

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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Crowdfunder launched to protect and display King of Scots letter at Brodie Castle

A crowdfunder has been launched today (29 November) by the National Trust for Scotland to preserve and bring to life one of the oldest surviving documents within the conservation charity's collection - a letter at Brodie Castle in Moray, written in 1312 by King of Scots, Robert the Bruce.

The aim of the crowdfunding campaign is to raise £24,000 on St Andrew's Day to put the letter back on display and protect it in a state-of-the-art case. The cabinet will not only display the document and provide the highest standard of protection, but also contain interactive audio and video elements and translate the document into different languages, making it easier for all visitors to engage and learn from it

Despite being cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, the letter (which was written by King Robert to Malcolm, Thane of Brodie, regarding the maintenance of the castle) was removed from display at the property earlier this year, after it started to fade due to environmental factors, particularly light and humidity. To guard against future deterioration, experts at the National Trust for Scotland have painstakingly removed damaging traces of adhesive, carried out delicate surface cleaning and have added a new mount. If the crowdfunding target is reached, the letter will be able to go back on display without further harm from temperature, humidity and light conditions, allowing it to be shown once again to visitors.

Written in Latin on Vellum paper, the letter predates the oldest parts of Brodie Castle by about 200 years and is significant due to its antiquity and the prominence of its origin. The document is made even more special as it was one of the few family papers that survived a fire in 1645.

The translation of the letter reveals that Robert the Bruce demanded that the Thane of Brodie take proper care of his mill pond as the neglect of it has annoyed the local monks of Pluscarden Abbey near Elgin. It offers a fascinating insight into Robert the Bruce's authority as well as medieval kingship and the way of life for landowners 700 years ago.

James Dean, Operations Manager at Brodie Castle, said: "Few documents from this time survive intact and are still legible, so we are very fortunate and

honoured to care for this special piece of our past, especially as it was written by such an important figure in Scotland's history. By reaching our target for this appeal we'll be able to protect the letter and present it in a way that means more people will be able to appreciate it for years to come - and there's no better day to call on people for their support for this campaign than on Scotland's national day.

"The cutting-edge technology of the cabinet makes the letter more accessible and interactive, showing illustrations, photography and videos to visitors. It will also translate the letter into multiple language and explain its historical context." Find out more about Brodie Castle at www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/brodie-castle and make a donation to the cause at www.justgiving.com/campaign/robert-the-bruce.

