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SPF VOICE

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Welcome from the Chair

Jonathan Guthrie
Robertson Group

Working together makes time fly!

As I ponder my last contribution as Chair, it seems no time at all since I sat worrying about my first! The year has been a blur of activity and I have enjoyed meeting so many people. My theme for the year, Working Together, seems to have connected with many. Thank you for your support at events and meetings, especially the regional lunch and dinner events (including the Inverness breakfast)! These mean so much and bring together like minded people, looking for solutions at a local level that need influence at a national level. It has reinforced my understanding of the strength of the SPF. The ability to convene and discuss local issues, roll those up and propose solutions to the national Government agenda.

The big news over the last month has been the national election results and the resultant ministerial appointments and shuffle. Our home team are actively setting up briefing sessions and meetings with new Ministers and officials, to ensure we have our industry voice is heard loud and clear. We are keeping a close eye on new committees to ensure we understand their priorities and membership. On that note, please remember to get involved in our own new committee structure for Real Estate:Scotland going forward. These represent industry opportunity to shape policy and ensure we have a close, productive relationship with Government officials and Ministers. Your input will be critical in ensuring industry is heard, as we all seek to strengthen the economy and bring some certainty to the pipeline over the next few years.

UKREiiF has also been and gone. The

Scotland contingent was busy, with events packed out and pavilions overflowing! Team Scotland and our Vice Chair, Cameron Stott did an excellent job, with JLL and Scottish Cities Alliance, convening the conversations around investing in Scotland. Looking ahead, please get in touch for a heads up on future events, including MIPIM and UKREiiF 2027! More to follow on how you can get involved in bringing investment and new businesses to Scotland.

Looking forward, to the official launch of Real Estate:Scotland on the 23rd of June. Again, please get involved and hopefully we will see many of you at the event on 23 June in Edinburgh. I also look forward to seeing Cameron in action as Chair for the newly branded organisation. All the best Cameron!

Has Working Together become a thing? We seem to talk about it more, though as someone reflected on a LinkedIn post... I would say that because convening and partnering is what I have done for decades. However, it does feel like a subtle shift over the last year or so, where we have given ourselves permission to work more closely together? The language from Government (officials and parliamentarians) seems to reflect that too. With a closer working relationship, between and within public and private sectors... the big question is what do we do with it? Over to you Cameron!

I look forward to seeing you all at the inaugural RE:Scotland dinner 8 October! I won't be going far as I continue to work together with so many of you.

Thank you all for your support over the year. My first job is to catch up on 12 months of email...

Have a great weekend, and summer if it holds!

- Jonathan



Industry Comment

The Scottish Government Takes Shape

By

Barrie Cunning

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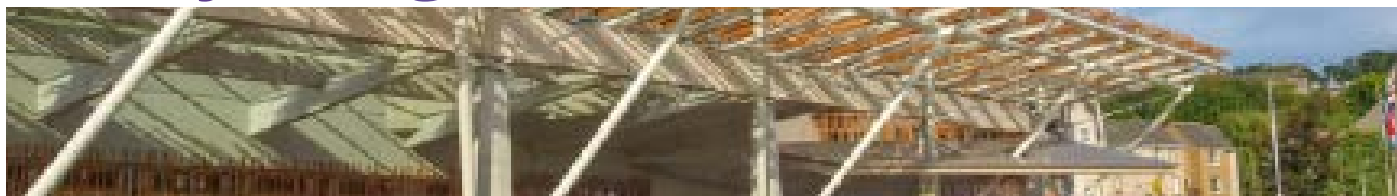
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Policy Insights



Reflections from the Scottish Parliamentary Elections May 2026

The Scottish Government Takes Shape

Although the Scottish Parliament is comprised of some 64 newcomers (or returners who had lost a previous seat) – there is a strong sense of continuity in much of the Scottish Government. There is even more familiarity with some of the key issues highlighted by First Minister John Swinney in his address to the CBI last Friday 22 May and they are some of the most familiar issues facing the sector, including business rates and the performance of the planning system.

The First Minister has made clear that sustainable economic growth is a government priority. This is a welcome priority that has not always been so prominent – and it will remain to be seen if the National Council for Economic Growth encourages broader public sector economic priorities than has arguably been the case in previous iterations. Delivery of sustainable economic growth will require however significant elements of the public sector to be aligned to support the objective of growth, and unfortunately this has been too often an option and not a priority.

The government intends to signal strong momentum with its key announcements and initiatives to be unrolled during the first 100 days of returning to government. In his CBI address, the FM opened an invitation to address issues of clarity and consistency on business rates in his new administration's first 100 days. This includes opening the First Homes Fund (FHF), the new shared-equity first time buyers' scheme, by the end of June with the aim of supporting 2000 households within this first 100 days. By the end of this Parliament the intention is to support 50,000 households onto the property ladder through the FHF.

The new government offers a wide variety of decision-makers and key points of contact. Deputy First Minister Jenny Gilruth includes responsibility for local government and finance. This remit includes the annual budget and the three yearly expenditure plans. It also includes wider fiscal and taxation policy, possibly including the Building

Safety Levy and LBTT although it is usual for Ministers (not Cabinet Secretaries) to assume detailed responsibility for specific taxes eventually. New Cabinet Secretary for Public Service Reform Ivan McKee assumes responsibility for the Scottish Futures Trust as well as addressing government efficiency and productivity. Reporting to Mr McKee, Hannah Mary Goodlad (Hannah Mary to be used as first name) takes Ivan McKee's former responsibilities for Business Rates and Planning, although note our earlier comments on BSL and LBTT.

Shirely-Anne Somerville resumes the Social Justice and Housing brief. This will incorporate responsibility for Housing to 2040, affordable housing and tenant rights, housing regulation, cladding remediation and building standards.

Stephen Flynn assumes a range of areas including City Regional deals, SNIB and the enterprise agencies as well as the industrial strategy and international trade and investment. In Mr Flynn's new team, Tom Arthur returns as Minister for Towns and Cities, Regeneration and Green Freeports, and will support the Cabinet Secretary on Inward Investment and Global capital.

Scottish development and housebuilding sector a slight glimmer of hope, but as I always say, the proof is always in the policy pudding.

These are exactly the kinds of conversations we'll be exploring at the **Scotland 2050 conference** on 2 June at the Assembly Rooms. We believe the best ideas happen when people from every walk of life, community members, business owners, students and politicians, come together to shape our future. No jargon. No agendas. Just an open conversation about the Scotland we want to live in by 2050.

Book your free ticket [here](#)



Call for comments

Last call for comments: Heat Networks Installation and Maintenance Licence

The Scottish Government is consulting on proposals for an opt-in installation and maintenance licensing regime for heat networks in Scotland, to be introduced through the forthcoming Heat in Buildings Bill. The license would grant operators statutory rights, such as road works, surveys, and compulsory purchase powers to help install and maintain infrastructure more efficiently. The proposals follow the partial supersession of the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021 by the UK Energy Act 2023, which introduced OFGEM regulation from 2025. The consultation covers scope, application process, conditions, and powers.

Consultation closes on 5 June, please send your views at spf@realestateuk.org.



Industry Comment

Barrie Cunning
Pentland Communication |
Scotland 2050

As the Scottish Parliament enters its seventh session all eyes will be on what we can expect from the next Scottish Government. John Swinney MSP, First Minister of Scotland has given a snippet of what we can expect in terms of his focus which will be on economic growth and innovation, public service reform and a continued strong commitment to environmental sustainability.

As a minority administration and given the underpinning new dynamics and the rise of the Scottish Green Party and Reform UK Scotland, we may see a new alignment on policy areas where parties can work together - energy and green economy, social justice, but as John has mentioned before he wants to focus on economic growth and this will give the



Get Involved with Real Estate: Scotland



Apply Now to Real Estate:Scotland's Committees

Scotland's real estate industry is undergoing a period of significant change. From planning reform and net zero targets to evolving investment models and the growing influence of AI, the decisions made over the next few years will shape the sector for decades to come.

From 23 June, SPF will transition to **Real Estate:Scotland** which will be the newly unified voice of the Scottish real estate industry bringing together the SPF, BPF, Investment Property Forum and the Association of Real Estate Funds. Established at a pivotal moment - following the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections - it brings the sector together

to speak with clarity and influence in shaping policy and regulation for the built environment in Scotland.

Real Estate:Scotland will deliver regional and national events, alongside a programme of policy development, to bring the industry together and work with industry stakeholders, Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament and local authorities to champion the sector at home and internationally.

As we build this programme, we are seeking new committee members to help shape and drive our work.

Building on the legacy of the SPF, this includes opportunities to get involved in our sector-specific Committees and to capitalise on the achievements of the IPF, a new Industry Insights Committee will deliver a programme of industry-wide events.

Applications are now open until 12 June to apply for our Real Estate:Scotland Committees.

Applications open for Committees include:

- Commercial Property and Investment Committee
- Development Planning and Management Committee
- Property Finance Committee
- Residential Property and Investment Committee
- Sustainability and Building Design Committee
- Industry Insights Committee

[Apply Here](#)



Join our Committees & Working Groups

Looking to shape the future of the industry?
Apply before 12 June



SPF at UKREiIF



Debrief from UKREiIF

The UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum held its 5th conference in Leeds this month. The official 3-day event attracted some 16,000 plus to the city, with an increasing number also attending a broad range of fringe events too. The SPF team was down in full force alongside a strong Scottish contingent, all taking advantage of the week's packed programme.

We supported several well-attended events, including a Scottish Government panel hosted at the Scottish Cities Alliance pavilion. The line-up featured Cameron Stott, Head of Scotland at JLL and SPF Vice Chair as well as representatives from Scottish Enterprise, the Scottish Government and the Scottish National Investment Bank on the theme of 'Scotland: Open for Investment'. Similarly, we also supported a stowed-out panel session hosted in the JLL pavilion, again chaired by Cameron Stott on Why Invest in Scotland. The Scottish Government, SNIB and GreenFree Ports were also represented on the panel. We are told this was JLL's largest attended event of the week!

For next gen professionals, our Real Estate:Futures network hosted numerous events from roundtables, to yoga, panels, and lunches and a sneak preview of L&G's latest BtR development, Tura.

UKREiIF is certainly a hectic week - and one that may require several more coffees than usual - but it is an excellent opportunity to network at scale, uncover new opportunities and, importantly for us, demonstrate a coordinated public and private sector message that Scotland is open for investment.



**Real Estate:
Scotland**

Book Now: Early Bird
Ends 31 May



Real Estate:Scotland

The Inaugural Annual Dinner 2026

Thursday 8 October | EICC, Edinburgh

Join us for an evening celebrating the Scottish real estate industry as we continue the long-standing legacy of the SPF Annual Dinner.

After Dinner Speaker

Brian Taylor

Columnist at the Herald and Former political editor for BBC Scotland



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