

Prime Minister visits Edinburgh and is met with protests

The Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, visited the First Minister in Edinburgh this afternoon where he was met with loud protests outside in Charlotte Square.

Following a Labour event in an Edinburgh hotel, he arrived at Bute House where he entered by the back door amid close and extensive security.

The two leaders met to “emphasise their joint commitment to working collaboratively on areas of shared interest”.



Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, with First Minister of Scotland, John Swinney Photo courtesy of The Scottish Government

The Prime Minister avoided any confrontation with the pro Palestinian protesters who were gathered at the front door, and mixing with media in the so-called media pen.

Ian Murray MP, the newly re-elected MP for Edinburgh South who is now the Secretary of State for Scotland, joined the meeting along with Deputy First Minister, Kate Forbes. Mr Murray was later seen leaving through Charlotte Square by a waiting taxi.

The First Minister said: "I was pleased to welcome Sir Keir to Bute House so soon after his appointment as UK Prime Minister.

"We continued our conversation about areas of shared interest. I believe there is an opportunity for collaborative working that can make a difference to people's lives and I hope to work with Sir Keir's new Government to deliver progress for the benefit of people in Scotland.

"Following our talks, I am confident we have established the foundation for a productive relationship between our two governments based on renewed respect for the devolution settlement.

“On a personal note, having been First Minister for two months and a minister for many years, I am very aware of the demands of office. I again offered Sir Keir and his family my congratulations on his appointment and my best wishes for what will be a demanding start to his term in office.”

The Prime Minister said on Saturday at a press conference in Downing Street: “I shall go first to Scotland...I shall then go to Northern Ireland...Then to Wales, and then back to England...

“Where I will meet the First Ministers, not just to discuss the issues and challenges of the day. Of course, we will do that...

“But also to establish a way of working across the United Kingdom that will be different and better to the way of working that we’ve had in recent years, and to recognise the contributions of all four nations...”

Protests

The noise outside Bute House was extremely loud and continued for around two and a half hours, as “the windows are not great, they’ll hear us inside” and the chants decrying the Prime Minister for his lack of support for a ceasefire in Gaza were colourful.

The protesters were joined by I Daniel Blake screenwriter Paul Laverty who spoke to us here:

*Ahead of a visit by [@Keir_Starmer](#) to Bute House there is about pro Palestinian protest outside the front door.
pic.twitter.com/aAnEwNIVk4*

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [July 7, 2024](#)

Eventually children took over the megaphones while adults drifted to the back door where it was clear the Prime Minister

would also exit the building.

The two leaders discussed areas where both governments can work together including the Scottish Government's priority of eradicating child poverty, growing the economy, jet zero and "ensuring the delivery of public services".







One person had a different message