

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

28 January 2019

BILL GRANT MP BACKS CAMPAIGN TO SAVE BURNS COTTAGE

Bill Grant, MP for Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock has offered his backing to the National Trust for Scotland's £100,000 fundraising campaign to protect Burns Cottage before it is damaged beyond repair.

Visiting the Alloway cottage on Burns Day (25th January), Bill saw for himself the damage caused by centuries of harsh Scottish winters.

Built in 1757 the cottage needs significant work to ensure its safety for generations to come. Caroline Smith, Operations Manager at the [Robert Burns Birthplace Museum](#) said: "At the back of the home the traditional thatched roof has developed significant tears and has worn away. Towards the front, moss is also beginning to grow, collecting rainwater and rotting the thatch underneath. The north-west gable is starting to crack, letting the wind and rain in and damaging the interior plasterwork."

Robert Burns, the world's best-known Bard, was born in the cottage in 1759 and it was here just five years after his death that close friends of his hosted the very first Burns supper, a tradition that is enjoyed the world-over to this day.

Commenting on his visit, Bill Grant MP said: "Burns Cottage is one of Ayrshire's most famous and important historical buildings and it's essential that we protect it for years to come. The National Trust for Scotland need the help of the public to ensure Burns legacy can be enjoyed by locals and visitors for generations to come and I would urge everyone to do what they can to help."

Hugh Farrell, Burns Expert at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, said: "Burns Cottage is recognisable from every corner of the globe. Visitors and members often ask me what the most important item in the collection is, where I reply every time, Burns Cottage
"Everything we do at the museum is for the love of Scotland. We are all hugely passionate about the life of Burns and sharing the stories of his life and work, but we are asking for help to protect the legacy of Ayrshire's most famous son."

The cottage has been in the care of the National Trust for Scotland since 2008, and the charity needs to raise £100,000 to preserve it. By giving just £15, donors can help fix the north-west wall; £35 will help restore a patch of thatch and £60 will limewash a section of the walls.

To make a donation to the Burns Cottage appeal donate online at nts.org.uk/donate.

ENDS

