

Delivering for Today, Investing for Tomorrow

The Government's Programme
for Scotland 2018-19



year of young people
bliadhna na h-òigridh
2018

NHS
SCOTLAND

70
YEARS
#nhsscot70



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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicola Sturgeon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister of Scotland

Introduction from the First Minister

Last year's Programme for Government set out bold and ambitious plans to tackle some of the big challenges of our time – getting our economy fit for the future, preparing for demographic change and tackling inequality. It spoke to the sort of Scotland we want to see – one that is innovative, welcoming, caring and productive. Our aim is a Scotland where every person and community is able to achieve their full potential.

It is not possible to ignore the uncertainty caused by Brexit – uncertainty that is being made worse by the blundering of the UK Government. But, equally, we must not let it define us, curtail our ambitions or halt Scotland's progress.

And the progress we've made so far is significant.

Over the past decade we have delivered radical changes in our country – free prescriptions, over a quarter of a million modern apprenticeships, equal marriage, world-leading action on climate change and the modernisation of our infrastructure. And before we know it, our more recent innovations like Baby Boxes for newborns, fairer systems of taxation and social security, and minimum unit pricing for alcohol will be taken as the norm.

We should be proud of what we, as a country, have achieved in making Scotland a better place – a country where businesses are profitable and people are treated fairly; a country where we nurture, help and protect those who need it most, and where our public institutions, whether our NHS, schools, social security system or enterprise and skills agencies, belong to, and listen to, the people they serve.

The next wave of progress has already started.

We are now delivering a transformational expansion of early learning and childcare, that will save families thousands of pounds and ensure that every child has the best start in life. We are investing in an economy that delivers for everyone, with spending on economic development in Scotland higher than the UK as a whole.

The modernisation of our infrastructure too is progressing – we have exceeded our target of 95% fibre broadband coverage across Scotland and are now taking forward our commitment to 100% superfast connectivity.

Strong public services are an essential part of building a strong economy and we continue to invest for the future.

We have recently awarded 147,000 NHS staff a minimum pay rise of 9% over the next three years and we are investing record amounts in our NHS to help it adapt to the challenges of a changing society. Our communities are benefiting from significant investment in new and affordable homes and recorded crime at its lowest level since 1974.

We have put in place new legislation setting international standards for tackling domestic abuse and will now take forward plans to better support victims and witnesses of crime. This past winter we were able to keep more people from sleeping rough – and now our work to fundamentally change how we tackle and prevent homelessness will intensify.

All of our work is now supported by a fairer tax system – which asks those who can most afford it to pay a little more to protect our public services, while ensuring slightly lower bills for the majority.

So much has been achieved but there is still much more we want to do.

This Programme for Government continues the major reforms that are under way in our health, education and justice systems. And it builds on the progress we have made in tackling inequalities.

A strong, sustainable and inclusive economy is central to that.

In this Programme for Government I am committing to the most ambitious long-term level of infrastructure spend that Scotland has ever seen – that is investment in schools, hospitals and transport, and in digital connectivity and clean energy.

In the coming year we will introduce legislation to underpin the Scottish National Investment Bank and take forward a package of measures to increase the export of Scotland's innovations and products to the rest of the world.

We will also work with industry and trade unions to ensure that our people have the skills they need to benefit from the technological change that is transforming our world and workplaces.

To be a more successful country we need to close the gap between the health of our wealthiest communities and that of our poorest, and we need to see an overall improvement in our population health.

We know that ensuring good health, both physical and mental, is not just the job of the NHS – indeed, good health is directly linked to our economic success as a nation. However, a modern, fit-for-purpose NHS, focused on prevention and speedy treatment where necessary, is essential. Our health service, like that of other nations, is facing the challenges of changing demographics and rising demand. We are determined to support it to meet those challenges.

We will continue to invest record sums and later this month we will publish a plan to substantially and sustainably improve waiting times.

Mental health is just as important as physical health and we recognise that, right now, support for our children and young people in particular is not good enough. This Programme for Government commits to changing that. We plan a significant investment in the range of support available to our young people, which will see issues tackled earlier and where possible in the community, while ensuring speedier access to specialist care for those who need it.

The defining mission of my government remains our commitment to education – for every child to have the best start in life and to fulfil their potential. I want young people to continue to benefit from the free, quality education that I was privileged to have. We will build on the work that is under way to close the attainment gap and, with our colleagues in local government, we will pick up the pace of the reforms needed to put power in the hands of headteachers, schools and communities. Our new packages of careers advice and student support will also help us to continue to make progress on equal access to university by 2030.

Our new, more compassionate social security system will make its first payments this month through the Carer's Allowance Supplement and we will start making payments from our Best Start Grant by the end of the year – more than six months ahead of schedule. This will put more money into the pockets of families on lower incomes – by providing £600 on the birth of a first child and £300 on the birth of any further children, more than the current UK Government arrangements.

And we will make progress on reducing child poverty, with children in school this year being among the first entitled to a national minimum school clothing grant of £100. We will also extend access to free sanitary products to more women and girls and deliver on radical recommendations to end homelessness.

There is still work to be done to tackle the prejudices and attitudes that fuel intolerance and we will consult on new hate crime laws that are fit for 21st-century Scotland. We will also take forward a package of measures to better support the victims of crime, and put victims and witnesses at the heart of our reforms to our justice system.

We are learning more and more about the impact of adverse childhood experiences on our life chances and we have a moral imperative to do more, not only to prevent them from happening in the first place, but to limit the damage they do to people, families and communities in the longer term. Our expansion of the Family Nurse Partnership and increased recruitment of school nurses and counsellors will help to deliver practical support in communities to those that need it most.

We will continue to take world-leading action on climate change and reduce the burden of plastics in our seas – banning the manufacture and sale of plastic-stemmed cotton buds. While we protect our natural environment and its biodiversity for future generations we will continue to make the most of the economic opportunities of our natural infrastructure through tourism, innovation in the circular economy and clean energy. Moving beyond the design of our deposit return system we will consult on what additional measures should be considered to improve the use and reuse of other materials.

And as we make progress we will continue to look outwards.

We will continue to be innovative, pioneering, inclusive and creative and to give the record number of people coming to visit us the warmest of welcomes.

Everyone who wants to be part of Scotland's progress must feel welcome to live, work and study here. All of our population growth in the next 25 years is predicated to come from migration. So we want those healthcare professionals, teachers, students and entrepreneurs – indeed people from any walk of life who will add to the richness of our country – to do us the honour of making Scotland their home and help us create a more successful country.

Of course we cannot ignore the fact that Brexit puts all of our progress at risk and we will continue to call upon the UK Government to divert us from the damaging course of a hard and unnecessary Brexit.

We recognise, however, our responsibility to Scotland to prepare for all exit possibilities in order to protect the Scottish economy in what are and will continue to be very uncertain times. So we must be prepared to act quickly and be flexible in our response, anchored by our values and our determination to do right by all of Scotland.

As we look to the future, however, one thing is certain: our commitment – my commitment – to making sure that all of Scotland flourishes, and that we remain outward looking and confident, will be undiminished.

This Programme for Government sets out what I want us to achieve in both the short and long term. But the vision it underpins will not be delivered by government alone – it is for all of us. It is Scotland's plan for the future.

This Programme for Government sets out an ambitious plan that will deliver for people, communities and businesses now and make the investments that will benefit future generations. The plans we are setting out in this Programme for Government include:

- increasing investment in Scotland's infrastructure so it is £1.5 billion per year higher by 2025-26 than in 2019-20. This increased investment will help us support faster broadband, improved transport and more low-carbon energy
- delivering the first Best Start Grant payments before Christmas – 6 months earlier than planned – helping parents on low incomes with £600 on the birth of their first child and £300 on the birth of later children, to buy the pram or other big essentials that new families need
- recruiting 430 new school, college and university counsellors as part of a new package to help support wellbeing and prevent mental ill-health
- implementing new powers for headteachers, making them the key decision makers in the life of their school
- making payment of the living wage, transparency on gender-equal pay and exclusion of zero-hours contracts criteria for the award of job-related public sector grants like Regional Selective Assistance
- supporting 750 new, extended or refurbished nurseries as part of our commitment to double the provision of early learning and childcare
- developing 'A Trading Nation' – an enhanced export plan, backed by £20 million of investment, to help boost the value of our overseas exports and provide additional help to those considering overseas trade
- rolling out the electrification of Scotland's roads with 1500 new charge points and £20 million to help people and businesses switch to electric vehicles
- reducing our carbon footprint with 500 new ultra low emission vehicles in the public sector and over 100 new green buses
- enshrining children's rights by incorporating the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into law

Executive Summary

This Programme for Government for 2018-19 sets out the Scottish Government's plan of action over the coming year.

Building a Globally Competitive, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy

A strong economy with growing, competitive and innovative businesses is essential to supporting jobs, incomes and our quality of life. Our economy must also be environmentally sustainable and inclusive – involving and providing benefit and opportunity for all of our people and communities. In turn, a strong competitive economy depends on a skilled, healthy and flexible workforce, and our rich ecological capital and natural environment are powerful assets that can help create economic value for the country as a whole.

We will continue to deliver on the ambitious package of measures to promote digitally-enabled and low carbon growth that we set out last year. These measures are delivering enhanced physical and digital infrastructure, core skills and increased innovation and use of technologies in key industries such as advanced manufacturing, FinTech and life sciences. These are the measures we must focus on to ensure our economy is ready for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The time is right to lay down ambitious roadmaps for the future of the Scottish economy and workforce.

This Programme for Government commits to a mission to raise Scotland's infrastructure spending to internationally competitive levels – it also underlines our progress on revolutionising our digital infrastructure and helps our people and businesses prepare for the work of the future.

We will make it our mission to steadily increase annual infrastructure investment so it is £1.5 billion per year higher at the end of the next Parliament than in 2019-20. This bold mission will increase Scottish Government capital investment by an additional 1% of current Scottish GDP and to achieve it we will need to continue to innovate in our models for investment and work across the public sector. On current estimates that would mean around £7 billion of extra infrastructure investment by the end of the next Parliament. That is investment that will deliver jobs and allow our communities to flourish and businesses to grow and export more. It will be a step change in infrastructure investment that will deliver a long-term boost to Scotland's economy. It will be direct investment in our housing, schools, hospitals, transport and digital infrastructure and an investment that will be enjoyed by future generations.

This mission is part of our transformation of our economic foundations. Another key part of that is the Scottish National Investment Bank. In the coming year we will introduce the legislation that will support the establishment and capitalisation of the Bank. In addition to the planned investment in the next two years as a precursor to the Bank, our aim is for the Bank to be investing in our businesses and communities from 2020, subject to regulatory and legislative approval. Backed by our commitment of at least £2 billion investment in its first 10 years, this will pave the way for a step change in innovative and inclusive growth. Ahead of that we will continue to invest in the Building Scotland Fund which will provide support for housing, modern industrial and commercial premises and business led Research and Development, together with continuing to provide micro finance, debt and equity finance for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) under the Scottish Growth Scheme.

And we are rolling out investment in digital infrastructure to every corner of Scotland. This year we will award the £600 million contracts to deliver the transformational opportunities of superfast broadband to every home and business in Scotland. We will reap the full benefit of this investment by ensuring that digital innovation is at the heart of our economy. This is why we are promoting areas of digital technologies that are important for the consumers and businesses of Scotland, and that will improve lives.

Our digital infrastructure needs to be matched by, and will become increasingly important to, our transport network. We will continue to invest more than £1 billion every year in public transport and deliver our programme of investment in all forms of transportation. In particular, we will promote the shift to more active travel for the benefit of our environment and our health, and support innovation in the transport sector. We will increasingly focus our investment on low carbon solutions, in pursuit of the ambition we set out last year to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032. We will go further this year, with commitments to:

- create at least 20 electric towns across Scotland by 2025
- add 1500 new charge points in homes, businesses and communities including 150 new public charge points
- make £20 million available to enable more people and businesses to make the switch to electric vehicles
- add more than 500 new ultra low emission vehicles to public sector fleets
- add over 100 green buses to the fleet through the £1.7 million Green Bus Fund

We will also harness innovation within our transport systems, through £2 million support for the development of 'Mobility as a Service' which aims to make smart and seamless public and shared transport options as desirable as owning our own car.

We will also continue to drive forward work that will make Scotland the most competitive place to invest and do business. This will include:

- introducing a Non-Domestic Rates Bill to further implement recommendations of the Barclay Review
- our enterprise and skills agencies stepping up their support to help businesses navigate Brexit
- Procurement Innovation Partnerships working collaboratively with public bodies to procure new goods and services to solve social challenges, creating opportunities for SMEs including micro-businesses



We will also take action to ensure that the population has the skills that we need to make the most of current and future economic opportunities. We will listen to the views of the business-led Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board and work with others from industry including the trade unions to set out our strategic approach in early 2019 to deliver a skilled and productive workforce for the short, medium and long term.

We know that this is not simply the role of government and our agencies. Instead we must continue to reinforce co-operation and harness the ingenuity of our businesses, trade unions and workforce. Following discussions with key stakeholders we will establish a national retraining partnership, working with trade unions and employer bodies. It will have the aim of helping workers and businesses prepare for future changes in their markets by enabling the workforce to upskill and retrain where necessary.

All of this is underpinned by our deep commitment to fair work. We will add criteria on fair work practices including the Living Wage, being transparent on gender-equal pay and the exclusion of exploitative zero-hours contracts to business support grants through Regional Selective Assistance and other large Scottish Enterprise job-related grants – starting with grants offered in 2019-20.

Scotland's labour market is performing well for many people. We have seen record employment levels and delivered our targets to reduce youth unemployment but we know that many people continue to face real challenges to move into work. We will invest an additional £5 million over the next three years to support around 2,000 women to return to work.

To reach our full potential as a nation we need every part of Scotland to have strong economic growth. We are investing over £1 billion in City Region Deals across Scotland and in the coming year will introduce a Bill to establish a new enterprise agency for the South of Scotland.

People are key to the economic and social wellbeing of Scotland's rural and island communities. We will do more to realise the potential of the rural economy and key sectors such as food and drink. We will ensure that, in the

face of Brexit and a difficult year ahead, farm and rural businesses receive their current payment entitlements. We will develop a new approach to fisheries management and help coastal communities keep fishing harbours operational. And we will plant more trees and make more of our forestry resources.

To be more productive and innovative we know that our economy must export more. We must be ambitious about Scotland's potential to grow our overseas trade and will work to boost the value and range of Scottish products, services and businesses in overseas markets. We will work with industry on how we can achieve our ambition and, with the support of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board, set out by spring 2019 a range of detailed actions in our export plan – 'A Trading Nation' – on how we will identify new opportunities. This work will be supported by over £20 million investment in the next three years. As part of that work we will:

- invest £2 million in a First Minister's export challenge to intensively support 50 businesses per year to ramp up overseas activity and create 100 new business to business peer mentorships per year for new exporters
- expand the network of in-market specialists to identify untapped potential in overseas markets and support Scotland's exporting interests
- increase Export Finance support for Scottish companies looking to enter new markets

Even without the additional challenges of Brexit we know that, to grow our economy, we also need to grow our population and that's why we will welcome people to Scotland who want to be part of our success. We want to ensure that we have enough healthcare professionals caring for us in the NHS, that we have the skills needed to remain competitive and innovative, that we have the workers needed for a thriving rural economy and that our universities are able to attract and retain talent from around the world.

We will continue to make the case that decisions on Scotland's population should be made in Scotland rather than at Westminster and that powers on migration should rest with the Scottish Parliament. With the powers we currently have, we will focus on:

- attracting and keeping people in Scotland, for example by making provision for an advice and support service including on the new settled status scheme and meeting the settled status fees for EU citizens working in our devolved public services
- challenging misconceptions on immigration in Scotland and building on the success of the 'We are Scotland' social media campaign

The sustainability of our growth is not just contingent on how we treat our people, it is also about how we protect and nurture our environment. Our natural resources and biodiversity must be protected and we cannot allow Brexit to undermine the progress that we have made both in Scotland and across the EU.

Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions have almost halved since 1990 and our current Climate Change Bill is the next step in our low carbon transition. We will build on our world-leading work on climate change mitigation with a new five-year Climate Change Adaptation Programme to ensure our communities, economy and natural environment are resilient to the changing climate.

We will pursue our goal of an energy system in Scotland that is globally competitive and delivers secure, affordable and clean energy to all. We will also work to ensure that businesses reap the onshore benefits of offshore generation. Later this year we will consult on our preferred model for a publicly-owned not-for-profit energy company, to support our efforts to tackle fuel poverty.

While we have made steady progress on recycling, there is more to be done. We have asked people for views on how a deposit return scheme for drinks containers should work. We will use the views shared with us to help design an effective system that will work well for everyone in Scotland. This year we will go further to tackle our throwaway culture. We will look beyond drinks containers and consult on what additional measures should be considered to improve the use and reuse of other materials. And as part of our efforts to reduce the burden of plastics on our seas we will ban the manufacture and sale of plastic-stemmed cotton buds.

A healthy clean environment is vital for our wellbeing and enjoying the outdoors supports our good physical and mental health. Our Biodiversity Challenge Fund, of up to £2 million, will support projects across Scotland focused on creating and improving habitats for key species and, where appropriate, encourage increased access to nature.

A Healthy and Active Nation

To be a more successful country we need to see an overall improvement in our population health, and we need to close the gap between the health of our wealthiest communities and the health of our poorest.

We will begin a radical reform of the way we respond to and treat mental ill-health. We will take a public health approach focused on prevention. We will improve clinical services so that they are more responsive to children, young people and adults and build new networks of support easily accessible from schools, colleges, universities, communities and workplaces to support good health and wellbeing. This will be supported by an additional £250 million investment over five years.

Too many children and young people are waiting too long for, or being rejected by, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). As a result we need to radically change what we do, building on the principles of early intervention and of support being available as close to young people and their families as possible.

The proposals set out in this Programme for Government will ensure that:

- parents will have a much clearer understanding of the kind of help that is available, and where and how to access it
- children and young people will have a much wider range of help available to them
- schools will be better supported to deal with wellbeing concerns, and will be able to direct children to counselling services

To make sure that children and young people have the support they need at the earliest possible stage we will take a range of actions including:

- investing in additional school nursing and counselling services. This will create around 350 counsellors in school education across Scotland and ensure that every secondary school has counselling services
- recruiting an additional 250 school nurses by 2022. This will help provide a response to mild and moderate emotional and mental health difficulties experienced by young people in the form of local help available immediately
- enhancing support and professional learning materials for teachers on good mental health, including ensuring that, by the end of academic year 2019-20, every local authority will be offered training for teachers in mental health first aid, using a 'train the trainer' model to enable dissemination to all schools
- providing more than 80 additional counsellors in Further and Higher Education over the next four years

- putting in place systems to fast-track those with serious mental illness to specialist treatment
- developing services for community mental wellbeing for 5-24 year olds and their parents to provide direct and immediate access to counselling sessions, self-care advice, family support, peer-to-peer support and group work with links to other care settings

These, and other measures set out in this Programme for Government, will provide support that is more appropriate and provided more quickly; preventing, where possible, issues reaching levels that require specialist CAMHS support. This will also help reduce demand on specialist services and allow those young people and families who do need specialist services to receive them more quickly.

We will also substantially expand the range of perinatal support available to women. Almost 20% of all women will experience mental ill-health during their pregnancy and we want to transform the service that they receive – by providing more counselling support for less acute issues and better specialist support for moderate to acute problems.

We will also expand other services for adults and in particular:

- trial improvements to the NHS 24 Breathing Space service by introducing web-chat with an NHS 24 adviser
- help those with mild to moderate depression through more widespread online access to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy – this would help people to combine improving their mental health with working and caring
- improve access to psychological assessment and therapies in rural areas through the use of technology such as video-conferencing

More generally we are investing record amounts in our health service. With our commitment to increase health funding by at least £2 billion over the lifetime of this Parliament we will also:

- open the Major Trauma Centres in Aberdeen in October and Dundee in November, with centres in Glasgow and Edinburgh to follow
- begin construction on the Golden Jubilee expansion in the West of Scotland in early 2019 and the North of Scotland Elective Care Centre at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness by mid 2019
- publish a plan, later this month, to substantially and sustainably improve waiting times performance in the face of rising demand for services
- support improvements to person-centred visiting in our NHS – flexible visiting will be in place across NHS Scotland by 2020
- establish Public Health Scotland to help drive improvements in population health
- intensify work to deliver our ambition to halve childhood obesity by 2030
- take forward work to be a more active nation including supporting the walking football programme and increasing support to Community Sports Hubs within our 5% most deprived communities
- develop and implement a redesigned minor ailment and common conditions service which will be available to all in the coming year

We recognise that our workforce is the greatest asset of our NHS. We have awarded 147,000 NHS staff earning under £80,000 a minimum pay rise of 9% over the next three years and we will proceed with the implementation of the new contract for GPs, freeing up GP time to see those with the most complex needs. We have also awarded salaried NHS doctors and dentists earning under £80,000 a pay rise of up to 3% this year.



Progress is being made both locally and nationally towards a new and sustainable future for adult social care. We will continue to embed the recently established rights for Scotland's 790,000 unpaid carers, give people greater choice and control over their social care and implement Frank's Law, which will see people of all age groups who need it be eligible for free personal care by April 2019. We will also explore the potential for a new national scheme to provide extra financial support to people with the highest social care needs.

The Best Place to Grow Up and Learn

In the Year of Young People, we have the opportunity to underline our commitment to future generations. We have the chance to fundamentally change the way in which we deal with the rights of young people. That is why this Programme for Government commits us to incorporating the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law. We will need to work with partners across public services and wider civic society to ensure that we do so in a way that promotes those rights most effectively, but now is the time to commit to that work.

Perhaps the most important part of serving our young people is our commitment to giving every child the best start in life with free, quality education that inspires and enables everyone to reach their potential. We have made progress but it is this Government's defining mission to close the attainment gap and raise the bar.

That starts from day one with every new baby receiving a baby box and continues into early years and beyond. We will take forward our work to double entitlement to funded early learning and childcare for eligible two year olds and for all three and four year olds to 1140 hours from August 2020. In April we reached a landmark deal with local government on a multi-year funding package worth over £1 billion, critical to ensuring the delivery of the expanded offer to children and their families.

The attainment gap is closing, but there is more to do. This financial year we have provided £179 million to local authorities and schools to help in closing the attainment gap through the Attainment Scotland Fund.

We are working with local government to deliver a school and teacher led education system. We will work with partners to deliver new national guidelines for local authorities and a Headteachers' Charter to put headteachers in control of important decisions that are fundamental to the running of their school, such as curriculum, staffing and budgets.

We will continue to support teacher recruitment through new routes into the profession, which have already resulted in around 280 additional student teachers.

We have significantly invested in further and higher education with real terms increases in funding supporting 116,000 full-time equivalent college places in this financial year.

Since 2007 we have provided free tuition to over half a million students in full-time higher education. We will continue to drive forward recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access to meet our commitment to equal access to university by 2030.



We support the central premise of the independent Review of Student Support of creating a system around the key values of fairness, parity and clarity. To take forward the recommendations of the review we will:

- invest £5.2 million in this financial year to increase bursaries for full time care experienced further and higher education students to £8,100 a year – equivalent to the Living Wage
- invest £16 million in the next financial year to expand and increase bursaries for students from the lowest income families
- raise the repayment threshold for student loans to £25,000 from April 2021 and from this year lower the maximum repayment threshold for student loans from 35 to 30 years

Preventing and mitigating adverse childhood experiences is a moral imperative. It improves our wellbeing as children – and as adults – and gives the best chance for those who have suffered adversity to go on to live their lives to the full. Our approach is rooted in the *Getting it Right for Every Child* principles. Tackling adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) requires our public services to work collaboratively, and with communities, across early years, education, health, justice, social work and more. We are working in partnership with the Scottish ACE Hub and a wide range of people and organisations to embed a focus on better preventing ACEs and supporting the resilience of children and adults to overcome early life adversity.

This year we are progressing our commitment to tackling ACEs and focusing our work around four key areas:

- taking intergenerational approaches to support parents, families and children – including investing in perinatal and infant mental health, expanding support to young mothers through the Family Nurse Partnership, and supporting parent victims and child victims of domestic abuse
- preventing and mitigating adverse childhood experiences for children and young people – including investment in school nurses and counsellors in schools, and funding to support health and wellbeing interventions
- developing an adversity and trauma-informed workforce – including implementing national trauma training, testing potential approaches for enquiring with adults about ACEs, and supporting schools to embed trauma-informed and nurture approaches in response to ACEs
- increasing societal awareness and action across communities – including working with the Scottish Hub to raise awareness and support local areas and communities to address ACEs and enable resilience

An Empowered, Equal and Safe Scotland

Thriving communities – where there are opportunities for all to flourish – sit at the heart of our purpose and what it means to live well in Scotland. The success and the wellbeing of our communities, is rooted in the strength of our relationship and partnerships with local government as well as drawing on the capacities, expertise and commitment of those people and organisations delivering critical services across the public, private and third sector.

Scotland offers a fantastic place to live, with vibrant cities, stunning scenery and diverse communities enjoying high standards of living. However, despite some improvements, too many of our communities are still blighted by low income, poor or unaffordable housing and long-term ill-health. Crime may be at historic lows but the nature of crime and how we police it is changing. We must also work to continually improve the experiences of victims and witnesses within the criminal justice system.

We are taking further steps to tackle child poverty and meet our 2030 targets that would reduce child poverty to the lowest level in Scotland's history. This school year saw the introduction of a new £100 minimum school clothing grant for families across Scotland. In the year ahead we will:

- begin work on a £12 million intensive parental employment support programme
- invest in innovative approaches to preventing and reducing child poverty, as a start to our £7.5 million Innovation Fund – a partnership with the Hunter Foundation
- step up our work to eradicate holiday hunger, providing an additional £2 million of funding to tackle food insecurity among children

Our work to expand early learning and childcare, support people to get back to work and action to lift the public sector pay cap will directly improve household budgets. Poverty shows itself in many forms and this year we will go further than ever before to boost household incomes.

We will work to promote awareness and encourage take up of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme – we have invested £1.4 billion in this scheme since 2013 and want to do more to ensure no one eligible loses out.

We will also increase, by 7,500 by April 2019, the number of workers receiving a pay increase to the Living Wage as a result of employer accreditation. This is part of our longer term target to increase by 25,000 the number of Living Wage recipients.



This year sees the opening of our new social security agency, Social Security Scotland, marking a fundamental shift in the delivery of social security as a human right underpinned by the values of dignity, fairness and respect. We will publish our Social Security Charter – developed with those who have experience of the system – setting out people's rights and how the new approach of our Scottish system will support them.

Social Security Scotland is making its first payments to people this month, through the Carer's Allowance Supplement. This increases the Carer's Allowance by 13% and is an investment of more than £30 million a year to support carers in Scotland. In 2019 we will make the first payments under our £300 per year Young Carer Grant.

We want to accelerate the help we can give to new families so that every child has the best start in life. Therefore we will start making payments of our Best Start Grant by this Christmas – more than six months early. This will put more money into the pockets of families on lower incomes – by providing £600 on the birth of a first child and £300 on the birth of any later children, more than the current UK Government arrangements. By paying families on lower incomes more money more quickly we will support thousands of children across Scotland. This is the first step in our delivery of the Best Start Grant which will also – by summer 2019 – see families get a further £250 for each of their children at key points in their early years such as starting nursery and school.

In the coming year we will also provide financial support to people on lower incomes who have lost loved ones and are struggling with funeral costs through Funeral Expense Assistance.

We will publish an Older People's Framework by March 2019. This will set out how we will deliver improved equality outcomes for older people and, equally importantly, how we maximise the contribution of our older people in our communities and economy.

The foundations of our communities are our homes and over the lifetime of this Parliament we are investing more than £3 billion to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes including 35,000 for social rent. We are investing around £750 million this year alone to keep up that momentum. We will support delivery of more wheelchair-accessible housing for disabled people. And we will implement the recommendations of our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group to eradicate rough sleeping, transform the use of temporary accommodation and prevent homelessness.

We will also support communities and encourage developments through legislative and digital improvements to the planning system that will transform how people interact with the system as part of our work to make planning more simple and transparent. We will continue to take action to increase the safety of people living in new and existing buildings, following the Edinburgh schools report and the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

We will continue to support community land purchases through our £10 million per year Scottish Land Fund, including extending it until 2021. And we will continue to support the work of the Scottish Land Commission to shape the land reform agenda. We will explore how to promote the existing Community Right to Buy mechanisms to enable community allotments and other forms of community growing. We will also progress the Scottish Crown Estate Bill.

We will strengthen the arrangements for local democracy and decision taking. We will take forward the Local Governance Review, jointly with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), which will look at how decisions are made within Scotland's diverse communities.

Diversity is something we must cherish and we will tackle the prejudices and attitudes that fuel intolerance. A key aspect of this is developing modern laws that show there is no place for hate crime. We will consult on the legislation that is needed to reflect life in 21st-century Scotland, and we will also respond in full to the recommendations of the First Minister's Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership when it sets these out at the end of 2018.

And we will continue work that will enable us to bring forward legislation on gender recognition in the next legislative programme.

In justice, we will maintain our focus on prevention, early intervention and services that support rehabilitation and reduce re-offending. We will continue to reform and modernise our justice system, in particular to improve the experiences of victims of crime.

As part of this work we will:

- reduce and, where we can, eliminate the need for victims to have to retell their story to different organisations as they look for help, working with Victim Support Scotland and others
- widen the range of serious crimes where the victim can make a statement to the court about how the crime has affected them physically, emotionally and financially, consulting on specific details by early 2019
- ensure victims and their families have better information and greater support ahead of prison release arrangements
- increase the openness and transparency of the parole system, consulting on specific proposals later this year
- establish a new support service in Spring 2019, developed and delivered with Victim Support Scotland, to give families bereaved by murder and culpable homicide dedicated and continuous support

We will also improve the experience of victims of rape and sexual assault in the criminal justice system, taking action to allow trials involving rape to start at the earliest opportunity and to minimise stress caused to victims. We will consult on improved legislation and practice for forensic medical examinations. We will also provide an additional £1.5 million to Rape Crisis Centres to help people access the support they need.

Prevention and multi-agency responses also underpin our efforts to tackle violence against women and girls. We will implement the Equally Safe strategy through a preventative approach and improve services and drive forward work to prevent and reduce all forms of gender-based violence. In the coming year this includes:

- launching a consultation on how to improve multi-agency interventions for victims of domestic abuse who are at a high risk of harm, so that they receive better support and are kept safer
- convening a roundtable later in 2018 on what more can be done to tackle online abuse and misogyny, and engaging with media companies on tackling harmful gender stereotypes
- launching a major national campaign in Spring 2019 to challenge sexual harassment and sexism
- bringing forward a Female Genital Mutilation Bill to strengthen the protection of women and girls from this form of gender based violence

In the past year we have delivered legislation that created a new offence of domestic abuse designed to reflect our modern understanding of how perpetrators use coercive controlling behaviours against their partner or ex-partner. We will consult in the autumn on further protections for those at risk of domestic abuse through new protective orders and we will expand the innovative Caledonian Programme into a further six local authority areas with £2.8 million of funding over the next two years – so that more male perpetrators of domestic abuse can receive specific rehabilitation services.

We will expand our successful approach to youth justice to include, where possible, young people up to the age of 21 and care-experienced young people up to the age of 26 and we have protected criminal justice social work funding at record levels of around £100 million per year.

In the year ahead the presumption against short sentences will be extended to 12 months, once additional safeguards for victims in the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 are in force. We will issue revised guidance and provide additional funding for supervised and supported bail to ensure that remand is only used where necessary and appropriate.

We will continue to invest in the prison estate, including the new model for the female custodial estate. As part of our work to tackle adverse childhood experiences, we will enhance support for children affected by parental imprisonment.

We will improve the provision of health and social care services for people in prison including with improved clinical IT systems in prisons to make services safer and more efficient. And we will improve how the justice and health systems respond to people in mental distress.

In the coming year we will bring forward legislation for new drug driving limits covering 17 different drug types to improve the safety of our roads. This will mean Scotland leads the way with drug driving limits in place and a lower drink-drive limit than the rest of the UK.

We will also continue to improve our openness and transparency and consult on proposals to extend Freedom of Information legislation, for example to companies providing services on behalf of the public sector.

We will establish an Animal Welfare Commission to provide expert advice on the welfare of domesticated and wild animals in Scotland and ensure that we maintain high standards of animal welfare after Brexit. We will take steps to allow animals taken into the protection of the Scottish SPCA or local authorities to be rehomed much more quickly and efficiently than at present and introduce increased sentences for the worst types of animal cruelty, including attacks on police dogs, an initiative known as 'Finn's Law'.

A Creative, Open and Connected Nation

This has been another spectacular year for Scotland hosting world-class events. The celebrations continue with the opening of V&A Dundee later in September. V&A Dundee is a prime example of our support for culture as a means of regeneration and economic growth and in addition to our £38 million investment towards construction of the building, we will continue to provide £1 million a year to the museum for its first 10 years with a further £361,000 in this opening year.

We want to live in a Scotland that is innovative, inclusive, open and connected, where we are proud of our reputation and optimistic about the future.

We will publish our Culture Strategy by the end of 2018, underpinned by three ambitions: transforming through culture, empowering through culture and sustaining culture. Our actions to support that will include:

- an International Creative Ambition Programme by May 2019
- support for the development of film and television productions and strategic partnerships with broadcasters, making Scotland a more attractive base for screen companies and broadcasters
- measures to ensure that all children have the opportunity to enjoy cultural opportunities no matter where they live, building on the legacy of the Year of Young People

We will protect free access to Scotland's national museums and galleries, continuing to invest in support for key projects, and we will promote library use, via the Every Child a Library Member project, take forward the single library card pilot and investing in the Public Library Improvement Fund.

Our heritage is important and we will continue to support our historic environment and our indigenous languages, Gaelic and Scots, as well as our cultural institutions, Scotland's festivals and our reputation as the host of world-class sporting events.

Despite the challenges of Brexit we will strive to make a positive contribution internationally and demonstrate our commitment as a good global citizen.

We have significantly enhanced Scotland's overseas network in recent years and we will consolidate that presence over the coming year. We have just published our *Contribution to International Development Report* setting out our contribution to international development and humanitarian emergencies – not only our financial support but our policies across government. We will continue to build the capacity of our international development partners, providing a safeguarding framework to support and hold to account organisations that we fund to deliver international development.

We have a moral obligation to offer a place of safety to people fleeing conflict and persecution. We will continue to support the Syrian Resettlement Programme, and in the coming year, working with partners including COSLA and the Scottish Refugee Council, we will:

- work to develop opportunities for refugees to build their skills and employment options, including through volunteering and work placements
- support refugees to have a voice in improving their health and wellbeing through participation in local and national health forums
- provide opportunities for refugees to produce work for and to participate in cultural, heritage and sports activities

We have embedded the UN Sustainable Development Goals in our new *National Performance Framework*, one of the first countries to do so. These goals will help us stretch our ambition to improve Scotland's wellbeing and increase sustainable and inclusive economic growth and provide the backdrop to this Programme for Government.

Scotland, Europe and the Constitution



More than two years on from the European Union Referendum, and with only six months to go until the day that the UK Government intends the UK to leave the EU, the terms of withdrawal and the future relationship remain uncertain. As each day passes, more and more evidence demonstrates that leaving the EU will have profound and damaging effects on our economic prosperity and the way we live our lives.

We remain clear that Scotland's interests would be best served by continued membership of the EU, in line with the overwhelming wishes of the people of Scotland. However, in December 2016 we were the first administration in the UK to set out in *Scotland's Place in Europe* a detailed policy blueprint that would minimise the damage of withdrawal. We set out how, short of remaining in the EU, continued membership of the European Single Market and Customs Union is the best solution for Scotland and the UK as a whole. That has been our consistent position and one which has been borne out by the evidence that has mounted over the two years. We are determined to maintain a Scotland that is fair, prosperous, open and tolerant.

We will continue to argue for membership of the Single Market and Customs Union as the least worst outcome from any exit from the EU, and to press the UK Government and Westminster Parliament to adopt this approach. We will also continue to press the UK Government in particular to rule out exiting the EU without an agreement on transition and the future relationship. A 'no deal' exit is completely unacceptable because of the economic, social and environmental costs that will be incurred.

Unfortunately the UK Government continues to raise the prospect of such an outcome publicly. Therefore, as a responsible government, we have a duty to prepare for all possible exit scenarios including the most damaging, to support the Scottish economy, organisations and individuals as best we can. As part of this, we are working hard to press the UK Government to consider fully the financial implications of EU exit for Scotland and we have been absolutely clear that Scotland must not be any worse off in respect of the funding allocations that replace those currently provided from the EU.

The UK Government's 'no deal' technical notices present a worrying picture of what Brexit could mean in practice for businesses and the people of Scotland. Those notices show us that companies will need to comply with new and as yet unclear customs arrangements to do business. Health service suppliers, for example, will need to navigate through two separate regulatory regimes in the EU and UK. Deals will still need to be negotiated with third countries on research.

Where we can, we are making sensible practical preparations for various outcomes. For example, we are stepping up support for businesses to find their way through the complexities of the changing circumstances, and for our rural economies to adapt to the new arrangements. We will do all that we can to retain and attract talent to Scotland to support our ambitions for world-class businesses and public services. We are seeking to ensure that there is recognition of Scotland's separate criminal justice system and law enforcement agencies in the co-operation on security, law enforcement and criminal justice that is vital to ensure the safety and security of all our citizens. And we are making the necessary contingency arrangements to ensure that we will continue to have access to the necessary medical supplies and equipment that we need in Scotland.

Preparations for Brexit also require a challenging programme of legislation to make the necessary changes to the devolved Scottish statute book to ensure that, as far as possible, the same laws, rules and schemes will operate after the UK leaves the EU as they did before. The Scottish Parliament will have an essential role to play in scrutinising and approving this programme.

Exit from the EU also has profound implications for Scotland's constitutional position. We can see the threat in the approach that the UK Government took to the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and the Continuity Bill passed by the Scottish Parliament in March. First, the UK Government referred the Continuity Bill to the UK Supreme Court which prevented the Bill coming into force. Secondly, the UK Government proceeded to legislate in devolved areas and to change devolved competence despite the Scottish Parliament refusing consent under the Sewel Convention. Thirdly, the Withdrawal Act allows UK Government Ministers to change the competence of the Scottish Parliament without its consent, breaching a fundamental principle of the devolution settlement put in place in 1998.

We are determined to protect the Scottish Parliament, and the devolution settlement that the people of Scotland voted for in 1997, from such threats. Most immediately, there need to be measures to strengthen the Sewel Convention and rebuild trust that it will be respected by the UK Government. We have set out options to achieve this, including greater legislative protection. Further work is now required between the Scottish and UK Governments to make progress. We have made clear that we do not plan to introduce any further motions seeking legislative consent on Bills related to withdrawal without that.

Events on the Withdrawal Act, on negotiations for withdrawal, and preparations for EU exit more generally have exposed the weaknesses in the current arrangements for the conduct of intergovernmental relations across the UK. The Joint Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister and including the First Minister, agreed in March that these arrangements need to be reviewed. The Scottish Government will press for substantive improvements to be made as part of this review.

In fact, withdrawal from the EU necessitates an all-round consideration of the distribution of power within the UK. Centralisation of decision-making in Whitehall and Westminster must be avoided, for example in areas where common frameworks are put in place across the UK, so that devolution is respected.

In addition, there must also be a re-examination of areas where legislative powers are currently reserved but are of acute concern for Scotland, including immigration, protection of employment and other rights, and the development of future UK trade arrangements.

We have already set out a comprehensive assessment of the constitutional implications of withdrawal from the EU, including areas not directly connected with EU membership. And we have set out in more detail the opportunities for Scotland from a greater role in decision-making in areas such as migration and a greater role in the development of the UK's international trade arrangements. We will continue to develop proposals for the future governance of Scotland, and the UK, to secure Scottish interests following withdrawal, increase the powers of the Scottish Parliament and contribute to a wider debate on the nature of the governance of these islands in the future.

At the end of the period of negotiation with the EU, and when the terms of Brexit are clearer, we will set out our judgment on the best way forward for Scotland at that time, including our view on the precise timescale for offering people a choice over the country's future.

The Legislative Programme 2018-19



We will introduce an ambitious legislative programme that drives forward sustainable and inclusive economic growth and shows our commitment to a fairer Scotland. The uncertainties of Brexit mean that the precise volume and timing of Brexit legislation that will need to be considered by the Scottish Parliament is still unclear. We will prioritise delivery of our legislative programme to ensure Scotland's interests are protected. We will also continue work to enable us to deliver Bills on Gender Recognition and Forensic Medical Examinations for next year's legislative programme.

Bills for introduction in 2018-19

Biometric Data Bill

Budget Bill

Census (Amendment) Bill

Consumer Protection Bill

Disclosure Bill

Electoral Franchise Bill

Electoral Reform Bill

Family Law Bill

Female Genital Mutilation Bill

Non-Domestic Rates Bill

Scottish National Investment Bank Bill

South of Scotland Enterprise Agency Bill

Bills already in Parliament

Age of Criminal Responsibility Bill

Children and Young People (Information Sharing) Bill

Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) Bill

Damages (Investment Returns and Periodical Payments) Bill

Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) Bill

Health and Care (Staffing) Bill

Human Tissue (Authorisation) Bill

Management of Offenders Bill

Planning Bill

Prescription Bill

Scottish Crown Estate Bill

Transport Bill

Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) Bill

Bills passed since 2017-18 Programme for Government

Budget Bill

Child Poverty Bill

Civil Litigation (Expenses and Group Proceedings) Bill

Contract (Third Party Rights) Bill

Domestic Abuse Bill

Forestry and Land Management Bill

Gender Representation on Public Boards Bill

Historical Sexual Offences (Pardons and Disregards) Bill

Housing (Amendment) Bill

Islands Bill

Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (Relief from Additional Amount) Bill

Social Security Bill

Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses Bill

Bill Summaries



Biometric Data

Following on from the recommendations of the Independent Advisory Group on the Use of Biometric Data, the Bill will deliver enhanced oversight of biometric data and techniques used for the purposes of justice and community safety. Subject to views expressed through a full public consultation, the Bill will establish provision for a statutory code of practice covering the acquisition, use, retention and disposal of such data which includes fingerprints, DNA and facial images. It will also establish a Parliamentary Commissioner tasked with overseeing the code and promoting best practice, as well as raising wider awareness in this evolving area.

Budget

The annual Budget Bill provides parliamentary approval for the Scottish Government's spending plans, allocation of resources to our strategic objectives and supporting progress towards our vision of a more successful country, through increasing inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Census

The Bill will permit National Records of Scotland to ask voluntary questions on sexual orientation and transgender status/history in the 2021 census and future censuses.

Consumer Protection

The Bill will establish a new statutory consumer body and make changes to existing funding arrangements to allow Ministers to fully utilise devolved powers.

Disclosure

The Bill will make amendments to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 and Part V of the Police Act 1997 to support the modernisation of the policy design of the disclosure system. It will continue to balance safeguarding and proportionality, and provide a disclosure regime in Scotland that is more responsive to the needs of stakeholders.

Electoral Franchise

This Bill will include provisions to extend the franchise for Scottish Parliament and Local Government elections to protect the franchise for EU citizens. This Bill will be brought forward after a consultation on prisoner voting has been undertaken.

Electoral Reform

The Bill will implement a range of electoral reforms, some of which will use the 2016 Scotland Act powers. These include proposals included in the recent Electoral Reform Consultation to extend the powers of the Electoral Management Board, and make changes to Boundary reviews. It will also include some technical matters, for example transferring oversight of the Electoral Commission to the Scottish Parliament.

Family Law

The Bill will make a number of changes to family law, in particular to further ensure that the child's best interests are at the centre of any contact and residence cases. This includes regulation of Child Welfare Reporters, further protection of domestic abuse victims in contact and residence cases and ensuring that cases are dealt with effectively and efficiently by the courts.

Female Genital Mutilation

The Bill will strengthen the existing legislative framework for the protection of women and girls from Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), a form of gender based violence. The Bill will seek to introduce protection orders for women and girls at risk, and place guidance for professionals on a statutory footing.

Non-Domestic Rates

The Bill will deliver the ambition set out in the Barclay Review to enhance and reform the business rates system in Scotland to better support business growth and long-term investment and reflect changing marketplaces. Having already introduced the Business Growth Accelerator and Day Nurseries relief recommended by the Review, the Bill will include other measures to support growth including the move to a three year valuation cycle. The Bill will introduce measures aimed at improving the administration of the system including to reduce the number of appeals and improve the quality of information available to stakeholders. It will also deliver measures to increase fairness and ensure a level playing field by reforming a number of reliefs and tackling known avoidance measures.

Scottish National Investment Bank

The Bill will pave the way for the establishment of the Scottish National Investment Bank. The Bank will provide investment, help companies grow and support the Scottish Government's economic vision.

South of Scotland Enterprise Agency

Following on from the *Enterprise and Skills Review*, this Bill will establish a new enterprise agency for the South of Scotland, to drive inclusive growth and ensure that the region benefits from a new approach that supports a diverse and resilient economy, sustains and grows communities, and harnesses the potential of people and resources.

Scotland's National Performance Framework

Our Purpose, Values and National Outcomes



Our new *National Performance Framework*, launched in June, sets out a clear purpose for Scotland – to focus on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

We have, for more than 10 years, been resolute in our focus on improving lives through common goals across the public sector and beyond. The new framework – its purpose, values of kindness, dignity and compassion and the kind of Scotland we want to see – builds on this and is about more than the work of government. It has been shaped by more than 200 organisations and endorsed by all parties in the Scottish Parliament. It presents a vision for national wellbeing across a range of economic, social and environmental factors. Importantly, our *National Performance Framework* embeds the UN Sustainable Development Goals,

reinforcing our commitment to tackling the most challenging issues facing our planet. In striving to achieve our National Outcomes, we are simultaneously striving to achieve the UN Goals. We are a country committed to protecting human rights, and we will remain steadfast to this on the brink of Brexit and worrying approaches to civil liberties elsewhere in the world.

While we, working together with local government, will take the actions needed to make Scotland fairer, wealthier and happier the real power is beyond government. It is often the decisions we take as individuals, families, businesses and communities that have the most impact on our success as a country. We will work with people across Scotland and use the framework to check our progress – learn from what is working and what needs a different approach.



Chapter 1

**Building a Globally
Competitive, Sustainable
and Inclusive Economy**



A strong economy with growing, competitive and innovative businesses is essential to supporting jobs, incomes and our quality of life. Our economy must also be environmentally sustainable and inclusive – involving and providing benefit and opportunity for all of our people and communities. In turn, a strong competitive economy depends on a skilled, healthy and flexible workforce. And our rich ecological capital and natural environment are powerful assets that can help create economic value for the country as a whole.

So, our core purpose is clear: we will grow the economy in a sustainable and inclusive way to increase wellbeing. We want all of our communities, both urban and rural, to flourish economically, socially and environmentally.

We are already seeing the benefits of this approach. Scotland has seen the fastest productivity growth in the UK since 2007, our exports are growing and we have the highest proportion of employees in the UK paid the Living Wage. We do better than the rest of the UK on employment rates for women and young people. But we know that Scotland still has untapped potential in individuals, businesses and communities. So we will do more to make sure that every person in Scotland has the skills and opportunities to thrive and to help make Scotland a more successful country.

Last year we set out an ambitious package of measures to promote digitally-enabled and low carbon growth. This included harnessing technological change to improve the economic and social wellbeing of all. We will continue to deliver on this through ongoing investment in skills and innovation, new technologies, advanced manufacturing, infrastructure and broadband. This will improve our productivity, boost our exports, and help make Scotland the most competitive place to do business. In turn, it will also increase our wellbeing as a nation.

Our infrastructure will continue to see substantial investment. We will make it our mission to steadily increase annual infrastructure investment so it is £1.5 billion per year higher at the end of the next Parliament than in 2019-20. We will award contracts that will mean that every home and business has access to superfast broadband and continue to see more investment in low carbon energy and transport solutions. Building on the ambition we set out last year to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032, we will add 1,500 new charge points in homes, business and communities including 150 new public charge points. We will invest in new ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) by more than doubling the funding available to £20 million to enable more people and businesses to make the switch to electric. We are adding more than 500 new ULEVs to public sector fleets and will establish a ‘Switched on Taxis’ initiative.

WE WILL
INCREASE
INVESTMENT IN SCOTLAND'S
INFRASTRUCTURE BY AROUND
£7 BILLION BY 2026



Taking advantage of the benefits of the circular economy, we will take the next steps on designing our deposit return scheme for drinks containers and consult on how we can go further to improve the use and reuse of other materials. This will help our world-leading action on climate change. And we will maintain our environmental standards following Brexit.

We will continue to drive forward work that will make Scotland the most competitive place to do business – where innovation is rewarded, a global outlook is encouraged and fair work principles are key to success. We will introduce legislation to pave the way for the Scottish National Investment Bank and further reform of non-domestic rates.

Our enterprise and skills support system will become more customer focused. Across our enterprise and skills agencies we have a wide range of high quality products designed to help businesses grow. We are developing a single online point of entry for business support to enable Scottish businesses to more rapidly navigate and identify the support that is available to them, and once that is developed to build in the ability to deliver rapid decision making on eligibility based support such as grants.



To reach our full potential we need every part of Scotland to have strong economic growth, with a sharp focus on the opportunities within regional economies. We will introduce a Bill to establish a new enterprise agency for the South of Scotland, to drive inclusive growth and ensure that the region benefits from a new approach that supports a diverse and resilient economy, sustains and grows communities, and harnesses the potential of people and resources.

Scotland's infrastructure – digital, physical and natural

Good infrastructure is essential to our economy and wellbeing and for the delivery of efficient, high-performing public services. We want to do more to recognise the value of our infrastructure investment, while acknowledging that our natural assets are as valuable as our broadband, roads and bridges.

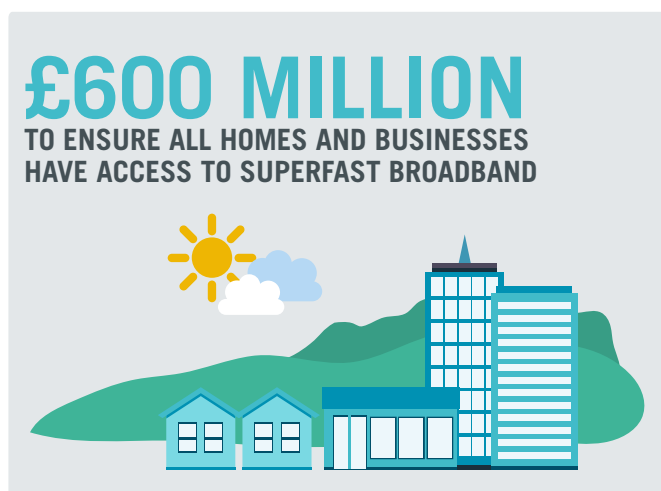
We know the value of investing in our infrastructure goes beyond modern homes, schools, hospitals and world-leading engineering projects such as the Queensferry Crossing. It unlocks economic potential, supports jobs and allows our communities to flourish and businesses to grow. Research by the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank and the EU all draws the conclusion that infrastructure investment is a key driver of productivity growth.

We will continue to make the investment in our infrastructure that is required to support economic growth, boost international competitiveness and prepare for the uncertainty of Brexit. And we will go further. We will make it our mission to steadily increase annual infrastructure investment so it is £1.5 billion per year higher at the end of the next Parliament than in 2019-20. This bold mission will increase Scottish Government capital investment by an additional 1% of current Scottish GDP and to achieve it we will need to continue to innovate in our models for investment and work across the public sector. On current estimates that would mean around £7 billion of extra infrastructure investment by the end of the next Parliament.

This is a direct investment in the competitiveness of our country's assets – in our digital infrastructure and transport – and will help to maintain competitive economic conditions in an increasingly global market. And this step change in infrastructure investment will deliver a long-term boost to Scotland's economy. We will start identifying priority projects to take forward that ensure the positive effects of this investment will be felt now and by future generations.

Digital and data

By the end of last year we had exceeded our target of 95% fibre broadband coverage across Scotland. To ensure we continue to be at the forefront of the digital revolution, we will now award contracts for the first phase of our Reaching 100% programme. Our £600 million investment will unlock superfast broadband of 30Mbps for all homes and businesses in Scotland by the end of 2021. Our digital infrastructure will create greater opportunities for education, work and leisure as well as enabling economic growth – particularly in rural Scotland.



We have awarded a contract for the delivery of new masts to boost the coverage of 4G in remote areas and we will develop a 5G strategy that allows Scotland to gain first-mover advantage from this emerging technology.

We will continue to press Ofcom and the UK Government that the UK-wide regulatory environment should prioritise mobile coverage in rural and island areas. The UK Government must also ensure that we do not lose out on digital benefits of being part of the EU – such as free mobile phone roaming – as a result of Brexit.

Data-driven innovation

Scotland is already at the forefront of the use of data to boost productivity and improve public services and we are well placed to become a global centre of excellence. There are clear economic gains for business and through highly-skilled jobs, but this area also has potential to transform our everyday lives.

We will build on our digital infrastructure investment and continue to place digital transformation and innovation at the heart of our economic policy.

We launched Scotland's first widespread Internet of Things network last month. We want as many people and businesses to benefit from the transformative potential that the Internet of Things offers. To do so, in the year ahead we will develop a range of activities across Scotland to inspire and enthuse enterprises of all sizes along with public bodies and our communities with what this technology can achieve.

Our existing support for innovation centres like The Data Lab and Censis is working to promote digitisation, innovation and address the digital and data skills gap. We are working with stakeholders and interest groups to develop a common public sector approach to online identity assurance. The aim will be to test ways in which we can deliver an online ID scheme which safely provides easier and better access to public services for Scotland's citizens.

We are investing in measures that will enable Artificial Intelligence (AI) to be used to improve lives in Scotland and around the world, including a world-leading clinical imaging data resource and measures that develop future AI applications for the public good.

We will make more of our rich public sector data open for social and economic good and will support the creation of secure and effective technology platforms that will enable collaborative research in the public interest and attract investment and innovation.

We will provide £1.5 million over three years to support the establishment of a 'UNICEF Data for Children Hub in Scotland' in partnership with UNICEF, The Data Lab and the University of Edinburgh. Taking advantage of Scotland's growing tech and innovation capabilities, the Hub will bring together participants in the exchange and use of data, data science expertise, and resources to develop data-driven collaborative solutions to improve children's wellbeing. The Hub will shed light on complex problems such as improving child health through behaviours around factors such as nutrition and physical activity; achieving better mental health outcomes for young people and equality of opportunity in education and employment. It will establish ethical and promising collaborations that transform data into public good.

Cyber resilience – security and opportunity

Digital technology offers huge opportunities for Scotland as a modern, progressive nation. However, our ability to flourish in the global digital economy will increasingly rely on our ability to design and deliver innovative products and services that are resilient to ever-evolving cyber threats.

We want to ensure our people, businesses, charities and public institutions are protected, and to make Scotland a centre of global excellence for cyber resilience. To achieve this, we will continue to implement our cyber-resilience plans.

We will invest in advice and support for workplace training on cyber security and make £500,000 available to smaller businesses and charities, to at least double the number of Scottish businesses and third sector organisations with critical controls in place to defend against the most common cyber threats.

Our investment and expertise in cyber security can help differentiate Scotland as an attractive and secure place for investment and innovation in the high-value and high-growth technology sector.

This year, we will work with Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International to build and promote Scotland's reputation for robust cyber security products and services. We will provide seed funding of over £350,000 for a Cluster Management Organisation to support the growing number of businesses in this sector. We will also provide dedicated funding of £250,000 for a cyber-resilience innovation call, to stimulate fresh thinking in our private sector and help meet the future cyber-resilience challenges our public sector will face.

As well as thinking about today's opportunities and challenges, we will make sure that Scotland has the expertise it needs for the future. We are working with key partners to provide clearly defined learning pathways into cyber-security careers (including for career changers) and will support children and young people in our schools, colleges and universities, and also in non-formal learning settings such as youth work, to develop key cyber skills. Scotland will also take full advantage of available extra-curricular and online programmes, including the UK-wide CyberFirst and Cyber Discovery programmes. To make sure people develop the skills they need, we will support teachers and college lecturers by providing additional learning resources and building quality content into teacher training and professional learning programmes.

Over the last year, our public bodies have been working to implement a common set of critical cyber-resilience controls, meaning our public sector will have appropriate protection against the most common forms of cyber-attack. Over the coming year, we will continue to strengthen our defences by funding central cyber security posts for local government, health bodies and the universities and colleges sector. We are also developing guidance and tools for public bodies to help them understand and comply with the legal and regulatory landscape around cyber security and to make sure that any suppliers they work with meet appropriate cyber security standards.

Transport – connecting and improving lives

A modern travel and transport system is fundamental to sustainable and inclusive economic growth – it opens up new opportunities for people and directly impacts the health and wellbeing of communities and the effectiveness of our public services. We will continue to invest more than £1 billion every year in public transport and deliver our programme of investment in all forms of transportation. We will increasingly focus our transport investment on low carbon solutions, in pursuit of the ambition we set out last year to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032. Drawing on data-driven innovation, we will support opportunities to explore the potential of new transport solutions tailored for individuals – where we can access information, ticketing and payment options in one place and from our smart phones or watches.



Active travel

We will work across all levels of government and with our NHS, businesses and communities to realise the potential of a shift to active travel including as a prescription for better health. In the past year we have supported the take up of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes. Our actions in the coming year include:

- promoting walking- and cycling-friendly businesses
- subsidising bike hire for jobseekers, modern apprentices, young people and students
- developing a system of Greenways for walking and cycling – bringing together the benefits of active travel with enjoying our natural environment

Air quality, low emission zones and ULEVs

We have set out a bold ambition to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032.

We will step up our work in the year ahead and launch ‘Plugged In Households’. This will widen access to electric vehicles, including through housing associations and car clubs, so that communities across Scotland can share in the benefits of ultra-low emission vehicles.

1,500 NEW CHARGE POINTS
IN HOMES, BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

The infographic features a purple car on the left, connected by a green charging cable to a green charging station on the right. Above the station is a yellow sun icon. The station has a blue screen at the top and a white plug icon on the front. The background is a light grey gradient.

We will build on our plans to electrify the A9 by expanding the scope of our Switched on Towns and Cities initiatives to create at least 20 Electric Towns across Scotland by 2025. And, in close collaboration with the sector and local government, we will establish a ‘Switched on Taxis’ initiative to build on our existing programme of support for the sector. The initiative will include a new fund for electrifying taxi ranks with emphasis on major transport and tourist hubs. This year we will also:

- invest £15 million to add an additional 1,500 new charge points in homes, businesses and communities including 150 new public charge points
- increase our Low Carbon Transport Loan Fund from £8 million to £20 million to enable more businesses and consumers to switch to electric vehicles than ever before. To date, the Loan Fund has supported around 500 ULEV purchases; with another 450 forecast to be supported in 2018-19 with this increased funding
- add an additional 500 ULEVs to public sector fleets

We will introduce Europe's most comprehensive network of cutting-edge remote sensing air quality monitors on local and trunk roads with the first monitors being deployed by August 2019. This will give us accurate data on exhaust emissions based on real life use rather than relying on manufacturers' information. Our Transport (Scotland) Bill currently being considered by Parliament will enable the creation and enforcement of low emission zones. Together with our commitment to introduce low emission zones in our four biggest cities by 2020, this will make our cities cleaner, healthier places to work, study and live. And to help those who will have the most difficulty in making the transition we will create a Low Emission Zone Support Fund that will target specific cohorts of both commercial and private vehicle owners affected by the introduction of low emission zones in Scottish cities.

Our ambitious programme for electric and ultra-low emission vehicles will create new challenges for our electricity networks, but also considerable opportunities. We will work with Scotland's network operators and others to make sure that we are well placed to address and respond to these. We will also look to the opportunities of data-driven innovation to influence and manage consumer demand and improve network management.



We will take steps to improve access to the information from our ChargePlace Scotland network to commercial operators, investors and network companies. In collaboration with the Scottish data and informatics partnerships, we will explore platforms to build on research and commercial opportunities in the development and application of data at the interface of the transport and energy sectors.

Roads

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route will be fully open to traffic this autumn and is expected to cut journey times across Aberdeen by up to half at peak times, improve journey time reliability and enable local authorities to develop public transport solutions. In the year ahead our work across the rest of the country includes:

- maintaining the trunk road network in line with international best practice
- investing in essential road maintenance schemes and increasing resilience of the roads network
- progressing dualling of the A9
- starting work on replacing the Shlatach Bridge in Glenfinnan
- progressing work on the Maybole bypass



Rail

In the year ahead we will see more results from our significant investment in the ScotRail franchise. By the end of 2019 we will have a 23% increase in seating capacity across the network and enhanced train facilities with 200 new services across Tayside, Stirlingshire, Perthshire, Aberdeenshire and the Borders.

We plan to have the first dedicated carriages for cyclists and other sports enthusiasts in service next year providing greater access to Scotland's great outdoors.

Work will start on redeveloping stations in Aberdeen, Inverness, Motherwell and Stirling to improve facilities, access and connectivity and we are progressing with plans to enable a competitive public sector bid for the next ScotRail franchise contract.

Buses

More than three-quarters of public transport journeys in Scotland are by bus. We will provide stability for bus services with funding over three years. Building on our Transport Bill, we will improve passenger information and integration with other travel options and give those communities that need it most, whether urban or rural, more transport options.

We will finalise the eighth round of the Green Bus Fund. We expect our £1.7 million investment will add over 100 green buses to the fleet, meaning that we are ahead of schedule in delivering the Climate Change Plan commitment of 50% by 2032.

Links by air and water and our maritime sector

This year we have seen Hainan Airlines launch Scotland's first route to China, linking Edinburgh and Beijing.

We remain committed to reducing the overall burden of Air Departure Tax by 50%, abolishing the tax altogether when resources allow, and working with the UK Government to find the best possible solution for the Highlands and Islands before the tax can be introduced in Scotland.

We will build on current activity through Scotland's airports and ports to expand our international export routes, to create more international routes and trade direct from Scotland. We will also explore the viability of a direct ferry link to Europe from Scottish ports.

Scotland's marine economy contributes £5.1 billion to our economy and employs 79,000 people. The maritime sector is a key part of that and takes many forms.

From the commercial ferry service at Cairnryan ports, connecting Scotland with Northern Ireland, to cruise ships and small harbours supporting fishing, the sector supports tourism and coastal communities. It connects communities and provides lifeline services. It is also key to our imports and exports. In addition to our rich construction and manufacturing heritage, we have world leading maritime and skills training within Glasgow City College and companies across the country complementing our successful ship management sector and supporting industries. We will work with the Scottish maritime industry to develop a Scottish Maritime Strategy. This will highlight the strengths and successes of our vibrant maritime sector and the significant contribution it makes to the economy. It will also identify key opportunities to harness the potential of our maritime and coastal assets sustainably.



We have supported the Brodick Harbour project, creating first-class facilities for Arran. We will continue to apply Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) fares on the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network. We introduced a 20% reduction on passenger and car fares on the Aberdeen – Lerwick and Kirkwall – Lerwick ferry services this summer, and remain committed to continue to pursue all avenues to deliver RET for Orkney and Shetland.

We will support the implementation of the new £3.5 million Ferries Resilience Fund to upgrade equipment on existing ferries to reduce the risk of vessels breaking down and get them back into service for our islands more quickly if they do.

Future of transport – Intelligent Mobility

We will invest up to £2 million to support the testing of 'Mobility as a Service' in Scotland. This concept has the potential to transform the way we use transport – making public and shared transport options as desirable as owning our own car. Models being developed include using our personal smart devices, such as phones and watches, to get personalised travel information, ticketing and payment for transport all through one portal incorporating all modes. We want to facilitate growth and innovation in this area, building on strengths and skills already in Scotland. This funding will be available from 2019 and will complement our existing work on smart ticketing.

We will also encourage and support the research, development, demonstration, and deployment of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles or Driverless Cars. We will hold a summit in 2018 and explore with others how Scotland can best capitalise on the opportunities and benefits of this technology.

Boosting sustainable and inclusive economic growth

Scotland's economic success is not only growing GDP, but ensuring that economic growth is inclusive, sustainable and boosts the wellbeing of all our people. In practice this means our economic policies should drive our wellbeing as individuals and communities. So while we will support all of our businesses to grow, this needs to happen with the principles of fair work and opportunities for all embedded at every level. We are working with a group of other Wellbeing Economy Governments to share best practice on how wellbeing is embedded in our economic approach.

The most competitive place to do business

We want Scotland to be the most competitive place to do business, delivering a strong, dynamic and productive economy which creates wealth and employment across Scotland.

While our powers over business taxation are limited we have delivered the most competitive business rates package of reliefs in the UK. We are making our businesses more profitable and competitive by abolishing business rates for over 100,000 premises, saving small businesses around £1.5 billion. Our Business Growth Accelerator, for new-builds and businesses that make improvements to their properties, is stimulating growth and investment.



The Non-Domestic Rates Bill will deliver a rates system designed to better support business growth and long-term investment

We will bring forward a Non-Domestic Rates Bill to implement further recommendations from the *Barclay Review*. The *Barclay Review* was established to deliver a rates system designed to better support business growth, long-term investment and reflect changing marketplaces. Having already introduced the Business Growth Accelerator and Day Nurseries relief recommended by the Review, the Bill will include other measures to support growth including:

- moving to a three-year valuation cycle
- improving administration of the system by reducing the number of appeals and improving quality of information available
- increasing fairness and ensuring a level playing field by reforming reliefs and tackling known avoidance measures

We will also continue to progress work on the *Barclay Review* recommendations which can be implemented without the need for primary legislation – through an Advisory Group, which will report later this year to inform further decisions on implementation.

In the coming months our enterprise and skills agencies will step up their support for businesses to navigate through Brexit.

We know that effective public procurement has huge potential to support business and sustainable and inclusive economic growth. In the coming year we will publish a report on public procurement activity drawing together the experience of more than 100 of the highest spending Scottish public bodies. The report will inform any further actions that are needed to help maximise procurement's contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, including on the Living Wage and community benefits.

We want to help businesses innovate to address real social challenges, and export their solutions to the rest of the world. We will therefore set up Procurement Innovation Partnerships for the Scottish Government to work collaboratively with public bodies to procure new goods and services to solve social challenges, creating opportunities for SMEs including micro-businesses.

CivTech® is our ground-breaking innovation programme, bringing together public sector expertise and private sector creativity to solve real problems, develop new solutions and deliver better services for everyone. For entrepreneurs and businesses it combines a streamlined procurement process with a comprehensive support programme, providing a springboard for innovative exportable technologies.

The first two cohorts have seen the participating companies win over £1.4 million in contracts after the programme, create new jobs and secure equity investment. Benefits for public services have included a public sector organisation making a cost avoidance of £1.5 million.

The third cohort is currently in progress and saw a record number of sponsors submitting potential challenges as well as companies applying from across the UK. It has also seen the development of an intrapreneurship programme for those showing entrepreneurship while working for a large organisation.

The success of CivTech® has attracted international interest and we are scoping plans to scale the CivTech® Programme.

We intend to build on the reputation that Scotland now enjoys as a leader in the growing market for 'govtech' and find new and innovative ways to engage with businesses to both promote innovation in public services and stimulate our digital economy.

Investing in skills

Investing in the skills and creativity of our workforce, protecting workers' rights and providing decent working conditions are essential for us to reach our economic potential and for Scotland's businesses to thrive.

We will take a strategic approach to Scotland's skills system that reflects both the jobs that are needed now and the jobs of the future – making the most of opportunities such as automation, technology, data and digitalisation and mitigating the negative impacts of change. We will do more to support those moving jobs through their working lives as the balance of opportunities changes.

We will listen to the views of the business-led Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board and work with others from industry including the trade unions to develop an action plan by early 2019 to ensure Scotland has a skilled and productive workforce for the short, medium and long term.



We know that this is not simply the role of government and our agencies. Instead we must continue to reinforce co-operation and harness the ingenuity of our businesses, trade unions and workforce. Following discussions with key stakeholders we will now establish a national retraining partnership, working with trade unions and employer bodies. It will have the aim of helping workers and businesses prepare for future changes in their markets by enabling the workforce to upskill and retrain where necessary. This will be part of our wider action plan that will define how we support workers by bolstering existing skills and helping people to transfer their skills and experience and transition more easily between workplaces and sectors. Through this partnership, government, employers and trade unions can work together to ensure jobs are designed and work is organised in a way that allows people to make full use of the skills and knowledge they possess.

We will continue to improve opportunities for apprenticeships as well as providing opportunities for the existing workforce through a range of programmes including the Flexible Workforce Development Fund, Individual Training Accounts and the Scottish Union Learning Fund. We will prioritise Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and higher level apprenticeships and continue to progress our Developing the Young Workforce Programme. We will also continue to increase the number of modern apprenticeships, to meet our commitment of 30,000 by 2020.

Fair work

We want Scotland to be a world-leading Fair Work nation. We will publish a Fair Work Action Plan by the end of 2018 that will set out the next steps we will take to embed fair work practices in Scottish workplaces by 2025. As part of this we will:

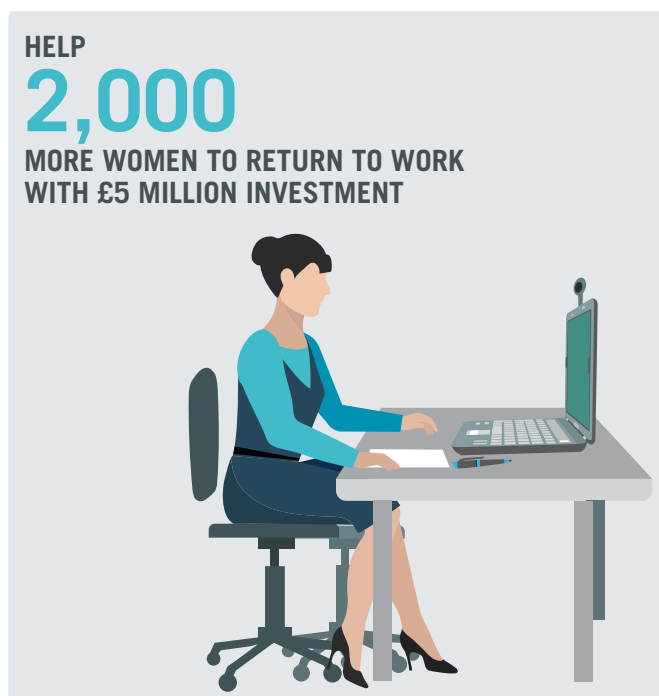
- introduce fair work criteria, including paying the Living Wage, excluding exploitative zero-hours contracts and being transparent on gender-equal pay to business support grants through Regional Selective Assistance and other large Scottish Enterprise job-related grants, starting with grants offered in 2019-20
- explore options to develop support and advice for small, micro and Business Pledge employers to support fair work practices in their businesses including employing disadvantaged groups

No one left behind

Scotland's labour market is performing well for many people. We have seen record employment levels and have delivered our targets to reduce youth unemployment, but we know that many people continue to face real challenges to move into work and we must do more to provide the joined-up support people need to fulfil their potential and ensure no one is left behind.

Fair Start Scotland, our new devolved employment service, went live in April 2018. With these new powers we will make a significant impact for those further from the labour market, in a way which treats them with fairness, dignity and respect, but this is not the end of our ambitions. We are reviewing the existing Scottish Government funded employability services, with a view to strengthening relationships with local and regional partners and developing a new delivery model that builds on the principles underpinning Fair Start Scotland by providing more flexible, joined-up and person-centred support to help those furthest away from the labour market to make a successful journey into fair and sustainable work. We will set out the conclusions of this review later this year.

As part of these reforms, we are committed to supporting many more disabled people, whose skills and talents are underutilised, into work. We have seen recent improvements in the employment rate of disabled people, but we know they remain more likely to be out of work and to live in poverty. Our economy, and our society, is missing out as a result of this, and we understand and appreciate the valuable contribution disabled people make. We have therefore committed to at least halve the disability employment gap. It is estimated that by halving the employment gap, we could boost our GDP by as much as 3.5% per year in real terms, on top of the individual benefits to people of being in work.



We will also increase the number of practitioners with National Institute of Disability Management and Research training so that they can support people to remain in or return to work – our aim is for 300 practitioners to be trained across Scotland as part of a five-year programme.

We will also take a joined-up approach across our public services to help keep people in work by piloting a Health and Work Support Service in Dundee and Fife, set to run until June 2020. This tests a single, easy to navigate, entry point for health and work services to reduce length of sickness absences and the risk of job loss. The pilot aims to support 6,000 people who are struggling to stay at work, or in employment and absent from work due to ill-health and disability, or who have recently fallen out of work.

Gender equality

We are determined to reduce gender inequality and improve the position of women in the workplace. We know that women earn significantly less than men over their entire careers for complex, often interrelated reasons. These include differences in caring responsibilities; more women in low skilled and low paid work; men in more senior roles; occupational segregation and outright discrimination.

We will implement the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 and provide guidance on the new requirements for women's representation on public boards, making Scotland the only part of the UK to have this standard.

To tackle the gender pay gap, raise family incomes and grow our economy we need to support the women who have taken a break from paid work back into jobs that match their skills and experience. We have a pool of talent who often find it difficult to find employment that rewards their abilities. Our transformation in early learning and childcare – as well as being an investment to give our children the best start in life – will also allow more women to return to work.

We will take forward a range of actions including investing an additional £5 million over the next three years to support around 2,000 women to return to work. We will also:

- work with business organisations to showcase the positive contributions of women returning to work and address skills gaps in businesses across Scotland
- work with employers to extend the offer of comprehensive training and support delivered through employability and skills programmes.
- seek to offer pre-employment support to women in their local area before they undertake a three-month placement with an employer
- encourage women to return into more advanced roles where we know the gender pay gap is widest
- work with training providers and employers to support women returning to the workforce to undertake roles in male-dominated sectors

Support for veterans

Veterans are assets to our society, and we remain fully committed to ensuring there is no disadvantage to members of the Armed Forces and veterans community in Scotland when accessing services and support. This year marks a decade of investment in our Scottish Veterans Fund with over £1.3 million provided to charities and organisations supporting over 150 projects. We will continue to positively support veterans through the Fund, with our multi-year commitment, in partnership with Standard Life Aberdeen, which totals £600,000 over three years to 2019-20. As part of our work to support veterans, in the coming year we will progress delivery of the Veterans Commissioner's recommendations to support those transitioning from the military to find fulfilling civilian careers and to develop a distinctive Scottish approach to meet the healthcare needs of veterans. We will also accelerate opportunities to create business workspaces to help veterans and military spouses who want to run their own business, such as developing hubs near to the main defence bases.

Investment

In last year's Programme for Government we set out our ambition to establish a Scottish National Investment Bank, this year we will introduce the legislation that will support the establishment and capitalisation of the Bank. In addition to the planned investment in the next two years as a precursor to the Bank, our aim is for the Bank to be investing in our businesses and communities from 2020, subject to regulatory and legislative approval. Backed by our commitment of at least £2 billion investment in its first 10 years, this will pave the way for a step change in innovative and inclusive growth.



The Scottish National Investment Bank Bill will pave the way for the Bank to become operational in 2020

Building on his work to develop an implementation plan, Benny Higgins, former CEO of Tesco Bank, will act as strategic adviser on the development of the Bank.

In advance of the Scottish National Investment Bank being open for business our £150 million Building Scotland Fund provides debt and equity support to the private sector and organisations such as housing associations and universities to support the development of housing across all tenures; develop modern industrial and commercial space; and support industry-led research and development. In line with the vision for the Bank, it is focused on projects and investments that support inclusive growth, reduce carbon and sustain and create places.

And the Scottish Growth Scheme is already delivering additional investment in Scottish SMEs, and leveraging new investment from private investors. A range of sectors have been supported including software development, textiles, energy, multi-media, Fintech and healthcare.

Entrepreneurship

We have an impressive past and, more importantly, an exciting future as a world-leading entrepreneurial nation. Our people are our greatest asset to realising this future and by building on 'Scotland CAN DO' we will continue to support successful programmes that unleash the potential of our future entrepreneurs. In 12 rounds over the past six years 'Scottish EDGE' has awarded over £11 million in grants and loans, supporting over 300 businesses to create in excess of 1,300 new jobs, growing turnovers by over £100 million and leveraging an incredible further £82.47 million in investment.

Building on the success of this model; 'Unlocking Ambition' is already supporting a first cohort of 40 high-potential and high-innovation entrepreneurs picked from global applications from academia and beyond and gaining support from public and private partners and from our nation's current entrepreneurial successes. The businesses being supported are those capable of making real change to the economy and that are growing their business in a way that benefits society – including developing construction products from waste materials and creating products for safe financial learning for young people. Entrepreneurship is, and must be, a force for good and by supporting work such as 'Scotland CAN B' that celebrates and guides businesses impacting positively on society and by delivering upon the 'Women In Enterprise' programme to tackle the gender gap in enterprise we will ensure growth and innovation go hand-in-hand with wider benefits for all of society.

Advanced manufacturing

180,000 people are currently employed in manufacturing, which accounts for 52% of all of Scotland's international exports. In the past year we have seen new investment to build a subsea manufacturing campus in Montrose and work has started on the new National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland (NMIS). As part of the NMIS Skills Academy, 30 industry doctorate students will be recruited over the coming year. We will continue to prioritise this area of strategic importance.

Life sciences

Life sciences continues to be a tremendously important sector for Scotland. Over 700 life sciences organisations employ more than 37,000 people in high quality jobs, making Scotland one of the largest life sciences clusters in Europe.



In partnership with the UK Government and industry we have announced the new £56 million Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre. A world-first, the new industry centre will offer pharmaceutical companies, from start-ups through to multinationals, a unique service to develop and adopt novel manufacturing techniques to adapt into their own manufacturing processes. By transforming processes and technologies, the speed of bringing new drugs to market could improve drastically.

We have seen continued investment in the life sciences sector in the last year, including Össur cementing its commitment to Scotland with an agreement to invest £5.6 million over a three-year period to develop ground-breaking myoelectric prosthetic hand and arm solutions at its Touch Bionics operations in Livingston. And Scottish Enterprise provided TC BioPharm with £2.7 million funding to co-develop a novel immunotherapy product with the aim of treating a broad range of cancers and major viral disease and Synpromics was awarded a £1.9 million grant to expand its programme of cell and gene therapy.

Companies are attracted to Scotland because of the expertise on offer and meeting business needs is central to the new *Life and Chemical Sciences Skills Investment Plan* published in May which will work to ensure Scotland remains competitive and attractive as a place to do business.

Financial services and FinTech

Scotland is an established, successful financial hub and the financial services sector continues to play a significant role in Scotland's economy – both in its own right as one of our most significant employers, with 86,000 employed directly in the sector, and also as a driver and supporter of wider economic activity across the country.

We will continue to work with the sector to attract new investment and jobs to Scotland, such as the planned Barclays expansion in Glasgow, supported by Scottish Enterprise, that will bring up to 2,500 jobs to Glasgow. Such investments will ensure that Scotland continues to be a major financial centre.

We will build on our support for FinTech, though the newly-established FinTech Scotland, and ethical finance to support innovation and diversity in the sector taking full advantage of Scotland's strength and history in finance and technology.

Our universities

Our university research is amongst the best in the world and makes a significant contribution to our economy. We are boosting our investment in university research and innovation by an additional £17.6 million this financial year. This includes £11.6 million specifically aimed at increasing the number of partnerships with businesses in Scotland and competitive grants secured from UK Research & Innovation in order to contribute to inclusive economic growth in Scotland.



Economic Action Plan

We will publish a new Economic Action Plan at the end of October. The plan will set out how our key economic initiatives are supporting the business community to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It will outline how we are working with business and industry to ensure success on the ground across all of Scotland. It will also demonstrate how our policies interact to deliver on the strategic objectives that Scottish businesses, consumers and our citizens want to see. Our Economic Action Plan will demonstrate how our Economic Strategy is delivering for Scotland, and how we are adapting our approach in response to recommendations from others including the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board, the Scottish Parliament and the work of the Sustainable Growth Commission. We will also address how our economic policy will respond to emerging economic challenges and opportunities.

Glasgow: Realising the potential of innovation and investment

Over the coming year we will work with Glasgow City Council and other public and private partners to help realise and connect key opportunities along the River Clyde and to capitalise on the city's knowledge and innovation assets to deliver inclusive growth.

Key assets such as the SSE Hydro, the Media Quarter at Pacific Quay and the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital are already delivering economic benefits for Glasgow and Scotland. Further investment such as Barclays' new campus at Buchanan Wharf which will create up to 2,500 new jobs; plans for the expansion of the Scottish Event Campus (SEC); and the development of the National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland and associated Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District near Glasgow Airport has the potential to deliver further significant growth.

We will work with public and private partners to help realise those opportunities and maximise their collective impact.

In particular, we will work with the University of Glasgow, which is already investing over £1 billion in the transformation of its West End campus, to develop a business case for a new Clyde Waterfront Innovation Campus in Govan, bringing together world leading research and infrastructure alongside companies manufacturing components for growing industries such as quantum technology. This development would be part of the wider Glasgow West End and Waterfront Innovation District, which will help drive investment by major companies and SMEs in sectors such as precision medicine, data science and FinTech.

Elsewhere in the city, we will work with the University of Strathclyde to take forward the next phase of the Glasgow City Innovation District. Building on the success of the Technology Innovation Centre, Tontine House and the Innovo Building, the Innovation District will further transform central and east Glasgow by creating a thriving ecosystem of small, medium and large innovation companies supported by the knowledge, research and skills of the University.

Strong regional economies

Our cities and their regions make up around two-thirds of Scotland's economy. When they thrive, all of Scotland benefits. We are supporting Scotland's strengths in research and innovation through City and Growth Deals across Scotland, including Edinburgh Region's approach to data-driven innovation and our investment in a network of learning centres across the Highlands and Islands, which is transforming science, technology, engineering, mathematics and digital creativity (STEMD) education across the entire region as part of the Inverness and Highland City Region Deal.

Beyond our cities we are taking action that recognises the particular needs of the South of Scotland by introducing legislation to establish a South of Scotland Enterprise Agency.

Too many communities in Scotland have suffered a negative economic legacy from the decline of their local industries and Regional Economic Partnerships have the potential to develop and prioritise needs at a local level, driving prosperity and equality. As part of the Local Governance Review we will consider what more can be done to enable more Regional Economic Partnerships.

And whether urban, rural or island we know that with limitless ambition, and the right support, communities can develop and regenerate places and spaces where they live and make them even better.

Business improvement districts and regeneration

We want our towns and town centres to be vibrant, creative, enterprising and accessible. Business Improvement Districts can create platforms for economic growth and regeneration, and help town centres to thrive and meet the needs not just of businesses, but also residents and visitors. Over a decade ago we successfully introduced Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Scotland and we now have 40 established BIDs including the world's first Food and Drink BID in East Lothian, a UK award-winning BID in Falkirk, and a European award-winning BID in Aberdeen.

We will now create a new generation of BIDs with wider reach and impact. We will launch a new and more expansive BID model later this month which will build much greater capacity through stronger public, private and community partnerships which are more strategic and sustainable and ensure BIDs can make an even bigger contribution to inclusive economic growth. Scotland's Towns Partnership (STP) will provide new and increased support to accelerate and innovate the development of new Business Improvement Partnerships. We expect to see new pilots coming through, for example in Lanark, over the course of this year. And we will launch a pilot Digital Improvement District, a BID dedicated to digital improvements, to model the delivery of digital infrastructure and WiFi within towns through strategic collaborations and partnerships with local businesses, agencies and communities to best meet their needs.

Building on our successful approaches to regeneration, we will also pilot a new industrial and commercial space growth initiative that will be used to support the remediation of public sector land and enable the development of industrial space by public/private partnership. The initiative would use Scottish Government funding towards this land remediation and site preparation to drive wider private sector investment and development.

We will continue to work with COSLA and individual local authorities on the use of innovative funding mechanisms to unlock investment and boost local economic growth.

Rural and island economies

People are key to the economic and social wellbeing of Scotland's rural and island communities. We are determined to reduce the potential disruption of Brexit on rural and island life and to help our communities and businesses flourish. There is untapped potential in the rural economy and the right opportunities and infrastructure can help unleash that.



The South of Scotland Enterprise Agency Bill will establish a new enterprise agency to support a diverse and resilient economy, sustain and grow communities and harness the potential of people and resources

We will introduce a Bill to establish a South of Scotland Enterprise Agency. Ahead of this we have established the South of Scotland Economic Partnership – backed by £10 million funding. Its members have engaged widely with local communities and businesses to establish priorities for the new agency and will take forward a range of projects and investments to drive the local economy. We want the South of Scotland to benefit from a new approach that supports a diverse and resilient economy, sustains and grows communities and harnesses the potential of people and resources.

WE WILL DEVELOP AN
**ISLANDS
PASSPORT
SCHEME**
TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE
TO VISIT MORE OF
SCOTLAND'S 80
INHABITED
ISLANDS



We will develop a Rural Economy Action Plan, which will steer our transition to more sustainable and inclusive economic growth in rural areas. This will be an essential part of an overarching Scottish Economic Action Plan and include measures to:

- increase the number of people living and working in rural Scotland
- support micro-enterprises to improve their productivity and grow
- improve connectivity to encourage innovative delivery of public services and access to education, employment and business opportunities
- provide new opportunities for young people to develop rural skills

Post-Brexit, we envisage a shift in thinking about how best to invest across all aspects of rural Scotland's economy, including how we continue to produce high quality food; promote economic diversification; protect our environment; and enable sustainable repopulation – where communities thrive. Drawing on the recommendations of the National Council of Rural Advisers, the Agriculture Champions, the Griggs Greening Review Group and others, we will set out our strategic approach to farming, food and drink production and rural development for the medium and long term. This will allow for a transition period during which new and innovative approaches will be tested to determine the best mechanisms to support sustainable, inclusive growth across rural Scotland.

As a start, we will establish an agri-tourism monitor farm programme which will involve working with farms, estates and crofts to develop food tourism as an additional strand to food and farming businesses.

We will support the hosting of the next Rural Parliament in Stranraer in November and continue to listen to the views of rural communities about what matters to them most.

We will take forward work on a Crofting Bill and publish a national development plan for crofting.

In May, the Scottish Parliament passed the historic Islands (Scotland) Act to address the particular opportunities and challenges for island communities. In the year ahead we will begin implementing its measures by preparing the national islands plan.

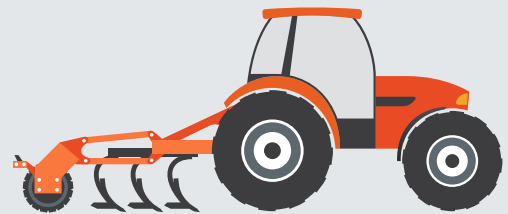
We will also develop an Islands passport scheme as a marketing initiative to encourage people to visit more of Scotland's 80 inhabited islands.

Farming and food production

In the difficult year ahead, we will ensure that farm and rural businesses receive their current payment entitlements. We will also seek to provide certainty through the immediate Brexit transition by taking forward the proposals in our Stability and Simplification consultation, and we will continue to support the Agriculture Weather Advisory Panel as an effective platform for rapidly sharing information and best practice, building resilience and encouraging co-operation across the sector.

We will continue our work on encouraging new and young farming entrants and make 750 hectares of land on the national forest estate available for potential lease.

MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO VISIT A FARM



We want farmers to move towards a more profitable, low carbon future, adapting to the changing climate and securing business viability for future generations. Our specific actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions include:

- establishing and publishing first-phase research into the feasibility of a SMART target for reducing Scotland's emissions from nitrogen fertiliser by the end of 2019
- reviewing and renewing our flagship Farming for a Better Climate programme
- appointing young farmer climate change champions by the end of 2018

We will improve Scotland's international reputation for high quality meat production by updating Farm Animal Welfare Codes and introducing compulsory video recording of slaughter in abattoirs. We will also use the new Plant Health Centre to build our national resilience against risks posed by pests and pathogens to agriculture, forestry, horticulture and the wider environment.

We will also protect the provenance and reputation of Scotland's food and drink by legislating to ensure that after Brexit, Scotland can continue to opt out of cultivating Genetically Modified (GM) crops.

Aquaculture and fishing

We want to ensure that Scottish fisheries are managed in a way that best benefits the Scottish industry, coastal communities, our marine environment and people throughout Scotland. This applies equally to offshore, inshore and farmed activity.



We will develop a new approach to fisheries management in partnership with the fishing industry and other stakeholders, establishing a world-leading, sustainable fisheries management strategy, with inclusive economic growth at its heart. This will include a future catching policy which continues to support the principle of a discard ban.

We will publish a national discussion paper on the Future of Fisheries Management in the autumn, using the views on that to develop policy proposals for consultation at the end of 2019.

We will also take steps to modernise the management of inshore fisheries through the introduction of appropriate vessel tracking and monitoring.

We want to help coastal communities keep fishing harbours operational because of their importance to the maritime and rural economies, and the greater wellbeing of those communities. Therefore, in the year ahead, we will provide up to £2 million to meet emergency work at fishing harbours which ensures the continued operation of the facility and the safety of the fishermen and wider community. We will also work with Fisheries Local Action Groups to deliver projects which support harbour diversification and delivers an increase in harbour income.

Forestry

Scotland's forestry industry is a future-proofed carbon negative industry that is worth £1 billion a year while protecting our environment, biodiversity and enhancing our wellbeing.

We will plant more trees and make more of our forestry resources. We will meet our target of planting 10,000 hectares of woodland every year, and increase this by a further 50% by 2025. In the coming year, we will deliver a National Forestry Strategy setting out our long-term vision and objectives for forestry and woodlands and by April 2019 we will have new arrangements in place for forestry in Scotland.



We will manage woodlands and forests more efficiently with better technology. We will use remotely-sensed data to develop new information on tree-felling activity to ensure that Scotland's woodland area is increasing and following consultation, put in place new regulations relating to the control of felling. To increase skilled opportunities for young people in forestry, a new Forest Machine Operators Modern Apprenticeship scheme will be operational by the end of the year.

Good Food Nation

The food and drink industry is a major contributor to Scotland's economy, with a turnover of around £14 billion each year and accounting for around 1 in 4 manufacturing jobs. We have nearly 17,000 food and drink businesses employing over 111,000 people. We will continue to support the sector to grow sustainably and inclusively through the industry-led strategy, *Ambition 2030*.



Food and drink exports are now at record levels of £6 billion a year but Brexit threatens to dislocate trade from our biggest international market. We will do all we can to reduce that disruption and enhance and strengthen Scotland's brand as a Good Food Nation at home and abroad. By March 2019 we will publish a new Food and Drink 5-Year Export Plan and bring forward new measures to promote and market our produce in overseas markets.

Protected Geographic Indications (PGIs) such as Scotch Beef, Arbroath Smokies and Ayrshire Dunlop cheese are worth more than £1 billion to the Scottish economy. We want to grow that value further by increasing the number of Scottish products with protection and supporting the development of existing products with Geographic Indications.

We want to expand the sectors covered by Food and Drink Sectoral Plans to include beef, sheep, dairy, poultry and craft beer. In the coming year we will continue to support small producers, including community groups, to help promote their products through the Regional Food Fund. Our Food to Go initiative will continue to provide small grants to help get fresh and locally sourced food in local shops.

We will take action to streamline and simplify our support for food and drink businesses to ensure they can access the right support quickly and effectively.

We will work with the industry to bring forward, by the end of the year, measures to strengthen primary producers' position in the supply chain, creating more equity to improve their position and profitability.

We will publish a Good Food Nation programme in the autumn, highlighting progress to date, while also seeking views on new and developing proposals and actions and what legislative measures might be required to underpin our ambition.

Key to being a Good Food Nation means ensuring everyone who lives here appreciates and benefits from Scotland's quality produce. We will therefore create more opportunities for more primary school children to have the chance to visit a farm to raise their awareness of where their food comes from and the key role Scottish farmers play as custodians of the countryside and as food producers.

Internationalisation – growing our exports

While the uncertainties of Brexit are making it difficult for businesses to look beyond the immediate challenges, we remain ambitious about Scotland's potential to grow our overseas trade.



Scotland is globally renowned for its high quality products, burgeoning tech sector and innovation. We want to help Scottish businesses export their products and services to strategic markets. We must be ambitious about Scotland's potential to grow our overseas trade and will work to boost the value and range of Scottish products, services and businesses in overseas markets.

On top of our actions on food and drink, we will work with industry on how we can achieve our ambition and with the support of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board set out a range of detailed actions in *A Trading Nation: Our Plan for Growing Scotland's Exports* by spring 2019. We will support our new plan with over £20 million investment in the next three years. As part of that work we will:

- invest £2 million over three years to intensively support 50 high growth businesses per year to ramp up overseas activity and create 100 new business to business peer mentorships per year for new exporters
- expand the network of in-market specialists to identify untapped potential in overseas markets and support Scotland's exporting interests
- increase Export Finance support for Scottish companies looking to enter new markets

Scotland's population

Inward migration is vital to meeting Scotland's economic, demographic and cultural needs. All of Scotland's population growth over the next 25 years is due to come from migration. Due to the challenge of population ageing that all western economies now face, without population growth we will be less prosperous and less able to provide leading public services. We have set out ambitious plans for Scotland but we cannot deliver them without attracting talent to Scotland and growing our population.

A distinct Scottish approach to migration

The dual threat of leaving the Single Market and Customs Union and the UK Government's approach to immigration is risking Scotland's future. We need a migration system that meets Scotland's needs which is rooted in dignity and respect by:

- continuing free movement of people by the UK remaining in the European Single Market and Customs Union after Brexit
- devolving power to allow the Scottish Government, accountable to the Scottish Parliament, to set visa rules and criteria tailored to meet Scotland's most acute needs
- rethinking the UK immigration system to design a new regional approach, with powers for the Scottish Parliament tailored to meet Scotland's full range of needs

The time for change is now, and is backed by a majority in the Scottish Parliament.

Last year, the Scottish Government prepared an extensive summary of the evidence demonstrating how migration benefits Scotland's economy, demography and society, and presented that to the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC). The MAC will advise the Home Secretary in the coming weeks on the impacts of migration on the UK labour market.

We will consider the MAC conclusions on how migration policy should interact with labour market policy as we focus on delivering solutions that meet Scotland’s distinct needs. We need to ensure that we have enough healthcare professionals caring for us in the NHS, that we have the workers needed for a thriving rural economy and that our universities are able to attract and retain talent from around the world. We will therefore also consider if there are other policy dimensions more relevant to Scotland than to other parts of the UK that need to be taken into account – including the impact on remote and rural communities, and the role of migration in responding to demographic change. We will commission further research and expert advice, where necessary, to ensure that Scotland’s needs are taken into account.

We will continue to push the UK Government to recognise the action that is needed to protect Scotland’s prosperity and wellbeing.

We will also take forward work to break down misconceptions on migration in Scotland and build on the success of the ‘We are Scotland’ social media campaign to promote an inclusive vision of Scottish identity. We will bring forward an Electoral Franchise Bill to give fair access to voting rights for all those who have a legal right to live in Scotland. This will mean that citizens of all countries will be treated in the same way for elections to the Scottish Parliament and local government. This Bill will be brought forward after a consultation on prisoner voting has been undertaken.



The Electoral Franchise Bill will give fair access to voting rights for all those who have a legal right to live in Scotland, meaning that citizens of all countries will be treated in the same way for elections to the Scottish Parliament and local government

Retaining and attracting talent

We know that for EU citizens currently living in Scotland this is a particularly worrying and uncertain time. We want those who have made Scotland their home to be able to stay here and continue their positive contributions to life in Scotland.

AN ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE FOR THOSE
235,000
EU CITIZENS
WHO HAVE MADE SCOTLAND THEIR HOME

With the powers we have, we will make provision for an advice and support service for those 235,000 EU citizens resident in Scotland. This will seek to offer information on the new settled status scheme and provide support to EU citizens in understanding the impact Brexit will have on them.

We are clear that EU citizens should not have to pay a charge to retain the right to live and work in this country. We will continue to press the UK Government to change their policy on this issue. We are particularly concerned about the proposal to charge a fee for around 36,500 children. In particular, we recognise the contribution EU citizens make to our public services and this is why we will meet the settled status fees for EU citizens working in our devolved public services.

We value the EU citizens who are making a positive contribution to our economy, our communities and to our public services. EU citizens are playing crucial roles in our schools, our health service and our police service. We will therefore encourage individuals from across the EU who can make a positive contribution to our public services to move to Scotland. We want to continue to attract students from the EU to study at our universities.

We will also attract people from elsewhere in the UK to work in world-class and rewarding public service. Healthcare professionals working in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, who want greater recognition of their service through improved pay are welcome in our NHS in Scotland.

We want people to do us the honour of making Scotland their home and help us to create a more successful country. We will therefore work with partners to develop a Welcome to Scotland resource.

Tourism

2017 was a record-breaking year for our tourism industry, with 3.2 million people visiting – and spending record amounts of money in – Scotland from overseas. Our reputation as a country that warmly welcomes visitors to enjoy our landscape, culture and hospitality is world-renowned.



Our tourism sector supports around 207,000 jobs – 8% of Scottish employment and we will encourage more fair work practices across the sector including increasing the number of businesses paying the Living Wage, excluding exploitative zero-hours contracts and improving gender-equal pay. We will also continue to explore the potential of the key elements of the sector, including golf, mountain biking and marine tourism, as well as developing a campaign to promote tourism as a career of choice.

Our natural capital – valuing and protecting our environment

Scotland is a beautiful country and we are blessed with abundant natural resources to rival the best in the world. We recognise that it is our duty to protect and enhance these assets as essential to our economy, culture, way of life and the wellbeing of future generations.



At the same time as protecting and enhancing the natural world and its biodiversity, we can make the most of economic opportunities from our natural assets through tourism, innovation in the circular economy and clean energy.

We can, and will, do more to open up the joy and health-giving properties of our natural environment to everyone. Our commitments to active travel and outdoor learning are key, as is the importance of empowering communities to protect and shape their surrounding areas.

We are clear that environmental protection standards must be maintained following Brexit. We will continue to take world-leading action on climate change and intensify our support of the marine environment so that we are celebrating the year of Scotland's Coast and Waters in 2020 with a reduced burden of plastics in our seas.

Protecting and restoring biodiversity

We remain committed to delivering Scotland's biodiversity strategy and striving to meet the 'Aichi' 2020 international targets. Our investment in the new Biodiversity Challenge Fund worth up to £2 million will enable targeted action to deliver projects across Scotland focusing on creating and improving habitats for key species and, where appropriate, encourage increased access to nature.

We are also committed to helping shape the new post-2020 international biodiversity targets. We have asked Scottish Natural Heritage to help lead and co-ordinate this thinking, including ensuring that there is a sound evidence base on which to base future action and to help develop our strategic response to the new targets.

Collaboration with partners across the public, private and third sectors will continue to be vitally important. And working with Scottish Natural Heritage, we will also take steps to improve compliance by public bodies with their duty to enhance biodiversity, where they can, in carrying out their functions. We will also remind public bodies of the requirement to publish a report every three years on how they have done this.

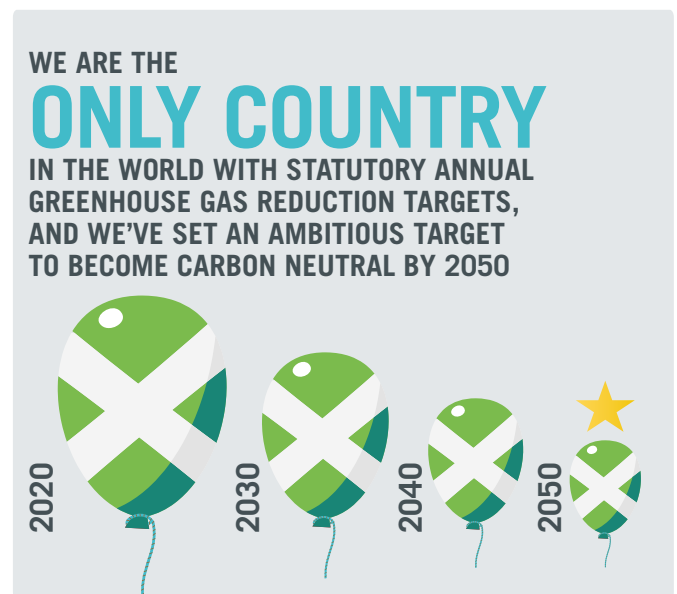
Tackling climate change

Our approach to tackling climate change reaches every area of our work in government and is designed to enable everyone to contribute to one of the most important global challenges of our time. Scotland's low carbon transition is well under way and our approach makes sure that we not only continue to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions but also ensures that we are resilient to climate change impacts.

Next year, Edinburgh will welcome 220 of the world's top climate scientists as the Scottish Government hosts a meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's discussion on their sixth assessment report.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions

We are making good progress against our emission reduction targets. Scotland's emissions have almost halved since 1990 and our Climate Change (Emission Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill is the next step in our low carbon transition. The Bill will introduce tougher targets and make sure Scotland plays its full part in efforts to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. The 90% reduction target for all greenhouse gases set out in the Climate Change Bill means achieving net-zero carbon dioxide by 2050. In other words, Scotland will be carbon neutral.



The moral, scientific and economic case for increased global action on climate change is clear and this Bill maintains our position as climate leaders. Scotland is already the only country in the world with statutory annual targets and the Climate Change Bill not only includes the world's most ambitious statutory targets for 2020, 2030 and 2040, covering every sector of our economy, but our long-term target of 90% reduction of all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 is also the world's most ambitious based on domestic effort alone. The Scottish Government is committed to achieving net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases as soon as possible and we will put a target date into legislation as soon as we can do so credibly and responsibly.

Building resilience

We are building on our work on climate change mitigation by progressing our activity on climate change adaptation. We will publish a new five-year Climate Change Adaptation Programme in 2019 to ensure our communities, economy and natural environment are resilient to the changing climate. This will build on the work already happening nationally and locally like Climate Ready Clyde, Edinburgh Adapts and Aberdeen Adapts and complement our new actions as a hydro nation.

Climate Challenge Fund

This year marks a decade of investing in our Climate Challenge Fund. Our £101 million investment in the Fund has supported more than 1,000 community projects that have helped cut carbon emissions.

From upcycling in Inverness to cycle training in Inverclyde, the Fund has empowered local communities to take action to reduce carbon emissions in a way that also delivers wider benefits for them. The Fund will continue to support projects in the year ahead and we will work to ensure that it continues to deliver for the climate and for communities.

Energy

Our energy sector is a prime example of where we can realise sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Our vision is for our future energy system in Scotland to be a globally competitive sector delivering secure, affordable and clean energy to all of us. In the year ahead we will continue to work to achieve that vision as set out in our Energy Strategy and our two headline targets of:

- the equivalent of 50% of the energy for Scotland's heat, transport and electricity consumption to be supplied from renewable resources
- an increase by 30% in the productivity of energy use across the Scottish economy

We will report on our progress later this year and publish the first Annual Report on our Strategy in early 2019. We will continue our work to deliver a publicly-owned not-for-profit energy company by 2021, to support our efforts to tackle fuel poverty and will consult on our preferred model later this year.

Energy efficiency is a national infrastructure priority – it reduces our greenhouse gas emissions, boosts household incomes, supports jobs and improves our wellbeing through warmer homes and reduced household bills. We have launched our 20-year delivery programme – Energy Efficient Scotland – to improve the use and management of energy in Scotland's buildings and help decarbonise heat supply. This includes, among other measures, continuing to invest in Area Based Schemes that support local energy efficient measures to lift people out of fuel poverty. We have consulted on the potential legislative requirements to underpin Energy Efficient Scotland and the potential for a Bill if needed. This included district heating regulation, an area where Scotland is playing a leading role. We will set out the next steps in the coming year.

Our investment to create local green energy solutions has seen projects supported with over £40 million since 2015 in areas including Glencoe, Aviemore, Stromness and St Andrews. This year our £20 million Energy Investment Fund and £60 million Low Carbon Innovation Fund will provide support for renewable and local carbon infrastructure.

We will continue to work to realise the benefits of decommissioning, advancing our commitment to provide financial support for establishing a Deep Water Port in Scotland. Our 2018 deep water feasibility study has identified Dales Voe in Shetland as the optimal UK location and we will continue to work collaboratively with the UK Government, the port, and industry to move work forward to create a facility and unlock the business opportunities this will provide. We are also running a further £5 million round of the Decommissioning Challenge Fund in 2018 to provide support across the Scottish supply chain.

There are still significant opportunities in the North Sea, with up to 20 billion barrels of oil equivalent remaining – which could sustain production for at least another 20 years. That is why we continue to support Maximising Economic Recovery from the North Sea. We have recognised the challenges for the workforce and have supported more than 3,500 people and helped the sector retain talent. Our oil and gas industry is internationally renowned for its offshore engineering and subsea expertise.

Supporting continued investment in oil and gas exploration and production and in renewable and low carbon solutions will provide Scotland with the energy system we need for the 21st century.



We will continue to work with industry to encourage investment in key industrial areas where energy efficiency, renewables, bio-technology and carbon capture utilisation and storage could offer significant opportunities for decarbonisation and economic growth.

Offshore renewables

The offshore renewables sector has the potential to create huge value and significant employment across the Scottish economy and supply chain, and we will continue to support its expansion through providing new guidance to industry on licensing and decommissioning. We are providing a further £2 million this year to support innovation and help reduce the costs of offshore wind. We will support research that will help address challenges with the sustainability of offshore renewables. In the year ahead we will consult on a new Sectoral Marine Plan identifying future locations for large-scale offshore wind developments.

Unconventional oil and gas exploration

We continue to take a cautious, evidence-led approach to considering unconventional oil and gas in Scotland. In accordance with our statutory responsibilities, we are required to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) ahead of finalising our policy on unconventional oil and gas. The work to complete the SEA and a Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment is under way and their findings will be carefully considered.

A hydro nation

Water is one of our most valuable natural assets. We are fortunate to have the management of this natural asset in public ownership. In the coming year Scottish Water will invest around £600 million in Scotland's water infrastructure, providing 1.35 billion litres of fresh, high quality drinking water every day, improving quality and resilience, and treating our waste water before returning it safely to the environment.

An infographic with a light grey background. At the top, the word "INVEST" is written in large, bold, teal letters. Below it, in smaller teal text, it says "AROUND £600 MILLION IN SCOTLAND'S WATER INFRASTRUCTURE, PROVIDING 1.35 BILLION LITRES OF FRESH WATER EVERY DAY". Below the text is a stylized illustration of a teal water tap with a single drop falling into a larger teal drop, which is above a series of teal wavy lines representing water. To the right of the wavy lines are several small black dots.

We are consulting on the priorities for future investment by Scottish Water in the regulatory period 2021-27 and beyond. Among the many significant issues that must be addressed is the need to revise the approach to the management of surface and storm water. Ageing assets, population growth and climate change all pose challenges. By working together, Scottish Water, local authorities and others can develop approaches to drainage which will reduce the burden on the sewerage network reducing the need for costly new infrastructure and reducing flood risk. By retaining more water in rivers and soils we can improve the environment and support biodiversity while increasing leisure and activity potential and take steps to join the international trend towards Blue-Green cities. We will build on examples of work under way in Glasgow and elsewhere to establish new pilots of this approach.

We have identified that the sewerage systems serving Edinburgh and the surrounding area are facing particular challenges which will be exacerbated by the prospective population growth in the area and climate change. A recent study has shown how the performance of the main treatment works at Seafield is impacted by events elsewhere on the network. It is vital that a sound strategy is developed to meet these challenges and ensure that in future the networks operate efficiently and support the continuing economic growth of the area. We have therefore asked Scottish Water to work with local authorities in the area and SEPA to review future waste water treatment needs in the area in order to guide future investment planning.



Water refills in public spaces

We will pilot water bottle refill points in public spaces – starting small but with a view to establishing a network across Scotland. This will cut down on our use of plastics and promote the benefits of hydration building on Scottish Water’s Top Up at The Tap campaign. Facilities have been put in place by Network Rail at Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Waverley stations and work is being done in communities to sign up local businesses as designated water refill points.

Flood protection

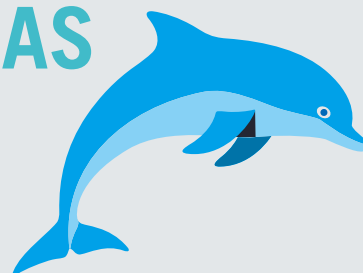
Flooding is currently one of our biggest climate risks. Too many communities have felt the devastating effect of flooding on their homes, businesses and communities, and our work with local government and others on the delivery of flood protection is critical to supporting successful climate change adaptation. In the last year the Huntly Flood Protection Scheme was completed, reducing the flood risk to around 45 properties and a care home. This year we will see progress by local authorities on the delivery of flood protection schemes, including on the Stonehaven and New Cumnock schemes.

In the coming year we will also:

- develop an action plan to promote the economic and social benefits of flood resilient properties and fund the Scottish Flood Forum to raise awareness and increase resilience of communities at risk
- publish, in partnership with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), an updated National Flood Risk Assessment which embeds climate change and social justice in Scotland’s flood risk management planning approach and puts communities at the heart of the assessment

CONSULT ON CREATING FOUR NEW

**MARINE
PROTECTED
AREAS**



Plastics and waste – ending throwaway culture and promoting circular economy

We want everyone to be able to live in clean and unpolluted environments and aspire to being the greenest country in the world. We have reached a turning point, individually and as a nation, about our use of plastics, our throwaway culture and the impact both seen and unseen on our environment.

While we have made steady progress on recycling, there is more to be done. In 2016 less than half of household waste was recycled.

Building on our work in the past year to reduce, reuse and recycle waste we will go further in the coming year and ban the manufacture and sale of plastic-stemmed cotton buds. We have appointed an Expert Panel on Environmental Charges and Other Measures. The Panel will identify the bold actions we need to take as consumers and producers to tackle our throwaway culture, including on disposable cups and plastic straws. And in early 2019, Scotland will host an International Conference in Glasgow on improving and protecting our marine environment, focusing on reducing the level of marine plastics in our seas.

Deposit return scheme

We have asked people for views on how a deposit return scheme for drinks containers should work. We know that as well as cutting litter and pollution we could gain significant economic benefits by developing the circular economy.

We will use the views shared with us to help design an effective system that will work well for everyone in Scotland. Deposit return offers an exciting opportunity to expand our recycling infrastructure creating new job and investment opportunities. As with all our action to reduce, reuse and recycle we know that the success of new measures depends on how people can easily adapt change into their everyday lives.

We will also take the next step of moving beyond drinks containers and consult on what additional measures should be considered to improve the use and reuse of other materials.

Protecting life and habitats – below water and above land

On top of our commitment to maintain our environmental protections following Brexit we will do more to safeguard our biodiversity, species and habitats for future generations to enjoy.

We want to enhance our protection of charismatic species such as the basking shark, minke whale and Risso's dolphin. To do this, we will consult on proposals to create four new Marine Protected Areas which would also protect seabed habitats. These will be among the first sites in the world created to protect these species.



In the year ahead we will:

- consult on the creation of a national deep sea marine reserve, with the aim of this being in place by the end of 2019. This will protect some of the most vulnerable habitats and species on the planet, such as coral gardens and the leafscale gulper shark
- identify actions to address the significant declines in seabird populations, such as puffins, through a new Seabird Conservation Strategy
- work with the fishing sector and coastal communities to develop proposals to tackle the issue of fishing litter and lost gear

A natural health service

We know that a healthy clean environment is good for us and that enjoying the outdoors supports our good physical and mental health whatever our age and stage of life. Some communities do not have a quality natural environment on their doorsteps and we need to do more to maximise opportunities for all.



We will explore how to promote the existing Community Right to Buy (CRTB) mechanisms to enable community allotments and other forms of community growing.

In the coming year we will also:

- invest in the Outdoor Learning and Nature Fund, working with schools and nurseries to help children and young people spend time in nature – something we know is good for wellbeing
- provide opportunities to involve young people in Scotland's nature and outdoors, including taking forward a number of the recommendations made by 'ReRoute', Scotland's Youth Biodiversity Panel
- continue to develop Europe's largest greenspace project, the Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN), through our core support for the CSGN Trust and the CSGN Development Fund including creating 4.5km of 'Greenway' over three different sites along the John Muir Way – creating ecological links between pollinator hubs and encouraging active travel and enjoyment of the route
- invest in the Water Environment Fund and support delivery of River Basin Management Plans – in the coming year we will open up 175km of rivers for fish, create accessible green space for more communities and continue to improve the quality of our bathing waters
- launch a review of our air quality strategy, building on the progress made under Cleaner Air for Scotland and as part of that, we will also review our arrangements for driving delivery

Scotland's place in Europe – protecting, maintaining and enhancing environmental standards

Much of the progress in environmental protection in Scotland and the UK has been driven and enabled by EU membership. Around 80% of our environmental legislation comes from the EU and EU membership has provided essential sources of funding, labour, scientific expertise and collective initiatives that have played an important role in delivering Scotland's environment and climate ambitions.

While Scotland did not vote for Brexit, we do now have to manage the consequences and ensure that we uphold our ambitions for our environment. We are committed to maintaining and enhancing environmental standards in Scotland and carrying forward EU environmental principles. It is also vital to ensure effective governance arrangements are in place to monitor and enforce these standards. In the autumn we will consult on future environmental governance arrangements in Scotland as well as how EU principles will continue to guide our approach to environmental policy.

Regardless of the UK's future relationship with Europe, Scotland will continue to lead action to protect, enjoy and enhance our environment and tackle global environmental challenges. To support this, we will publish an Environment Strategy which will help to co-ordinate action and guide future activity across Scotland's existing environment policies, addressing biodiversity, land use, water, air, seas, climate change, the circular economy and our connection with nature.

As the UK prepares to leave the EU, Scotland will not leave our moral responsibilities behind. We support the EU's vision to phase out single-use plastics by 2030 and will do what we can in Scotland to make this a reality. We will continue to press the UK Government to step up their action on plastics to match our ambitions in Scotland.

Protecting public services – fairer and more progressive tax

We have a strong track record of using the powers we have to make taxation fairer and more progressive. We have taken a more open, consultative approach to taxation – something we will continue to champion in future Budgets.

We have radically reformed income tax. These reforms and the increase in the personal allowance mean 70% of income tax payers in Scotland will pay less tax this year than they did last year, for a given income. And 55% pay less than those on the same income elsewhere in the UK, with those that can afford it paying a little bit more.



Our reforms to Council Tax, in place since April 2017, have protected household incomes, making Council Tax fairer and local authorities more accountable.

Scotland led the way in the UK by introducing a progressive approach for Land and Buildings Transaction Tax, replacing the slab approach used for Stamp Duty Land Tax and prioritising support for first-time buyers.

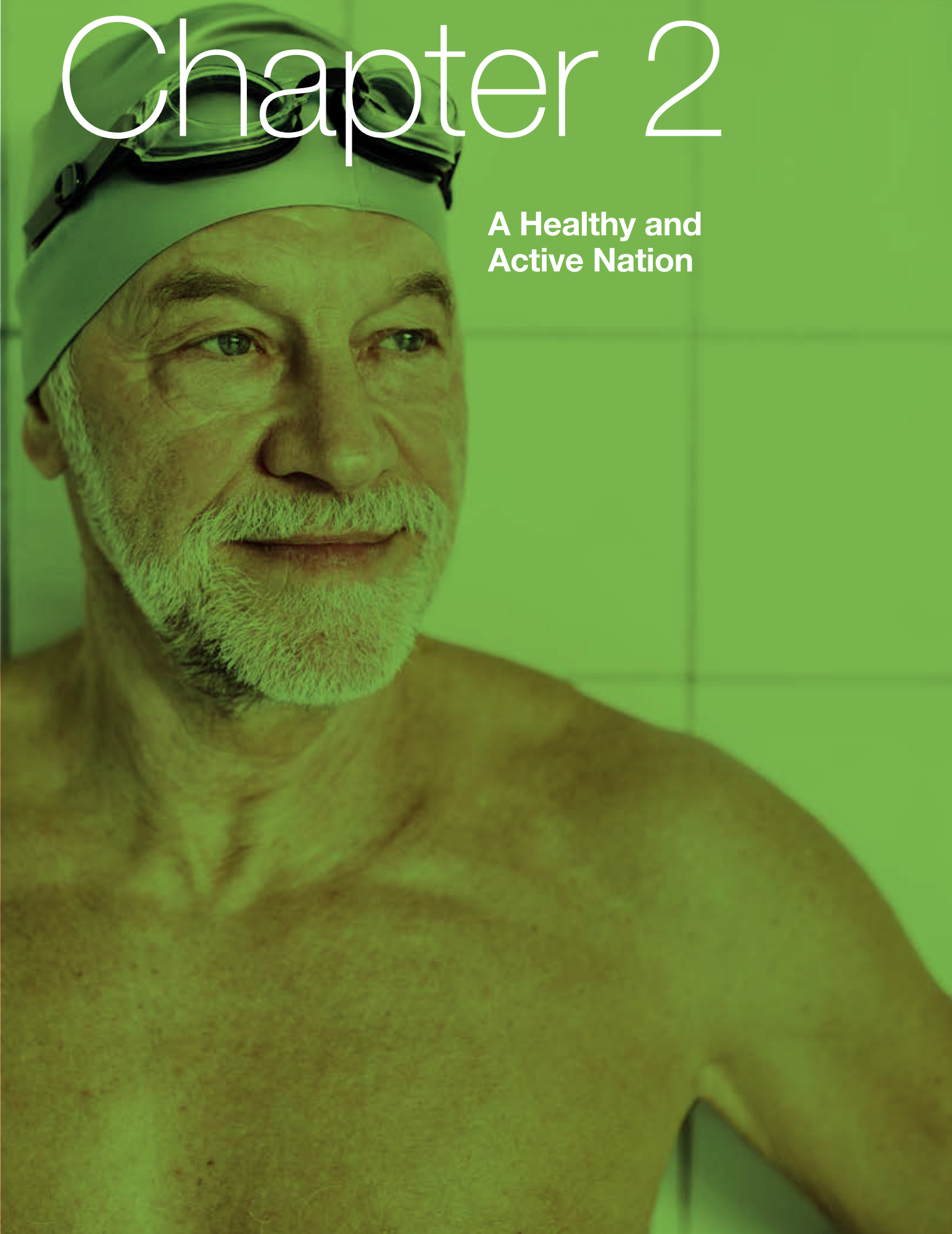
We listened to business, and delivered on their number one ask of us at last year's Budget relating to the cap for business rates uplifts.

We have delivered these reforms and others whilst raising additional revenue to support our public services, help tackle the worst effects of the UK Government's austerity programme and protecting those on lower incomes. We lifted the public sector pay cap and will continue to offer a fair deal for public sector workers that also is affordable to the public purse.

In the year ahead we will work with the Scottish Parliament and others to develop a new approach to the planning, management and implementation of changes to devolved taxes with the aim of bringing greater certainty, transparency and efficiency.

Chapter 2

A Healthy and
Active Nation



The best place in the world to be cared for and healthy

To be a more successful country we need to close the gap between the health of our wealthiest communities and that of our poorest, and we need to see an overall improvement in our population health. We know that keeping us as healthy as possible – both physically and mentally – is not just the job of the NHS. The quality of our housing and natural environment, our job prospects and our childhood experiences all shape our wellbeing. And our wellbeing is directly linked to our economic success as a nation. In the coming year we will step up our efforts to prevent poor physical and mental health by using all the resources available to us.

While the solutions to improving our health are not wholly reliant on the NHS itself, we remain absolutely focused on our NHS meeting our needs now and being fit for the future – and supporting our NHS workforce to continue to care for us.



In the last year we have continued our record investment in our NHS as part of the commitment to increase health funding by at least £2 billion over the lifetime of this Parliament. We have awarded 147,000 NHS staff earning under £80,000 a minimum pay rise of 9% over the next three years and we will proceed with the implementation of a new contract for GPs. We have awarded salaried NHS doctors and dentists earning up to £80,000 a pay rise of up to 3% this year. New investments will deliver better outcomes for people – by the end of 2018 the new trauma centres in Aberdeen and Dundee will be open and in the year ahead we will begin construction on the Golden Jubilee expansion in the West of Scotland and the North of Scotland Elective Care Centre at Raigmore Hospital.

There are challenges – Brexit, meeting our ambitions for everyone to get world-class treatment as quickly as possible and ensuring we live not just longer, but healthier, lives. But we have been ambitious in the past and remain ambitious to deliver the long-term investment and reform our NHS, and wider public services, need.

We will reform the way we respond to and treat mental ill-health. Not only improving clinical services to be more responsive for children, young people, and adults but also building new networks of support easily accessible from schools, communities and workplaces to support our good mental health and wellbeing.

We are also taking bold action for the nation's health in tackling poor diet and obesity, with the same drive that led us to put in place minimum unit pricing for alcohol earlier this year.

The creation of integration authorities is one of the most significant reforms since the NHS was created 70 years ago. We are starting to see more of the positive impact health and social care integration is having on how we are cared for close to home – reducing unplanned pressures and providing better outcomes for families. Over the next year, we will accelerate our efforts to ensure that the widely supported aims of integration of health and social care translate into positive changes in every community. This work will be guided by the *Review of Progress with Integration* which we announced in May 2018.

We will continue to shift the balance of care, continuously improving those services offered in our communities with community pharmacists playing a vital role in increasingly becoming the first point of access for care and advice.

We will innovate and think differently about how services should be delivered. We will use our data and digital expertise and learn from the successes at ward, community and regional level to deliver the good health and social care that 21st-century Scotland needs.

And to achieve this we will work with others who want to see the same positive outcomes as we do, to deliver a healthier Scotland.

Improving our support for good mental health

Just as with our physical health, we can take action to keep ourselves in good mental health, but sometimes we need extra support. More of us than ever are open about experiencing poor mental health and recognise that the right help at the right time can build resilience and see us through difficult times. This is not just about ensuring our specialist services can address those whose needs become critical, but that all our public services can support better mental health and wellbeing for all of us.



Our approach needs to change to meet the demands of modern day Scotland. We will introduce a comprehensive package of measures to improve mental health services for children, young people and adults, and ensure that support for good mental health is embedded across our public services.

We will invest an additional £250 million over the next five years to support this package of measures and we will work with others to deliver it, across all levels of government, public services, third sector and communities.

Support during pregnancy and after birth

One in five women face mental health problems during their pregnancy. The earlier support and treatment is provided the better for both mother and baby. We know that early experiences have lasting impacts for childhood and beyond so early intervention is crucial. Investing and building up the services that support new and expectant mothers is central to this.

We will provide three tiers of support across Scotland, in line with the needs of individuals:

- for those 11,000 women a year who would benefit from help such as counselling we will support the third sector to provide this
- for those 5,500 women in need of more specialist help we will ensure rapid access to psychological assessment and treatment
- for those 2,250 women with the most severe illness we will develop more specialist services and consider the need for a small number of additional inpatient beds or enhanced community provision

Children and young people

The Task Force on Children and Young People's Mental Health Improvement was announced in June – backed with £5 million funding – and Dr Dame Denise Coia DBE was appointed as Chair. Over the summer, Dame Denise Coia has been listening to the views of young people, clinicians and service providers, as well as examining how other countries have had success in supporting good mental health. We will receive initial recommendations from Dame Denise Coia this autumn. To complement the Task Force we will take action now that draws on those early discussions.

We all experience setbacks and adversity in our lives and for children and young people the stresses of growing up in modern society add to the need for us to have a wider range of support that can be accessed quickly and easily.

The proposals set out here and the work that will be progressed will ensure that:

- parents will have a much clearer understanding of the kind of help that is available, and where and how to access it
- children and young people will have a much wider range of help available to them
- schools will be better supported to deal with wellbeing concerns, and will be able to direct children to counselling services

To make sure that children and young people have the support they need at the earliest possible stage we will:

- invest over £60 million in additional school counselling services across all of Scotland. This will create around 350 counsellors in school education across Scotland ensuring that every secondary school has counselling services
- have an additional 250 school nurses in place by 2022. This will provide a response to mild and moderate emotional and mental health difficulties experienced by young people in the form of local help that is available immediately
- enhance support and professional learning materials for teachers on good mental health, including ensuring that, by the end of academic year 2019-20, every local authority will be offered training for teachers in mental health first aid, using a ‘train the trainer’ model to enable dissemination to all schools
- provide more than 80 additional counsellors in Further and Higher Education over the next four years with an investment of around £20 million
- put in place systems to fast-track those with serious mental illness to specialist treatment
- develop services for community mental wellbeing for 5-24 year olds and their parents to provide direct and immediate access to counselling sessions, self-care advice, family support, peer-to-peer support and group work with links to other care settings
- improve the training and awareness of people working with vulnerable families and deliver improved infant mental health support for those families that need them.
- launch a new website containing trusted help and information for young people and their families

- expand the Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) programme pilots during 2019 to include people under 18. In essence, DBI, is a form of ‘listening with empathy and practical problem solving’. It is currently testing with adults to positive effect in Lanarkshire, Aberdeen, the Highlands and the Borders
- make mental health and suicide prevention training mandatory for all NHS staff who receive mandatory physical health training. This includes doctors, nurses, psychologists, allied health professionals and pharmacists and will help children, young people and adults

350 SCHOOL COUNSELLORS

AND 250 SCHOOL NURSES
TO SUPPORT THE WELLBEING
OF PUPILS



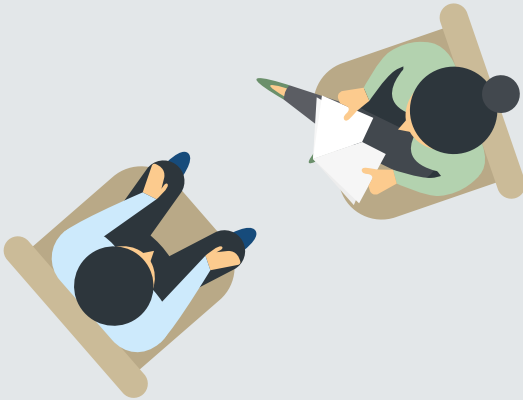
In addition to the package of measures described here we will make changes now to improve the experience of children, young people and families who need specialist support. We have accepted the recommendations made in the Audit of Rejected Referrals which was commissioned as part of last year's Programme for Government. The Taskforce on Children and Young People's Mental Health Improvement will work to implement these recommendations ensuring that all children are appropriately triaged and where necessary directed to alternative support services. This will include ensuring that GPs and others have clear consistent guidelines for referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Adults

Building on our programme of work to improve access to mental health support including investment in additional workforce and in mental health in primary care, we will put in place new and improved support for people that fits in with our lives. Good mental health is intrinsically linked to our employment and life opportunities and a healthy population is vital for our aspirations of inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

QUARTER OF A BILLION

**POUNDS FOR IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH
AND WELLBEING SUPPORT**



Our actions to tackle mental health issues experienced by adults include:

- trialling improvements to the NHS 24 Breathing Space service by introducing web-chat with an NHS 24 adviser
- helping those with mild to moderate depression by introducing more widespread online access to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy – this would help around 5,000 more people to combine improving their mental health with working and caring
- strengthening the content of current self-help platforms provided through NHS Inform
- improving access to psychological assessment and therapies in rural areas through the use of technology such as video-conferencing
- enhancing the handling of mental health calls to the 111 service with more specially trained staff providing specialist mental health advice

We are continuing to take action on suicide prevention. We have set out plans to continue the decline in the number of people dying through suicide and want to further reduce Scotland's suicide rate by 20% by 2022. Backed by a new £3 million innovation fund we will:

- create and implement refreshed mental health and suicide prevention training by May 2019 for Scotland's public and private sectors
- develop reviews of all deaths by suicide ensuring lessons are shared and acted on
- develop innovative ways to use digital technology to prevent suicide

This work will be led by our National Suicide Prevention Leadership Group.

Getting the right healthcare, in the right place and at the right time

Primary care

The substantial work on community health services, supported by an additional £500 million invested every year by 2021, is translating into more multi-disciplinary teams of healthcare professionals in the community. Along with the benefits of people not having to travel unnecessarily for care and treatment this reduces pressure on our hospitals and delays in patients being able to return home. Across Scotland, since August 2016, the number of days spent in hospital by people where discharge was delayed has reduced by over 15%.



We have delivered a new General Medical Services contract, taking a distinct Scottish approach to designing the reform with the British Medical Association. This new contract will:

- ensure GPs are recognised as the senior clinicians in the community, leading the delivery of better health outcomes
- support multi-disciplinary community care teams, freeing up GP time to see those with the most complex needs
- reduce barriers to recruitment of GPs through the £30 million GP Premises Sustainability Fund

Community pharmacy already plays an important role in the communities they serve, providing highly accessible services. We want more people to use their community pharmacy and think of their community pharmacist as the first point of access for care and advice. Enhancing these services and the clinical role of community pharmacists is crucial. We will build on the learning from the extended Minor Ailment Service pilot in Inverclyde and the rollout of the Pharmacy First initiative by developing and implementing a redesigned minor ailment and common conditions service available to all in the coming year.

We are also strengthening and refreshing the Chronic Medication Service in order to improve how it enables community pharmacists to provide personalised care for people with stable long-term conditions. In the coming months we will say more about how the shape of this service will be enhanced by building in medication review, pharmacist prescribing and monitoring of patient medicines.

We are continuing to take action on dental care as well. We will introduce a new scheme, from April 2019, to ensure people in care homes receive appropriate dental care. We will, over time, expand this to include those people being cared for at home, and we will take forward new approaches to reduce inequalities by supporting communities and families to take positive action to improve oral health through our £2.5 million Community Challenge Fund.

Acute and secondary care

Building on the success of our Scottish Patient Safety Programme, which among other successes has led to a 21% reduction in SEPSIS since 2012, we will continue to deliver quality and safe care in our hospitals and emergency services. Our new Scottish Trauma Network will save more lives and work across traditional specialties and geographic boundaries. We are investing £10.2 million to support the delivery of this Network so that those seriously injured in Scotland get the best possible care and chances for recovery wherever their location. Our investment to enhance elective capacity will help our NHS treat people more quickly and meet increasing demand from a growing older population.

NEW MAJOR TRAUMA CENTRES

OPENING IN ABERDEEN
AND DUNDEE THIS AUTUMN



We will:

- open the Major Trauma Centres in Aberdeen in October and Dundee in November, with centres in Glasgow and Edinburgh to follow
- begin construction on the Golden Jubilee expansion in the West of Scotland in early 2019 and the North of Scotland Elective Care Centre at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness by mid 2019
- open, by April 2019, a ScotsSTAR base in the North to improve arrangements for specialist patient retrieval and transfer
- support the improvements to person-centred visiting in our NHS so that patients can be with the important people in their lives while in hospital – flexible visiting will be in place across our NHS by 2020
- continue to progress the Health and Care (Staffing) Bill through Parliament and provide additional investment to expand workforce planning infrastructure in the NHS and in social care
- continue to progress the Human Tissue (Authorisation) Bill through Parliament, changing the current ‘opt in’ to an ‘opt out’ system
- consult on proposals to reform the law on adults with incapacity with the aim of people receiving more support to make their own decisions and better access to the right care and support

We will publish a plan, later this month, to substantially and sustainably improve waiting times performance in the face of rising demand for services. This will complement the existing range of activities in support of waiting times, including the additional funding provided to NHS Boards earlier this year and the Access Collaborative launched last year with core professional and patient representative involvement.

In the coming year we will provide national service improvement and workforce development support to modernise specialist dementia hospital care. The re-designing of specialist hospital and community services will mean more people can be supported to stay at home or in a homely setting for longer as their dementia advances.

To improve care and support for people living with neurological conditions we are developing Scotland's first ever National Action Plan on Neurological Conditions. A draft plan will be published for consultation in October with the final plan being published in early 2019.

We will also develop a National Falls and Fracture Prevention Strategy. Often, falls can be prevented and making sure we take a consistent and joined-up approach to falls prevention and management across Scotland can make a significant difference to the lives of many people in our communities.

Social care and support

Social care provides vital support for thousands of people in Scotland. As a population we are enjoying longer lives and with that comes often more complex care needs. That means demand for social care and support is growing faster than our traditional services were designed for. We therefore need to think differently about what social care is, the value we place on it as a society and how people can access the support that is right for them in a way which is sustainable.

We are working with COSLA, Health and Social Care Partnerships, people who use social care, and a wide range of other partners, to make sure our social care is fit for the future. Together we will continue to build on existing work to:

- embed the recently established rights for Scotland's 790,000 unpaid carers under the Carers (Scotland) Act. The Act gives carers rights to be listened to and to access social care support to help protect their health and wellbeing. This includes supporting them to achieve their personal goals (such as returning to work or undertaking studies or training), alongside caring

- give people greater choice and control over what their social care support is and how it is delivered. This year, with partners, we will reinvigorate this work by focusing on improving ways of working to make sure that everyone who receives social care is able to make choices that are right for them
- continue to implement Frank's Law, which will see people of all age groups who need it be eligible for free personal care by April 2019, rather than only those over the age of 65 as was the case in the past

While we are making progress, there are still significant challenges facing social care. That is why, over the next year, with partners, we will develop a national programme to support local reform of adult social care. This will involve:

- accelerating work at a local level to make sure that those working in social services and healthcare, local organisations and communities can work together to support people to live independently for as long as possible
- at a national level, raise awareness of the role of social care in Scotland, and its social and economic value. This will allow us to together create and realise a vision for social care which focuses on the right things and delivers the right mix of support to ensure that it is sustainable for the future

We will also gather views and consider evidence for a potential new national scheme to provide extra financial support to people with the highest social care needs, so that they can choose to live independently in their homes and in their local communities.

Improving our population health

In the summer we celebrated the 70th birthday of our NHS and in those 70 years the overall health of our population has improved. But an unacceptable gap exists between our life expectancy and that of our Western European neighbours – and the health gap between our most deprived communities and our wealthiest is too large. It is these health deficits that threaten our future prosperity, and why we are renewing our focus on improving our population health.

One of our greatest health challenges is now poor diet and obesity. We are committed to halving the level of childhood obesity by 2030 meaning that approximately 56,000 fewer children will be at risk of being obese.

To focus our efforts on improving the health of our population we have, together with COSLA, set out our Public Health Priorities for the next decade. They are shaping our actions over the coming year, including:

- creating Public Health Scotland, to lead, support and enable progress against our priorities
- progressing action to address adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- consulting this autumn to restrict the promotion and marketing of targeted food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt
- providing practical support to SMEs to help them reformulate their products, making them healthier, including dedicated support through Scottish Enterprise's *Make Innovation Happen* programme
- banning tobacco in prisons from 30 November 2018

We will also increase our support for children and families affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Over the next year, we will work to set up a third sector hub that will focus on both preventing instances of FASD arising in the first place and supporting families following diagnosis.

An active nation

Scotland is one of the first countries in the world to set out what we are doing to address the range of priorities in the World Health Organization's Global Action Plan, which put forward a target of a 15% relative reduction in the global prevalence of physical inactivity in adults and adolescents by 2030. In the coming year our work includes:

- providing £1 million for the Changing Lives Through Sport and Physical Activity Fund to help transform lives
- expanding the 'cycling without age' project across Scotland
- encouraging walking and cycling for recreation and travel via the Active Nation Commissioner role
- supporting the walking football programme to encourage participation in sport and physical activity
- increasing support to Community Sports Hubs within our 5% most deprived communities
- increasing participation in sport by women and girls, working with the Women and Girls in Sport Advisory Board



Tackling key health challenges

Our focus on improving our population health has a direct link to preventing two of our biggest health challenges, cancer and diabetes.

Although more of us are being diagnosed with cancer, fewer of us are dying of this disease, as a result of earlier detection and improved treatment options. In addition to our work on prevention and early detection we will continue to implement other actions in our £100 million cancer strategy, with enhanced radiotherapy services through new technology and recruitment which will help to improve outcomes for cancer patients and reduce waiting times. As part of this we are investing up to £2.5 million over five years in improving cancer care for teenagers and young adults including additional key workers in the North of Scotland.

Overall, we spend around 9% of our NHS budget treating type 2 diabetes. For many, the onset of type 2 diabetes, which is closely associated with being overweight or obese, can be slowed down or reversed through intensive weight management. In the coming year we will begin a five-year plan to invest an additional £42 million to improve the range of weight management services offered by our NHS as a core part of treatment services for people with, or at risk of, type 2 diabetes.

Scottish Patient Safety Programme

This year marks a decade of the Scottish Patient Safety Programme (SPSP) – the first national safety programme in the world. The now world-renowned SPSP has made our hospitals safer and improved health for some of Scotland's most vulnerable people – including a 21% reduction in SEPSIS since 2012. From its beginnings in acute adult care it is now expanded to maternity, mental health, primary care, dentistry and pharmacy.

In the coming year, another success from the Programme, a project started in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness to support clinical teams to use combined quality and cost data to deliver better patient outcomes at lower cost will be developed and adapted beyond the Highlands to other areas in Scotland.

Using research, innovation, digital and data capabilities to improve health

We have a strong pedigree in leading research and innovations in healthcare. We will continue to support the development of excellence in medical innovation in Scotland. For example, our understanding of genes and the consequences of genetic variations, known as genomics, offers the potential for a more rapid and complete diagnosis and treatment of genetic conditions. This year we will:

- establish a genomics data facility
- continue enrolment of Scottish patients into the 100,000 genomes programme
- support our NHS to provide continuity of testing when access to genetic testing services in England will be reconfigured



We will work with stakeholders to develop the single national formulary for medicines during 2019, to reduce unwarranted variation in the medicines prescribed in different parts of the country.

We will implement our Digital Health and Care Strategy, launched in April 2018, to ensure that digital enhances the delivery of health and care services. As part of this, work has started to develop a 'national digital platform' that will enable the development of clinical and care systems which are easy to use, enable excellent care, support front-line staff, and empower people to manage their own health and wellbeing.

We will continue to support technological solutions for managing health and wellbeing. This includes the 'Attend Anywhere' video consultation service which allows for a secure clinician to patient consultation that can be accessed anywhere by using a web browser or app on a laptop, tablet or smart phone. Work is under way to scale up this service across Scotland as soon as possible.



We want to see more innovative solutions such as those led by the Digital Health and Care Institute (DHI). Their work includes moving away from the traditional colonoscopy for the inspection of gastroenterology to a camera contained in a pill that can be swallowed, avoiding the need for more invasive procedures and allowing for the timing of any investigations to be more flexible. We will continue to work with the DHI in the development of a demonstrator and simulation environment that, among many other benefits, will allow for industry to develop 'fit-for-purpose' products and allow for the use of data in a much more collated and meaningful way, by linking the national digital platform.

Smarter booking system

We are developing a new smarter booking system for use in our NHS by the end of April 2019. The new system is being developed as part of CivTech, the Scottish Government's innovative technology acceleration programme and will allow patients to make, change and cancel outpatient appointments online, as well as providing text message reminders. The smarter booking system will also help ensure patients are seen by the right person, in the right place and at the right time – reducing unnecessary appointments.

Working across public services for better health

We know that people's health and wellbeing is so much more than the services our NHS can provide. We will join up our work across public services to meet our goal of increased wellbeing for all.

Building on the success of the Navigators programme in Glasgow and Edinburgh Royal Infirmarys, we will expand this to the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in Glasgow and Crosshouse Hospital in Ayrshire. The Navigators work alongside NHS staff within A&E and hospital wards reaching out to people living chaotic lifestyles and providing support that continues after the person has left hospital.

We will do more to reduce unintentional harm, including targeted safety messages for new families, to reduce the 500,000 A&E visits and one million GP appointments it is estimated result from accidental injury.

We will work to improve health and social care services in Scottish prisons to help reduce inequalities and tackle health-related causes of offending such as drug and alcohol misuse. We will empower frontline practitioners and prison officers to improve and redesign services through support from a dedicated improvement fund.

Our approach to drugs policy is underpinned by a public health approach, guided by a principle of ensuring the best health outcomes for people who are, or have been, drug users. We are sympathetic to proposals being pursued by Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership to pilot a safer drug consumption facility in the city centre – designed for an estimated 400-500 people who inject publicly in the city centre and experience high levels of harm. In particular, it is anticipated that the facility will significantly reduce the risk of further outbreaks of blood-borne viruses. Drug legislation is currently reserved to the Westminster Parliament and we will continue to press the UK Government to make the necessary changes in the law, and if they are not willing to do so, to devolve the powers in this area so the Scottish Parliament has an opportunity to act and allow the facility to proceed.

Our NHS workforce

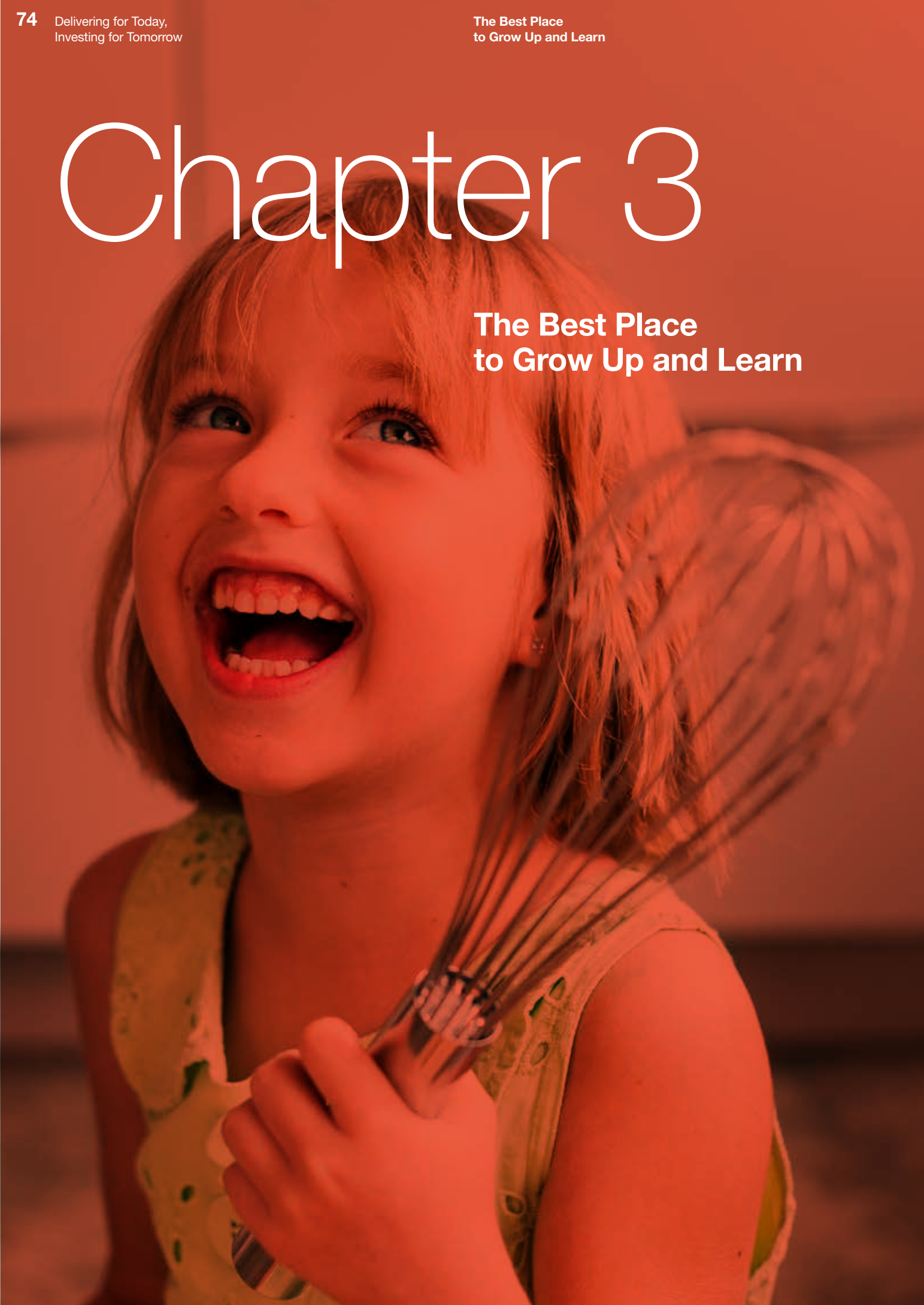
We recognise that our hardworking workforce is the greatest asset of our NHS. We also recognise the impact that years of pay restraint have had on our staff. This year, we scrapped the pay cap and awarded 147,000 NHS staff earning under £80,000 a minimum pay rise of 9% over three years with a total additional investment of £989 million. NHS salaried doctors and dentists earning under £80,000 were awarded a pay rise of up to 3% this year with a total additional investment of over £60 million.

We will continue to progress our work on Transforming Nursing Roles so that we maximise the potential of our much valued nursing, midwifery and health professional workforce to help meet the current and future needs of Scotland's health and social care system.

The pool of EU workers that Scotland has been able to attract, particularly in hard-to-recruit specialisms and rural areas, is at risk because of the UK Government's approach to Brexit and migration. We are working with others to mitigate these challenges and be as prepared as we can be for all the possible scenarios. In particular, we have made absolutely clear that we value those EU citizens living and working in Scotland and that we want them to stay. We will meet the settled status fee for EU citizens working in devolved public services. We will also take forward further work to ensure EU citizens working in health and social care in Scotland have the advice and support they need over the challenging period to come.

Chapter 3

The Best Place
to Grow Up and Learn



We want Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up and that means ensuring every child has an equal chance to succeed. We want all our children to grow up in a supportive environment where we invest significantly in their future – not just financially – but also with time, energy, and love.

To do this we will take actions that start before birth – transforming maternity care so that women receive continuity of carer throughout their pregnancy and providing a Baby Box with essentials for these early months. And to accelerate help to new families so that every child has the best start in life we will start making payments from our Best Start Grant by this Christmas – more than six months early.

We will take forward work to deliver a transformational increase in early learning and childcare, in a nurturing environment, so that all children, regardless of their background, get the same start in life.



We will pick up the pace of the reforms needed to put power in the hands of headteachers, schools and communities and will build on our work to close the attainment gap. We will work with local government on additional support for learning to secure more positive experiences for those in need of support and their families. Our transformation in support for good mental health will mean that children and young people will have a much wider range of support available to them including new school nurses and counsellors. To complement this we will improve the experience of students in further and higher education with wrap around support and more financial assistance, including changes to student loan repayments.

We will do more to prevent adverse childhood experiences. Where children do experience adversity or trauma, they will be supported by services that recognise the impact of those experiences and that help children and adults to be resilient. This will make serious inroads into the preventative agenda set out in the Christie Report on *The Future Delivery of Public Services*, by our public services working innovatively and in partnership to provide high quality support.

We will ensure that we listen to the voices of children and young people in the decisions that affect them now and will incorporate the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law.

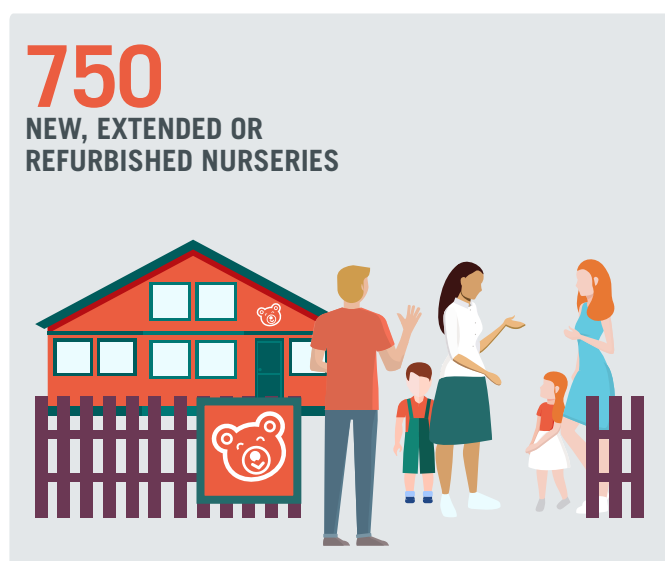
Getting the best start in life

We will transform maternity care in Scotland with women receiving continuity of carer throughout their pregnancy, improving relationships and outcomes. Postnatal and neonatal care will be reformed to keep families together as much as possible, supporting bonding and enabling parents to deliver more care for their baby. This will be supported by the improvements in support for women suffering from mental ill-health during pregnancy.

The Baby Box will continue to be available to every child born in Scotland, providing essential items for those earliest stages in life. We will support pregnant women and young children most in need to have healthy, nutritious food through our Best Start Foods Scheme. And, by this Christmas, families on lower incomes will have received the first payments from the Best Start Grant – the Pregnancy and Baby Payment.

Early learning and childcare

We will continue to implement our commitment to double entitlement to funded early learning and childcare for eligible 2 year olds and for all 3 and 4 year olds to 1140 hours from August 2020. This is a cornerstone in giving every child the best start in life, closing the attainment gap and reaching our economic potential as a nation. Its benefits will also be felt in household budgets – our investment in early learning and childcare will save a family around £4,500 per child a year. As a result of our commitment and funding in 2017-18, over 3,000 children benefited from access to more funded early learning and childcare.



In April we reached a landmark deal with local government on a multi-year funding package worth over £1 billion. This funding is paying for 750 new, extended or refurbished nurseries as well as skilled staff, food for children and play equipment.

The Best Place to Grow Up and Learn

We know that a professional, dedicated and skilled workforce is essential to our children's life chances and we will continue to invest and provide more opportunities for training in a range of settings. This year we've seen new early years practitioners start full time training and we are funding an extra 435 additional graduates to work directly with children in our most deprived communities. We will take forward work to increase provision of early years courses in colleges and universities and support vocational training routes including piloting a new graduate apprenticeship and delivering a 10% year-on-year increase in modern apprenticeships. This year, we expect to see around 1,700 people start on early learning and childcare apprenticeships.

On top of this, our work this year includes:

- ensuring that early learning and childcare is high quality and offers choice to families by introducing a National Standard for Funded Providers from 2020, which will be published by the end of 2018
- ensuring that early learning and childcare providers, including childminders, are supported through the transition to the implementation of the expanded entitlement in 2020
- providing £76 million of revenue funding and £150 million of capital funding to local authorities to allow them to grow and develop their early years workforce and creating additional nursery space
- working with the Scottish Funding Council to offer over 1,500 additional places on Higher National Certificate courses in colleges in 2018-19 and over 400 extra graduate level places
- working with local authorities and others to develop and launch an awareness-raising campaign to ensure that families understand what the expansion of funded early learning and childcare means for them, and how they can access their child's entitlement
- supporting local authorities to improve uptake of funded early learning and childcare for eligible 2 year olds

Outdoor learning and play

We know the benefits of outdoor learning, exercise and play for children. Playing, learning and having fun outdoors helps to improve wellbeing and resilience as well as physical and mental health and also provides children with the opportunity to develop a life-long appreciation of the natural world. A growing body of research also shows a positive impact on educational attainment.

The significant expansion of funded early learning and childcare provides an opportunity to define the type of experience we offer children during their early years. We will provide guidance to all early learning and childcare providers on how to access local outdoor space and how to set up an outdoor nursery experience. Also, we have provided £860,000 of funding to Inspiring Scotland to work with eight local authorities to increase and improve their outdoor learning, which will include the establishment of two outdoor nurseries.

As well as providing these experiences for our youngest children, we will also support our young people to have regular, frequent outdoor learning experiences. We will provide £600,000 of funding over the next two years through the Outdoor Learning in Nature Fund for up to 16 projects in nurseries, schools and community groups across Scotland. All the projects involve working with schools and nurseries to help children from our most deprived areas spend time in nature.

We will create more opportunities for more primary school children to have the chance to visit a farm to raise their awareness of where their food comes from and the key role Scottish farmers play as custodians of the countryside and as food producers.

Additionally, our continued investment in a range of sustainable outdoor play-focused initiatives support the promotion of free play outdoors in areas across Scotland and provide many benefits – not only for children, but for parents and the whole community.

School years

The Scottish Attainment Challenge is focused on improving numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing. Supporting the wellbeing of our young people is also reflected in the commitments made in this Programme for Government to tackle adverse childhood experiences and radical reform of support for children and young people's mental wellbeing. It is vital in closing the attainment gap and raising the bar.



Scottish Attainment Challenge

The attainment gap is closing. But we know there is much more to do to make sure no child is left behind. We will continue to invest in the Scottish Attainment Challenge and in this financial year have provided £179 million to local authorities and schools to help close the attainment gap with the Attainment Scotland Fund.

From that Fund, those places and schools that need it most will receive their share of £50 million this year to deliver targeted literacy, numeracy and wellbeing support. Our Pupil Equity Funding of £120 million is going directly to the hands of headteachers and helping more than 95% of schools in Scotland to address the attainment gap. Initiatives supported by this funding focus on helping children to overcome barriers, often linked to poverty and adverse childhood experiences, that are preventing them from achieving their potential.

As part of this, home-school workers have a vital role to play in supporting families and closing the attainment gap. Local authorities and individual schools are using Attainment Scotland and Pupil Equity funding to employ more of these key staff. In the coming year we will continue our work with local authorities to ensure that every school has access to home-school link worker support by the end of 2019.

Additional support for learning

We want all children and young people to get the support they need to reach their full learning potential and we have listened to the experiences of children and families about getting that support. We will take action to secure more positive experiences for those receiving support. We will work with local government towards:

- improving consistency of support across Scotland, through improved guidance
- building further capacity to deliver effective additional support
- improving career pathways and professional development, including new free training resources for school staff on inclusive practices

After-school and holiday childcare

We are committed to developing a strategic framework for after-school and holiday childcare over the course of this Parliament and in the next year we will publish a consultation asking for views on that draft framework.

Putting teachers, parents and communities in the driving seat

We will pick up the pace of reform and are working with local government to agree an approach to empower schools, that will deliver a school and teacher led education system. Rather than wait for legislation we are taking forward work now that, in the year ahead, will make empowerment a reality by:

- working with partners to deliver a Headteachers' Charter, supported by new national guidance, to be published by the end of 2018. The Charter and the guidance will put headteachers in control of important decisions that are fundamental to running their schools such as curriculum, staffing and budgets
- enhancing the high quality practical support and expertise available through the Regional Improvement Collaboratives and Education Scotland with investment of up to £10 million in this academic year

- investing up to £4 million over three years to ensure headteachers have the right skills and support to effectively lead our schools. This will build on the national package of leadership support which includes the Into Headship, In Headship and Excellence in Headship development programmes, leading to a comprehensive suite of professional development for headteachers
- working with local authorities to pilot a new national survey of parents and carers by summer 2019, with a view to wider roll out in academic year 2019-20, as part of delivering on actions in our plan for parental engagement which was published last month
- trialling a Scottish Learner Panel from this autumn to provide young people with an opportunity to influence national education policy

We will continue to support teacher recruitment through new routes into the profession, which have already resulted in around 280 additional student teachers. The independent panel considering the design and development of teacher career pathway models is due to make recommendations by the end of 2018.



STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)

We will continue to take forward actions through our STEM education and training strategy to develop Scotland's talent and capability in an area crucial to reaching our economic potential.

Actions already taken in the last year include our introduction of a bursary scheme of up to £20,000 for career changers in certain STEM subjects, as part of our continuing efforts to improve the supply of STEM talent into the teaching profession.

This year our work includes improving the gender balance in those participating in STEM learning, courses and training and expanding STEM hubs to strengthen partnerships between schools, colleges, universities, science centres and employers.

INVEST UP TO
£4 MILLION
TO ENSURE HEADTEACHERS
HAVE THE **SKILLS, SUPPORT**
AND EXPERTISE THEY NEED
TO BE THE KEY DECISION-MAKERS
IN THE LIFE OF THEIR SCHOOL



Measaidhean Coitcheann Nàiseanta airson Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig

We will be providing Gaelic medium education Scottish national standardised assessments (Measaidhean Coitcheann Nàiseanta airson Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig) to ensure that teachers and parents of pupils in Gaelic medium education have the same access to robust, consistent evidence of children's progress.

Beyond school

We have significantly invested in further and higher education with real-terms increases in funding to support 116,000 full-time equivalent college places in this financial year and we have a record number of Scottish students getting a place at university through UCAS – and that includes more students than ever before from our most deprived communities.

In giving young people the best start in life, we also aspire to create the best opportunities for them to flourish as adults. This includes supporting the development of their skills and ensuring they remain relevant in the rapidly evolving world of work. Our expansion of apprenticeship opportunities creates an increasingly diverse range of skills and training pathways for those starting work for the first time and those already in work to fulfil their potential. And our Flexible Workforce Development Fund provides the opportunity for the upskilling and reskilling of our current workforce.



Choosing and staying on the right path

We want to ensure that young people have the confidence to choose the career path that is right for them. To have this confidence young people need the right advice and support. They also need to hear a clear message from their earliest childhood that they have the potential to get the right skills for the kind of jobs they want – and that what they want is good enough. Our careers advice should also reflect that as our economy advances, young people need to be able to be flexible to change jobs.

We will take forward the recommendations of the *15-24 Learner Journey Review*, published in May. In the year ahead this includes, starting work to:

- ensure every pupil in Scotland has access to an online account to collate their skills and experiences, enhancing the personalised support available when choosing courses and planning a career
- deliver a new careers strategy by autumn 2019 to set the vision for high quality career information, advice and guidance services accessible to all
- improve choice through the expansion of Graduate Apprenticeships to provide new higher level technical skills

We will progress our work with colleges, schools and employers to improve the lives of young people, especially those aged 15-24. This will include the continued delivery of the Developing Young Workforce programme, building on its success to date, having achieved its headline target to reduce youth unemployment by 40% by 2021 – four years early.

Widening access and student support

Since 2007 we have provided free tuition to over half a million students in full-time higher education.

We will continue to drive forward recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access to meet our commitment to equal access to university by 2030. While great progress has been made in helping young people succeed we want to do more to make sure the right practical support is there in the right place and at the right time.

We support the central premise of the independent Review of Student Support of creating a system around the key values of fairness, parity and clarity.

To take forward the recommendations of the Review we will:

- invest £5.2 million in this financial year to increase bursaries for full-time care-experienced further and higher education students to £8,100 a year – equivalent to the Living Wage
- invest £16 million in the next financial year to expand and increase bursaries for students from the lowest income families
- raise the repayment threshold for student loans to £25,000 from April 2021 and from this year lower the maximum repayment threshold for student loans from 35 to 30 years
- launch an online portal for student financial information, advice and guidance across further and higher education, including a budget calculator



As part of our actions to tackle child poverty, this year we are working with the Students Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS), to increase understanding of funding support, through expanding the SAAS Outreach Programme, which proactively provides face-to-face, digital and published student information. £150,000 funding is helping expand this successful model to reach children and young people from our priority families, making sure they can access the funding support available.

Wrap-around support for students

We want to see wrap-around support for students from day one of their studies to qualification and graduation. Students should have access to support which is person-centred, and supports their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. We want to work with the sector, to develop an integrated approach to student wellbeing in Higher and Further Education, that links and interconnects support for mental health, student safety, pastoral support and information and advice services, including clear pathways to support. Building on best practice in the sector, students will know where to go for information, support and advice, and when required, support can be provided rapidly, to ensure a student is able to successfully stay on their course.

To make this vision a reality, in the year ahead we will work with all key players, including students, the higher and further education sectors, Scottish Funding Council, our NHS, Police Scotland, third sector and the Emily Test campaign, to shape what wrap-around support should look like. We will then work with colleges and universities, and their partners, to develop the approach. This work will complement our commitment to increased provision of counselling services for young people and adults in colleges and universities, where over 80 additional counsellors will provide support to students during their studies.

Investing in looked after children – time, money and love

The Independent Care Review will identify and deliver lasting change to the care system, transforming the life chances and wellbeing of children and young people in care, and providing the kind of preventative support which the Christie Report envisaged.

As the work of the Review continues we will continue to improve the support available for children and their families investing time, money and love in their future.

By the end of this year all local authorities will have been offered help from the Permanence in Care Excellence programme, based on our knowledge that faster decisions mean better life chances for looked after children.

We look forward to receiving recommendations from the National Review of Foster, Kinship and Adoption Care Allowances for a national kinship care and foster care allowance. We will set out our next steps following the conclusion of the review.

We will work with partners to provide support for mothers with complex and challenging needs who have frequent pregnancies, but whose children are taken into care. We want to break this cycle by supporting women and creating the space for them to take control of their lives and develop new skills.

From the Attainment Scotland Fund, we will provide £33 million, with £8.2 million available in this financial year, for local authorities to provide targeted initiatives, activities, and resources, that will help improve the educational outcomes of care experienced young people.

As part of a wider package of support for survivors of historic child abuse in-care, we committed to a consultation on the provision of financial redress. We expect to receive recommendations from the independent group taking this important work forward shortly and will announce next steps in the autumn.

Social work workforce

Giving our children and families the best possible life chances needs a strong social work workforce. In the year ahead our actions include:

- delivering a campaign to promote the social services sector as a positive career destination
- working with partners to improve the data, guidance and tools available for workforce planning



We will support the skills and resilience of social workers and their transition into practice by:

- developing a Social Work Education Partnership to deliver improvements to consistency and quality of social work education
- working with the Social Services Council to pilot options for a supported year in practice for newly qualified social workers

Children's rights

We are consulting on changes to the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, including consultation questions specifically for children and young people. We will consider the views put forward and introduce a Family Law Bill to:

- ensure that the child's best interests are at the centre of any contact or residence case or Children's Hearing
- ensure that the voice of the child is heard
- ensure that cases and hearings are dealt with in an efficient way

In the year ahead we will also:

- support the removal of the defence to the physical punishment of children proposed by the Member's Bill being developed by John Finnie MSP
- launch a National Hub for the prevention of child deaths which will include establishing a new national approach for effective, sensitive child death reviews by 2020



The Family Law Bill will ensure that the child's best interests are at the centre of any contact or residence case or Children's Hearing and that the voice of the child is heard

Incorporating the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Scottish Government is already committed to ensuring that the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are embedded into policy and legislation in an effective and practical way. In the last Programme for Government we committed to undertake a comprehensive audit on the most effective and practical way to further embed those principles. The audit is well under way and will continue. Now, building on that work, we will incorporate the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law.



Evidence shows that there are different ways to achieve this, and that there are some particular complexities in relation to the UNCRC which require to be worked through. It will be important to develop a model that will deliver the best outcomes for children, young people and families in Scotland. In order to deliver this commitment, we will consult widely, including with children, young people and families. We will also continue to work closely with local authorities and other public bodies across Scotland, as well as third sector partners. As part of that work, we will consider where it may be possible for Scots law to go further than the Convention requires, where that is demonstrably beneficial for children and young people. In the meantime, we will continue to consider ways in which rights under the UNCRC can be given better or further effect across individual policy areas. To support these commitments, we are working with children, young people and stakeholders to co-design and co-deliver a three-year children's rights awareness-raising programme.

Adverse childhood experiences

Preventing and mitigating adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is a moral imperative. It requires our public services to work collaboratively, and with communities, across early years, education, health, justice, social work and more. Our objective is to improve the wellbeing of children – and adults – to give the best chance for those who have suffered adversity to go on to live their lives to the full. Our investment in tackling adverse childhood experiences now is not only an investment in improving the life chances and happiness of each individual child, it is also a down payment on improved health and wellbeing and a future Scotland's educational and economic success.

What are ACEs?

Research shows that adverse childhood experiences have a huge impact on our childhoods and can have lasting effects throughout adulthood. ACEs are different types of abuse, neglect and family difficulties – including parental separation, domestic abuse and parents or carers with experience of alcohol or drug problems, imprisonment or mental ill-health. We are committed to addressing these and also a broader range of adversities that impact on children such as bereavement, bullying, homelessness and poverty.

What are we doing to help?

In the past year we have worked in partnership with the Scottish ACE Hub (led by NHS Health Scotland) and a wide range of people and organisations to embed a focus on better preventing ACEs and supporting the resilience of children and adults to overcome early life adversity. We are focusing our work around four key areas:

- providing intergenerational support for parents, families and children to prevent ACEs
- reducing the negative impact of ACEs for children and young people
- developing adversity and trauma-informed workforces and services
- increasing societal awareness and supporting action across communities

The Scottish ACEs Hub will be central to awareness raising and taking forward collaborative action across sectors and services, and supporting actions across local areas and communities.

What actions are we taking forward?

Providing intergenerational support for parents, families and children to prevent ACEs:

- investing in perinatal and infant mental health to support parents and infants at the outset to prevent problems escalating
- expanding the Family Nurse Partnership across Scotland to be available to first-time young mothers by the end of 2018 to develop parenting skills and support positive life choices
- supporting low-income families and tackling child poverty

Reducing the negative impact of ACEs for children and young people:

- schools and local authorities are using funding from the £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund to deliver health and wellbeing interventions (such as investing in educational psychologists, family support staff and counselling services) to support their pupils, including those who have suffered adverse childhood experiences
- investing in the provision of school nurses and counsellors in schools and working with our partners and key stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the Personal and Social Education Review. The review is reporting at the end of 2018 and the actions will support children's understanding of mental wellbeing, societal and cultural issues which affect them
- building on the work done to deliver national guidance on anti-bullying, and improve recording and monitoring of bullying incidents in schools. 'respectme' will continue to work with local authorities and other young people's organisations to build confidence and capacity to effectively address all forms of bullying

- enabling improved contact between parents in prison and their children to support positive attachment and involvement in the life of their child, where appropriate, and enabling schools to be alerted in a non-stigmatising way of children in need of support following parental imprisonment
- supporting cultural, sporting and outdoor activities which support the wellbeing and resilience of all children and young people and particularly where ACEs have occurred, such as Sistema Scotland, Outdoor Learning and Nature Fund, and investment in physical activity

Developing adversity and trauma-informed workforces and services which respond in ways which minimise distress, overcome barriers and build trust:

- implementing national trauma training following NHS Education for Scotland development of a National Trauma Training Framework
- funding development and testing of routine enquiry of ACEs in Scotland, where trained professionals ask adults in a sensitive way about adversity they experienced in childhood and how it impacts on them now
- continuing support from Education Scotland to schools with developing effective responses to ACEs by embedding nurture and trauma-informed approaches

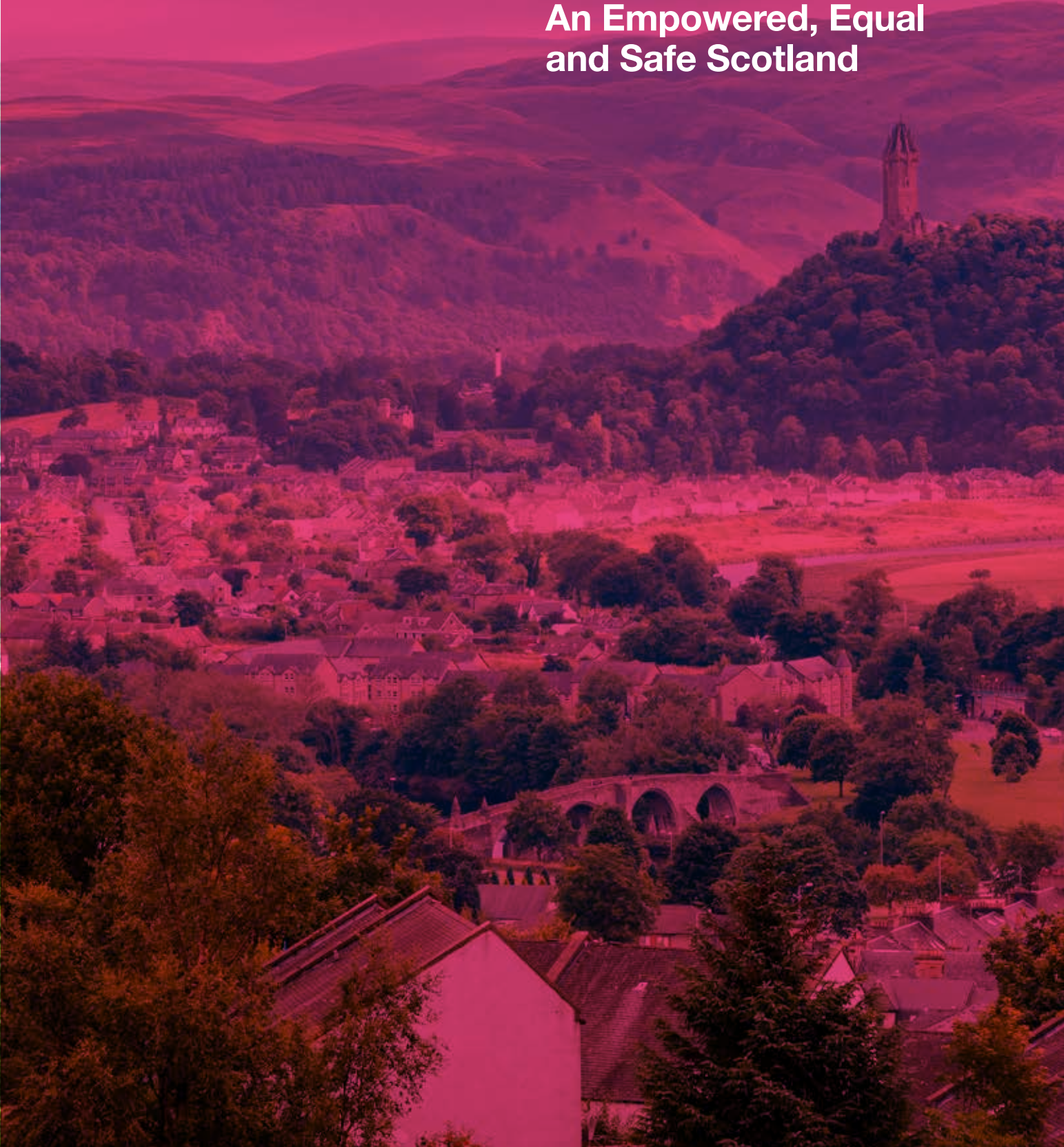
- improving experiences of the Children's Hearings system to respond compassionately to traumatised and neglected children and young people
- considering how the Barnahus concept for immediate trauma-informed support for child victims of serious and traumatic crimes can operate within the context of Scotland's healthcare and criminal justice system
- supporting work with adults affected by ACEs and trauma in health and justice settings, such as the Navigator Programme in hospitals and improvement fund for health and social care in prisons

Increasing societal awareness and supporting action across communities:

- incorporating ACEs questions into 2019 Scottish Health Survey, to better understand the prevalence of ACEs amongst Scottish adult population and the links with health outcomes and behaviours
- working with the Scottish ACE Hub and other partners to raise awareness of ACEs across Scotland and supporting actions across communities
- progressing work on children's rights in Scotland

Chapter 4

**An Empowered, Equal
and Safe Scotland**



Thriving communities – where there are opportunities for all to flourish – sit at the heart of our purpose for Scotland.

Achieving our ambitions for a more successful Scotland relies on stronger relationships between organisations, people and communities, drawing on our values in order to promote trust, collaboration and partnership. While significant progress has been made, we recognise not only that change takes time but that we cannot do this on our own.

The success and the wellbeing of our communities, is rooted in the strength of our relationship and partnerships with local government as well as drawing on the capacities, expertise and commitment of those people and organisations delivering critical services across the public, private and third sectors.

It is against that backdrop that we will continue to take forward work to reduce poverty and maximise household incomes. We are making substantial investments to tackle inequalities including action to reduce child poverty, prevent homelessness, provide affordable credit and extend access to free sanitary products.

We will step up our work to eradicate children's holiday hunger, providing an additional £2 million of funding.

Social Security Scotland is making its first payments to people this month – a landmark moment in Scotland's new approach to social security as a human right.

Our delivery of new, affordable homes continues at pace and we will extend the Scottish Land Fund until 2021.

We will take forward important new laws on hate crime by consulting on the legislation that is needed to reflect life in 21st-century Scotland. We will put in place further reforms to our justice system to strengthen victims' rights and support, increase transparency and extend the opportunity for those affected by crime to have their voices heard. We will take specific actions to support victims of rape and sexual and domestic abuse and drive forward work to end violence against women and girls.



Tackling poverty and inequality

No child or adult should have their chances limited by poverty. We want to break the intergenerational cycles of poverty, inequality and deprivation. To make inroads we need to tackle and prevent the root causes of poverty. Our ambitious economic policy, new social security system and approach to fairer taxation are an important part of this.

Getting the key decisions right is particularly important to tackling poverty and inequality effectively. That is why we introduced the Fairer Scotland duty in April 2018. The duty is a new legal responsibility on national and local government, our NHS and other public bodies to actively consider what more can be done to reduce inequalities of outcome, caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. We will continue to monitor progress on implementing the new duty over the next year.

Every Child, Every Chance – The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan

Our *Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan*, published in March 2018, sets out a range of concrete and ambitious actions to make progress on our 2030 targets that would reduce child poverty to the lowest level in Scotland's history.

In the coming year we will take a wide range of action, including:

- reporting, by end June 2019, on progress to develop the new Income Supplement. In time this will provide vital financial support for parents on low incomes
- beginning work on a £12 million intensive parental employment support programme, to help parents on low incomes move into employment and progress their careers when already in work – the first delivery projects will be identified in 2019 and commence later that year
- investing in innovative approaches to preventing and reducing child poverty, as a start to our £7.5 million Innovation Fund in partnership with the Hunter Foundation
- investing in Children's Neighbourhoods Scotland – a distinctive approach to empowering communities and improving outcomes for children and young people in neighbourhoods with high levels of poverty. This initiative brings together children, their community, local third sector and public sector organisations and businesses. They work together to tackle the big issues that prevent children and young people from living happily and healthily, succeeding in school and achieving what they want in life. In addition to sustaining the first Children's neighbourhood in Bridgeton and Dalarnock, two new neighbourhoods will be added to the programme in 2019-20. Over the next four years the programme will be further developed to extend to a total of seven sites with our investment totalling £2 million
- introducing from the current school year a new £100 national minimum school clothing grant across Scotland, with an estimated 120,000 families benefiting from this new investment

The Poverty and Inequality Commission, launched in July 2017, is to become a new public body from July 2019. This will enable the Commission to meet its duties under legislation. The appointment of the Chair of the Commission will commence later in September, with member recruitment taking place in the first half of 2019.

Maximising incomes and consumer rights

Poverty shows itself in many forms and the UK Government's austerity programme and corresponding welfare cuts have made families in Scotland poorer. We will continue to take action where we can to mitigate the impact of welfare cuts. This financial year we expect to provide over £125 million of support for welfare mitigation and measures to help those on low incomes – that is an increase of more than £20 million on the previous year. Our work to expand early learning and childcare, support people to get back to work and lifting the public sector pay cap will also directly improve household budgets.

WE WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER
OF WORKERS RECEIVING
THE LIVING WAGE BY
7,500
AS A RESULT OF EMPLOYER
ACCREDITATION



By the end of this financial year we will have invested over £1.4 billion in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme since 2013, helping around half a million households every year to pay their Council Tax bill. In the coming year we will work to promote awareness and encourage take up of the scheme to ensure that no one eligible loses out.

We want to do more to make sure people get practical help and support to maximise their incomes and understand their rights.

So, we will begin roll out of the £3 million Financial Health Check before the end of 2018, providing low-income families and older people with help to reduce costs and maximise incomes, with a particular focus on tackling the 'poverty premium'.

Scotland has a strong credit union sector. Over the last two years we have funded credit unions to run projects with local schools, encouraging young people to budget and save. Last year £148,000 was provided to 11 credit unions and since the programme commenced, in 2016, 47 new savings schemes have been established in schools across the country, from Dumfries and Galloway to Morayshire. We will continue to work with the sector in the vital role it plays in offering affordable lending and savings in the heart of communities and protecting people from predatory lenders and unmanageable debt. And in November we will launch an awareness-raising campaign to further strengthen the credit union movement.

We know that accessing affordable credit is a concern generally across Scotland. That is why we are investing £1 million in the Affordable Credit Fund, working with the Carnegie UK Trust to reduce the 'poverty premium' low-income households often have to pay. Care experienced young people, in particular, can face considerable challenges to borrow money. We want to help. Over the next year, we will work with the Care Review to develop options which will help these young people increase access to financial services, including affordable credit.

We are also working to secure fairer outcomes for consumers and increase consumer trust. In the coming year we will bring forward a Consumer Protection Bill to establish a new public body called Consumer Scotland, to maximise the impact of our new consumer powers. We are exploring whether this legislation could also ensure that government and other public bodies consider the impact of their decisions and policies on consumers.

This new work on consumer rights complements other initiatives such as our consultation with stakeholders later this year on our preferred model for a publicly-owned not-for-profit energy company by 2021, which will support our efforts to tackle fuel poverty. The public energy company will also support economic development and help to achieve our climate change targets.

The Fuel Poverty (Target, Definition and Strategy) Bill aims to align fuel poverty with relative income poverty more closely, to better target support for those needing it the most, wherever they live. The target of less than 5% of people in fuel poverty by 2040 is stretching but achievable, and we are working with stakeholders from across the country to improve national delivery programmes and encourage the development of innovation and local solutions.

While we are making good progress in making Scotland a Living Wage nation, and are ahead of the rest of the UK, there are particular sectors and communities that are still not being paid well enough to have a decent standard of living. We will recognise the first Living Wage town by the end of 2018 and by the end of April 2019 we will increase the number of workers receiving a pay increase to the Living Wage by 7,500 as a result of employer accreditation. This is part of our longer-term target to increase by 25,000 the number of Living Wage recipients.



The Consumer Protection Bill will establish a new public body called Consumer Scotland, to maximise the impact of our new consumer powers

Tackling food poverty

A modern vibrant and successful Scotland, with our abundant natural resources, should not tolerate any child or adult going hungry. But too many people are suffering from hunger and many go without to provide for their loved ones. More people in Scotland have relied on support from Food Banks this year, linked to the UK Government's welfare cuts.



In addition to our Attainment Scotland Fund, we have made more money available to support 34 projects across Scotland providing food security in dignified ways and are investing £1 million over the next two years to support children at risk of going hungry during the school holidays. But we know that more needs to be done.

We will step up our work to tackle food insecurity among children by providing an additional £2 million of funding to help accelerate action. We will work with COSLA, local authorities, the third sector and other stakeholders to build momentum, trial new approaches and develop a clear plan of action for the future to eradicate holiday hunger.

We will also look for opportunities to identify and share the successes that local authorities and schools are having in tackling holiday hunger through our £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund.

On top of this action, in summer 2019 we will deliver a new scheme for Healthy Start Vouchers, Best Start Foods, linked to our social security system, which will support families on lower incomes to access healthy and nutritious food.

Access to essential sanitary products

We have delivered on our commitment to make free sanitary products available to all those attending Scotland's schools, colleges and universities.

And we have gone further and taken action to ensure that those that cannot afford to buy essential sanitary products are able to access them, without stigma. Following a successful pilot in Aberdeen we have expanded our commitment to free sanitary products through a scheme to help low-income households. The scheme run by FareShare aims to reach nearly 19,000 women across Scotland.

In the coming year we will go even further as we aim to increase the number and range of places where sanitary products are available for those who need them. We will do this through working with a range of public and private sector organisations and with additional third sector partners to expand the geographical spread of support.

We will continue to call on the UK Government to give the Scottish share of the Tampon Tax Fund to the Scottish Government to allow us to distribute those funds in line with Scottish priorities.

A compassionate social security system

This year sees the opening of our new social security agency, Social Security Scotland, marking a fundamental shift in the delivery of social security as a human right underpinned by the values of dignity, fairness and respect. We will publish our Charter – developed with those who have experience of the system – setting out people's rights and how the new approach of our Scottish system will support them.

Social Security Scotland is making its first payments to people this month, through the Carer's Allowance Supplement. This increases the Carer's Allowance by 13% and is an investment of more than £30 million a year to support carers in Scotland. In 2019 we will make the first payments under our £300 per year Young Carer Grant. We want to accelerate the help we can give to new families so that every child has the best start in life. Working with the UK Government, we will start making payments from our Best Start Grant by this Christmas – more than six months early. This will put more money into the pockets of families on lower incomes – by providing £600 on the birth of

their first child and £300 on the birth of any further children, more than the current UK Government arrangements. By paying families on lower incomes more money more quickly we will support thousands of children across Scotland. This is the first step in our delivery of the Best Start Grant which, by summer 2019, will also see families get a further £250 for each of their children at key points in their early years such as starting nursery and school.



We will continue to work with the UK Government as they develop systems to provide us with the information we need so we can put more money into the pockets of families.

In the coming year we will also provide financial support to people on lower incomes who have lost loved ones and are struggling with funeral costs through Funeral Expense Assistance.

As a further step in implementing the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018, we will establish the Scottish Commission on Social Security to scrutinise the new Scottish system (including benefit regulations) and hold Scottish Ministers to account. This will also ensure that the Scottish Parliament has the benefit of expert advice from an independent body. The Chair and Members of the Commission will be appointed in January 2019.

These changes are significant but only cover 15% of the social security spend in Scotland. The UK Government will still have control of critical benefits such as Universal Credit.

We will show through our safe and secure transition of the 11 benefits that have been transferred into Scotland's hands that this is the best place to take decisions and deliver social security for our population.

WE'LL HELP PEOPLE ON
LOW INCOMES BY DELIVERING
**THE BEST
START GRANT**
TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES
WITH YOUNG CHILDREN



The death of a child is one of the most awful experiences anyone will ever face. We will provide funding to local authorities to support the removal of burial and cremation fees for children aged under 18. Our joint commitment with COSLA will be implemented by the end of 2018, helping to reduce the financial worries for bereaved parents. We are working with local authorities to agree how to pass funding to private cemeteries and crematoriums who agree to waive these fees, to ensure consistency of provision across Scotland.

Empowered and thriving communities

People, communities and place must be at the heart of sustainable and inclusive growth, so that economic benefits and opportunities can be spread and shared across Scotland's people and communities.

As we implement our community empowerment legislation, we will see alignment between national and local outcomes that will enable co-ordinated support across services and between places, at neighbourhood, town, city or regional levels, and a more joined-up, collaborative and participative approach to services, land, and buildings across all sectors within a place.

Local Governance Review

We want to devolve more power to more local levels – for communities to have more say about how public services in their area are run and for local councils and their public sector partners to have the powers needed to grow their local economies and increase the wellbeing of their communities. We have launched the *Local Governance Review*, jointly with COSLA, and the *Democracy Matters* conversation with communities across Scotland will continue throughout the remainder of 2018.

The findings from the Review will be used to put in place new governance arrangements, and where legislation is needed we will deliver these through a Local Democracy Bill.



Regeneration

Our Regeneration Strategy recognises that a sustained and co-ordinated place-based approach across the public sector and its partners, working with people and communities, is needed to address the deeply ingrained economic, environmental and social issues faced by some of Scotland's communities. And community-led regeneration delivers inclusive growth by supporting interventions which respond to local circumstances and increases opportunities to attract investment and jobs in those communities, while building community and regional cohesion.

Over the duration of this Parliament we will continue to deliver and support regeneration through funding and investment. We will continue to stimulate inclusive growth through the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund in partnership

with local government. We have now invested in more than 110 projects since 2014, with projects recommended in this financial year expected to support or create around 1,400 jobs, refurbish and bring back into use a number of historic and landmark buildings, create more than 26,000 sq. m of business space and support over 80 community facilities and services. Our SPRUCE investment loan fund will continue to provide new investment for projects utilising recycled funds with 11 investments now complete and the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund we deliver with local authority partners will continue to bring back land into use. We will also continue our sponsorship of Clyde Gateway.

We will look for opportunities to facilitate more support to enable people and communities to take charge; and, beyond our funding and resources, we will address the need to work across government and the wider public, private and third sectors to combine resources more effectively and fully involve communities.

Social enterprise and a strong third sector

Later this month, Scotland will welcome the Social Enterprise World Forum, marking 10 years since it was first held in Edinburgh. Social enterprises contribute £2 billion to our economy each year and provide jobs for around 80,000 people. They can be an exemplar of sustainable and inclusive economic growth. We will continue our work to maintain Scotland's place as a world-leading social enterprise nation in the year ahead by:

- using the Year of Young People 2018 and our delivery of social enterprise activity in schools and early learning establishments across Scotland to raise awareness of social enterprise as a viable and rewarding career
- doubling our seed funding for start-ups from £500,000 to £1 million through our national social enterprise incubator
- providing over £134,000 funding in 2018-19 to expand the innovative Community Shares Scotland programme, which has helped social entrepreneurs raise more than £10 million for over 100 community projects since 2014
- conducting a national census of the sector over summer 2019

The third sector is a crucial part of our social and economic infrastructure, playing a key part in the ongoing reform of our public services – without them we would not be able to innovate, adapt and maintain our drive to tackle deep-rooted social challenges in the way we are. That is why we continue to invest in the sector, and have made a point of maintaining our levels of funding within the third sector budget at £24.5 million.

It is over 17 years since the McFadden Commission proposed establishing a Scottish charity regulator, and more than 13 years since the passage of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. To ensure public confidence in charities and in the Scottish Charity Regulator is maintained we will consult on updating legislation to promote transparency and accountability.

We have made progress on our drive to increase participation in volunteering across society, building on the growth of youth volunteering during the Year of Young People by investing in the establishment of a National Youth Volunteering Design Team who will make recommendations to the Scottish Government early next year on actions required to grow participation rates. We have also invested in the development of our volunteering evidence base and maintained our funding to support third sector organisations to engage with those facing barriers to participation, providing £3.8 million over the period 2017-20 through the Volunteering Support Fund. In the coming year we will publish a National Volunteering Outcomes Framework that will set out a coherent and compelling vision for volunteering and identify the key evidence and data to drive an increase in participation for all.

Open government

We will continue our work as part of the Open Government Partnership – a multilateral organisation of over 90 governments worldwide committed to openness, transparency and citizen participation. Our first action plan has been completed, delivering actions on participatory budgeting, financial transparency and aligning the new *National Performance Framework* to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It has been independently reviewed and we are working with others to co-produce a second action plan – which will be for two years.

We will consult on proposals to extend coverage of Scotland's freedom of information legislation, for example to companies providing services on behalf of the public sector. Working with the Scottish Information Commissioner, we will continue to make improvements in the way we respond to Freedom of Information requests, building on the work done in the last year.



The Electoral Reform Bill will implement a range of reforms including extending the role of the Electoral Management Board and giving greater flexibility for the Local Government Boundary Commission to take account of community ties and local geography when reviewing ward boundaries

We will bring forward an Electoral Reform Bill that will implement a range of reforms including extending the role of the Electoral Management Board and giving greater flexibility for the Local Government Boundary Commission to take account of community ties and local geography when reviewing ward boundaries. This Bill will be the first opportunity for the Scottish Parliament to use powers in relation to elections devolved by the Scotland Act 2016.

Our partnership with local government

The success of this, and future Programmes for Government, is rooted in the strength of our partnership with local government and the expertise and commitment of those communities and organisations delivering a wide range of services across the public, private and third sector.

This Programme for Government offers the opportunity to build on our achievements and reaffirms our commitment to a strong partnership between national and local government. This is supported by the refreshed *National Performance Framework* that we launched in partnership with COSLA earlier this year.

This past year, we have seen the benefit of our partnership with local government in taking forward some of our most ambitious reforms:

- we have reached a sustainable settlement for the delivery of our early learning and childcare reforms and agreed the way forward to ensure the improvements to our education system are led by schools and teachers
- we have renewed our efforts to tackle homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping
- through our joint work alongside the Scottish Refugee Council, we updated our *New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy*, continuing our commitment to welcome refugees and asylum seekers into our communities
- we have provided free sanitary products in every school, college and university – working together to end period poverty
- we continue working together towards investing over £3 billion to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes by 2021
- we are partners in the transformation of health and social care, delivering the integration of services and agreeing a set of public health priorities for Scotland, ahead of the creation of a new public health body in 2019

- together, we are supporting regeneration and developing long-term strategic approaches to improving regional economies through our City Region deals
- we remain committed to tackling climate change and working together with businesses and communities on Scotland's transition to a low carbon economy

This partnership is essential as we continue the delivery of the next stage of our long-term reforms of public services:

- our jointly-led local governance review will focus on and strengthen local decision-making and democratic governance in ways that engage communities, improve outcomes, grow Scotland's economy, and encourage innovation
- we are committed to supporting the further empowerment of our communities through increased participation and decision making, not least through our continued investment in participatory budgeting
- we will continue to explore the potential of data driven innovation to transform our everyday lives and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our public services
- despite the UK Government's cuts to the Scottish Resource Budget in the ongoing challenging fiscal environment, we will continue to work constructively and openly with local government to deliver a fair funding settlement to enable them to meet our shared ambitions for the people and communities we serve
- through our commitment to increasing infrastructure investment, we will work with local government to identify those investments that will unlock economic potential, support jobs and allow our businesses to grow and communities to flourish
- we will continue to engage with COSLA and other local government stakeholders at both political and official levels to help inform and develop our approach to Brexit and to help them prepare for the UK leaving the EU

- we will work in partnership with local services to radically reform the way we support wellbeing and respond to and treat mental ill-health
- in order to tackle adverse childhood experiences, we will support our public services to work collaboratively, and with communities, across early years, education, health and justice. To do this most effectively, we will ensure these services nurture and develop an adversity and trauma-informed workforce

The partnership between the Scottish Government and local government is key to enabling the delivery of our reforms and to ensuring improved outcomes for the people of Scotland. Only through an effective partnership can we make the best use of our collective resources and work together to tackle our most difficult challenges – making a real difference to the prosperity and wellbeing of our communities.



Housing and infrastructure

We have delivered more than 76,500 affordable homes since 2007.

That is almost 52,600 homes for social rent – including 9,799 council homes – over 5,600 for affordable rent, and almost 18,400 for affordable home ownership. We continue to lead the way in the UK in our investment in housing. Between 2012 and 2017 more council houses were delivered across 32 local authority areas in Scotland than across 326 local authority areas in England.

Over the lifetime of this Parliament, we are investing more than £3 billion to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes including 35,000 for social rent.

In this financial year over £756 million is available to increase the supply of affordable homes across Scotland up from £590 million in 2017-18. More homes will be delivered through our commitments to local authorities and also through demand-led national schemes such as the Rural and Islands Housing Fund.

Our homes ownership schemes, Open Market Shared Equity and Help to Buy (Scotland) will support more than 3,500 households into home ownership in this financial year.

Through our £150 million Building Scotland Fund we are establishing a viable pipeline of projects, including housing projects across all tenures. The homes supported by this Fund are over and above our commitment to deliver 50,000 affordable homes during this Parliament.

We continue to support the Empty Homes Partnership. We have doubled the funding available to support bringing empty homes back into use – adding to the 3,200 empty homes this work has brought back into use since 2010.

Building on the success of the Highland Self-build Loan Fund pilot, a £4 million, national Self-build Loan Fund will launch this month and run for three years, offering eligible self-builders struggling to access financial assistance, loans of up to £175,000 for development costs related to their self-build project. It will be available in both urban and rural areas and is designed to help applicants reach build completion allowing them to access a traditional mortgage which is then used to repay the loan. We will showcase best practice and provide further advice and support through our Self-Build forums.

Ending homelessness

We are committed to eradicating rough sleeping in Scotland and transforming the use of temporary accommodation. In the past year we have allocated £21 million towards rapid rehousing and Housing First to get rough sleepers and those living in temporary accommodation into permanent homes more quickly. This money comes from our £50 million Ending Homelessness Together Fund with £1.5 million from the £20 million of funding for addictions set out last year.

Rapid rehousing will see local authorities transform their response to homelessness for the majority of households by ensuring people are quickly offered settled accommodation, significantly reducing the need for – and time spent in – temporary forms of accommodation.

For those who require intensive support to sustain settled housing, including tackling mental health challenges and addictions, Housing First provides permanent accommodation as a first, rather than last, response for people with complex needs. Our funding includes up to £4 million support for pathfinders being established in five cities by Housing First Scotland, also supported by Social Bite and the Corra Foundation. These projects started placing tenants with a Housing First support package in August and aim to support up to 845 placements over the next two years, while ensuring learning is captured and shared across all areas.

In the year ahead we will act on the recommendations from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group and the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee. Later this year we will publish the high-level action plan for delivery of the recommendations, which will be led by the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group and a range of partners including local authorities.



We will also join up the work of the Action Group with ongoing partnership initiatives which are working to ensure that everyone leaving custody has somewhere appropriate to live, supporting their rehabilitation, and reducing their risk of reoffending.

Housing for disabled people

We are committed to delivering more wheelchair accessible housing to help people who need it to live independently in their community. We know that many disabled people would like to own their own home and in the coming year we will issue guidance to local authorities to support them in setting targets for the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures within their areas.

We will also work with private house builders and disabled people to increase the numbers of accessible houses for sale using a range of options including the potential to develop standard accessible wheelchair house types. We will involve disabled people in the development work, particularly in assessing the level of demand to buy their own homes.

Short-term lets

We know that for some communities, the impact of short-term lets, particularly of an entire home, has caused difficulties for those wanting to buy or rent long term and upset the quality of life for permanent residents in our cities and islands and rural areas.

While we want to ensure that tourists have places to stay, we do not currently always have the right balance between supporting tourism and the economic and other benefits it brings through short-term lets and what is right for local communities.

In the coming year, we will work with local government, communities and business interests to ensure that local authorities have the appropriate regulatory powers to allow them to take the decisions to balance the needs and concerns of their communities with wider economic and tourism interests. These powers will allow local authorities to ensure a safe, quality experience for visitors, whilst protecting the interests of local communities.

Building standards and fire safety

We have robust rules in place for the safety of our buildings and will take action to ensure that where there is room for improvement, we make changes. In the coming year we will continue to implement the actions recommended by the Ministerial Working Group established following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London.

As part of that, we will introduce new fire and smoke alarm legislation to ensure everyone has the same level of protection, regardless of tenure. We will also implement the recommendations of two Scottish Building Standards system reviews completed in 2018. This will strengthen and enhance key aspects of the Scottish Building Standards system including increased emphasis on the roles and responsibilities of key players in the construction journey and the need for effective enforcement – making our buildings as safe as they can be. We will bring forward legislation in the lifetime of this Parliament to make it a legal requirement for all future new build social housing properties to be filled with automatic fire-suppression systems.

Delivering a world-class planning system

Planning has a vital role to play in shaping Scotland, now and in the future. It can nurture our places, our environment and our communities, guiding future changes so they benefit everyone. We believe that the system needs to change to better respond to a changing world and are currently working to improve Scotland's planning system, through a comprehensive package of reform, so that it can realise its full potential.

We introduced the Planning (Scotland) Bill to Parliament in December 2017 as part of the continuing programme of reform to simplify the system, support inclusive growth and provide confidence for investors and communities. Following passage of the Bill, we will focus on delivering the changes needed to make the Planning system work for everyone. This includes the review of Scotland's National Planning Framework (NPF4) to develop a spatial vision for Scotland until 2050, supported by a delivery programme which consolidates infrastructure investment, health and climate change objectives into a single plan. It is also an opportunity to strengthen the contribution of planning policy to our overall ambitions for improving Scotland's health and addressing inequalities.

We know the places where we live, work and play can have a major impact on our health, wellbeing and prosperity. Planning can support the development of high quality, well-designed places and communities. Recognising this, we are continuing to modernise and support the use of compulsory purchase orders to regenerate communities and deliver essential infrastructure. We will expand our support for community-led design, building upon the successful use of the Place Standard tool to ensure early involvement by communities in shaping development in their area.



In November 2018 we will set out what is needed to deliver a world-leading digital planning service and how we will achieve this transformative change. Through exploiting the potential of emerging technologies and data-driven innovations, we will build the foundation for an efficient and high-performing digital planning system and can maximise the huge opportunity to increase involvement of people, particularly young people, in their communities, using new ways to engage.

Housing beyond 2021

We want everyone in Scotland to have a home that is warm, affordable and accessible. And we want to support our most disadvantaged communities and create great places that are sustainable and promote wellbeing. Given the long lead-in times for housing delivery, we have started work on our approach to housing supply beyond 2021. We remain committed to meeting demand for homes across all tenures but Scotland faces a number of challenges, including caring for our ageing population and the negative impact of the UK Government's approach to both Brexit and welfare cuts.

We want to deliver more of the right homes in the right places to meet the housing needs and aspirations of the people of Scotland. We want this to be a lasting legacy that is not just about new homes. We need to make the best use of our existing buildings too. That is why we are proposing to develop a new approach encompassing the whole housing system.

Housing has a vital role to play in meeting our aims for Scotland including eradicating child poverty and homelessness, ending fuel poverty and tackling the effects of climate change.

We have already put in place an Energy Efficient Scotland route map to 2040 describing how to make all of our homes warmer, greener and more energy efficient. Now we are going to consult on a wider vision for housing in 2040 and the steps we all need to take to get there.

We want to provide confidence to householders and businesses to plan ahead. Over the period to 2040, we will change the way we spend public money to support housing services and delivery. We will ensure that the economic and business environment supports housing investment and an efficient housing market. We will make our housing system fairer, especially for young people and others who do not currently own a home. We will explore new sources of funding for, and innovative ways of, building homes and providing care and other services at home. We will set new standards around accessibility, energy efficiency, quality and safety. Our homes will be connected, physically, digitally, culturally and economically, to their surroundings and promote healthy lifestyles, wellbeing and physical activity.

Over the next 12 months, we will be engaging extensively with local government, businesses, the third sector, home owners, tenants and others to plan together how our homes and communities should look and feel in 2040 and the options and choices to get there.

Scottish Crown Estate

We will continue to progress the Scottish Crown Estate Bill through the Scottish Parliament. The Bill allows for local control and decision-making over Crown assets and allows wider socio-economic and environmental benefits to be taken into account in land management as well as commercial interests.

We will also bring financial benefits to communities. We are committed to ensuring communities will benefit from the net revenue from the Scottish Crown Estate marine assets.

Land reform

We will continue to support community land purchases through our £10 million per year Scottish Land Fund, including extending it until 2021.



We want to increase the amount of land owned by urban communities so we will encourage and support communities in urban areas to consider opportunities to buy land and assets.

We will continue to support the Scottish Land Commission to shape the land reform agenda. In the year ahead the Commission will publish papers on key issues such as land value capture and ways to make it easier for communities to own land. It will also publish codes of practice to help landowners and communities manage land in the most effective way, encouraging them to work together and promoting change on the ground. This year the Commission will also work with private and public organisations to develop more ways of bringing more vacant and derelict land into productive use.

We will progress land reform by continuing to promote the Scottish Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement, as well as working with landowners and communities to follow our Guidance on Engaging Communities in Decisions Relating to Land.

Scottish Land Fund

In 2017 the Scottish Land Fund awarded over £10 million to 38 groups across Scotland for the acquisition of land and land assets. The investments include:

- £4.415 million to North West Mull Community Woodland Company to acquire the island of Ulva
- £648,300 to the Bannockburn House Trust to acquire historic Bannockburn House near Stirling
- £65,800 to Easthall Residents Association in the east end of Glasgow to acquire neglected and derelict sites to create two areas that will provide facilities for outdoor activities and sports
- £647,500 to Action Party in Edinburgh to acquire Bellfield Church for a wide range of community activities and events

Strong, connected communities

By the end of this year we will publish a national strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness, taking account of what we heard from communities when we consulted earlier this year. We are one of the first in the world to develop a national strategy to tackle one of the crucial social issues our society faces. In the coming year this strategy will help to raise awareness about what we can all do to reduce social isolation and loneliness; deliver resources to community groups who need a helping hand to foster social connections in their area and ensure that every part of government is focused on how we empower communities to build a connected Scotland.

Older people

As we live longer and healthier lives the way we support and harness the skills and talents of our older people needs to change. Over the next 20 years we will see a large increase in people over 75 with more than 70% of all population growth in the over 75 age group.

We are proud of the support we provide to our older people such as free personal care and concessionary travel. We recognise the contribution they have made but that many older people have much more they want to give back. We will publish an Older People's Framework by March 2019 that will deliver improved equality outcomes for older people. We will identify and work to reduce barriers that older people face in making contributions to society whether in work or in their communities. It will ensure that there is clear strategic ownership of Scotland's approach to our ageing population, informed directly by the voices of older people and that there is consistent messaging across the public sector on the positives of ageing and addressing the negative perceptions that older people face.



We know that where we live has a huge impact on our wellbeing. Too often old age can be isolating. In the coming year we will pilot innovative housing solutions for older people, testing intergenerational and other co-living arrangements to meet housing needs and reduce loneliness.

Gypsy Traveller families

We are strengthening our work to improve the wellbeing and protect the human rights of Gypsy Traveller families in Scotland. We are supporting greater opportunities for the voice of the Gypsy Traveller community to be heard in decisions that affect their lives. This year we will:

- provide over £1 million funding, over three years, to organisations supporting the Gypsy Traveller community
- consider what further actions are needed to ensure our public services meet the needs of the community
- give the community a stronger voice in the future development of where they live and ensure that they have safe and secure places to stop or settle through planning reform
- invest £100,000 to establish the new Gypsy Traveller Women's Voices Project to empower women in the community to participate in public life in Scotland

To help children and young people in this community to overcome barriers to their learning and opportunities we will:

- support the new Young Gypsy Traveller Assembly to ensure the views of young people are central to our work
- provide an additional £275,000 to support and share best practice in delivering education for all ages and stages through the Scottish Traveller Education Project (STEP) to pave the way for a further £500,000 Tackling Child Poverty Fund investment in a community education programme starting from 2019

One Scotland

Scotland is a diverse, multicultural and tolerant place and we encourage our communities to be strong, resilient and cohesive. However, there is still work to be done to tackle the prejudices and attitudes that fuel intolerance and a key aspect of this is developing modern laws that show there is no place for hate crime. We agree with Lord Bracadale's recommendation that hate crime laws should be consolidated into a single piece of legislation and, taking account of his recommendations, we will consult on the legislation that is needed to reflect life in 21st-century Scotland.

We will respond to recommendations on how to improve gender equality in Scotland from the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls. We will ensure that gender equality continues to be central to our policy development, and give early consideration to the Advisory Council's advice on putting in place a robust process to ensure that the next and future Programmes for Government are gender sensitive.

The First Minister's Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership will present its recommendations by the end of 2018. We will respond in full, and will prioritise actions that can be taken to address the human rights and equality impact of Brexit.

We have righted the historic wrong of criminalisation of consensual same-sex activity and people can apply to have such convictions removed from central records.



The Census Bill will allow National Records of Scotland to ask voluntary questions on sexual orientation and transgender status in the 2021 Census and future censuses

We will also:

- continue to promote and strengthen interfaith dialogue and understanding, including through an Interfaith Summit
- continue to implement the Race Equality Action Plan and hold the first annual race equality conference in December
- take forward work on proposed changes to the system for obtaining legal gender recognition, replacing the UK Gender Recognition Panel. We will bring forward legislation on gender recognition in the next legislative programme
- introduce a Census Bill to permit National Records of Scotland to ask voluntary questions on sexual orientation and transgender status/history in the 2021 Census and future censuses
- preserve and advance Scotland's reputation as one of the most progressive countries in Europe in terms of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) equality



Support for people with autism and learning disabilities

We are committed to transforming the lives of autistic people and people with learning disabilities and addressing the inequalities they can face throughout their lives. This year we have refreshed our priorities to focus on ensuring people with autism and learning disability live healthier lives, have choice and control over the services they use, and are supported to be independent and active citizens. We will:

- improve early diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders, which includes autism, by better collaboration of services by the end of 2020
- provide additional support to improve diagnosis of autism and support for people and their families after diagnosis by the end of 2019
- invest in training for professionals working with autistic people including funding a two-day autism training course for up to 500 school teachers and support staff in 2018
- work with national charities to raise awareness of autism
- develop national awards for excellence in care and provision of services for autistic people by March 2019
- support awareness-raising, showing the positive contribution that people with a learning disability can make throughout their lives in 2019
- support further work on employment with the Independent Task Group on Employment for people with a learning disability due to report in autumn 2018
- support the implementation of further work on complex care for learning disabilities including appropriate training and supporting health and social care partnerships to reduce out of area placements from autumn 2018

Our justice system

Our justice system must have the needs of victims and witnesses at its heart. As part of our ongoing reforms we will strengthen victims' rights and support, increase transparency and extend the opportunity for those affected by crime to have their voices heard. We will take specific actions to support victims of gender-based violence and drive forward work to end violence against women and girls.

We will maintain our focus on prevention, early intervention and services that support rehabilitation and reduce re-offending.

Reconviction rates are at their lowest in nearly 20 years, recorded crime is at its lowest level since 1974 and 95% of adults in Scotland rate their neighbourhood as very or fairly good.



Building on reforms already delivered to ensure modern and effective justice services, we will continue to support the vital work of Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and invest in digital technology. We will consult on a number of areas to modernise our civil justice system – including the law of defamation. And we will do what we can do ensure that the negative impact of Brexit on our criminal and civil justice systems is minimised.

Our focus on preventing adverse childhood experiences and improving life chances for all will shape how future generations engage with the justice system. A person who has had four or more adverse childhood experiences is up to 20 times more likely to have been in prison or an offender's institution at some point in their life. By preventing and mitigating the impact of adverse childhood experiences now we will reduce the need for intervention from the justice system as those children become adults.

Improving support for victims of crime

We want to do all we can to improve the experience of victims. Navigating the justice system can be daunting and, beyond that, we understand that the need for support and information for victims and families does not end at the point of sentencing.

We have made good progress in recent years on enhancing the rights and support available to victims. Building on this, the Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) Bill we have introduced to Parliament will remove legislative barriers to child and vulnerable adult witnesses giving pre-recorded video evidence.

We have carefully considered the views of victims and victims organisations and in the coming year we will go further to make sure that information and support is there at every step of the way.

To do this we will:

- reduce and, where we can, eliminate the need for victims to have to retell their story to different organisations as they look for help, working with Victim Support Scotland and others
- widen the range of serious crimes where the victim can make a statement to the court about how the crime has affected them physically, emotionally and financially, consulting on specific details by early 2019
- ensure victims and their families have better information and greater support ahead of prison release arrangements
- increase the openness and transparency of the parole system, consulting on specific proposals later this year
- establish, by spring 2019, a new support service for families bereaved by murder and culpable homicide, developed and delivered with Victim Support Scotland to provide dedicated and continuous support

Improving the experience of rape and sexual assault victims

Improving the experience of rape and sexual assault victims in the criminal justice system is a key priority for all involved in the justice system. In addition to wider actions to support victims of crime, in the year ahead we will:

- provide an additional £1.1 million of funding to allow trials involving rape to start at the earliest opportunity and minimise the distress caused to victims
- consult on proposals to clarify in legislation the responsibility for forensic medical examinations to ensure that access to healthcare, as well as a forensic medical examination for victims of rape and sexual assault, is a NHS priority and consistently provided for throughout Scotland
- continue to work with others, such as NHS Education Scotland, to achieve a gender balance of professionals trained to undertake forensic medical examinations so that where a victim requests the specific gender of the forensic examiner involved in their care, this can be met

We want to encourage everyone to come forward if they have been a victim of domestic or sexual abuse – and we want them to be able to access the right support that is clearly needed, when they need it. Therefore, we will be investing an additional £2 million over the next three years to ensure that support can be provided. Rape Crisis Centres will be given an additional £1.5 million over three years from next month – helping these services plan for the future and ensure that more people can receive access to the support they need. The remainder of the funding will be used for other initiatives focused on prevention and early intervention and help to ensure that gender based violence is reduced and prevented from happening in the first place.

Tackling domestic abuse

In the past year we have delivered legislation that created a new offence of domestic abuse designed to reflect our modern understanding of how perpetrators use coercive controlling behaviours against their partner or ex-partner. It will enhance the safety of those at risk of domestic abuse and ensure that courts consider the harmful impact on children when sentencing for domestic abuse.

IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCES OF VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF CRIME



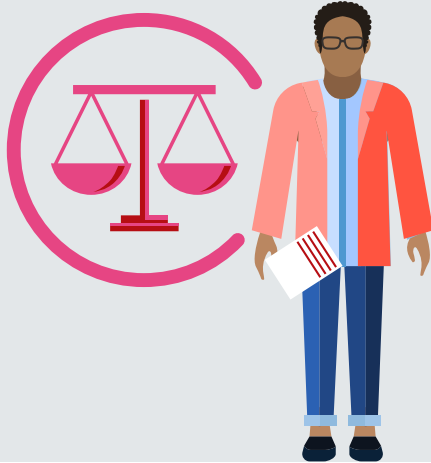
Domestic abuse is one of the core adverse childhood experiences, and no child should have to experience it. We have supported Police Scotland and third sector agencies to deliver an ambitious training programme including over 14,000 front-line police officers and staff to allow the new legislation to be implemented in the coming year.

We will build on this work in the coming year by:

- consulting in the autumn on further protections for those at risk of domestic abuse through new protective orders that could be used to keep victims of domestic abuse safe by banning perpetrators from their homes and on whether changes are needed to the current system of exclusion orders
- supporting the expansion of the innovative Caledonian Programme into a further six local authority areas with £2.8 million over the next two years – so that more male perpetrators of domestic abuse can receive specific rehabilitation services
- launching a consultation in November on how to improve multi-agency interventions for victims of domestic abuse who are at a high risk of harm, so that they receive better support and are kept safer

CONSULT

ON WIDENING THE RANGE OF SERIOUS CRIMES WHERE THE VICTIM CAN MAKE A STATEMENT TO THE COURT ABOUT HOW THE CRIME HAS AFFECTED THEM PHYSICALLY, EMOTIONALLY AND FINANCIALLY



Preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls

We will continue to drive forward work to prevent and reduce all forms of gender-based violence, as set out in our *Equally Safe* delivery plan. In the coming year this includes:

- taking forward our work with key stakeholders to consider how the Barnahus concept for immediate trauma-informed support for child victims of serious and traumatic crimes can operate within the context of Scotland's healthcare and criminal justice system
- launching a major national campaign in spring 2019 to challenge sexual harassment and sexism
- developing an information resource about gender-based violence for children and young people
- launch a consultation in November on how to improve multi-agency interventions for victims of domestic abuse who are at a high risk of harm, so that they receive better support and are kept safer
- pilot an accreditation scheme for employers which will support employers to tackle gender-based violence in their workforces

- convene a roundtable later in 2018 on what more can be done to tackle online abuse and misogyny, and engage with media companies on tackling harmful gender stereotypes
- continue to work to reduce harm and increase opportunities for women to leave prostitution, including establishing a multi-agency group to tackle the issues that can lead to someone becoming exploited in this way



The Female Genital Mutilation Bill will strengthen the protection of women and girls from a form of gender based violence, seeking to introduce protection orders for women and girls at risk and statutory guidance for professionals

We will bring forward a Female Genital Mutilation Bill to strengthen the protection of women and girls from this form of gender-based violence. The Bill will propose protection orders for women and girls at risk and statutory guidance for professionals. We will also consult with communities to understand what further protections may be helpful.

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice can lead to a route out of crime and provide closure and redress to victims and communities. We know that it can empower victims of crime and reduce offending. We want to have restorative justice services widely available across Scotland by 2023 with the interests of victims at their heart. We will publish a Restorative Justice Action Plan by spring 2019 that will set out how we deliver this aim.

Prevention and rehabilitation

We will expand our successful approach to youth justice using proven partnership working to keep children out of justice and care systems while addressing harmful behaviour. Our new investment will improve existing services and by extending, where possible, the support to young people up to the age of 21 and care experienced young people up to the age of 26 we are recognising and addressing adverse childhood experiences. As part of our commitment to improving the life chances of young people, we have protected criminal justice social work funding at record levels of around £100 million per year.

In the year ahead we will extend the presumption against short prison sentences to 12 months, once additional safeguards for victims in the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 are in force.

We have responded to the recommendations made in the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee report on its Inquiry into the Use of Remand in Scotland. We recognise that the impact of remand can be similar to that of short prison sentences in terms of disrupting employment, housing and family relationships. While remand is necessary in some cases, including for the protection of the public, we will issue revised guidance and provide additional funding for supervised and supported bail to help ensure that remand is only used where necessary and appropriate.

We will consider carefully the outcomes of parallel reviews by HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland into arrangements for Home Detention Curfew (HDC), including breaches of HDC. We will work with the Scottish Prison Service, Police Scotland and other partners to ensure a continuing focus on public safety and reintegration.

Transforming custody

We will continue to support the work of the Scottish Prison Service in providing services that help to transform the lives of the people in its care.

We will continue to invest in the prison service estate and infrastructure for both men and women, including healthcare facilities. Work is progressing on the development of a new model for the female custodial estate. The new model will offer access to intensive support services, to help women in custody overcome issues such as alcohol, drugs, mental ill-health and domestic abuse trauma which can often drive offending behaviour. The Scottish Prison Service will open the first two community custody units in Dundee and Glasgow and the new national prison by the end of 2020.

Modern justice system

In the coming year we will bring forward legislation for new drug-driving limits covering 17 different drug types to improve the safety of our roads. This will mean Scotland leads the way with drug-driving limits in place and a lower drink-drive limit than the rest of the UK.



The Biometric Data Bill will enhance oversight of biometric data and techniques used for the purposes of justice and community safety

We will introduce a Biometric Data Bill to take forward the recommendations of the Independent Advisory Group on the Use of Biometric Data chaired by John Scott QC.

The Bill will enhance oversight of biometric data and techniques used for the purposes of justice and community safety. It will include provision for the creation of a statutory code of practice covering the acquisition, use, retention and disposal of data including fingerprints, DNA and facial images. We will ensure an appropriately distinct and proportionate approach to capturing biometric data for children aged between 12 and 17.

We will continue to work with others to use technology to transform criminal justice processes including developing digital evidence sharing to help bring cases to swifter conclusion.

We will respond to the recommendations made by the independent review *Rethinking Legal Aid*. While its report set out a 10-year vision for the legal aid system in Scotland, there are a range of improvements that can be made in the short to medium-term to simplify the system while longer-term and more ambitious reforms are developed. These include changes in solicitor fees that reflect new processes in the criminal justice system, and make it easier for solicitors to claim fees from the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

The independent review of the regulation of legal services is due to submit its report to us in the autumn. We will engage with relevant stakeholders and set out how we intend to respond to those recommendations.

Civil law

We will continue to make sure our civil legal system is fit for purpose and in the coming year will consult on a range of measures that will modernise our laws.

We want our law of defamation to be fit for 21st-century Scotland with a clear and accessible framework that balances freedom of expression and protection of individual reputation. We will take the next steps to bring forward legislation to reform the law in this area by consulting on the Scottish Law Commission's Report and draft Bill.

We will consult on the future of civil partnership in Scotland, in light of the recent judgement by the UK Supreme Court on the issue of a couple seeking to enter into a mixed sex civil partnership in England. The consultation, which will be with a view to bringing forward legislation, will launch later this year. Couples already in a civil partnership will be able to remain in that partnership for as long as they both wish.

We will also consult on a fresh approach to the reform of succession law and on implementing the Scottish Law Commission's report on judicial factors (appointed by the court to look after property belonging to someone else) to modernise the law in both of these areas.



The Disclosure Bill will simplify the disclosure system and strike the right balance between strengthened safeguarding and helping people with convictions get back to work

To modernise and improve proportionality in the disclosure system we will introduce a new Disclosure Bill. This will simplify the system and strike the right balance between strengthened safeguarding and helping people with convictions get back to work. We will provide a digital way to improve safeguarding and access disclosures that is more responsive to Scotland's people.

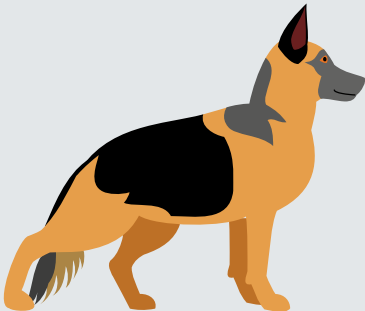
Animal welfare and 'Finn's Law'

We will establish an Animal Welfare Commission to provide expert advice on the welfare of domesticated and wild animals in Scotland and ensure that we maintain high standards of animal welfare after Brexit. We will take steps to allow animals taken into the protection of the Scottish SPCA or local authorities to be rehomed much more quickly and efficiently than at present and introduce increased sentences for the worst types of animal cruelty, including attacks on police dogs, an initiative known as 'Finn's Law'. We will continue work to introduce and reform licensing of animal activities including animal sanctuaries, rehoming centres, breeding and the use of animals in public display or performance.

WE WILL INTRODUCE

'FINN'S LAW'

TO INCREASE SENTENCES FOR
ATTACKS ON POLICE DOGS AND
OTHER SERVICE ANIMALS



Safer Communities

Police Scotland

Police Scotland provides a crucial public service, working across Scotland and internationally to keep our communities safe and protect our most vulnerable. Police officers across Scotland keep communities safe every day and many put their lives on the line as part of their service. We value the contribution that officers and staff make to delivering crucial services across the country, often in extremely challenging circumstances. With a refreshed leadership team at Police Scotland, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and significant change to the SPA Board, there is an opportunity to forge enhanced relationships within and across organisations, working together to deliver improved services for the public.

Policing in Scotland has embarked on an ambitious transformation to implement the 10-year strategy 'Policing 2026: Serving a Changing Scotland'. Significant enhancements in technology and services are being designed in collaboration with those working in frontline policing, communities and partners, supported by strong national specialist functions. This will further enable an empowered and well-equipped police workforce to deliver a service that meets emerging and future needs. In anticipation of the planned review of Policing 2026, in 2019 we will work with partners to revisit the Strategic Police Priorities which set the direction for policing in Scotland. We will increase our focus on collaborative working to ensure the most vulnerable in society receive the support they need.

We will continue to support the SPA and Police Scotland to deliver this transformation. We are protecting the police revenue budget in real terms over the lifetime of the Parliament – meaning an additional £100 million investment over five years – and providing £31 million of reform funding in this financial year. In addition, we have ensured that Police Scotland will retain £25 million following the long-awaited UK Government agreement to enable Police Scotland to recover VAT, putting more funding directly to day-to-day policing.

The SPA has initiated a significant improvement programme to strengthen police governance. We will continue to support the SPA to implement this programme.

On the rare occasion when things do go wrong, we want to make sure that the public have confidence that where things go wrong they know this will be investigated and lessons learned. That is why we have commissioned Rt. Hon Dame Elish Angiolini DBE QC to lead an independent review of complaints handling, investigations and misconduct issues in relation to policing. The review will start work this autumn.

Through the independent review of the impact of policing on communities during the Miners' Strike, which is being led by John Scott QC, Scotland will lead the way in ensuring the experiences of those affected by dispute in the 1980s are properly understood. This represented an extremely turbulent and difficult time for many mining communities in Scotland. The feelings and scars from that time still run deep and there are questions that still need to be answered. The review will bring openness, understanding and a degree of closure to all those involved.

Fire and Rescue

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is changing to meet global challenges such as terrorism and climate change. Our commitment to transform the Service including introducing Rapid Response Vehicles and full-time posts in rural areas is backed by additional spending capacity of £15.5 million in this financial year.

As part of their work to continue to deliver for communities the service will:

- provide public charging points in a number of community fire stations, supporting our move to a low carbon economy
- develop a cadet scheme to encourage young people to be fit and active in their communities and deliver first-aid training for young people
- provide further training and equipment to fire-fighters to ensure they are equipped to deal with the emerging and changing risks faced by our communities

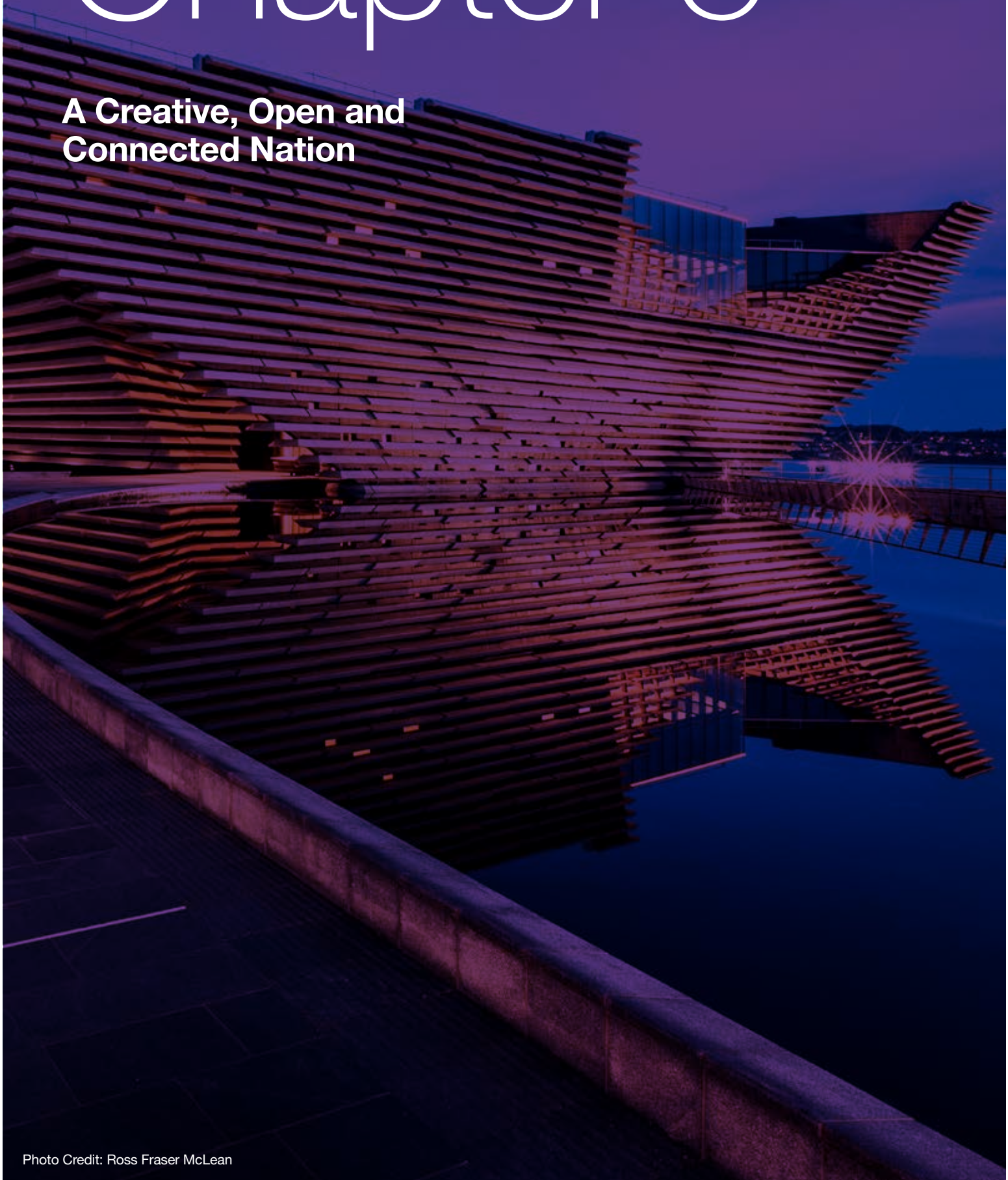


National security

The safety and security of Scotland is a priority and we will continue to work with a range of partners to minimise the risk and impact of terrorist activity. We will work with the emergency response services, local authorities, the UK Government – and most importantly our communities – to ensure that we are appropriately and proportionately protected against all forms of national security threats. We will also continue to strengthen our approach to preventing radicalisation in Scotland.

Chapter 5

A Creative, Open and Connected Nation



Creativity and culture are two of Scotland's greatest strengths. They support individual, community and national prosperity and wellbeing with the potential to innovate, transform and shape a more equal, fair and creative society underpinned by an inclusive economy.

Culture is the way that society expresses itself, seeks meaning and connection. Culture supports us to understand, celebrate and question the past, the present and navigate the future. Culture makes us more aware of ourselves and of others. Our vision is that culture in Scotland is innovative, inclusive and open to the wider world. Cultural excellence – past, present and emerging – is celebrated and is fundamental to our future prosperity and wellbeing. Culture's empowering and transformative potential should be experienced by everyone.

This year Scotland has continued to host world-class events and this month sees the opening of the V&A in Dundee.

We want the rest of the world to see Scotland as a creative, open, welcoming and outward-looking nation, proud of our reputation and optimistic about our future. Where Brexit threatens our ability to connect and prosper we will do what we can for Scotland to flourish. While we take critical action to tackle poverty, inequalities and move towards a carbon neutral society at home we will also work to address these issues on the global stage.

We have embedded the UN Sustainable Development Goals in our new *National Performance Framework*, one of the first countries in the world to do so. These goals will give stretch to our ambition to improve Scotland's wellbeing and increase sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Culture as a force for good

Culture, creativity, heritage, landscapes, languages and traditions express and shape who we are and who we want to be as a nation. There is no one story of culture in or from Scotland, each individual and community has the right to contribute to, and shape, their own culture and society more broadly.

Creativity is key to realising Scotland's potential in capitalising on technological advancements and our move to a low carbon economy. Culture is at the heart of our success and wellbeing individually, in communities and as a country. Our global reputation is enhanced by our creativity and we are known as a welcoming host.

Culture has a role to play in supporting health and wellbeing including tackling social isolation and helping children and adults be resilient in the face of adverse childhood experiences. It can play a preventative role in maintaining good physical and mental health.

A new Culture Strategy for Scotland

Our new Culture Strategy, to be published following extensive consultation, will be culturally and socially ambitious. It is underpinned by three ambitions – transforming through culture, empowering through culture and sustaining culture. It is committed to long-term change through greater collaboration and integration across culture, communities and policy development. We want to bring about a shift in how society and government view culture to realise the full potential of culture for everyone and every community by:

- publishing the final Culture Strategy by the end of 2018 setting out short-term and long-term ambitions, aims and actions
- setting up an International Creative Ambition Programme by May 2019 to support international cultural partnerships that develop new work and support talent through international collaboration and exchange. This is particularly important against the backdrop of Brexit

Growing the cultural economy and infrastructure

Creative industries contribute more than £4 billion to the Scottish economy every year supporting more than 80,000 jobs.

We have seen the direct benefits that our support for culture has on the wider economy. The first £3.7 million allocated by the Production Growth Fund to film and high-end television productions that have based themselves in Scotland has helped deliver more than £60 million estimated spend in the wider economy, providing a pipeline of work and showcasing Scotland and our talent to audiences across the UK and internationally. This year Creative Scotland are allocating a further £2 million through the Production Growth Fund, part of our increased overall funding for the sector. Creative Scotland's new screen unit, Screen Scotland, will support development, production and infrastructure with the aim of doubling production spend and increasing sectoral growth over a period of five years.

Working with its partners in the public, private and third sector, Screen Scotland will also develop a joined-up strategy for skills to support career development, meet future demand, and build on progress in supporting employers where there are skills gaps. As part of this work, we have supported the opening of the National Film and Television School's base in Scotland with the first specialist courses taking place earlier this year. In line with our aim to increase diversity across the sector, the School is providing bursary funding to a third of participants in the first two years to open up opportunities to everyone with the talent and potential, regardless of background.

We will work with creative businesses to identify where there are challenges and opportunities, including in public procurement, and where they need support. We will bring together creative industries and the public sector to share experience, with the aim of promoting growth in the creative and cultural economy through public spending.

Children and young people

From opera for babies to supporting under 25s to realise their creative ambitions, we know how important exposure to cultural activity at a young age is in shaping the creative workforce and audiences of tomorrow.

We are using the 2018 Year of Young People as the catalyst for driving forward the next phase of our 'Time to Shine' National Youth Arts Strategy. At the halfway point of this programme of work the next phase will be led by young people and will open up more opportunities for all ages and art forms no matter your background or where you live.



Learning music enriches the lives of children and young people and can have a significant effect on their skills, confidence and wellbeing. We will respond to the *What's Going on Now?* review of music education being undertaken by the Royal Conservatoire Scotland and work collaboratively with others to find solutions that help ensure instrumental music remains accessible to all.

We will work to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to enjoy cultural opportunities no matter their circumstances or where they live through:

- launching the Cultural Youth Experience Fund with a view to supporting a number of pilots in the next year, with a focus on areas of deprivation, helping to ensure that location is not a barrier to experience the best of Scotland's culture
- our continued support for Sistema Scotland's orchestra projects in communities such as Govanhill, Raploch, Torry and Dundee
- the Youth Music Initiative – which enables more young people to learn about, and enjoy, music
- expanding our work to tackle child poverty by enhancing partnerships with schools and communities in our most deprived areas

School libraries

Our School Library Improvement Fund has supported 15 projects with a total of £100,000 in its first year. The projects being supported include an initiative in East Ayrshire Council secondary schools to equip their school libraries with mental health and wellbeing 'First Aid Kits'. These are bundles of resources, including films, books and writing materials, which pupils can borrow to enjoy as well as to give them support and advice. In the coming year another £450,000 will be invested to support more projects providing children with improved resources to read, learn and support their wellbeing.

Museums, galleries, venues and attractions

We will protect free access to Scotland's national museums and galleries, enjoyed by over 5 million people a year, to make sure everyone is able to experience them. We were an early supporter of the plans for V&A Dundee as a fantastic addition to Scotland's world-class museums, providing £38 million towards the construction of the building which is set to open to the public on 15 September. V&A Dundee is a prime example of our support for culture as a means of regeneration and economic growth and we will continue to provide £1 million a year to the museum for its first 10 years with a further £361,000 in this opening year.

In the coming year we will continue to invest in Scotland's culture through our support for:

- the Burrell Collection Renaissance project
- enhanced exhibition facilities for the Scottish art collection at the Scottish National Gallery
- the Citizens Theatre redevelopment in Glasgow
- the Great Tapestry of Scotland Visitor Centre in Galashiels
- the first phase of the development of the National Collections facility at Granton, helping the regeneration of north-east Edinburgh
- further development of the National Museum of Flight in East Lothian
- proposals to develop fit-for-purpose storage capacity to protect Scotland's Heritage Archives
- the David Livingstone Centre redevelopment in Blantyre
- the development of projects funded through City Region Deals

We will also continue to support Scotland's four science centres, in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow, in line with our STEM Education and Training Strategy and recognising that science, innovation and creativity are embedded in our culture.

Historic environment

Our historic environment contributes £2.3 billion to the Scottish economy every year and supports 34,330 full-time equivalent employees. Historic Environment Scotland will continue to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment and equip it to meet the challenges of climate change. By March 2019 Historic Environment Scotland will have:

- invested at least £14.5 million through historic environment grants
- published a Skills Investment Plan for the historic environment sector and, working with Skills Development Scotland and key partners, developed a traditional skills programme
- provided 75,000 free education visits and 20,000 travel subsidies

Gaelic and Scots

We will continue to support the distinct and significant contribution that Scotland's indigenous languages, Gaelic and Scots, make to the cultural life of Scotland and encourage all authorities, bodies, festivals and arts centres to take account of Gaelic and Scots as they develop and deliver their culture and arts programmes. We will maintain our strong support for MG ALBA and Gaelic arts bodies such as, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, An Comunn Gàidhealach, Ceòlas and others, recognising that the impact of the Gaelic arts provides opportunities for expression, participation and language use.

We will maintain our support for the learning and use of Gaelic by promoting the growth of Gaelic education at all levels, supporting the work of MG ALBA and ensuring Gaelic continues to be included in cultural projects and initiatives. In particular we will support the establishment of new Gaelic schools, the growth of e-Sgoil and new initiatives to support Gaelic in areas of low population. In our support for the Scots language we, along with Creative Scotland, will organise a Scots language conference to mark the UNESCO year of indigenous languages.

Libraries

Our libraries across Scotland can provide a hub for local communities to meet, learn and enjoy free access to books, computers, local archives and Wi-Fi. They are ideally placed to break down barriers to learning and to promote participation in culture at all stages of life. In the coming year we will:

- further develop the library offer for children and young people through an engagement programme which enables every child to become a library member
- build on the success of the 'One Card' pilot for library membership, extending this beyond North East Scotland and paving the way for a national library card
- invest £450,000 in the Public Library Improvement Fund to continue to support innovative ways for people to use public libraries, for example last year, the Fund supported South and North Ayrshire Library Services to evaluate how the use of reading and books can support young people's mental health and wellbeing with their *Mind an Read Well* 'books on prescription' project



Sporting events

We continue to see the legacy of the successful Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games in attracting world-class events to Scotland. Since 2014 we have secured 65 UK and international level sporting events worth £27.5 million to our economy and we will continue to work to bring additional major events to Scotland, the Perfect Stage. In the summer, Glasgow once again excelled itself as the co-host of the 2018 European Championships – with up to 1.03 billion watching from around the world.

2019 will be no different as Scotland will once again host world-class sport. Glasgow will host the European Athletics Indoor Championships in March and welcome the European Short Course Swimming Championships in December 2019.

We will continue to promote Scotland as the Home of Golf through support for the Scottish Open and Ladies Scottish Open and the 2019 Solheim Cup at Gleneagles and provide new opportunities for women and young people to participate in the sport.

Scotland's festivals

We have a proud history of support for festivals through our Expo Fund – and this year marks a decade of that investment, totalling £21 million. This year, in addition to supporting international festivals in Edinburgh, Glasgow's Celtic Connections will receive funding that will support performers from Scotland to make the most of a career in music.



This year sees the first investments in our Platforms for Creative Excellence (PLACE) Programme, a partnership with Edinburgh Festivals and City of Edinburgh Council to maintain Edinburgh's status as the world's foremost festival city and support wider access to showcase and enjoy talent as part of the Festival and beyond. The Programme will invest £15 million over the next five years.

Our winter festivals continue to go from strength to strength and in 2018 we will deliver the inaugural St Andrew's Fair Saturday, boosting community celebrations and providing opportunities to support social causes as a positive response to the commercialism of 'Black Friday' and 'Cyber Monday'.

In line with our STEM Strategy we will also continue to support our science festivals, in towns, cities and regions across Scotland, making science, innovation and creativity accessible to a wide public audience, as well as inspiring our young people.

Year of Young People 2018

The Year of Young People 2018 has given young people new and powerful opportunities to have their ideas, voices and opinions heard and acted upon. It has focused the lens on their achievements and talents and given them a spotlight to show Scotland what they can do.

Young people's voices have been at the forefront, with more than 2,000 young people involved in shaping the Year – designing, developing and delivering this world-first initiative. This Year has challenged our thinking, given us new perspectives and has been the catalyst to enhance Scotland's relationship with our young people, creating respect and a better understanding between generations.

The engagement of young people in policy development and delivery has been key to the success of the Year with progress across themes chosen to be important by young people during the planning stages of the Year. This co-design activity has included; the Youth Commission on Mental Health which will continue throughout 2018 and beyond with young people leading an in-depth investigation of child and adolescent mental health services to improve services and support; the creation of a Scottish Learner Panel which will provide, for the first time, a national forum for young people to directly influence education policy in Scotland; young people from across Scotland have engaged in the development of the Culture Strategy; and have the opportunity to take part in the first ever First Minister's Question Time for Children and Young People – an event which will be designed and delivered by young people themselves, providing a platform for their voices to be heard at the highest level.

Valuable progress is being made to ensure Scotland is the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up by making sure they have a say in their future. The long-term commitment from the Scottish Government is to continue to engage young people directly in policy-making which will ensure that young people continue to be empowered and know their voice still matters beyond 2018.

Scotland's place in the world

On the brink of the UK leaving the European Union, Scotland's role as an open, connected country is more important than ever. We will build on the early success of our invitation to the world that is the 'Scotland is Now' campaign and look for new opportunities for our businesses to grow and to welcome others to live, work, invest, study and visit Scotland.

Our network of offices outside Scotland – now expanded to include Berlin, Paris and Ottawa – will continue to evolve and mature, drawing on a wide range of contacts, expertise and partnerships to deepen our impact in key markets and encourage collaborations. The network will work to identify and create opportunities for Scotland's cultural and creative offering, complementing trade, investment and influencing activity.



In the last year, we successfully hosted an Arctic Circle Forum, which further strengthened Scotland's growing relationship with Arctic partners. We published *All Points North: The Scottish Government's Nordic Baltic Policy Statement* promoting greater policy exchange and collaboration with countries across the region. We have deepened our engagement with China, India, Japan, the United States and Canada, securing further investment in Scotland and new policy exchanges that will provide shared benefits.

In April, we signed a new and updated Partnership Agreement with the Government of Malawi, during the visit of the President of Malawi to Scotland. In that, our two Governments committed to realise the vision of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and to do so through our 150-year-old tradition of partnership working.

In the coming year we will conduct a review of Fair Trade in Scotland to inform action to further grow sales of Fair Trade goods, support growing awareness of the Fair Trade movement and contribute to Scotland's role as a good global citizen.

We will raise the profile of Scotland's transition to a low carbon economy, including through the European Commission's Clean Energy for EU Islands initiative, promoting our expertise on energy transition and identifying opportunities to share best practice with islands in the EU and beyond. We will also deepen co-operation with the Danish Government following the signing earlier this year of a Memorandum of Understanding covering heat decarbonisation, district heating and energy efficiency in buildings whilst continuing to develop links to other European countries to promote learning, policy and knowledge exchange in this area.

Playing our part in addressing global international challenges

Our recent inaugural *Contribution to International Development Report* sets out how we support the attainment of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals outside Scotland including how Scottish Government funded projects have increased professional care delivery of births from 73% to 91% and reduced the health risks associated with pregnancy in areas of Malawi. In the past year our new Humanitarian Emergencies Fund supported those affected by humanitarian food crises in East Africa and South Asia and the Rohingya and Democratic Republic of the Congo refugee crises. In the coming year we will complete our competitive funding rounds under our International Development Fund, with a new round of projects in Malawi starting in October to join our cohort of projects in Zambia and Rwanda. We will always work in collaboration with organisations here in Scotland and in our partner countries.

We will continue to build capacity across our international development partners in Scotland, working together to enhance our impact and safeguard those with whom we come into contact. Building on our *Safeguarding Policy*, published in March 2018, we will provide a proper safeguarding framework to support and hold to account organisations we fund to deliver international

development. This framework will promote a culture of zero tolerance to any form of exploitation or abuse. We will also encourage smaller charities to apply for funding from our international development Small Grants Programme, to focus on developing and strengthening their own safeguarding policies.

Our 'Beyond Aid' agenda recognises that some of the greatest improvements we can make to the lives of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people are beyond traditional international development work. This year that includes the establishment of a Scottish Global Health Co-ordination Unit to support our work on improving healthcare in developing countries, in particular our partner countries. This will provide capacity and expertise to the co-ordination of health partnership work in our NHS.

Our action on climate change, almost halving our greenhouse gas emissions, with greater ambition to come in the Climate Change Bill in response to the UN Paris Agreement, is the single most powerful action that Scotland can take as a good global citizen. In the coming year we will continue to invest in the Climate Justice Fund, providing £21 million to some of the world's poorest people by 2021 which includes supporting the Climate Challenge Programme Malawi, backed by £3.2 million of funding, to support communities in southern Malawi to adapt to the worst effects of climate change and improve access to food, water and energy.

We have a moral obligation to offer a place of safety to people fleeing conflict and persecution. We will continue to support the Syrian Resettlement Programme. Since 2015 Scotland has welcomed around 2,375 refugees from Syria, around half being under 18 years of age. Scotland's approach to mitigating adverse childhood experiences will ensure that these children have the support they need to have a bright future.

In January 2018 we published the second *New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy*, supporting the vision of a welcoming Scotland, where people seeking protection from persecution and human rights abuses are able to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive. In the coming year, working with partners including COSLA and the Scottish Refugee Council, we will:

- work to develop opportunities for refugees to build their skills and employment options, including through volunteering and work placements
- support refugees to have a voice in improving their health and wellbeing through participation in local and national health forums
- provide opportunities for refugees to produce work for, and to participate in, cultural, heritage and sports activities

International role of our universities

Our universities have an important role in promoting Scotland as an open and connected country. In addition to our support for work on international research collaborations, international student recruitment and transnational education we will work with others to build a programme of overseas market engagements involving universities, research pools and innovation centres. We will consider further support for international research collaboration and two-way researcher exchanges, as well as bilateral agreements with equivalent funding bodies in European and other international countries to facilitate our universities to collaborate.

We will continue to work with our universities to develop Scotland's Saltire Scholarships to attract talented students from Canada, China, India, Pakistan and the USA and to develop a network of influential alumni. We will expand the programme from academic year 2019-20 to include applicants from Japan and will review the scope and administration of the programme to ensure it continues to support Scotland's broader international priorities.

And we will promote the widening of access to international opportunities for students in Scotland by working with the British Council and others to make it easier for those from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in international mobility programmes.



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