

Government will use digital strategy to get people involved in planning

A new digital structure to be set up in a Scottish Government programme will make it easier for the public to get involved with creating and shaping their neighbourhoods.

The £35 million five-year programme will also make it simpler for planners to work together.

The new data and technology system, which will begin development in early 2021, will provide a single place to access services and information about planning. This could generate up to 1,600 jobs in the construction and development sectors, and their supply chains, over the next 10 years, and bring as much as £200 million in economic benefits directly to users of the planning system according to the thinking behind it.

Housing Minister Kevin Stewart, who will launch Scotland's Digital Strategy for Planning on Tuesday said: "There is immense potential for digital to provide new ways to get people involved in the planning of great places.

"Our Digital Planning team has been hearing about the experiences of people who work within planning, and also of those who participate in various ways. We've learned about

what works well, what could work better, and how digital transformation can help deliver positive impacts and outcomes at both the local and national levels.

“We’re now preparing to put our findings into action, and over the next five years we will be building a world-leading digital planning system, helping connect people with their places, influence positive change, strengthen decision-making and focus on delivery of high-quality planned development.”

The government hopes that by introducing new technology and ways of working in the planning system it will simplify and speed up the application and assessment processes. It will give planners the tools and data they need to collaborate and improve decision making, making it easier to understand the planning process and get involved at every stage.