

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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Public urged to donate to protect Scottish landscapes

The National Trust for Scotland is appealing for donations to its 2019 footpath fund in a bid to support its £1.9million five year investment programme to repair and upgrade 273 miles of upland walking routes over the next five years.

Last year's appeal raised £122,000 and helped the team address widespread erosion in the boggy parts of the Coire Mhic footpaths in Torridon, begin work to re-open the coastal path at St Abb's Head and prepare to rebuild and realign the much-loved tourist path at Goatfell on Arran.

Footpath erosion leaves ugly scars on the landscape and irreversible damage to mountains. It occurs for a number of different reasons; Scotland's thin soil means fragile vegetation is easily broken and persistent rain enters broken soil and can't drain away. Walkers and cyclists can also unknowingly cause erosion on the mountainside. If paths are inaccessible, people veer off the track creating unsustainable new path lines and damaging vegetation with boots and wheels.

By donating just £25 to the National Trust for Scotland's Footpath Fund supporters could pay for the building of a water bar to protect a stretch of footpath from destructive water; £50 could bolster a crumbling path and £60 could keep 10 metres of footpath restored for years.

Bob Brown, Uplands Path Manager for the National Trust for Scotland, is at the front line of repairs and restorations. He said: "Scotland's beautiful hills and mountains are there for everyone to enjoy and that's why protecting the country's footpaths is one of the most important areas of work we do at the Trust. It's essential because without it our breath-taking landscapes will be blighted beyond repair and the extensive wildlife who call those footpaths home could vanish.

"Our ambitious five-year plan will see us restore upland paths to a high level of repair and halt and restore existing damage. In turn that will create an improved experience for hill walkers and cyclists and importantly protect the landscapes for generations to come. We'd urge anyone who has a love for Scotland to support us in this appeal and help us maintain Scotland's beauty."

To make a donation to the National Trust for Scotland's Footpath Fund visit - <https://www.nts.org.uk/campaigns/footpath-fund> or text PATH to 70331 to donate £3 (texts charged at your standard rate).

