



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
2016/17



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



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01 COMMUNICATIONS FOR SCOTLAND – FOREWORD BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

Scotland is experiencing a period of unprecedented change, challenge and opportunity, with an ambitious Programme for Government, the devolution of significant new powers and questions over our future in Europe.

Good communication lies at the heart of any competent and ambitious organisation and especially one which has committed to becoming Scotland’s most open and accessible government. Insightful, creative and effective engagement with the public, with partners, with stakeholders and with staff can raise awareness, shift attitudes and change behaviours. It has the power to improve lives.

Over the next year we will engage with more than five million people in Scotland and reach out to many more internationally, working to build a more prosperous nation with a dynamic, sustainable and inclusive economy, with public services that put people’s needs first, and where there is true equality of opportunity for all. In order to do that we need to be a more open, capable and responsive organisation – the vision which lies at the heart of SG2020, our organisational transformation programme.

We have a successful track record of communication. Past achievements and awards show how we adapt to the ever-changing communications environment. An increased emphasis on the needs and interests of our audiences and the use of evidence, evaluation and collaboration will be key to our continuing success.

This Communications Plan will ensure that our work will be focused and effective. It is a blueprint for how our communications professionals will help deliver the Programme for Government. It is incumbent on us all to communicate and engage openly and effectively – I encourage everyone to consider the contribution they will make to putting this Plan into action.



Good communication lies at the heart of competent and ambitious government



Our emphasis is on the needs of our audience: evidence, evaluation and collaboration are key



02 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Communications division undertakes specialist, high-quality work to support the delivery of the Scottish Government's outcomes, providing the following functions and services:



News Hubs offer strategic and tactical communications advice to Ministers and officials, as well as communicating directly with the media to promote and explain Scottish Government policies. They are placing increased emphasis on broadcast, digital and online content to reflect changes in the way people access news and improve direct engagement with key audiences.



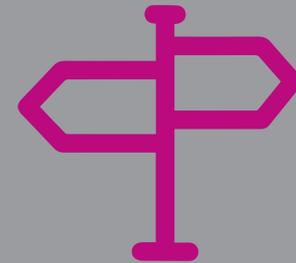
The **Digital Communications Team** provides advice to Ministers and staff on digital engagement and is responsible for the Scottish Government website (gov.scot) - our biggest single communication channel.



The **Marketing Unit** works with policy colleagues and provides advice to Ministers on how to use marketing as a lever to change behaviour, to inform the public about legislative change and to promote Scotland overseas.



The **Corporate Communications Team** uses internal communications and employee engagement to support organisational change and help staff do their jobs more effectively. It also promotes the organisation's reputation externally and is responsible for the Scottish Government's intranet.



Providing strategic and tactical communications advice



Ensuring insight is used to develop the most effective communications for audiences



02 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO



The **Strategy & Insight Team** is responsible for providing overall strategic direction and ensuring insight is used to develop the most effective communications for audiences, to maximise reach, impact, efficacy and return on investment. It also promotes robust evaluation across Communications.



The **Communications Services Unit** works closely with the specialist teams to provide the support they need to do their job effectively, including news planning, media monitoring and budget and contract management.



We encourage Scottish Government officials to seek advice from Communications at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure we are all working as effectively as possible.

The division also welcomes conversations with public bodies about how we can collectively contribute to the delivery of Ministers' priorities.



03

COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES 2016/17

Communications will contribute to the delivery of the Programme for Government by pursuing the following priorities:

MAKING OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM WORLD CLASS, WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

As part of our work to give Scotland's children the best start in life, improve educational achievement and close the poverty-related attainment gap, we will work proactively to:

- highlight early years support for parents such as the 'baby box' for all newborns and raise awareness and uptake of the expansion of free early learning and childcare;
- support the engagement of parents, young people and the wider population, together with public and third sector partners, to ensure there is a clear understanding of how information-sharing will operate ahead of introducing the Named Person service as part of the wider commitment to Getting It Right For Every Child;
- encourage and support parents to play an active role in their child's development and learning in the crucial early years and then primary school;
- publicise our review of school governance, plans for a new, fair and transparent funding model and actions to de-clutter the curriculum, in order to empower teachers and parents to improve their school;
- promote the role of teachers and teaching as an inspiring and fulfilling career, supporting local and national work to address teacher shortages; and
- illustrate opportunities for all school leavers to pursue their ambitions, outlining our plans for widening access to university and maintaining college places in a reformed, modern further education sector.



We will highlight early years support for parents and the provision of a 'baby box' for all newborns



We will promote the role of teachers and teaching as an inspiring and fulfilling career, supporting work to address teacher shortages



GROWING A PRODUCTIVE, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

To support the development of a sustainable economy across Scotland that is both resilient and inclusive, we will work proactively to:

- ensure business and industry are aware of the resources we have made available to counter the threat to economic recovery from the UK vote to leave the EU, including a £100m capital stimulus package and a post-referendum business network for advice and support;
- promote a new Scottish Growth Scheme worth up to £0.5 billion over the next three years, backing young companies with ambitions to grow and expand into overseas markets;
- highlight opportunities for young people to maximise their talent and skills to help secure meaningful employment, with additional apprenticeship places and the use of new powers to develop a new jobs grant;
- show how we support innovation – the main driver of long-term productivity – through continued investment in world-class higher education and research facilities, an Innovation Prize and the work of the Council of Economic Advisers;
- encourage the growth of world-class companies in Scotland and the development of international trade links by promoting Scotland as a great place to live, work and do business;
- demonstrate how smaller businesses are the lifeblood of Scotland's economy, while raising awareness of our competitive business rates regime and the further expansion of the Small Business Bonus scheme;
- illustrate to employees and employers, through our Labour Market Strategy and Scottish Business Pledge, the gains from investing in and promoting fair working practices such as paying the Living Wage and more workplace innovation;
- underline our focus on creating jobs and sustaining vibrant communities through our infrastructure programme of capital investment across transport, water, health, education and housing;
- motivate and help households to adopt a greener lifestyle as part of wider work to reduce emissions, decarbonise the economy and meet our climate change commitments, supported by a new energy strategy promoting renewables and greater efficiency;
- highlight our support for the rural economy and our investment in infrastructure and connectivity to remote communities such as rolling out superfast broadband and supporting lifeline ferry and air routes; and
- promote and help protect the natural environment and the welfare of animals, including highlighting new measures to tackle wildlife crime and a ban on the use of wild animals in circuses.



TRANSFORMING PUBLIC SERVICES

To support the development and delivery of high-quality, efficient and collaborative public services that place the needs and aspirations of our people at the centre of their work, we will work proactively to:

- illustrate the benefits of unprecedented investment and reform across health and social care, the transformation of primary care and a 10 year mental health strategy and other work to adapt to the needs of an ageing population;
- support better public health awareness, promote prevention and early intervention and deliver campaigns to increase early detection of lung, bowel and breast cancers;
- publicise the increase in GP and nurse numbers in Scottish communities alongside wider work to enhance the capacity of both the workforce and infrastructure such as expanded elective capacity and new treatment centres;
- promote the role of Scotland's police service and other emergency and public services as they work to keep people safe from harm, including responding to emerging threats such as terrorism and cyber-crime;
- work closely with our emergency services to ensure that Scotland plays its part in securing the UK against the threat of terrorism;
- explain justice system reforms to better support victims and witnesses, tackle underlying causes of offending and improve public safety, including better use of digital and other technology and robust community-based sentencing;
- increase public understanding about the nature of violence against women and girls and challenge harmful attitudes, including highlighting planned legislation to strengthen how we tackle domestic abuse;



We will support better public health awareness, promote prevention and early intervention and deliver campaigns to increase early detection of lung, bowel and breast cancers

- support and encourage use of online resources to help reduce inequalities, increase employability and benefit health;
- enhance the Government's reputation for openness and accessibility by transforming our corporate website and promoting social media best practice; and
- raise Scottish Government staff awareness and understanding of SG2020 and transform the Saltire intranet into a digital workplace that helps staff do their jobs and serve the public more efficiently.



PUTTING PEOPLE IN CHARGE AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

To help build strong, resilient and supportive communities where we all live together in peace, and people from all backgrounds have the opportunities to flourish, we will work proactively to:

- ensure local communities are aware of how they will have a greater say in the decisions that affect them, including new powers for island communities;
- explain how we are supporting greater community ownership and making land ownership more transparent, including creating a mandatory public register of controlling interests in landowners;
- inform the public about our new powers to maximise social, economic and human rights for Scotland;
- unveil a Fairer Scotland action plan, highlighting our commitments across Government to tackle poverty and inequalities;
- increase awareness of newly-devolved responsibilities relating to social security, publicising planned changes and encouraging uptake of benefits;
- show how we are using new tax powers fairly and progressively to meet Scotland's specific needs and to protect those on low and middle incomes;
- raise awareness of better access to good affordable housing as at least 50,000 new homes are built over the next five years; and
- promote opportunities for Scots to save money and have warmer homes through actions to improve energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty.



We will ensure local communities are aware of how they will have a greater say in the decisions that affect them, including new powers for island communities



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SCOTLAND ON THE WORLD STAGE

To promote Scotland and our interests outside the UK and on the world stage, to help strengthen international relations, boost our trade, investment, influence and networks, we will work proactively to:

- demonstrate how the Government is protecting the interests of the people of Scotland by exploring all options to secure the country's place in the European Union which includes a consultation on a draft Referendum Bill should a referendum be the best or only way to protect our country's interests;
- support engagement with stakeholders around Scotland, further afield and across portfolios to deal with the various and immediate impacts of uncertainty caused by the EU Referendum result;
- strengthen and enhance Scotland's reputation on the world stage, as an outward-looking country, showing leadership in areas such as climate change, procurement and equality;
- promote all of Scotland as a first choice, year-round destination and promote key sectors such as food and drink, higher education and tourism across the world; and
- promote the development of a confident, successful cultural sector, contributing to the nation's standing on the world stage, with people supported to express their creativity and access to the arts widely promoted.



We will demonstrate how the Government is protecting the interests of the people of Scotland



We will promote Scotland as a year-round destination and promote key sectors such as food and drink, higher education and tourism across the world



04 CHANGING THE WAY WE WORK – THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATIONS

We strive to continually develop our people and improve our ways of working so that we are more efficient, effective and responsive.

More evidence-based and outcome-focused

Our work will focus on those areas where we know communications can deliver results. We will use research techniques to truly understand our audiences and their lives, what motivates them and what creates challenges for them so that we can reach them and engage with them in the most effective way. By rooting our communications strategies in audience insight they will have a much greater chance of success.

Setting clear SMART objectives and using meaningful evaluation methods will allow us to deliver and demonstrate impact and value.

We will pilot a new strategy for communicating with parents, which will see the Strategy & Insight Team working with other parts of the communications division and policy teams to join up messaging across a range of topics and speak to parents in a way that best meets their needs.

Greater collaboration

We will continue to develop more opportunities for collaboration across the public sector such as the Greener Scotland Group. This group, which includes heads of communications from key public sector partners, meets regularly to co-ordinate its work, maximise reach and reduce overlap.

We will work across the Scottish Government to ensure our messages on Europe and inclusive growth are coordinated and aligned.

The Scottish Communicators' Network with members from across the public and voluntary sectors will continue to offer the opportunity to exchange ideas and explore how we can work more closely to save time, money and effort.

Matching resources to priorities

An effective communications operation must be proactive and strategic but also able to respond effectively to emerging issues.

News Hubs are enabling us to ensure we have the right people in the right place at the right time. Work is also underway to streamline processes and significantly reduce news release output, placing a greater emphasis on broadcast coverage and creative digital content to reflect changes in how people consume and access news, and enable more direct engagement with our key audiences.

These changes, together with the creation of a Reactive News Hub, are allowing staff to focus on strategic planning and informed, effective, proactive communications work to support delivery of our key priorities.



04 CHANGING THE WAY WE WORK – THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Digital engagement

The Digital Communications Team is developing more efficient tools to encourage better engagement and effective online communications across the organisation. This is being supported through a mentoring scheme, staff training sessions, new guidance and developing the skills of directorate-based Engagement Managers.

The new gov.scot website will improve the online experience for our audiences – ensuring the information they need is easy to find.

By moving all consultations online, we will continue to make the Scottish Government more open and accessible, save time and money and make it easier to collate, analyse and respond to consultations.

Measuring progress

Evaluation is the cornerstone of continuous improvement and development. Understanding what works and where we can have the most impact will allow us to deliver a more efficient and effective communications service.

This Communications Plan will assist our evaluation process by clearly outlining the priorities of our work for the period ahead, and requiring teams to set SMART objectives and business plans which are aligned to these priorities.

Evaluations will focus on the outcomes and impact of activity, with progress monitored throughout the year to inform and shape future communication.



We will continue to make the Scottish Government more open and accessible



Evaluation is the cornerstone of continuous improvement and development



05 GETTING IT RIGHT - CASE STUDIES

#juniordocscot

In February 2016, the Scottish Government launched a drive to bring more junior doctors to work in Scotland.

An in-house group bringing together health sector and communications professionals set about creating a campaign which had to be low cost but high impact.

A series of video case studies were filmed, following four junior doctors training in a range of medical specialties across the country and linked by an interview with the Chief Medical Officer.

These were launched via the #juniordocscot social media campaign and were covered by the mainstream broadcast and print media, using clips and infographics produced from stills taken during the filming.

Campaign results included:

- half a million people reached on Twitter and Facebook;
- 55,000 views on Facebook;
- 1,000 Facebook shares;
- 307,000 people reached on Facebook;
- 1,200 uses of the #juniordocscot hashtag on Twitter;
- 130,000 people reached on Twitter;
- 10 million combined UK television audience;
- 138% increase in unique views of speciality recruitment pages; and
- extensive coverage on news websites including BBC and PA.

But, most significantly recruitment into Higher Specialty junior doctor training posts increased by up to 18% between 2015 and 2016.

Other than staff time, the campaign cost less than £500.



**HALF A MILLION PEOPLE
REACHED ON TWITTER
AND FACEBOOK**

+18% 
**HIGHER SPECIALTY
JUNIOR DOCTOR TRAINING POSTS
RECRUITMENT**



05 GETTING IT RIGHT - CASE STUDIES

Healthier Scotland: Eat Better, Feel Better

Nearly two-thirds of adults and a third of children in Scotland are defined as overweight or obese and failure to tackle this problem could cost the taxpayer up to £3 billion by 2030, with around half a million people at risk of developing diet-related Type 2 diabetes.

The Scottish Government launched a new collaborative social marketing campaign – Eat Better, Feel Better – aimed to motivate and encourage families to eat more healthily.

The first burst of activity was in August 2015 to coincide with ‘back-to-school’ time, followed by another in January to March 2016 when people traditionally make New Year ‘healthy eating’ resolutions. Both campaigns combined TV, digital advertising and a press partnership, plus extensive PR, social media, field and partnership support through extensive collaboration with stakeholders, retailers and community groups. Additionally, radio advertisements and a radio promotion ran in January to March.

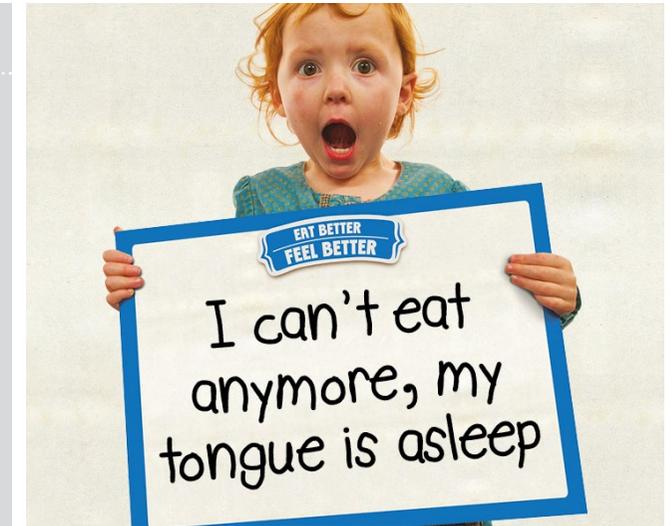
Independent research confirmed that the campaign messages reached the target audience and found that:

- 55% of those surveyed were aware of the campaign;
- 35% (over 52,000 mums) claimed to have taken action to shop, cook and eat more healthily; and
- 29% were aware of campaign-related materials in their local communities.

Furthermore:

- partner media secured, free of charge, a media equivalent of £1.7m and a return on investment of £1:£23
- over 180,000 visits to the campaign website and over 20,000 followers on Facebook.

This campaign will continue to use partnership working and digital channels as a cost-effective way to improve Scotland’s eating habits and help reduce the amount of public money spent on treating dietary-related health conditions.





05 GETTING IT RIGHT - CASE STUDIES

Fairer Scotland

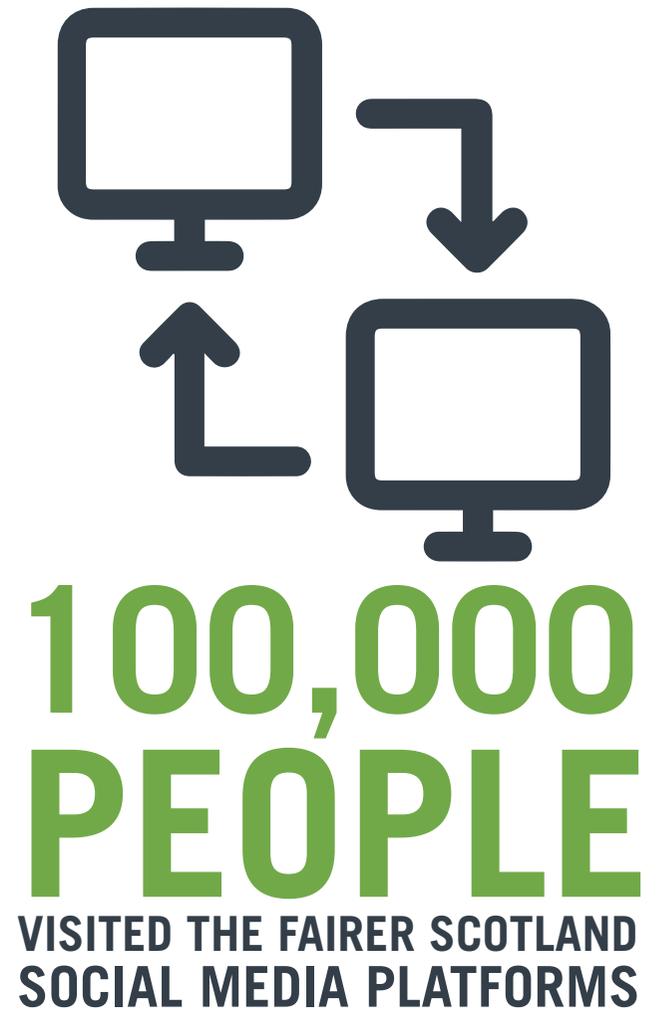
Digital communications played a major role in enabling politicians and communities to consider together what a Fairer Scotland should look like in 2030 and how this could be achieved.

This collaborative approach brought together policy officials, analysts, marketing, news and digital specialists, consulting with stakeholders and community groups.

Moving away from a traditional consultation paper, the team set up dedicated digital and social media channels to encourage engagement and increase accessibility. These channels were kept updated with a stream of creative material and resources that communities and individuals could use to take ownership of their local discussions.

Results included:

- Over 7,000 people took part in around 200 Fairer Scotland discussions, from Dumfries to Stornoway.
- Over 100,000 people visited the Fairer Scotland social media platforms.
- Around 76,000 personal Facebook feeds were reached.





05 GETTING IT RIGHT - CASE STUDIES

SG2020

The SG2020 programme is about creating the organisation we want and need to meet the demands of the next decade.

The Corporate Communications Team launched a programme of activity in August 2015 to raise staff awareness of the Programme's aims and encourage their involvement.

Regular staff updates via intranet articles, digital channels and Executive Team Q&A sessions have been used to share information and prompt discussion. Staff have also been encouraged to get involved and offer feedback via PollEverywhere, local conversations and online. By January 2016, every Directorate in the organisation had taken part in discussions about how they want the Scottish Government to look in the future.

Other activity has included staff events with Ministers to demonstrate their support for the changes, including two hosted by Derek Mackay. Evaluation showed that 99% found these sessions valuable and 85% felt they had increased their understanding of the programme.

By May 2016 the following results were achieved:

- 91% of staff were aware of the SG2020 programme; and
- 61% of staff understood the aims of SG2020.



**STAFF AWARENESS
OF SG2020
OVER 90%**



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