



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Parliamentary Corporate Body Discusses Holyrood Project Issues

This morning's meeting of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) held detailed discussions on two aspects of the project for the new Parliament complex at Holyrood

Interior of Chamber

The members were given a brief oral report from the group which visited the Dutch Parliament's second chamber (Tweede Kamer) in The Hague and the Flemish Parliament in Brussels late last month.

Representatives from the Design Team then updated the SPCB on their latest plans for the interior of the new chamber, which took on board comments from the three members who visited Europe (Sir David Steel MSP, Robert Brown MSP and Andrew Welsh MSP).

After the presentation, Sir David said:

"We found the visit to the Dutch and Flemish Parliament's very worthwhile in contributing to our thoughts on the interior of the chamber at Holyrood.

"The Design Team has taken on board our views and its amended proposals - which do not in any way alter the 'footprint' of the building which will house the chamber - met with the approval of the SPCB.

"The Design Team has now been asked to refine its proposals in order that the SPCB can present them to all MSPs shortly after the Parliament returns from the recess."

Queensberry House

The SPCB were also given a presentation on the proposals for renovating Queensberry House, at the lower end of the Canongate, so it can become an integral part of the new Parliamentary complex.

They were guided through plans which show how the historic building, parts of which date back to the 17th century and which was latterly a Board of Ordnance barracks, a house of refuge for the destitute and a geriatric hospital, would become a innovative link between the MSP's offices and the main Parliamentary complex.

Sir David said:

"There is a lot of interest in the renovation of Queensberry House, and the SPCB is keen to keep up a public information flow on plans for the building.

"We will be discussing the use of Queensberry House again before the end of the month and intend inviting the Royal Fine Arts Commission to our discussions, following their request for a meeting on the issue. Again, we will keep all Members up-to-date with our deliberations."

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Parliament Video Tells Full Story of Road to Holyrood

The full story of the road to Devolution and its culmination with the Royal Opening of The Scottish Parliament on July 1 is told in the official video of the opening ceremony, released today (Monday).

The 65 minute video – which is on sale priced £12.99 – features the best TV footage from the historical July 1 ceremony along with exclusive, yet-to-be-broadcast footage from the Parliament's own broadcasting unit.

The Parliament's Presiding Officer Sir David Steel said the video was something that would appeal to all Scots, both at home and abroad. Speaking at the video's premiere in Edinburgh, he said:

"Few of us who were lucky enough to be involved in the Opening Ceremony on July 1 will forget what a historic, symbolic and colourful day it was.

"Thousands of people lined the streets in Edinburgh and millions more watched on TV and via the Internet – it was a day that they too are unlikely to forget.

"This video will allow us all the opportunity to re-live that memorable day and give those who were not able to view the spectacle the chance to watch the many highlights in the comfort of their own homes. It also provides an intriguing insight into the behind-the-scenes work that went into Devolution and the opening days and weeks of our new Parliament."

The video will initially be available from the Parliament's shop on George IV Bridge in Edinburgh before going on widespread release from September 27. It has been produced in-house by the Parliament's own broadcasting unit, and shows the background to the coming about of the Parliament together with full coverage of the events of July 1.

The video features musical input from some of the biggest names of Scottish contemporary music, including Texas, Runrig, The Silencers and Eddi Reader. Traditional music lovers will get a lot from the video too, with music from the opening day including the Inverness Gaelic Choir, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Sheena Wellington's unforgettable performance of the Burns classic 'A man's a man for a' that' in the Parliament's temporary home, the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall on The Mound.

The video features the best footage shot by Scotland's broadcasters - BBC Scotland, Scottish, Grampian and Border Television - as well as footage shot by the Parliament's own broadcasting unit for the live broadcast of the opening relayed by the Microsoft Network on the World Wide Web.

As well as the ceremony in the main Chamber, the video features the Royal procession from Holyrood, the civic procession, the children's parade, the spectacular Red Arrows and Concorde flypast and the post-opening celebrations in the evening. There is also an exclusive look at the 'first days' of the Parliament from back in early May, with MSPs arriving at their offices for the first time and the very first sitting on May 12.

The Parliament has set up distribution deals which allow the video to be sent directly around the world, allowing Scots, exiles and any other interested parties at home and abroad to be sent a copy. It will be possible to order direct from the parliament's website at www.scottish.parliament.uk

Background notes

The official Scottish Parliament Opening Video was produced in-house by the broadcasting unit of the Scottish Parliament. It was produced and directed by Alan Smart, head of broadcasting at the Parliament and will retail at £12.99 from all good video stockists.

Pictures to accompany this news release are available via ISDN by calling David Grimmer on 0131 348 5736 / 07747 806146

Distribution of the video is being handled by SBL. Retailers wishing to stock the video should contact Charlie Cybulski on 0141 427 7222. International distribution deals are currently under discussion. The Parliament's website (www.scottish.parliament.uk) will be advertising the video with details of how international customers can order direct from the parliament's shop.

The Broadcasting Unit is currently in the process of setting up reader offers allowing various newspapers and magazines to join in partnership with the Parliament in selling the video direct to their readers. Any interested media should contact the broadcasting unit direct on 0131 348 5150.

Publications or other media wishing copies of the video for use as competition prizes should also contact the Broadcasting Unit direct on the above number. Additional information is also available there.

MSP's may be available for photocalls with local media. For contact details call Andrew Slorance on 0131 34 85389.

[Official video of Opening Ceremony 1999](#)

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Catalan Parliament and Holyrood Architect to be Visited by Sir David Steel on Monday

The Scottish Parliament's Presiding Officer Sir David Steel will be in Barcelona on Monday (September 27) to deliver the Ramon Trias Fargas memorial lecture, named after the co-author of the Catalan constitution.

Sir David will take the opportunity of being in the city to meet with his opposite number (President) of the Catalan Parliament, Juan Raventos. He will also meet with the President of the Catalan Government, Jordi Pujol, who has been a regular visitor to Edinburgh in recent years.

On Monday afternoon, Sir David will also call at the offices of Holyrood project architect Enric Miralles.

The Presiding Officer will return to Edinburgh early on Tuesday morning.

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Updated Plans for Holyrood Chamber Unveiled Today

Revised plans showing the 'ellipse' layout of Members' seating in the Chamber of the new Scottish Parliament building at Holyrood were presented to MSPs today.

A report, prepared by the Design Team (EMBT/RMJM) and issued by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) also informs Members of the SPCB's plans for the renovation of Queensberry House.

The Parliament's Presiding Officer Sir David Steel, who also chairs the SPCB, said the Design Team had worked hard over the summer to prepare the revised plans for the Chamber and to firm up on the proposals for Queensberry House.

Sir David said:

"Along with the other members of the SPCB, I am very pleased with the revised 'ellipse' layout of the Holyrood Chamber. The Design Team of EMBT/RMJM have produced a layout which is modern, flexible and accessible and will satisfy the operational needs of the Parliament.

"We feel that the layout meets the objective of creating a non-confrontational chamber but maintaining sight lines to allow for constructive and lively debates.

"The Design Team have taken on board the views and concerns expressed by some MSPs when the initial layout of the chamber was presented to them back in June prior to the debate on the Holyrood Project.

"To help further progress and inform the layout of the new chamber, some members of the SPCB and the Design Team visited the Dutch and Flanders Parliaments in July.

"Since then, the Design Team have made presentations to the SPCB on three separate occasions, each time refining the layout to meet specific issues.

"The key point is that the revised arrangements have been incorporated within the original 'footprint' of the building."

The Design Team will now turn their attention to the interior design of the Chamber focussing on specific details such as fittings, furniture design, furnishings and colour. The SPCB is committed to keeping Members fully informed of progress on these matters.

Queensberry House

Information is also given in the report to the background and proposals for Queensberry House, the Category A listed building on the site of the new Parliamentary complex.

In August, the Design Team presented their proposals for Queensberry House to the SPCB on two occasions, the latter in the presence of the Chairman and Secretary of the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland.

To help inform the design proposals, Mr John Hume, consultant to the Holyrood Project Team and former Chief Inspector of Historic Scotland has prepared an interim report, in consultation with the Design Team, on the history of Queensberry House and the proposals for this building.

A copy of John Hume's Interim Report to the SPCB has been placed in the Parliament's library. A copy of the final report will also be lodged in the library when it is available.

Following approval of the City of Edinburgh Council's Planning Committee on 15 September 1999 of the Notice of Proposed Development (Reserved Matters) the Design Team will continue to work with the Council on how ongoing archaeological investigations will inform the treatment of Queensberry House.

The SPCB have also taken on board the concern of Members about the level of car parking provision at Holyrood and have asked the Holyrood Project Team to survey Members of their intended use of cars and their car parking requirements. In light of this survey it is likely that some spaces could be used for storage, thereby reducing the number of parking spaces required providing there was future flexibility.

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