

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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New alliance formed to safeguard and improve Scotland's landscapes and places

Over 60 national organisations will gather on Thursday (April 25) to launch Scotland's Landscape Alliance which aims to ensure that Scotland cares for, improves and benefits from its landscapes.

Led by the National Trust for Scotland and the Landscape Institute Scotland, Scotland's Landscape Alliance (SLA) will launch at an event at Our Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh.

The event is significant in the history of landscape policy and signals the beginning of the work of the SLA to maximise the benefits provided by the landscape and place, whether they are economic, social, cultural or environmental. It will encourage both public and political support for better care of Scotland's landscape.

The creation of the SLA represents a new chapter in Scottish landscape policy by providing opportunity for input by a wide spectrum of interests including the design, enhancement, protection and promotion of all Scotland's landscapes and places. At the launch event organisations including universities, charities, government agencies and community groups will be asked to commit to the work of the SLA which will culminate in recommendations for regulatory and policy change in 2020.

Organisations such as the Institute of Civil Engineers Scotland, NHS Scotland, Scottish National Heritage, Mountaineering Scotland, Architecture and Design Scotland and Community Land Scotland will be in attendance at the launch.

Chris Dalglish, Director of Glasgow based heritage organisation Inherit and Chair of the Landscape Research Group will give a keynote speech at the launch, referencing the European Landscape Convention as a foundation for public benefit.

The SLA is being led by Stuart Brooks, Head of Conservation and Policy for the National Trust for Scotland and Rachel Tennant, chair of the Landscape Institute Scotland and they both co-chair the Executive Committee of the SLA.

He said: "This is a significant step towards improving and safeguarding both our natural and built heritage and is one of the largest collections of organisations to come together on the topic of landscape since the publication of *A National Landscape for Scotland* in June 1962.

"The SLA does not aim to stop progress, our landscapes are constantly evolving, but to collectively agree what we want from our landscapes be they rural, peri-urban or urban. As a country we should work towards a planned approach that balances different needs but benefits everyone.

“We are all well aware of how important Scotland’s landscape is. It remains the top motivator for visitors to Scotland and is of high economic, social, environmental and emotional value. People love Scottish landscapes. The high levels of support for our landscape are not always reflected in priorities of politicians and decision makers. Landscapes are under threat from poor design of urban developments, industrialisation of high value wild landscapes and regulation driving poor land use decisions.”

Rachel Tennant continued: “The SLA’s purpose is to find a way towards a common view on how the landscape and places around us in Scotland should be managed to benefit us all.

“This is the start of a public conversation to collectively agree on how Scotland’s landscapes can be healthy, biodiverse, beautiful, economically useful and embedded in communities and what we then need to put in place to ensure we deliver these public benefits fit for the 21st century and beyond.

“We will commission research on attitudes towards existing policy and issues and establish a series of working groups who will inform recommendations for changing policy and practice, whether that’s directly or through parliamentary processes.

“By working with a broad range of partners, the SLA will also show leadership in a crucial area of Scottish public policy.”

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