

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart on City Region and Growth Deals tour

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart visited Glasgow yesterday (1st July) to hear about progress on the City Region Deal's many projects and see the completed development of Sauchiehall Street.

Today (2nd July), he visited Carlisle Station to hear Borderland's Growth Deal partners' plans for helping to deliver growth and improved connectivity to the entire region. He also attended a roundtable meeting with Borderlands stakeholders.

The visit to Glasgow came as it was confirmed that City Region Deal leaders have now invested £263 million of its £1.13 billion infrastructure fund.

So far local companies have benefitted from more than £116 million in contracts helping them to build expertise and support jobs.

Minister Stewart said:

It's fantastic such great progress is being made on the Glasgow City Region Deal. These projects are making a real difference to communities: creating jobs, building sustainable public spaces, and attracting further investment to the area.

The deal will play a vital role as we build back better from the pandemic, and we will continue to work closely with local authorities and the Scottish Government to achieve this.

The UK Government is investing more than £1.5 billion into City Region and Growth Deals across the whole of Scotland.

The City Deal is jointly funded by the UK and Scottish governments who are each contributing £500 million, with a further £135 million coming from local authority partners.

The deal, which signed its first agreement in 2014, is also marking its 7th birthday since its inception, with the UK and Scottish governments recently reaffirming their continued commitment and joint working on the deal by accelerating the delivery of £65 million funding to help projects progress to their next stage.

Over 20 years the deal will deliver 21 major infrastructure projects, covering the entire region with a focus on regenerating and revitalising areas with forward-thinking designs that are both sustainable and adaptable to the challenges of climate change.

This includes the £115 million Avenues Programme which is set to transform and redesign many of Glasgow's iconic public spaces with more trees, rain gardens to improve drainage, and active travel routes to make it easier to move about the city on foot or by bike.

To the North of the City a huge area of polluted land has been cleaned up so a new community can be built with easy access to the city centre; while Europe's first Smart Canal system will help the city manage extreme weather and prevent flooding.

Many projects outside the city are also improving links and supporting revitalisation, including the construction of a new bridge across the Clyde, regeneration at Ravenscraig and Exxon industrial sites, and a new terminal for cruise liner visitors at Greenock.

The £452 million Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is also jointly supported by the UK and Scottish governments and local partners.

After his visit to Carlisle, Minister Stewart said:

The Scottish-English borderlands is home to many vibrant communities and innovative businesses with huge potential that the Borderlands Growth Deal, including UK Government investment of £265 million, will help to unlock, so the region can build back better from the pandemic.

At the heart of the deal is a major boost to connectivity for southern Scotland and northern England which will bring significant benefits to the area, and I was very interested to see Carlisle Station and hear about plans to transform it into a major travel hub connecting the entire UK to the Borderlands.

Together with the proposed extension of the Borders rail line from Tweedbank to Carlisle and the UK Government's Union Connectivity Review, to revitalise rail, road, sea and air links between all parts of the United Kingdom, these are exciting times for the Borderlands.