

News story: Scottish quarterly GDP figures show continued growth

Commenting on the Scottish GDP figures published Wednesday 4 April 2018, Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

It is good news that today's GDP figures show that Scotland's economy continues to grow. I note a modest improvement in Scotland's important services sector, and encouraging growth in production industries.

However, it is increasingly concerning that a significant gap persists between Scotland's economy and the rest of the UK. The Scottish Government has the powers to boost productivity and strengthen the economy, and must use them to close this gap. By making Scotland the highest taxed part of the UK, the Scottish Government risks damaging, rather than growing, our economy.

Scotland's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 0.3% in real terms during the fourth quarter of 2017, following growth of 0.2% in the third quarter of 2017. The equivalent growth rate for the UK as whole during the third quarter was 0.4%.

In the latest quarter, output in the Scottish Services sector grew by 0.5%, output in the Production sector grew by 0.9%, and output in the Construction sector fell by 2.6%.

Compared to the same quarter last year, Scottish GDP has grown by 1.1%. Equivalent UK growth over the year was 1.4%.

In 2017, annual GDP increased by 0.8% compared to 2016, following growth of 0.2% between 2015 and 2016. The equivalent UK growth rate for 2017 was 1.8%.

The full Scottish Government [statistical bulletin](#) is available for download.

Press release: New building performance standards to save MOD up to 20%

Infrastructure is a vital defence capability delivering accommodation, training facilities and critical assets such as runways and workshops to

enable our armed forces to live, work, train and deploy. Recent DIO projects include building a jetty at Portsmouth Naval Base so the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth can dock, and resurfacing runways at RAF Akrotiri, RAF Gibraltar, and RAF Valley.

The defence estate is large, diverse and widely dispersed across the UK and overseas. In the UK, it covers around 230,000 hectares comprising military training areas, naval bases, barracks, airfields, supply depots, and offices. Construction on these sites is sometimes subject to specific defence requirements but the majority is similar to other sectors, so the new standards have been developed in accordance with comparators from industry and other government departments. They are designed to be used by MOD staff and industry partners responsible for the planning, costing and delivery of the infrastructure assets and projects funded by MOD.

The new standards, Joint Services Publication (JSP) 315, are expected to save up to 20% on construction costs by creating efficient standards, enabling faster and more cost-effective project development and delivery. They also recognise the success and cost savings DIO has achieved in recent years from increasing the use of modular construction and standardisation of designs, as well as utilising 3D digital and interactive technology.

Graham Dalton, DIO's Chief Executive, said:

The new standards mark a step forward in how DIO enables our military to provide the most effective and efficient solutions and how we work better with the construction industry. The revised standards make it absolutely clear what our requirements are and will contribute to a significant cost and time saving on our infrastructure projects.

The new standards and supporting guidance set a series of reference designs for specific defence infrastructure requirements and benchmark capital and operational costs for the planning and delivery of MOD infrastructure.

The revised JSP 315 can be found [here](#)

[Press release: Images offer glimpse of A45 Chowns Mill upgrade](#)

As part of the government's £15.2bn road investment strategy, Highways England is developing a scheme to improve the A45/A6 Chowns Mill junction, leading to more reliable and safer journeys for people and businesses by reducing congestion and increasing capacity on the road.



Work will include widening the A45 and A6 approaches to provide additional traffic lanes, creating an additional roundabout section on the south side of the existing roundabout and introducing traffic signals to manage traffic safely and effectively.

The work will:

- improve journey times by providing additional lanes
- improve safety by changing the junction layout and introducing traffic signals – managing the flow of traffic through the junction more effectively and reducing the chance of collisions
- support economic growth by encouraging continued investment in the regional economy and support new business and residential opportunities
- improve access for cyclists and pedestrians thanks to new signalled crossings which will make it safer to cross the junction – all crossing points will be designed for users with disabilities

The A45 is a key link between the A14 and M1, serving the growing Northampton, Wellingborough and Rushden areas.

As part of the scheme the junction will be redesigned as a half hamburger layout with a new link road connecting the A6 North and A5028 with the existing roundabout. This will improve the existing junction to allow better flow of traffic reducing congestion through the junction. All approaches will be widened to provide extra lanes and increase capacity.

Highways England project manager, Rachael Langfield, said:

Chowns Mill roundabout currently suffers from severe congestion at peak travel times, leading to long queues on all approaches. This congestion will increase as traffic levels grow.

The scheme we have developed will improve journey times and safety along the A45 and A6 corridors as well as boost capacity to support planned growth in the local area, which is great news for the local and regional economy.

There will be no need to purchase any additional land with improvements to the junction carried out within the existing roundabout boundary.

Construction is due to begin in late 2019 and is expected to be completed within two years.

Public information exhibitions take place tomorrow and Saturday where people can find out more.

The exhibition times and locations are as follows:

- Friday 6 April 2018 – 2pm to 8pm Park Road Baptist Church, Park Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire, NN10 0RG
- Saturday 7 April 2018 – 10am to 4pm Park Road Baptist Church, Park Road, Rushden, Northamptonshire, NN10 0RG

People can also ask questions about the scheme by:

- emailing info@a45chownsmill.com
- [visit the Highways England website where you can also sign up for email alerts:](#)
- write to: A45 Chowns Mill improvement team , Highways England, Stirling House, Lakeside Court, Osier Drive, Sherwood Business Park, Nottingham NG15 0DS.
- call the Highways England Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: Plastic purge: Defra Legal Advisers](#)

Updated: Change of title

As the government announces a deposit scheme to encourage people to recycle plastic bottles and cans, GLD lawyers have been doing their bit to help stem the mounting volume of plastic waste that is posing a threat to much of the world's wildlife.

Brought into focus by the recent series Blue Planet II in which David Attenborough highlighted the toxic effect of plastic waste on the world's oceans, government lawyers from Defra Legal Advisers have joined a global effort to curb pollution.

Gilly Stratford of GLD was part of the UK delegation that joined the third United Nations Environmental Assembly which took place recently in Nairobi, otherwise known by its more snappy acronym UNEA-3.

UNEA-3's aim was to work towards ridding the planet of pollution, including the menace of marine plastic litter. At the end of long and intense negotiations, 15 anti-pollution measures were unanimously agreed by the 190+ countries which attended. Gilly's role was to advise policy colleagues and help draft amendments to the texts, while keeping an eye on the UK's negotiating position.

While these measures are not legally binding, they nonetheless send out a statement of intent. Defra achieved all its objectives at UNEA-3, especially its main aim to reduce marine pollution by plastics and microplastics.

[News story: London seminar – The Lammy Review: bringing to life recommendations 31 and 32](#)

3 May, 2018

The Lammy Review: Bringing to life recommendations 31 and 32

The role of commissioning and the involvement of smaller organisations featuring

George Barrow | Head of Lammy Response Team | Ministry of Justice

Eila Davis | Head of Equalities | HM Prison and Probation Service

Jeremy Crook, OBE | Chief Executive | Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)

Jonathan Martin | Head of Community Commissioning | Ministry of Justice

Omar Ralph | Lammy Response Team Lead | Ministry of Justice

For a more detailed overview and how to book please see the attached flyer.



[The Lammy Review: bringing to life recommendations 31 and 32 \(seminar flyer\)](#)

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