

NOTE OF REPRESENTATIVE CAPACITY VISIT TO ARDROSS CASTLE FRIDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2026

On Friday 4 September, Dave Doogan and Angus MacDonald visited Ardrross Castle, Inverness in connection with the Committee's ongoing non-inquiry interest in the work of the BBC in Scotland. The Committee was hosted by BBC Commissioning Editors Michael Jochowitz and Neil McCallum. During the visit, Members met BBC and Studio Lambert representatives, toured Ardrross Castle, and observed filming of *The Traitors*. This note summarises some of the key points arising from the visit.

- During a tour of *The Traitors* set, Members heard about the growth in the scale and complexity of the production since the programme began. Production has expanded from two series (UK and US) filmed over a few weeks each year, to four series (UK and US, civilian and celebrity editions) filmed over 25 weeks in 2026. As a result, *The Traitors* is now in production near-continuously throughout the year. Members heard that this increased level of production brings additional economic activity to Inverness and creates employment opportunities in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK.
- Members also saw evidence of the scale of the production's local economic footprint, both at Ardrross Castle, and while traveling to the site from Inverness. The production draws on a wide range of local accommodation, caterers, and taxi and transport providers. BBC analysis estimates that for every job directly working on the production of *The Traitors*, a further 14.8 jobs were created across the wider Scottish economy because of production spend with local suppliers.¹
- Committee Members discussed with Studio Lambert and BBC representatives efforts to increase the proportion of Scotland-based individuals working on *The Traitors*. They also met Scotland-based production staff who had progressed from short-term junior roles on the programme's first series, to more senior and sustained employment on subsequent series, as the show has grown and production has become more established.
- BBC and Studio Lambert representatives provided an overview of the TV production ecosystem, and the value of intellectual property. Members heard that creating new intellectual property (i.e. new UK programme ideas) and selling their production rights (for example, through a distributor) internationally generates considerably more economic benefit for production companies and subsequently commissioning broadcasters, compared to producing domestic versions of formats whose rights are owned overseas. *The Traitors*, for example, originated in the Netherlands and its commercial rights are derived from a Dutch production company.
- Relatedly, the nature of this production ecosystem also means the BBC does not, other than through sales of the BBC version, directly or financially benefit from its role in establishing the success of *The Traitors* internationally (including Studio Lambert-

¹ BBC, *The Traitors*: Scotland Economic Impact



produced, but not BBC-commissioned series, such as the US series), despite BBC creative talent contributing to the success of the UK-produced format.