

MP calls on the UK Government to reconsider the Scottish visa

Thompson urges rethink on Scottish visa to protect Midlothian jobs

Owen Thompson MP has called on the UK Government to urgently rethink their dismissal of the Scottish Government's proposals for a devolved Scottish visa system.

On Tuesday evening the Midlothian MP spoke in an opposition day debate on Migration and Scotland. He pointed out the crucial importance of international workers to the economy in Midlothian, in fields from health and social care to the growing life sciences sector.

Mr Thompson said:-“Whether it’s highly skilled scientists or carers looking after our elderly population, the economy in Midlothian, like the rest of Scotland, relies heavily on migrant workers. We need an immigration system that supports this, not stifles it.

“The UK Government’s blanket refusal to even contemplate the Scottish Government’s visa plans shows a contempt for the communities across Scotland that will be left to pay the economic and social price for their intransigence.

“Midlothian is a historic mining community, but its future economy relies on exciting opportunities in international fields such as the life sciences. We are the region with the highest proportion of jobs in this growing area, including Easter Bush, the base for Edinburgh University’s world leading

Roslin Institute.

“Twenty six per cent of the staff based at Easter Bush are from outside the UK. Why would any government hamper the international competitiveness of this growing success story, by blocking free movement and adding more people to a complex, broken visa system?”

“There is clear evidence that a tailored approach on immigration is not only needed in Scotland, but it could be done under the devolved settlement. By dismissing this offhand the UK Government is demonstrating it cares not a bit about what is in the best interests of Scotland.”

“Under Thatcher the Tories decimated the Midlothian communities when they obliterated the mining industry. I’m not going to stand by and watch while this Government commits a modern day equivalent by building more barriers for the people we want to welcome to the region.”



Westminster