

Spotlight on Scotland

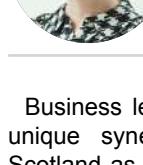


Scenic view of Edinburgh cityscape in Scotland.

A Strategic Bridge to Europe

Pivoting toward next-generation sustainable industries, Scotland transformed into one of Europe's most inviting destinations for innovation and R&D

Few places weave human talent, scientific innovation, and abundant natural resources as seamlessly as Scotland. The combination allows ambition to take root across a diverse range of industries from finance to space, food and drink to energy, and everything in between. The nation's dynamic ecosystem outperforms its scale, creating lasting prosperity. With just 5.5 million people, its economic output reached roughly £220 billion in 2024, and over the past decade Scotland attracted more foreign investment projects than any other part of the UK outside of London, while securing a vast share of R&D-driven investment. It is hailed for its business-friendly environment, from its robust legal and regulatory framework, modern infrastructure, resilient supply chains, and overall cost-effectiveness, to its highly educated workforce and strong networks that fuel breakthroughs. Today, Scotland is one of Europe's compelling destinations for long-term growth.



Sara Thiam
CEO
Prosper

Business leaders often point to the unique synergistic collaboration in Scotland as another force behind the region's momentum. "Both the UK and Scottish governments are committed to positioning Scotland strongly in the global marketplace. Our 'Team Scotland' approach brings together business, government, academia, and civic society behind a shared vision—giving investors a clear and confident landing point," stated Sara Thiam, CEO of Prosper, an organization driving economic policy and positive change in Scotland.

Thiam continued, "With major R&D investment driving high-value innovation, we're removing barriers so Scotland, although a small nation, can continue to play a big role in the global economy."

Education and Research

Boasting one of the most highly educated workforces in Europe with more than half its working population pursuing further study, Scotland punches above its weight in scientific and technological progress, landing breakthroughs while other countries are still finding their footing. The region has 19 higher education institutions, one of the highest concentrations in Europe. Its universities rank first in the UK for cost-to-benefit ratio and second globally for international

student enrollment per capita. They attract researchers and students from more than 180 countries and generate one of the largest concentrations of academic research per capita globally.

Universities like Edinburgh, Glasgow, St Andrews, Strathclyde, and Aberdeen are leaders in informatics, precision medicine, quantum technologies, and energy systems. They're supported by a strong pipeline of venture funding and specialized incubators that bridge academic discoveries with commercial markets, historically leading to a significant share of formal spinouts.

For instance, RoslinCT spun out from the University of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute. The company develops and manufactures cutting-edge cell therapies. Working with scientists and pharmaceutical partners from around the world, RoslinCT helps turn early-stage revelations from gene-edited cells to next-generation regenerative treatments, leading to therapies that can be tested and eventually brought to market to improve patients' lives.

Across sectors, from low-carbon heating systems to AI and supercomputing, Scotland's academic research feeds high-impact, commercially viable innovations that strengthen the economy and tackle global challenges.

Diverse Industries

While future-focused industries fuel Scotland's research landscape, its established sectors, notably financial services, are evolving just as rapidly, with Edinburgh becoming an influential fintech cluster. Other heritage industries are adapting, with a shift from oil and gas to decarbonization and renewables, helping Scotland in the energy transition.

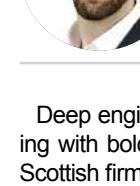
The strength of Scotland's energy sector offers a glimpse of the country's economic strategy in motion. Long before many of its peers, Scotland identified the energy transition as both an existential priority and a generational economic opportunity that is capable of reshaping its industries, creating skilled jobs, and driving the nation toward its goal of net-zero emissions by 2045, five years ahead of most of the world.

Other growth sectors include life sciences, anchored by global firms and a deep bench of start-ups working in cell therapy, diagnostics, and pharmaceuticals. Major industry players are collaborating with new entrants, allowing Scotland to become one of Europe's expanding life sciences clusters.

Scotland spent the past two decades shaping the creative and digital arts arena, including the modern gaming world. It's home to the creation of *Grand Theft Auto*, a franchise that re-

Space - the Final Frontier

Space and satellites, once an unlikely field for Scotland, is now a blooming industry. Scotland produces more small satellites than any country in Europe. Reuben Aitken, the Managing Director of Scottish Development International, the region's trade and investment agency, described the transition. He stated, "Scotland's space sector is evolving into a rare end-to-end ecosystem, with manufacturing, space data, and imminent launch capability; it is an exciting part of our economy."



Reuben Aitken
Managing Director
Scottish Development International

Deep engineering traditions are blending with bold space-related innovations. Scottish firms now span the entire space chain from building nanosatellites to designing vertical launch vehicles, analyzing Earth-observation data, and developing proprietary research infrastructure. Rocket companies like Orbex and Skyrora are developing orbital-capable vehicles. Meanwhile, startups such as Alba Orbital and AAC Clyde Space are designing tiny standardized satellites, some as small as 5 centimeters to enable easier access to orbit for a constellation of possible uses.

Ambitious launch infrastructure is also moving through the next stages of development with five spaceports planned across Scotland. The Sutherland spaceport is targeted to be carbon-neutral, part of an effort to pair Scotland's ambitions with sustainability. A local innovation supporting this goal is the pioneering of green rocket fuel that will emit up to 90% less carbon.

On the data side, Edinburgh is nicknamed Europe's "space-data capital," where firms mine Earth-observation data for application across a range of industries such as forestry, agriculture, maritime monitoring, and even energy transition.

Scotland has not merely entered the space race; instead, it is shaping a distinct trajectory, helping make the orbital economy a reality.

Transatlantic Ties

Few economic relationships matter more to Scotland than its ties with the United States. The US is Scotland's largest source of inward investment, with American companies making up around a quarter of all foreign investment in the country. According to recent data, more than 700 US-owned businesses operate across Scotland, employing roughly 115,000 people in high-value sectors.

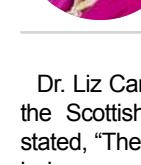
Aitken added, "Scotland's strength

lies in its unified, collaborative networks; one door in, and every resource is at your side. For American firms, that makes Scotland not only an easy place to do business, but a launchpad for expanding into Europe."

But the path runs both ways; the US is also one of Scotland's core export markets. Roughly 16% of Scotland's international exports go to the US, making it the country's second largest overseas marketplace after the European Union. Scotland's biggest export category to the US is food and drink; led overwhelmingly by Scotch whisky. Alongside whisky's dominant role, Scotland is also seeing steady growth in exports of red meat, while seafood — particularly salmon — continues to strengthen its position as one of the country's most important shipments to the US.

Cultural Connections

Cultural affinity reinforces existing economic ties. Millions of Americans trace part of their ancestry to Scotland, fostering familiarity and enthusiasm for deeper commercial engagement. As trade relationships evolve and American investors reassess supply chains, Scotland remains a stable, skilled, English-speaking base for international business.



Dr. Liz Cameron
CEO
Scottish Chambers of Commerce

Dr. Liz Cameron, Director and CEO of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce stated, "The Scottish diaspora in the US is immense, and includes a lineage of American presidents with Irish or Scottish heritage. This creates a unique foundation of trust, shared history, and impact. Scots have the humility as a business community to learn from others and build a partnership that is achieved by knowledge-transfer and strengthened by the steady exchange of ideas, investment, and opportunity. For instance in Edinburgh, we have one of the largest centers for robotics and AI in all of the UK. There is a tremendous amount of opportunity to collaborate with the US in these fields in particular."

While Edinburgh and Glasgow often capture the spotlight, Scotland's economic growth story extends well beyond its major cities, reaching communities across the entire country. Regions such as the Highlands, Midlothian, Stirling, and North Lanarkshire are forging their own path, contributing to Scotland's wider economic narrative and appeal. They offer significant advantages with more available land for expansion, tight-knit innovation clusters, coupled with lower operating costs.

For investors seeking a mix of stability, ingenuity, international connectivity, and collaboration, Scotland has become something rare: a small country with global impact that is humble, deeply capable, and increasingly impossible to overlook. ■

The Energy Transition: From Oil to Renewables

For half a century, North Sea oil and gas was paramount for Scotland's economy, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and delivering hundreds of billions of pounds in tax revenue. Now, as the nation advances toward its 2045 net-zero target, that legacy has become the platform for an energy transition as consequential as the oil boom itself.

Renewables are rapidly stepping into the foreground. David Whitehouse, CEO of Offshore Energies UK, noted how Scotland's traditional offshore skills in oil and gas, shaped over five decades, are being redeployed in floating wind, carbon storage, and hydrogen. "The ingenuity that defined the North Sea is opening global opportunities and positioning the UK to deliver cleaner,

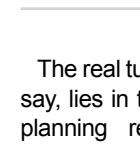
reliable, competitive energy for generations," said Whitehouse.



David Whitehouse
CEO
Offshore Energies UK

Investment is gathering behind that shift. Scottish Development International (SDI) estimates £3.7 billion in investment-ready projects from energy to climate tech, with offshore wind and hydrogen extending the country's historic role in global energy markets. "With 40 gigawatts of offshore wind and

more than 20 gigawatts of floating wind in development, we're a top-ten market worldwide for offshore wind," said SDI's Managing Director, Reuben Aitken.



Morag Watson
Director of Onshore
Scottish Renewables

The real turning point, industry leaders say, lies in the policy architecture, from planning reforms, grid coordination, and government-industry alignment that is translating targets into buildable projects. Morag Watson, Director of

Onshore for Scottish Renewables, the voice of Scotland's renewable energy industry, discussed the acceleration. She mentioned, "Scotland leads with its floating offshore wind pipeline and plans to double onshore wind by 2030. With clearer planning and policy certainty, we're scaling renewables and shaping a hub for low-carbon growth."

The message from boardrooms and fabrication yards alike is clear. Scotland's transition is no longer theoretical. A growing pipeline of projects, backed by capital and half a century of offshore expertise, is pushing the country toward a new role of not just decarbonizing at home but exporting energy, technology, and know-how to markets far beyond its windswept shores. ■

From Scottish Waters to American Tables



Scottish shellfish is top quality, needing little effort to taste its best.

Scotland's coastline stretches for over 11,000 miles. Its cold, clear waters have supported generations of fishing families, their livelihoods built on a deep respect for and commitment to nature. That relationship is evident with every fish caught and every shellfish harvested, and is at the heart of what makes Scottish seafood among the best in the world.

Seafood Scotland, the national organization championing the country's seafood sector, works hard to ensure this heritage thrives in a modern world. Representing fishers, farmers, processors, and exporters, the organization supports an industry that supplies over 100 countries – including a growing number of American buyers who recognize Scotland's seafood for its outstanding quality and appreciate the reliability of its supply.



Scotland's cold, clear waters contribute to the high quality of its seafood.

Recent discussions around tariffs have tested global trade relationships, but Scotland's seafood community is no stranger to navigating uncertainty. From Brexit to changing market conditions, the industry has consistently demonstrated agility and collaboration in the face of change.

Donna Fordyce, Chief Executive of Seafood Scotland, said, "Our sector

has always risen to meet challenges. When volatility hits, we focus on what we can control: building relationships, staying flexible, and ensuring quality never wavers."

In April this year, Seafood Scotland visited New York City to celebrate Tartan Week, the annual celebration of Scottish culture, and met with leading buyers, including a fish market servicing around 80% of the city's Michelin-starred restaurants. The organization also regularly visits the US as part of its relationship with StarChefs, working with the next generation of Michelin-starred chefs to give them an opportunity to use their culinary genius to create fresh, new seafood dishes using the finest seafood Scotland has to offer.

"Despite shifting tariff and trade dynamics, we work to ensure these key relationships last with chefs and industry organizations. They're grounded in trust and mutual respect for premium Scottish seafood, renowned for its exceptional taste and provenance," said Matthew Hurst, Head of Trade Marketing for the Americas at Seafood Scotland.

"Every time we visit the US, the feedback we get from chefs and consumers is consistently positive. We're constantly working with the market to ensure we're meeting the needs of US customers and providing them with top-quality seafood," stated Hurst.

As global trade evolves, Scottish seafood remains a steady presence. Its suppliers listen, adapt, and work hand in hand with American partners. From the rugged shores of the Scottish coast to the vibrant kitchens of New York, Scotland's seafood is a testament to quality, collaboration, and care.

Q&A: Donna Fordyce, Chief Executive of Seafood Scotland

Each year, Scottish fleets bring in roughly 560,000 tons of seafood from some of the most bountiful waters in Europe. Where the warm Gulf Stream meets the cold northern seas, the clash of currents creates nutrient-rich conditions, yielding seafood prized for its depth of flavor and texture. In the Scottish seafood sector, sustainability is hugely important; the country holds a concentration of MSC-certified fisheries. Automation, low-carbon transport, and real-time tracking now link Scotland's boats and farms directly to global buyers, delivering the same just-caught freshness in Scotland to chefs in Boston, Tokyo, and Paris.



Donna Fordyce
CEO
Seafood Scotland

Scotland supplies over 65 different types of seafood to customers in more than 100 countries. What makes it stand out in a competitive global market?

Our seafood speaks for itself in terms of quality, but it's really about the people and the process behind it. Whether wild-caught or farmed, Scotland's seafood is produced under some of the most rigorous sustainability standards in the world. Many of our fishermen are second or third-generation, and see themselves as custodians of the sea. This long-term stewardship safeguards not just catching fish for today, but preserving stocks for the future. They're using onboard cameras and LED lighting to target specific species and cut bycatch, while the Fisheries Innovation and Sustainability group unites scientists, industry, and government to turn research into real-world change.

What is behind the growing appetite for Scottish seafood in the US?

American buyers and chefs value authenticity and traceability, and Scottish seafood delivers both. Scottish salmon alone saw US sales rise by 110% in the first half of last year compared to the year prior. Beyond salmon, we're seeing strong interest in value-added products like breaded haddock and

shellfish, including langoustines and scallops. Once people taste Scottish seafood, they immediately recognize the difference. My message to partners and consumers is simple: taste the product. Scottish seafood is fresh, flavorful, and responsibly sourced. It's not just food from Scotland, it's a reflection of who we are: proud, resilient, and deeply connected to the sea.

If you could introduce one Scottish recipe to American kitchens, what would it be?

Cullen Skink is a traditional Scottish soup made with smoked haddock, potatoes, and cream. Think of it as Scotland's clam chowder: rich, hearty, and comforting.



Many seafood processors use traditional Scottish methods of curing fish and making it ready to eat.

How to Make Cullen Skink:

Melt 25g of unsalted butter, ideally from the Isle of Mull or Aberdeenshire, in a heavy pan and gently soften one finely chopped Ailsa Craig onion until translucent. Add 400g of peeled and diced floury potatoes, covering them with just enough water, and simmer for about 15 minutes until tender. Meanwhile, poach 350g of Arbroath-smoked haddock, preferably undyed, in 300ml of whole Scottish milk for 5 minutes, just until it flakes. Remove the fish, peel off the skin, and reserve the milk. Pour the warm milk over the cooked potatoes, stir in the flaked haddock, season with sea salt and cracked black pepper, and add a splash of Scottish double cream. Garnish with a handful of fresh parsley or snipped chives, and serve with Scottish oatcakes or crusty bread. ■

Born and Reared: The Work Behind a Scottish Staple

With global demand rising, Scottish red meat producers are uniting tradition with sustainability and meticulous standards



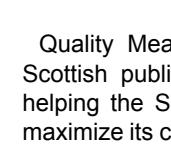
Grazing across Scotland's wide, weather-brushed pastures, sheep and cattle embody a principle the industry holds close: exceptional red meat begins with an exceptional quality of life.

For generations, Scottish red meat has been synonymous with quality, appearing on tables from local pubs to Michelin-starred kitchens abroad. Chefs select its consistency and character, meat that speaks of a place where natural abundance meets precision. Each cut carries not just flavor, but the story of a country that has made quality its calling card.

Scottish beef, lamb, and pork are celebrated for delivering protein that is as nourishing as it is distinct, reflecting the rhythm of Scotland's landscapes, rolling hills, rugged glens, and the careful supervision of farmers who have refined their craft. Beyond taste, the sector embodies sustainability and responsibility, marrying traditional practices with modernity to produce meat that resonates far beyond the plate.

Scottish cows enjoy fresh air, fertile soil, and vast pastures, with breeds like Aberdeen Angus and Luing based in Scotland's more rugged environments. Scottish sheep graze on open grassy hillsides and heather, working in harmony with nature to manage the biodiverse landscape. While Scottish pigs are cherished for being raised on farms using carefully balanced, locally sourced feed, ensuring ani-

mals with unwavering standards and welfare. Yet tradition alone no longer defines the sector. Across the supply chain, traceability and low-carbon logistics are reshaping what it means to produce food sustainably.



Sarah Millar
Chief Executive
Quality Meat Scotland

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS), the Scottish public body responsible for helping the Scottish red meat sector maximize its contribution to Scotland's economy, plays a vital role in the industry's continued global success. When the wider network of suppliers and services was factored in, Scotland's red meat industry contributed an estimated £3.5 billion to the local economy and over £1 billion in added value last year, in large part thanks to QMS's efforts. Sarah Millar, Chief Executive of QMS stated, "Our tagline of 'Born and Reared in Scotland' acknowledges that animal welfare and provenance increasingly drives pur-

chasing decisions. The QMS certification is one of the most comprehensive whole-of-life assurance schemes in the UK, where every stage of the supply chain is independently inspected. This rigorous program tracks Scottish beef, pork, and lamb from farm to fork, guaranteeing standards of animal welfare, traceability, sustainability, and consistent quality."

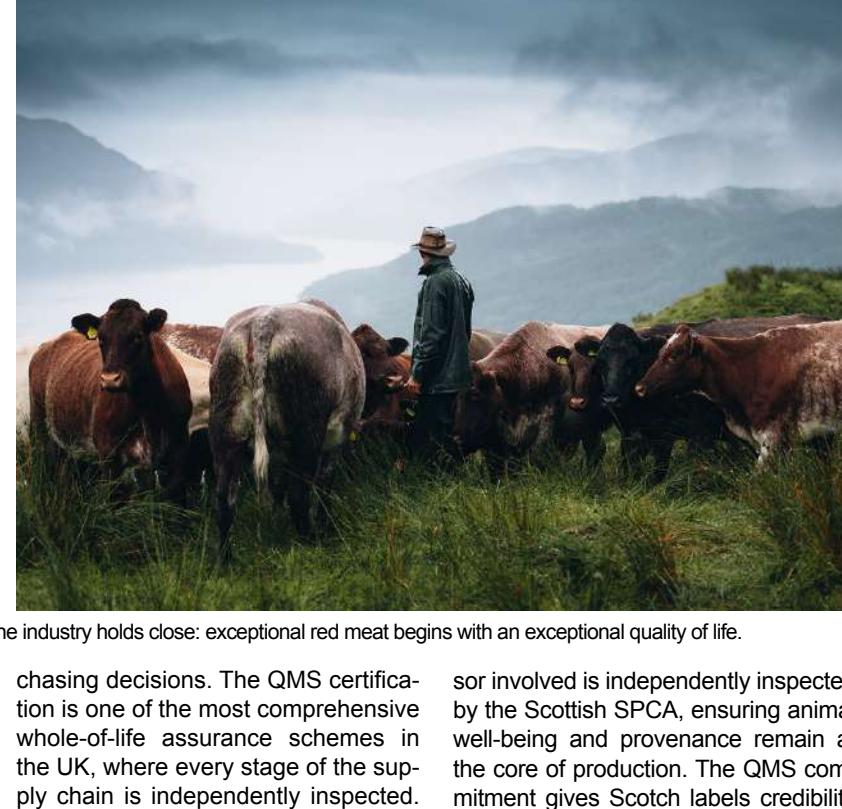
"The QMS certification is one of the most comprehensive whole-of-life assurance schemes in the UK, where every stage of the supply chain is independently inspected."

Over 90% of Scotland's red meat producers participate voluntarily in the assurance scheme, driven by a belief that quality is earned, not assumed, and that each step in the process carries a shared responsibility. Millar continued, "Livestock must be born, reared, and processed entirely in Scotland to carry the branding. Every farm and pro-

sor involved is independently inspected by the Scottish SPCA, ensuring animal well-being and provenance remain at the core of production. The QMS commitment gives Scotch labels credibility and international recognition, acting as a symbol of trust linking producers and consumers across continents."

Millar continued, "Scotch beef and lamb also hold UK Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) status, a legal protection that prevents imitation and preserves authenticity. This designation is awarded to products that meet strict standards, linking their quality to Scotland's unique landscape, climate, and farming traditions. It's a distinction that reflects centuries of skill and respect, and one that secures Scotland's place among the world's premier red meat producers."

In an era when consumers want to know not just where their food comes from but how it was raised, QMS provides that reassurance. Its standards emphasize environmental protection, ethical husbandry, and sustainable land use. From the green pastures of the Highlands to restaurants around the globe, the QMS Scotch brand stands as proof that integrity, sustainability, and taste can share the same plate. ■



Midlothian: Powering Scotland's Innovation Economy

On Edinburgh's doorstep, Midlothian combines science clusters, computing capabilities, and connectivity to fuel world-class breakthroughs



Photo: the University of Edinburgh

The UK's next-generation national supercomputer will be based in Midlothian in the University of Edinburgh's Easter Bush Campus, backed by a £750 million government investment.

About twenty minutes from Edinburgh Airport lies a county where history echoes through the hills. Rolling green pastures unfold beneath misty silhouettes of the Pentlands, lakes mirror skies brushed with northern light, and quiet trails invite wanderers to trade city streets for birdsong. Here, ancient stones whisper at Rosslyn Chapel, miners' lamps still glow in the halls of the National Mining Museum, and every path feels like a bridge between Scotland's industrious past and its untamed natural beauty. Well-connected by the Borders Railway yet worlds away in spirit, Midlothian offers a unique balance between proximity to Scotland's capital city and the serene surroundings.



Midlothian Science Zone, located just outside Edinburgh, is home to one of Europe's leading hubs for animal science research and innovation.

A county steeped in mining heritage, Midlothian has transformed into one of Scotland's most dynamic, well-connected destinations for foreign direct investment. Ranked Scotland's fastest-growing region by population, Midlothian is building its future on a foundation of leading research institutions, advanced infrastructure, and proactive government collaboration. Central to this momentum is the £1.3 billion Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, an engine driving new investment in transport, housing, skills, and innovation. Through this alliance, Midlothian is not simply benefiting from its proximity to the capital, but actively shaping the region into a global hub for enterprise.

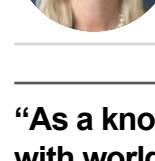
Research and Sustainability

Midlothian's research economy thrives on diversity and collaboration. At its core lies the Midlothian Science Zone, a nexus of world-class institutes, science parks,

and forward-thinking enterprises that form one of Europe's foremost life sciences clusters. Here, companies such as Ingenua and AliveDx, based at the BioCampus, share more than infrastructure; they share an ecosystem built on partnership, proximity, and purpose. The zone is also home to the University of Edinburgh's Royal School of Veterinary Studies, the Roslin Institute, and a constellation of other R&D facilities with discoveries that ripple far beyond Scotland's borders. From biotechnology and animal health to agri-tech, food security, and diagnostics, this hub turns research into real-world solutions, fueling investment, nurturing talent, and creating high-value industries and spin-offs with global impact.

Building on its reputation for innovation and sustainable development, Midlothian is also transforming the region's energy landscape. Midlothian Council launched the Business Carbon Charter and the Green Pledge to help local enterprises begin their journey toward net zero. These initiatives provide guidance and support as the region works to achieve its ambitious Net Zero 2045 target, positioning Midlothian at the forefront of sustainable business practices.

In a joint venture with Vattenfall, Midlothian Council operates an energy services company, Midlothian Energy Ltd. Harnessing heat generated from its energy-from-waste plant, the council is pioneering sustainable energy solutions in the region. With this approach, the company delivers district heating to the Shawfair development, and provides a reliable, low-carbon energy source for local homes and businesses, exemplifying Midlothian's approach to circular clean-energy solutions.



Dr. Grace Vickers
CEO
Midlothian Council

"As a knowledge economy with world-class life sciences research and development, the level of investment we've seen is second to none."

Dr. Grace Vickers, Chief Executive of Midlothian Council, stated, "As a

knowledge economy with world-class life sciences research and development, the level of investment we've seen is second to none. We're building housing rapidly to support the jobs we're creating, and as part of our Growth Deal, we're becoming the data capital of Europe, with a £750 million investment in a new supercomputer that will be the most powerful in all the United Kingdom."

Supercomputing

For more than three decades, the University of Edinburgh has stood at the heart of the UK's supercomputing excellence, driving scientific discovery nationwide. The UK's next-generation national supercomputer is set to be based in Midlothian, in the University of Edinburgh's Easter Bush Campus. Backed by the £750 million government investment, the facility will deliver computing on a world-leading scale, 50 times faster than any of the UK's existing machines, positioning Midlothian as a cornerstone for Britain's digital and AI revolution. For innovators across sectors from fintech and health to climate research, it offers a rare environment where public investment, institutional expertise, and technological ambition can converge to turn data into trailblazing discovery.

Highly-Educated Talent Pool

A strong network of education and skills partnerships supports the region's talent pipeline. In addition to the University of Edinburgh's campus in Midlothian, other institutions such as Edinburgh College, SRUC, Newbattle Abbey College, and Doctoral College UK collaborate to provide advanced training, opportunities, and professional development programs. These initiatives enhance local skills and expertise, while also helping to retain graduates in the area, ensuring a steady flow of talent to support Midlothian's growing businesses and industries.

Vickers stated, "Looking forward, we want to grow the life sciences corridor linking the Scottish Borders through Midlothian into the capital, clustering businesses to further accelerate growth. We aim to do this sustainably, aligning with net zero ambitions. The combination of highly-skilled workers, innovation, strategic location, and environmental responsibility makes Midlothian attractive

and positions the region for continued economic growth."

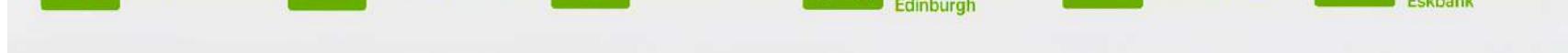
Building on that vision, Midlothian has developed its Science Zone not in competition with the wider region but as a complementary hub, a place where local ambitions have the space, and modern facilities to connect with global opportunity.

Locally Sourced, Globally Inspired

Midlothian's food and drink sectors are also flourishing and capture the region's creative spirit. Visitors can wander through the lavender-lined paths of the Secret Garden Distillery, where small-batch gins are infused with botanicals grown on site, or taste Stewart Brewing's award-winning craft beers, and family-run Macsween's famed haggis or their world's first vegetarian haggis. These local gems are emblematic of a county turning local culinary craft into scalable industries. The area's excellent transport connectivity, with direct access to main road corridors, the Borders Railway, quick connections to Edinburgh Airport for international travel, and easy reach of Scotland's ports, has helped local operations export internationally with ease.

Local Visionaries

One standout local story is Inclusive Play, a Midlothian SME that exports to the USA and is considered a leading designer and developer of accessible playground equipment, allowing children of all abilities to play together. Paul Hoenigmann, Managing Director of Inclusive Play, stated, "Midlothian's business ecosystem gives companies like ours a real advantage. There is such a strong engineering and manufacturing background here, from welding and fabrication to galvanizing and painting. These skills are critical for what we do. At Inclusive Play, we try to keep things local wherever possible. For instance, we source our steel and main materials from Scottish suppliers, and last year we even set up our own manufacturing business to bring more of the process in-house. This decision came from a desire to reduce transport, tighten our supply chain, and control our carbon footprint. It's not just about efficiency; it's about sustainability and community. Scotland has the resources, the talent, and the mindset to support innovative companies like ours, and that makes it a brilliant place to grow." ■

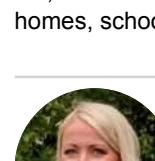


Investing on the Capital's Doorstep

Midlothian offers a rare balance of connectivity, affordability, and space to grow, combining seamless links to Edinburgh, the Scottish Borders and the north of England, with lower operating costs and the capacity for sustainable expansion. For global companies seeking a base that is both strategic and scalable, it represents one of the most compelling propositions in Scotland's investment landscape.

Kelly Parry, Council Leader of Midlothian Council, reflected on the region's transformation. She stated, "Midlothian is at a pivotal moment in our economic journey. We're Scotland's fastest-growing region, with our population projected to rise by 13.8% by 2028, compared to just 1.8% across Scotland. That growth brings both opportunity and responsibility; it fuels

local demand, expands our labor market, and increases the need for new homes, schools, and services.



Kelly Parry
Council Leader
Midlothian Council

"I've met with a number of companies eager to relocate here, drawn by our central location, strong infrastructure, and our outward-looking ethos. It is true that Midlothian is open for business, and we are ready to capture new opportunities and build lasting partnerships. Strengthening ties with America is part of that vision; it's a mutually ben-

eficial relationship, and there's never been a better time to invest here."

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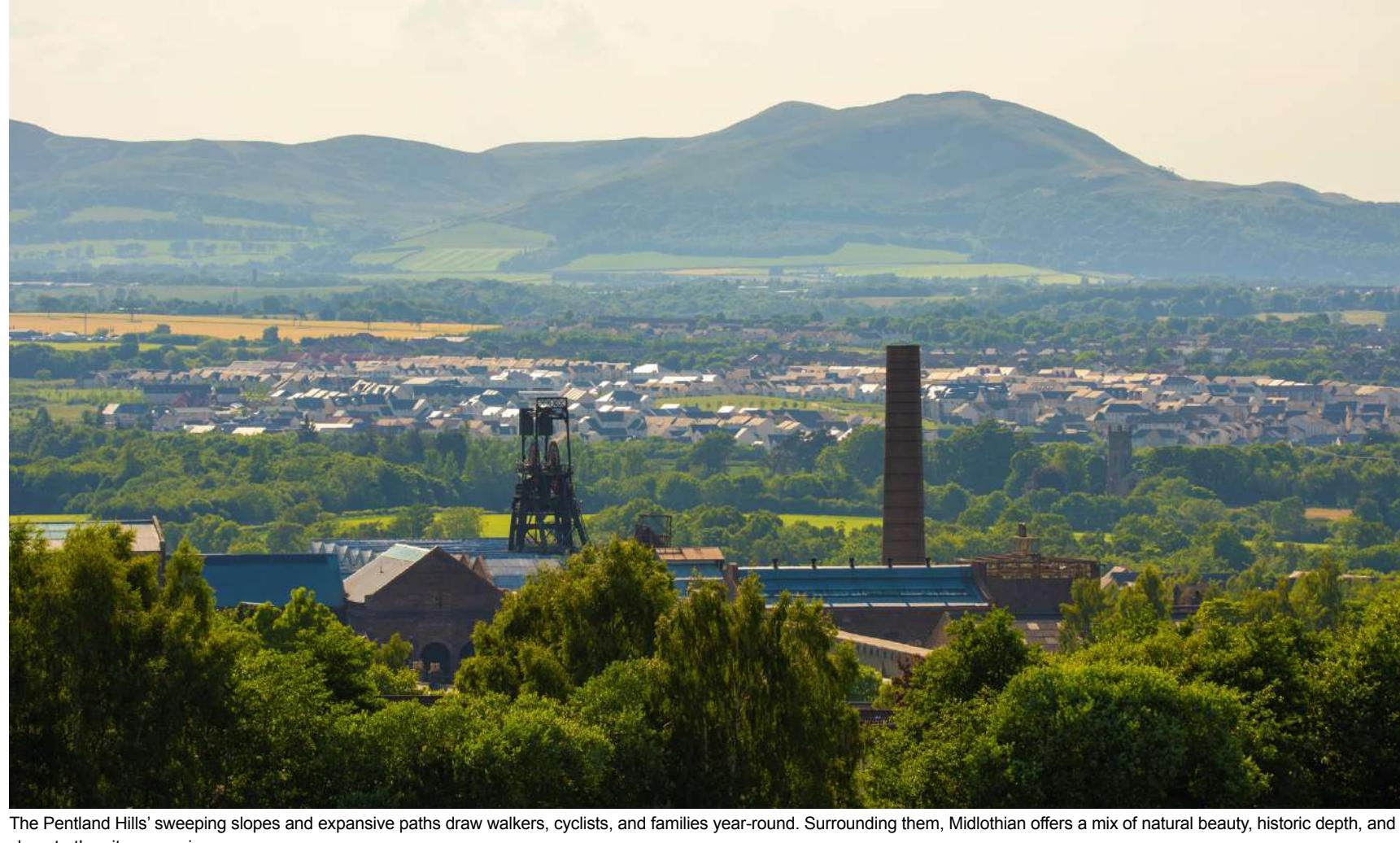
"We're in a co-creation phase, where business growth and community ambition advance together. Our focus is on creating highly-skilled, well-paid jobs for local people. Research and development lie at the heart of that future, and with the arrival of the new national

supercomputer and the new schools we're building nearby, we're giving young people the tools and opportunities to thrive in the industries of tomorrow. We really want to make sure that we take all our people on that journey and make Midlothian the best place to grow, invest, live, work, and visit."

Midlothian has rapidly emerged as a formidable base for foreign direct investment. Vickers concluded, "The county is a strategically sensible place to grow a business's workforce, and it's simply a beautiful place as well. From the Pentland Hills to the reservoirs, it's an absolutely wonderful area to live, work, and raise your family. I would encourage any American investor to look here first, before anywhere else." ■

Midlothian

Escape to Midlothian: Scotland's Tourism Gateway to History, Hills, and Hidden Wonders



The Pentland Hills' sweeping slopes and expansive paths draw walkers, cyclists, and families year-round. Surrounding them, Midlothian offers a mix of natural beauty, historic depth, and close-to-the-city convenience.



Rosslyn Chapel, famed for its intricate stonework and centuries of myth, remains one of Scotland's most captivating historic sites.



Shedding the hustle of the capital city, the suburbs dissolve into a mix of the rising Pentland Hills and pastureland, where farms stitch the lower slopes together and historic villages move to their own deliberate rhythm. Stonework appears like a memory resurfacing, in bridges, in ruins, in the impossible intricacy of Rosslyn Chapel, a jewel of medieval craftsmanship set against the sweep of open countryside. Venture deeper and the past shifts register: the National Mining Museum Scotland stands sentinel over an industrial heritage that shaped generations, its stories lingering in the landscape the way coal dust once clung to everything it touched. On the Pentland slopes, Destination Hillend brings a burst of modern vitality, transforming the landscape with one of the UK's most ambitious outdoor leisure developments offering year-round adventure against sweeping views. Wander on and the county reveals its gentle dualities like rain-darkened forests that fall silent after a storm, sudden ridge-top vistas that break open the sky, and daily life that feels rooted and unhurried. Yet the capital is never far away; its energy grazes Midlothian's borders.

On a sun-filled morning, light filters through the stained glass of historic Rosslyn Chapel, catching the edges of its famously intricate carvings. Angels are seen playing bagpipes beside scenes of vines and stars, with intricate details inspiring centuries of speculation. Mystery has long clung to Rosslyn Chapel's carvings that seem to guard more secrets than they reveal. Whispers of hidden vaults and secret societies from the tales of the Knights Templar, the Holy Grail, and Masonic symbolism all entwine within the chapel's ornate stonework. Some have even imagined the chapel as a portal to other realms or a map to lost worlds discovered before Columbus set sail. Though scholars regard such stories as romantic legend rather than fact, the chapel's craftsmanship continues to invite wonder, inspiring both historians and dreamers to search for meaning

in every chisel mark. Founded in the 15th century by the Sinclair family, the stonework is a tapestry of faith, folklore, and artistic genius. Its global fame soared after featuring in *The Da Vinci Code*, a novel by Dan Brown that later became a film starring Tom Hanks.

Just a few miles away, the National Mining Museum Scotland tells a different story. Set within the restored Lady Victoria Colliery in Newtononthe-
Banks, the museum preserves the grit and glory of Scotland's industrial past. Visitors can descend into recreated mine shafts, explore historic machinery, and hear firsthand accounts of the miners who once powered the nation.

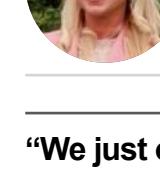
The contrast between Rosslyn's spiritual aura and the museum's industrial realism captures something essential about Midlothian itself, a region where artistry and labor, myth and modernity, exist side-by-side. Together, these sites offer more than a glimpse into the past. They reveal the layers of a county that continues to reinvent itself, a place where every stone, every story, contributes to the evolving identity of Scotland. Midlothian's cultural and natural treasures make it a magnet for visitors from across Scotland and around the world.

From enigmatic beauty to the sprawling landscapes of Dalkeith Country Park, attractions support local hospitality and contribute to Scotland's wider tourism appeal and economy. For example, the renewal of Vogrie Country Park, significant public investment at Hillend, and the growing film industry across the area are making Midlothian increasingly attractive to tourists. In addition to *The Da Vinci Code*, Midlothian was also the location of one of the most famous scenes in the television series *Outlander*. Set against the dramatic backdrop of the Pentland Hills, the historic Glencorse Auld Kirk within the grounds of Glencorse House is famed as the wedding site of Claire and Jamie Fraser. Steeped in history and brimming with charm, Glencorse House has become a sought-after destination for film tourists and their weddings.



The National Mining Museum Scotland offers a vivid look at the engineering, communities, and hardship that defined the nation's coal-mining era.

Kelly Parry, Council Leader of Midlothian Council, added, "It's not only historic sites; we have so much more. We just opened an Alpine Coaster, the longest in the UK. Guests have the time of their lives while enjoying some of the best views anywhere around. Tourism is very important to Midlothian, and it's something we're actively developing. Midlothian isn't defined by one landmark alone. It is the variety that attracts people to visit and live here, and it's why we've seen so much growth in recent years. With Edinburgh just up the road, we want to ensure visitors stay a little further south and experience the joys of Midlothian, like a ride on the Alpine Coaster."



Kelly Parry
Council Leader
Midlothian Council

"We just opened an Alpine Coaster, the longest in the UK. Guests have the time of their lives while enjoying some of the best views."

leads all the way down to the Scottish Borders at Tweedbank. This makes it easy for tourists to spend a day or two in different areas without renting a car, benefiting both visitors and local communities. It also allows us to regenerate places like Newtononthe-
Banks and Gorebridge, relatively small towns that have been completely transformed thanks to improved transport links. Connecting tourism with sustainable infrastructure, community regeneration, and local businesses has become a central part of our strategy, helping Midlothian grow while maintaining our unique charm. And let's not forget food and drink are also a growing part of our tourism offering, with award-winning restaurants, breweries, and distilleries across Midlothian."



Dr. Grace Vickers
CEO
Midlothian Council

"Connecting tourism with sustainable infrastructure, community regeneration, and local businesses has become a central part of our strategy, helping Midlothian grow while maintaining our unique charm."

The county offers visitors a gateway to the true spirit of Scotland, defined by experiences that are authentic, untamed, and unforgettable. ■

 Visit Midlothian



Scotland's first and the UK's longest Alpine Coaster is an adrenaline-filled ride with amazing views of the surrounding hills. From beginner slopes to tubing, there's an adventure for everyone at Destination Hillend.

Stirling Steps Into the Limelight: Scotland's Next Great Film Capital



Sam Heughan received an honorary degree from the University of Stirling, a fitting tribute given his connection to the area through his role in *Outlander*.

The 900-year-old city of Stirling has a starring role in the film industry, as a location for blockbuster shows including *Outlander*, *Game of Thrones*, and Netflix's *Outlaw King* and *Frankenstein* – and now a new high-end TV and film studio is in development.

The compact city and its surroundings contain some of Scotland's most iconic landmarks and landscapes, from Stirling Castle and the Wallace Monument to Doune Castle and Loch Lomond, with Lonely Planet rating it Scotland's top destination. Yet, for all its beauty, Stirling comes with lower costs than other Scottish cities and is within an hour of Edinburgh, Glasgow, their airports, and the Highlands.

Stirling may have caught the eye of filmmakers, but its connection with creatives runs deeper; last year, it was the Scottish area with the highest proportion of its workforce employed in creative industries and top three for tech. Stirling is home to the UK's largest tech incubator CodeBase and multi-award-winning Wild Child Animation.

With EY forecasting Stirling to have Scotland's fastest-growing economy, Stirling is putting film at the forefront. In March 2024, a 34-acre former military site beside the city center was transferred to Stirling Council, which secured £16 million from the UK government to prime it for development. Now earmarked to include one of

Scotland's largest film studio campuses, an operator will be appointed imminently. Screen Scotland has said the studio's proximity to crew and locations will be "second to none."

Stirling is already a destination of choice for film and media students, with the University of Stirling preparing the next generation of creatives. More than 140 nationalities are represented on its world-class campus, which boasts a multi-arts center showing the latest blockbusters, arthouse films, and documentaries.

Its film and media courses are ranked among the best in the UK, offering industry access through sector-leading partnerships, including with the BBC. Students benefit from mentors whose experience and industry networks open doors to placements and career opportunities.

Courses offer practical training across a range of constantly evolving specializations, including audio and video production, program development, digital media, editing, and scriptwriting. Its research is equally dynamic, spanning television, digital media, social media, music, gaming, and creative industries.

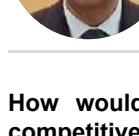


The National Wallace Monument draws many visitors thanks to its links with *Braveheart*. It stands on the site where Wallace is said to have watched the English forces approach before leading his charge at the Battle of Stirling Bridge on September 11, 1297.

Outlander star Sam Heughan, who was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Stirling, said, "I have always had a strong bond with Stirling and the surrounding area. It has a breathtaking landscape and is an inspiring city."

To find out more, visit: stir.ac.uk and investinstirling.com ■

Insights from Stirling Council CEO, Brian Roberts



Brian Roberts
CEO
Stirling Council

How would you define Stirling's competitiveness?

Stirling is both the name of our compact city and our vast council area, covering 800 square miles in the heart of Scotland. Our city spurs collaboration and our location opens endless opportunities, with over half the population and international airports within an hour's reach.

Stirling is recognized for its cultural heritage, sense of place and entrepreneurial spirit. You don't need to take my word for it. EY forecast Stirling to have Scotland's fastest-growing economy, and it's been rated Scotland's top destination, culture capital, and happiest place to live. Stirling is perfectly positioned to take full advantage of all Scotland has to offer.

Stirling is a hub for creative industries, innovation, and international investment. How is the area supporting growth and attracting foreign partners?

Increasingly we see investors looking beyond Scotland's biggest cities. Their interest piqued by innovative, Stirling-based businesses that have successfully secured significant investments and are scaling. Our size, location and highly skilled workforce are real advantages; we can compete with much larger cities when it comes to innovation, collaboration, costs, and agility. Our council collaborates with national agencies, investors, and supply chains to ensure joined-up support so businesses can thrive.

Stirling's growth sectors include creative industries, life sciences, medtech, and food and drink. These are all underpinned by cross-cutting strengths in manufacturing and tech. On tech, we secured the second site of the UK's largest tech incubator, have award-winning digital infrastructure, one of the highest concentrations

of tech employment, and our university is a leader in data and AI. Our city might be 900-years-old, but our people are future-focused.

In life sciences and medtech, home-grown businesses are leading their fields and exporting internationally. Symbiosis grew from Stirling University's Innovation Park to become a world-class contract manufacturer, recently winning the King's Award for International Trade, the UK's most prestigious business accolade. Emblation is a leader in microwave tech for medical treatments, and iGii is a nano-material producer applying its innovative product to point-of-care diagnostics.

Stirling is home to well-known food and drink exports, with Campbells Shortbread and distilleries including Glengoyne and Deanston, but it's also at the cutting-edge of emerging sub-sectors, with Scotland's National Aquaculture Innovation Hub and businesses like Peacock Technology applying AI and robotics to revolutionize agritech.

Leveraging our strong links with American producers through on-location shoots and our creative studios, we are investing up to £19 million in infrastructure that will be home to a new film and TV studio, embedding an ecosystem where international partners benefit from UK film incentives and Stirling's talent, supply chains, location, and costs.

Stirling Castle, the Wallace Monument, and other landmarks draw millions of visitors each year. How is the region renewing this legacy to appeal to modern travelers?

Stirling has some of Scotland's top attractions, from Loch Lomond National Park to Stirling Castle, Scotland's second most popular paid attraction. Last year, visitor numbers surpassed our pre-pandemic peak, generating over £700 million, with nearly two thirds attracted by history and culture and one third by the outdoors. We're focusing on active tourism, festivals, and events. For example, we're creating Scotland's leading outdoor event space, Stirling City Park, next to Stirling Castle. ■

North Lanarkshire: In the Heart of Central Scotland



Leading global premium wine, spirits, and food labeling company, Eurostampa, opened a state-of-the-art facility in North Lanarkshire this year.

Once central to Scotland's historic steel industry and the backbone of Glasgow's rise and industrial might, North Lanarkshire today stands as one of Europe's most striking stories of renewal, trading smoke and steel for innovation and sustainability.



Des Murray
CEO
North Lanarkshire
Council

Des Murray, Chief Executive of North Lanarkshire Council, reflected, "Lanarkshire has long been the heart of Scotland's economy. It's believed the first meeting of the Scots Parliament met here in Lanark, centuries before Edinburgh rose to prominence. Glasgow itself was once part of historical Lanarkshire; its growth powered by the steel and heavy industry of North Lanarkshire. Today, the county is a microcosm of Scotland. Based in the central belt where nearly half of Scotland's population lives, it is defined by its proud industrial heritage, hard-working people, and a culture of innovation. If we can get North Lanarkshire firing on all cylinders, through investment, enterprise, and our own economic strengths, then we've built a model that can be replicated across Scotland."

Space to Grow

Because of its post-industrial landscape, North Lanarkshire contains more than half of all marketable land for business and industry within the eight local authority areas comprising the Glasgow City Region. Available sites are on average larger than any other local authority in Scotland, making regeneration central to the council's growth strategy. A streamlined pre-planning process now fast-tracks development, helping to transform brownfield sites like Ravenscraig Steelworks (one of Europe's largest regeneration projects), Eurocentral, the M8 corridor, and Gartcosh.

According to Murray, over the last few years, North Lanarkshire attracted more foreign investment in land and industrial transactions than any other Scottish local authority, and over the past decade, its business base has grown more than three times faster than the Scottish average, while its economic output surged by 65.8% in the decade to 2023, well above Scotland's 43.3% average.

"A key driver of growth is the council's £1.7 billion capital investment program, the largest ever, which is revitalizing towns, schools, housing, and community spaces. As both the planning authority and an economic catalyst, we're bringing together government, communities, education, and industry under one vision," said Murray.



Eurocentral is a 650-acre business park with direct access to the M8 motorway and home to HSBC, Doble Engineering, Scania, and Brewdog.

Drivers of Growth

North Lanarkshire's resurgence is the result of strategic planning, supported by bold infrastructure investment and targeted support for high-growth sectors. Transport projects like the proposed East Airdrie Link Road, the upgraded Motherwell Station travel hub, and the planned Pan-Lanarkshire Orbital Corridor, are transforming connectivity by linking north and south, improving logistics, and opening up land for growth. At the epicenter, Eurocentral, a top industrial and logistics hub, anchors global giants such as Amazon, Lidl, and Scania.

Murray continued, "To strengthen the economy, we're diversifying and boosting STEM, advanced manufacturing, and other emerging sectors. The council is enhancing digital connectivity, having already laid 340km

of ultra-fast full-fiber, building a future-ready region that delivers gigabit-speed. Essentially, we're creating the conditions that not only support investment but also generate a pipeline for it to scale at pace."

Local hubs such as BioCity and the New College Lanarkshire Smart Hub are propelling pharmaceutical and biotherapeutic research, robotics, and automation startups onto the global stage. "North Lanarkshire has been the birthplace of some of the most important scientific breakthroughs; other businesses can benefit from this supportive ecosystem," Murray added.

Focusing on the future, he continued, "Proposals for a dedicated AI Growth Zone will bring billions of pounds of investment for data centers, power infrastructure, and skilled talent together, with plans to reuse data center heat to warm nearby buildings, and make North Lanarkshire a magnet for attracting investment in AI innovation and technologies. It's a model of innovation serving the community, making growth inclusive and responsible."



Stretching between Glasgow and Edinburgh, the M8 is Scotland's busiest motorway, cutting across North Lanarkshire, a critical artery for commuters and commerce.

Reimagining Places

Across the county, former industrial sites are also being reimagined. The landmark redevelopment of Strathclyde Country Park, a former coal-mining village, now features community areas with renewable-powered facilities and visitor attractions, symbolizing a region where sustainability and quality of life go hand in hand. Murray sees this balance between innovation and livability as essential. "Economic success means nothing if people don't feel its impact on their daily lives," he said.

Education and workforce development are also critical. The region's apprenticeship program is now one of the largest in Scotland, and local partnerships with the University of Strathclyde and New College Lanarkshire supply employers with skilled talent. Entrepreneurship is also thriving; The Hive, Scotland's first council-subsidized, women-only business incubator, supports new ventures with tailored advice, mentorship, and access to training and funding. Female school pupils are also benefiting from Bee the Boss immersion days, inspiring future generations of female entrepreneurs.

Niche Sectors

North Lanarkshire's expanding industrial base is drawing investment. In Cumbernauld, Wardpark Film and Television Studios, Scotland's largest full-service production facility and home to the acclaimed series *Outlander*, was acquired by American investors, reflecting a broader rise in US business activity across Scotland.

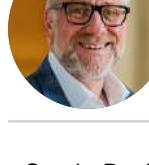
Also in Cumbernauld, Skyrora is propelling Scotland into the space age, designing and testing rockets and engines at its 55,000-square-foot facility dedicated to the next generation of launch technology. Derek Harris, Director of Business Development and Communications at Skyrora stated, "We moved our main manufacturing operation to North Lanarkshire, bringing high-value manufacturing jobs to the local community. They're genuine, hardworking, salt-of-the-earth people who take pride in what they do. We've also had tremendous support from the council."

For investors, North Lanarkshire delivers access and alignment as a strategically connected European base. Just as crucial, investors encounter a local government that behaves less like a gatekeeper and more like a partner, removing barriers, tailoring programs, and co-designing strategies for sustainable, long-term success. Murray concluded, "North Lanarkshire is not just open for business; it's ready for collaboration. If investors are looking for a European base that offers scale, access, and ambition, we're ready."

For more information visit: investinnorthlanarkshire.co.uk ■

Beyond the Banks - Scotland's Financial Services

Scotland's financial services industry is built on centuries of banking tradition and is further maturing with a new generation of asset managers, insurers, fintech innovators, and global investment firms. Rooted in Edinburgh, considered one of Europe's influential financial centers, the sector's impact ripples across international markets. At its core is Scottish Financial Enterprise, the industry body that helps set strategy and chart the sector's global ambitions.



Sandy Begbie
CEO
Scottish Financial Enterprise

Sandy Begbie, CEO of Scottish Financial Enterprise, noted, "The sector employs over 150,000 people in Scotland at salaries above the national average. The industry contributes over £17 billion to the local economy, and it's one of the few sectors that has continual growth year-after-year. What draws global giants like Barclays, BlackRock, and J.P. Morgan is Scotland's superb talent. Our world-class workforce has deep strengths in tech, data, and AI, and is supported by three universities that are ranked in the global top 150, including Edinburgh, a recognized leader in AI."

He pointed to other structural advantages, adding, "Salaries typically run 20% to 25% lower than in London, and firms report retaining staff three to four times longer than in tier-1 centers. Scotland also has the UK's largest fintech cluster outside of London, and is one of the few in Europe with silver-accredited status. And of course, quality of life matters; our cities and towns are easily commutable with all the services investors expect."

Begbie highlighted the depth of Scotland's financial heritage, "Scotland has been shaping global finance for generations. The country is home to some of the world's oldest banks, and the Scottish Building Society is the oldest remaining building society in the world. Even the invention of the cash machine came from Scotland. It's a reminder that Scotland's financial ecosystem isn't just well established; it has long been a source of ideas that changed how the world does business."

He added one final advantage, "Even the time zone works to our advantage. Firms based here routinely serve clients in the US and Asia with ease, making Scotland a practical and dependable base for international business."

Scotland's financial services icons have shaped the country's economic landscape for centuries, with a legacy that still plays a defining role in how the market competes today. Judith Cruickshank, Managing Director, Commercial Mid-Market at Royal Bank of Scot-

land said, "Scotland has always been a highly competitive financial market, shaped by the deep legacy of major banks, Royal Bank of Scotland, Bank of Scotland, and Clydesdale. At Royal Bank of Scotland, we look after one in three businesses and one in five personal customers across the country, combining 300 years of history, and deep customer understanding, with advances in technology and data. We have evolved and innovated to meet the needs of our customers and to drive economic growth with a team of experienced Relationship Managers, two Accelerator Hubs helping businesses to start and scale, and strategic partnerships in key sectors."



Judith Cruickshank
Managing Director,
Commercial Mid-Market
Royal Bank of Scotland

But legacy is only part of the story. Scotland's financial services competitiveness hinges on how well it can support the industries of the future, from clean energy to advanced technology, and on whether its financial institutions can help young companies grow into global players. David Ritchie, Chief Strategy Officer at the Scottish National Investment Bank said, "As a development bank, we invest commercially, but our mission is to sup-

port Scotland's ambitions for a fairer, greener, and more innovative economy. Scotland has a strong record of producing start-ups, but the real challenge is helping those companies scale into medium and large enterprises. That's where our capital comes in. We're an impact investor in the true sense, tracking not just financial returns but jobs created, emissions reduced, and patents generated through our portfolio. It's how we measure our contribution to national priorities like innovation, the energy transition, and tackling inequality. Scotland has a vibrant base of globally minded SMEs, and our focus is on backing those with the potential to grow nationally and internationally, strengthening their resilience, and delivering meaningful impact at home."



David Ritchie
Chief Strategy Officer
Scottish National Investment Bank

What emerges is a financial ecosystem that honors its heritage while steadily recalibrating, attuned to the demands of a greener, more technologically driven future. Here, legacy institutions and modern investment engines move in concert, shaping not only the nation's economic trajectory but its sense of what prosperity can look like, redefining a new financial services era. ■

High Demand is Reshaping Edinburgh and Glasgow for Investment across Scotland's Wider Economy



Glasgow City Chambers, completed in 1888 and standing over George Square, remains one of the city's most distinguished landmarks.

Scotland's two main cities offer global connectivity that continues to draw investors, entrepreneurs, and new residents. Together, they account for more than one-third of Scotland's economic output and serve as a key point of entry for foreign investment, with the Edinburgh-Glasgow corridor attracting some of the highest levels of international capital per capita in the UK. But in Scotland, opportunity isn't limited to its two largest cities; increasingly, it's found in the areas beyond them.

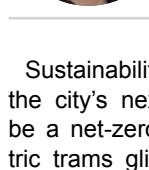
Edinburgh - the Capital City

Edinburgh's historic universities feed a steady pipeline of graduates. The city is becoming one of Europe's fastest growing innovation districts.

Tech incubators, with many startups, have sprouted where old printworks once stood. Edinburgh Innovations is the University of Edinburgh's commercialization arm, tasked with turning academic research into real-world impact. It bridges world-class university laboratories and the global marketplace, helping researchers, students, and industry partners forge startups, license technology, and launch ventures.

Edinburgh Innovations CEO, Dr. Andrea Taylor, stated, "Our team works with academics from the earliest research stage, connecting them with industry and investors to turn ideas into scalable businesses. An example is Resolution Therapeutics, a company that is developing advanced cell ther-

apies for liver disease. They moved from lab research to clinical trials within Edinburgh's integrated BioQuarter. Edinburgh receives over £400 million in annual research funding and is a destination for high-impact ventures. Our strong links ensure that world-class research doesn't just stay in the lab, but reaches markets worldwide."



Dr. Andrea Taylor
CEO
Edinburgh Innovations

Sustainability is further shaping the city's next chapter with aims to be a net-zero capital by 2030. Electric trams glide through cobblestone streets; rooftop gardens bloom above converted warehouses; and the Forth's steady winds fuel the region's renewable ambitions.

Yet Edinburgh's appeal comes at a premium. As a tightly packed heritage city, Edinburgh finds itself balancing the preservation of its historic character with the growing demand for modern spaces. It has some of the highest housing costs in the UK, with average rents more than 40% higher than the Scottish average. Office space, too, commands higher rates, reflecting tight supply in a compact city where development is heavily regulated.

Glasgow - A City Forged in Creativity

Glasgow offers a different kind of economic strength. Once defined by heavy industry, the city transformed into a center for advanced manufacturing and the creative sectors. The city's region hosts the Glasgow Riverside Innovation District as well as a thriving media cluster that includes major film and TV production. The University of Glasgow and the Uni-

versity of Strathclyde have active research ecosystems, drawing significant investment in health innovation, quantum technology, and engineering. Glasgow's cost base remains lower than Edinburgh's, though it, too, has seen rising demand.

Susanne Millar, CEO of Glasgow City Council, said, "Glasgow has a rich heritage in engineering, economics, and innovation. Adam Smith is widely regarded as the father of modern economics and his *Wealth of Nations* endures as the seminal work on how society, politics, and commerce shape prosperity. He studied at the University of Glasgow. The city's competitiveness is driven by its universities and academic strengths. Strathclyde University was founded as 'the place of useful learning,' and that ethos continues."



Susanne Millar
CEO
Glasgow City Council

Millar added, "One recent investment in Glasgow is J.P. Morgan's new, purpose-built facility, which opened last year. From there J.P. Morgan works on global technology systems, including AI transformation and productivity tools for software development. Glasgow is also the UK's capital for space technology. Later this year Scotland will conduct its first sovereign rocket launch in the north of the country."

The Regions Beyond

For foreign companies both cities offer advantages, but limited space is prompting investors to look toward nearby Scottish counties, where land is more readily available, homes are more spacious, and new development zones offer room to grow. Other regions are attractive alternatives, combining lower costs with access to the same national workforce and digital infrastructure. ■

The Highlands and Islands

A growing renewable energy hub



Offshore wind infrastructure off the coast of Scotland, where steady North Sea winds drive the country's expanding renewable sector.

Stretching from the Cairngorms to the edge of the Atlantic, Scotland's Highlands are renowned for their dramatic landscapes and increasingly for their leadership in renewable energy, harnessing the power of the nearby Atlantic Ocean and North Sea. The UK is the

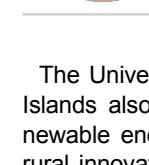
windiest country in Europe, with Scotland its windiest region, largely due to Atlantic weather systems moving in from the west and sweeping across the area. The region's abundant natural resources, including powerful tides, persistent winds, and extensive coast-

lines, create ideal conditions for clean energy innovation.

Off the coast, companies are spearheading marine energy solutions around the Orkney Islands and the Western Isles, including deep offshore wind that uses floating turbines to harness powerful wind above water that would otherwise be too deep for traditional foundations. The distinctive mix of onshore and offshore projects have attracted global firms eager to test and develop technologies that could define the next era of sustainable power. At the heart of tidal efforts is the European Marine Energy Center, which specializes in testing wave and tidal energy solutions in some of the world's strongest tidal currents.

Meanwhile, the mainland serves as the headquarters for the larger operations required to support these projects. Chief Executive of Highland Council, Derek Brown said, "We now have a green freeport on our doorstep, and it's already reshaping the energy landscape in the Highlands. Major global players have moved in such as Haventus, backed by Quantum in the US; Sumitomo from Ja-

pan; and most recently Mitsui, which acquired Port of Nigg. Together, they signal the scale of what's coming. The projected inward investment is at least £6 billion over the next two decades, with the possibility of doubling or even tripling that figure. Their focus on deep-water quayside capability, manufacturing, and offshore energy services positions the region as a hub for the next generation of renewable energy projects. It's an extraordinary opportunity for the Highlands."



Derek Brown
Chief Executive
Highland Council

The University of the Highlands and Islands also supports research in renewable energy, marine science, and rural innovation. Improved digital connectivity across the area has enabled a growing number of start-ups and remote workers to build careers outside of the Central Belt. ■