

Brexit 'threatens' Edinburgh festivals

BREXIT POSES THREAT TO FUTURE OF EDINBURGH FESTIVALS

SNP MSP Gordon MacDonald has raised concerns in The Scottish Parliament, over the threat that Brexit poses to the future of the Edinburgh Festivals.

He asked The Scottish Government "What impact the Tory government's plans to impose further restrictions on EU workers coming to Scotland will have on our internationally acclaimed festivals."

Festival organisers have previously described the visa process for performers who want to appear at Edinburgh arts festivals as "humiliating" and "Kafkaesque".

In response the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Fiona Hyslop, highlighted that the additional restrictions on people to coming to this country will affect both artists and visitors. She said that the "attitude of the UK Government and its attitude towards Europe will affect how people see this country".

Mr MacDonald who represents the Pentlands constituency has repeatedly highlighted the "devastating" impact that the UK government's hostile environment has had on the ability to attract international guests to Edinburgh's festivals.

In a Members' Debate that he led last year, he argued that since the Tory government introduced hard-line visa controls, visa applications for performers have been hit by refusals, errors and delays, with some acclaimed international writers, actors and musicians forced to cancel trips to festivals

across the capital.

The SNP MSP has now written to the UK Government to raise these additional concerns for the future of the capital's festivals.



Gordon Macdonald MSP

Mr MacDonald, said: "The Edinburgh Festivals are world class and have enormous cultural and economic benefits, not only for our capital, but for Scotland.

"The success of the Festivals rely on the seamless flow of artists and people from across the world – something that the Tory government seem intent on preventing.

“For years now, artists have been deterred from coming here because of the UK government’s humiliating application process and their current obsession with a hard Brexit looks like it is going to make this situation worse.

“The UK Government need to open their eyes to the damage they are causing to our festivals.”