

Kaukab Stewart MSP visits SLC during Scottish Apprenticeship Week

News story

Kaukab Stewart, MSP for Glasgow Kelvin visited SLC to mark the end of Scottish Apprenticeship Week.



Kaukab Stewart, MSP for Glasgow Kelvin, marked the end of Scottish Apprenticeship Week by meeting apprentices at the Student Loans Company (SLC) in the city centre.

Based on Bothwell Street, SLC has a growing Emerging Talent Programme with over 100 colleagues currently on its apprenticeship, graduate and internship programmes.

Kaukab Stewart said: “I welcome the innovative work of the SLC Emerging Talent Programme, supporting young and older people to train and developing skills for the wider digital economy. I’m particularly pleased to learn about the Career Ready Mentoring Programme and the recognition that people with particular barriers in the labour market are being supported the most in building more equal and diverse opportunities.”

During the visit, Kaukab was also given a tour of SLC’s new collaboration spaces and Stephen Campbell, SLC’s Chief Information Officer, talked about the importance of developing the skills of the workforce and investing in their futures.

He said: “Our apprentices play such an important role in our business. We offer young people the chance to unlock their potential and gain a recognised qualification, as well as valuable experience in the work environment. But we also believe it’s vital to develop the skills of our workforce, encouraging their career growth by providing them with the opportunity to upskill. It was fantastic to welcome Kaukab Stewart into our office today during such an important week for apprenticeships in Scotland.”

The Scottish Government is committed to increasing the number of

apprenticeships in Scotland and Scottish Apprenticeship Week, co-ordinated by Skills Develop Scotland, highlights how apprenticeships are providing the skills employers need now and for the future.

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[New byelaws on the River Wye to help improve at-risk salmon stocks](#)

- The Environment Agency is introducing new byelaws on the River Wye to help protect increasingly vulnerable stocks of salmon and sea trout.
- All salmon and sea trout caught by rod and line must be released alive with minimum injury and delay to help combat stock declines.
- Salmon numbers are currently among the lowest on record and are below sustainable levels.

This decline has led to an introduction of byelaws as numbers of salmon stock are currently among the lowest on record and below sustainable levels.

The new byelaws for the Wye rod fishery will require mandatory catch and release of all salmon caught, as well as provide increased protection for sea trout. They also provide a revised end date for the salmon season so that it runs from 3 March to 17 October for the whole river and its tributaries.

Kevin Austin, Environment Agency's Deputy Director for Agriculture, Fisheries and the Natural Environment, said:

We are committed to protecting our precious salmon and sea trout stocks for future generations to enjoy. This is why we are taking steps to limit pressures that contribute to salmon declines.

Fishing is only one of multiple factors that have led to the decline in salmon stocks in the Wye. However, we must do as much as we can to improve the chances for salmon to spawn successfully.

In recent years, the effects of long periods of low flow, increased temperatures and exceptional floods have all been having an impact on the water quality River Wye and its fish stocks.

We will continue to work with Natural Resources Wales on the wider issue of underlying sources of pollution that have a direct impact on fish stocks. We are committed to reducing pollution from agriculture. We have increased resources to the Wye catchment with newly appointed Agricultural Regulatory Officers and more Catchment Sensitive Farming support to farmers to help them reduce pollution

through management of farmyard manure and soils.

The byelaw introductions have been approved and confirmed by Victoria Prentis the Under Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) following a period of consultation.

The byelaws came into force on 10 March 2022 and will be in place until 31 December 2029, to coincide with the end of the 'Cross Border Rivers' byelaws.

The Environment Agency has worked with Natural Resources Wales to bring in the same protections for salmon and sea trout on the River Wye in Wales and England, maintaining a consistent catchment approach for the cross-border river. It also works with partner organisations and groups with a fisheries interest to support the recovery and long-term future sustainability of salmon and sea trout stocks and fisheries.

The existing byelaws mandating catch and release on the Wye, expired in December and new byelaws are necessary to ensure stocks continue to be protected.

What are the new byelaws?

The byelaws now require all salmon caught on rod and line on the River Wye must be released alive with minimum injury and delay.

New controls on angling methods such as the use of barbless hooks and restrictions on certain baits were implemented through the Cross Border Byelaws in 2020 and are intended to improve the survival of released fish so that they can contribute to spawning stocks. These are detailed below.

Existing controls on angling methods will prohibit specified methods for fishing for salmon and sea trout by rod and line within the River Wye as follows:

- ban on all bait fishing for salmon and sea trout
- the mandatory use of barbless hooks
- restrictions on hook type, size, and their number

The recent introduction of the 2021 Severn Estuary Net Limitation Order and Severn Salmon and Sea Trout Byelaws have closed the commercial net fisheries for putcher ranks and draft nets in the Severn Estuary; these have also reduced the lare nets to catch and release only. These fisheries previously exploited salmon stocks destined for the River Wye.

Responsible fishing provides a wonderful opportunity to connect with nature and feel the range of benefits doing so can bring. However, it is important to remember that if you decide to take up fishing, you must have a valid rod fishing licence and adhere to fishing byelaws and fishery rules.

It's easy to buy a rod fishing licence online:

<https://www.gov.uk/fishing-licences/buy-a-fishing-licence>

Rod fishing licence income is vital to the work of the Environment Agency to maintain, improve and develop fisheries.

Revenue generated from rod fishing licence sales is reinvested to benefit angling, examples include: tackling illegal fishing, protecting and restoring habitats for fish and improving facilities for anglers.

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[New UK shipbuilding vision launched](#)

The UK's world-renowned shipbuilding industry will be revitalised through a refreshed [National Shipbuilding Strategy](#).

First published in 2017, the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSbS) outlined ambitions to transform naval procurement, securing export and design contracts for British naval ships. Building on that success, today's refresh outlines the Government's further ambitions to reinvigorate the whole British shipbuilding industry contributing to its levelling up mission to boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards.

Over £4 billion of government investment will galvanise and support shipyards and suppliers across the UK, with new measures including better access to finance, vital skills-building, and funding for crucial research and development into greener vessels and infrastructure.

Designed in partnership with industry and delivered by the recently formed National Shipbuilding Office (NSO), the NSbS Refresh will also deliver a pipeline of more than 150 new naval and civil vessels for the UK Government and Devolved Administrations over the next 30 years. The vessels will include large warships, Border Force cutters, lighthouse vessels and the new National Flagship.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Shipbuilding has been in our blood for centuries and I want to ensure it remains at the heart of British industry of generations to come.

The National Shipbuilding Strategy will transform this important and crucial industry, driving technology development and upskilling the shipbuilders of tomorrow. This will ensure the UK is rightly seen as a shipbuilding power across the world.

The shipbuilding industry currently supports 42,600 jobs across the UK and contributed £2.8 billion to the economy in 2020. Encouraging further

investment and development, the refreshed strategy sets out a clear vision for the prosperous future of the UK's shipbuilding industry, helping 'Build Back Better' and supporting the government's drive to level up all parts of the UK.

Defence Secretary and Shipbuilding Lead Ben Wallace said:

As Shipbuilding Tsar, I am proud to be announcing our new strategy, this is an exciting time to be involved in the sector.

With significant government investment, we will be levelling-up across our shipbuilding, workforce, from shipyard to supplier, from procurement to designer, creating tens of thousands of new employment opportunities, boosting living standards and pay.

Our refreshed strategy will see the sector galvanised at a crucial time for our economy and see a vital part of British industry expand and flourish.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

Scotland is a world leader in building modern, state-of-the-art ships and our highly skilled workforce and expertise will be at the heart of delivering on the commitments in this strategy refresh.

I look forward to the National Shipbuilding Office, which will have a base in the UK Government hub in Edinburgh, working with industry to deliver a 30 year pipeline of orders in the naval and commercial sectors that will boost Scotland and help level up all parts of the UK.

Billions of pounds of UK Government defence investment into Scotland's shipyards is already boosting our country's prosperity through supporting thousands of jobs directly and through the supply chain.

We have delivered 13 naval vessels in recent years to protect the UK and our NATO allies. And there are many more to come with three Type 26 frigates currently being built at BAE Systems in Govan and work is underway to order another five. The first of five Type 31s is also being constructed at Babcock's Assembly Hall at Rosyth.

An ambitious pipeline of naval vessels including Fleet Solid Support (FSS), Type 26 and Type 31 ships, will bolster the Royal Navy whilst providing opportunities for UK shipyards. Encouraging investment in domestic shipyards, the pipeline seeks to maximise the social value contribution shipbuilding can make in the UK whilst balancing the need to deliver value for money and solutions that fully meet the requirements of the Royal Navy.

The strategy also includes a range of interventions from across Government to support the sector. A new Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme (HSCGS) will give UK shipyards access to finance for underwriting domestic contracts. This will level the playing field with competitors' export credit guarantees and ensure UK shipbuilders have a fairer chance of securing valuable contracts.

The Department for Transport will invest £206 million in the UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK-SHORE) to fund research and development in zero emission vessels and infrastructure and ensure our place as global leader in green technology. UK-SHORE will help to tackle barriers to investment in clean maritime technologies, including investment in port infrastructure. It also includes a multi-year version of the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition which ran last year and provided funding to consortia right across the UK.

The NSbS Refresh will also establish a new UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce, led by the Department for Education. The taskforce will work with industry and training providers across the UK to identify and address skills gaps, ensuring the UK continues to develop and nurture future-focused skills and knowledge to help our shipbuilders deliver world-class vessels.

With the shipbuilding supply chain spread across all parts of the UK, the taskforce will work jointly with the Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure shipbuilders and the wider supply chain can access the skills they need.

A new Maritime Capability Campaign Office (MCCO) within the Department for International Trade will coordinate export support across government and industry. The MCCO will use robust analysis to improve our understanding about global markets, helping maritime suppliers to win export orders and increase UK market share.

This refreshed NSbS moves beyond the Ministry of Defence's commitment to double its shipbuilding investment over the life of this Parliament to over £1.7 billion a year – supported as part of the £24 billion increase in Defence spending over the next four years. This will continue to support jobs and skills around the UK.

Seeking to deliver a globally successful, innovative and sustainable shipbuilding industry, the refreshed National Shipbuilding Strategy follows publication of the Levelling Up White Paper, which will ensure that the government continues to rise to the challenge and deliver for the people of the UK.

Background:

The investment covers:

- Over £4 billion for new vessels, including the Royal Navy Pipeline, was announced in the 2020 Spending Review and the 2021 Autumn Budget.
- £206 million for UK SHORE.
- £11 million of new funding for the Maritime Capability Campaign Office (MCCO).
- An initial £2 million of new funding to set up the Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme (HSCGS), with additional investment – for underwriting the finance of vessel contracts – to be confirmed in due course.

Sarah Kenny, Chair of Maritime UK, said:

Following today's refreshed strategy, shipbuilding communities can power the future prosperity of our island nation, as green engines for economic growth.

Whether it's levelling-up, by creating skilled jobs across our coastal communities; delivering net zero, by steering our ships in a green direction and exporting these technologies across the world; or promoting Global Britain, with 95% of all our trade moved by sea – maritime is central to our country's future success.

Our industry supports the National Shipbuilding Strategy, with its investment, broader focus on commercial and leisure vessels, and emphasis on enablers such as skills and collaboration. We will be working closely with government to ensure these ambitions are met, on our way to becoming the world's most competitive maritime nation by 2050.

New UK shipbuilding vision launched

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