

**NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE**  
Press release

## **National Trust for Scotland launches new footpath etiquette for Scottish walkers**

The National Trust for Scotland has published a new footpath etiquette guide to keep walkers safe and address the damage social distancing has caused to the nation's trails and pathways.

The national conservation charity, which cares for Scotland's best-loved spaces and places, has issued the advice following enquiries from supporters and visitors, asking the best way to continue to socially distance but without damaging the environment.

Thousands have headed for the hills and countryside as lockdown restrictions have lifted and with more people at the property, people have strayed off the footpath, causing path erosion and threatening local wildlife and fauna.

In a new video, National Trust for Scotland staff demonstrate the best and safest way to pass people on footpaths with four easy steps to follow:

- Step to the side
- Turn away
- Wait until they pass
- And go on your way

Bob Brown, Upland Path Manager for the National Trust for Scotland, who oversees some 400 miles of public footpaths, commented: "It's great to see everybody back out and about enjoying themselves in the countryside, but social distancing has brought some additional problems into the mountains.

"People contacted us and told us that they want to stay safe and keep their distance from other walkers, but that they were worried about additional erosion.

"We put together this video with a few very simple measures that people can take if they meet someone else on the path.

"You can simply step to the side and turn away so that you're no longer facing the person approaching you. Just wait there 'til they pass and then it's safe to walk back along the path. That then keeps you safe and keeps our paths safe."

The advice comes as the National Trust for Scotland launches a Footpath Fund to support both short and long term projects.

The charity expects to lose in the region of £30 million in essential income in 2020, which has seriously impacted a vital programme of footpath maintenance at properties.

“Over the spring and summer, my team should have been out across Scotland, repairing and maintaining the footpaths that the Trust looks after,” explained Bob. “This essential behind-the-scenes work is critical in protecting Scotland’s iconic landscapes and habitats.

“The pandemic halted our activity and we are now five months behind our schedule of crucial maintenance. As we come into the winter months, we must complete as much as we can to ensure our landscapes and habitats aren’t at risk of ugly scars and irreparable damage.

“This work is vital. Without clear pathways, walkers find different routes and their footprints start to erode the surrounding area. This damage destroys delicate upland ecosystems, makes plants and vegetation vulnerable to the harsh Scottish weather and our habitats and wildlife exposed.

“I know that times are difficult for everyone, but we need your help to ensure our footpaths can withstand the extra boots.”

A £10 donation to the National Trust for Scotland Footpath Fund could help buy spades, mattocks or other hand tools. A £25 pledge could help stabilise the edge of a collapsing path and £48 could help Bob and his team care for 1.2m of footpath, clear out vital ditching or restore a section of trampled ground.

You can watch and download the video showing the new code in action [here on YouTube](#).

You can donate and find out more at [nts.org.uk/footpath-fund](https://nts.org.uk/footpath-fund)

**ENDS**

**Issued on behalf of National Trust for Scotland by Frame PR. For media enquiries contact:**  
**Mamta Kakaiya, 07876 835 744, [Mamta.Kakaiya@framecreates.co.uk](mailto:Mamta.Kakaiya@framecreates.co.uk)**  
**Gregor Kyle, 07415 537 087, [gregor.kyle@framecreates.co.uk](mailto:gregor.kyle@framecreates.co.uk)**

**Editor’s Notes:**

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland’s heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland exists to protect the national and natural treasures we all love. To plan your visit today, enter your postcode at [www.nts.org.uk](https://www.nts.org.uk).

The National Trust for Scotland can also be referred to as the Trust or NTS.

