

Scotland's Culture Secretary tours The Kelpies with sculptor Andy Scott



Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop MSP, was in Falkirk last week to review progress on the construction phase of The Kelpies – the two 30-metre high horses head sculptures sitting on either side of a new Canal extension and marina improvement being formed as part of the Helix Project.

The Cabinet Secretary met with Andy Scott (on the left in the photo above) – the Glasgow-based artist behind the public art work – for a tour around the sculptures, which are due for completion at the end of October. The two giant steel-plated horses heads form a key element of the £43 million Helix land transformation project between Falkirk and Grangemouth.

Work on The Kelpies has gathered pace over the summer and sculptor Andy Scott is pleased with progress. He said:-“I am delighted with the recent progress on the project. It has been seven years in the making involving a huge team of specialists, and we now very close to completion. The Kelpies exemplify the best of creativity, engineering and project management and are sure to have an incredible impact on the area and hopefully Scotland as a whole. They are soon to be one of the largest public artworks in the country, and the largest equine sculptures in the world.

“It's therefore a great time to give the Culture Secretary an overview of developments and bring her up to speed on our aspirations for the artworks on site and beyond.”

Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop said:-“The Helix project demonstrates how culture can

be an important catalyst for economic development and a powerful force for regeneration. As well as attracting tourists and inward investment, creative activity like this helps to support and shape our communities and our places, fostering and reinforcing people's sense of identity and community cohesion. I am delighted to see this ambitious project taking shape, and to have the opportunity to view The Kelpies as they near completion."

The Helix is expected to attract an additional 350,000 visitors a year to the Falkirk area and boost the local economy by around £1.5 million per annum when it is officially opened in April next year -providing the area with its second 'top ten' tourist attraction.

Meanwhile, to help highlight the 350-hectare Helix development, a pair of one-tenth scale Kelpie models (3 metres tall) will continue their tour of key Scottish cities this month. This week they are being showcased in Dundee.

Mike King, Programme Director at the Helix (on the right in the photo) said:-"It's been a pleasure to welcome Fiona Hyslop to the Helix to allow the Cabinet Secretary to see for herself the massive impact The Kelpies will have on the area and to catch up again with Andy Scott – the creative talent behind these fantastic sculptures.

"People using the Forth & Clyde Canal and the M9 motorway between Glasgow and Edinburgh can see some of the fantastic progress being made on the The Kelpies, and we are on schedule to complete the construction phase towards the end of next month."

The Helix was the successful recipient of the Big Lottery Living Landmarks award and is being driven by a partnership of Falkirk Council and Scottish Canals.

Submitted by [Nicola Macnaughton](#)