

## **NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Carry on cruising to St Kilda – before it's too late**

It may only be June, but conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland is already offering 2017's last chance to visit the renowned World Heritage Site of St Kilda

For over 60 years the Trust has been organising 'cultural cruises', which have taken more than 30,000 passengers to get up close and personal with the most spectacular landscapes, coastlines and islands that Scotland has to offer.

The current 'Northern Delights' cruise was quickly booked up and is due to call at St Kilda this week following visits to Hoy and Kirkwall in the Orkney Islands and before moving on to Shetland.

Demand was such that the Trust has organised another cruise, 'Colours of the Celts', which has St Kilda as a destination, and is due to set sail on 10 September and reach the archipelago six days later.

Mark Bishop, Director of Customer & Cause for the National Trust for Scotland said:

"We are always astonished at the interest shown in the St Kilda World Heritage Site and how many people put a visit there on their bucket list of lifetime achievements.

"While there is both romance and pathos about the 'islands at the edge of the world' and the story of the evacuation of the last St Kildans in 1930, nothing can prepare you for the overwhelming and beguilingly beautiful views and the enormous numbers of seabirds that fill the skies.

"The seas that sustain and surround the islands only offer a brief season where is possible to be confident about reaching St Kilda. Beyond September the autumn and winter storms come in and our cruise aboard the Pearl II will in all practical senses be the last chance to get there before 2018.

"Places aboard the Pearl II are disappearing fast and I would recommend anyone who wants to fulfil their long-held ambition to see the most remote of the British Isles to contact us before it's too late."



The Colours of the Celts cruise aboard the Pearl II will set sail from Greenock on Sunday 10 September. The ship will head south to circumnavigate Ireland before heading to St Kilda and the west coast of Scotland. Among the destinations on its itinerary are Douglas on the Isle of Man, Waterford City, Glengariff, Inishmore, Killybegs, Mull, Rum, Inverewe and Knoydart.

As well as opportunities to go onshore to explore these places, watch wildlife and visit significant sites, on-board there will be chances to enjoy talks from knowledgeable specialists, like the Trust's Head of Archaeology, Derek Alexander, Dr Frances Fowle from the Scottish National Gallery and naturalist John Love. There is also plenty of good food, traditional music and performances to while away the voyages between destinations.

