

# US Consulate General in Edinburgh under threat of closure

The US Consulate General on Regent Terrace may fall victim to Department of Government Efficiency cuts engineered by Elon Musk advising the US President on ways to save money according to leaked documents.

In an article in [The Times](#) it is claimed that overseas spending is to be reduced and one of the victims could be the US Consulate General in Edinburgh. Details of papers outlined in The Washington Post show that the Scottish consulate is included in the plans for 17 office closures. Other locations which may face the axe include Malta, Eritrea, Luxembourg, and South Sudan.

The papers show that the funding for US Agency for International Development might be cut by almost half to \$28.4 billion.

There has been a [consular office](#) in Edinburgh since 1798, and the US Consul General plays an active role in the city as well as assisting US citizens during their visits to Scotland.

A Scottish Government spokesman said: "Scotland and the United States share strong and lasting social, cultural and economic ties, and we will do all we can to ensure those links remain

strong and continue to thrive.”

Hannah Bardell, a former SNP MP who worked at the consulate as head of protocol and events when Barack Obama was in office, said to The Times any closure would be a “devastating blow” to US businesses and citizens in Scotland, and also its staff.

She said: “I have seen first hand the importance of its consular work and the important engagement and work it does with business, the arts, politicians and many communities,” she said. “Some of the staff I worked with are still there and my heart goes out to them. The US Consulate in Edinburgh has a long and distinguished history of fostering relationships between Scotland and the US.

“It’s a strange decision from President Trump who himself has Scottish roots. I hope his administration will think again as the closure of the US consulate in Edinburgh would be a huge blow to the American community here in Scotland.”



US Consul General Jack Hillmeyer, The Rt Hon Lord Provost of

Edinburgh, Robert Aldridge, Cllr Amy McNeese-Mechan and Angus Robertson Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture all took part in a ceremony to lay wreaths at the statue of Abraham Lincoln in Old Calton Cemetery PHOTO ©2024 The Edinburgh Reporter



Jack Hillmeier was in post until August last year when Kathryn Porter as

su  
me  
d  
ch  
ar  
ge  
as  
U.  
S.  
Co  
ns  
ul  
Ge  
ne  
ra  
l.

Prior to her current post, Ms Porter served as a Senior Operations Management Officer in Washington D.C., overseeing management, innovation, and outreach at the State Department Operations Center, the Secretary of State's 24-hour crisis management and communications center.

She previously served as a Consul at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Other overseas tours include a variety of Consular positions at the U.S. Consulates in Krakow, Toronto, Johannesburg, and Tijuana. Early in her career she served in Washington as a Watch Officer in the State Department Operations Center.

[The US Consulate General in Edinburgh](#) is responsible for helping US citizens in Scotland with visas, passports or with assistance in the case of emergencies in tandem with the US Embassy in London where Matthew Palmer is the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. The US Government built a new Embassy in London on Nine Elms Lane although when it was opened in 2018 President Trump refused to visit saying it was an "off location" and it was a "bad deal".

We have asked the Consulate General in Edinburgh for comment.

*Reason I canceled my trip to London is that I am not a big fan of the Obama Administration having sold perhaps the best located and finest embassy in London for “peanuts,” only to build a new one in an off location for 1.2 billion dollars. Bad deal. Wanted me to cut ribbon-NO!*

– Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [January 12, 2018](#)

Edinburgh West MP and Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Scotland, Christine Jardine, has written to the US Consulate in Edinburgh to seek clarity on its proposed closure as part of Elon Musk’s cost cutting exercise.

She said: “Many sites are under threat of closure as the Trump administration seek to reduce their global footprint.

Christine said: “This is another astonishing move from the US government.”

“There has been a US Consulate in Edinburgh since the 1700s which has sought to assist American citizens in our city, and foster relations between Scotland and the US.

“Trump and his colleagues are pulling up the drawbridge to the rest of the world, and hurting Americans based abroad in the process.

“I have written to the US Consulate to seek clarification on the reports.”



Loading...



Taking too long?



↻ Reload document

| ↗ [Open in new tab](#)



US Consulate General



US Consulate General