



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **National Trust for Scotland media release**

**11 November 2020**

#### **Brian Cox thanks supporters as Save Our Scotland appeal raises over £3.4million**

*The successful campaign helped safeguard Scotland's national conservation charity*

Scottish stage and screen icon, Brian Cox, has thanked the thousands of people across Scotland – and the world - who rallied to support of the National Trust for Scotland, raising over £3.4million to support its vital work.

The actor helped front the charity's Save Our Scotland (SOS) campaign, which was launched as the Covid-19 outbreak threatened jobs and the Trust's ability to care for and protect some of Scotland's most treasured spaces and places.

Trust members and donors from Scotland, the UK and around the world answered the urgent appeal for help which ultimately raised in excess of £3.4 million.

These donations, along with a £3.8million support package from the Scottish Government, helped steer the charity out of an extremely challenging period, safeguard over 200 jobs and enabled the Trust to re-open more following lockdown and an easing of restrictions.

Addressing supporters and donors, Brian Cox said: "On behalf of the National Trust for Scotland, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated to the SOS appeal.

"It's thanks to you that the Trust is able to continue its vital work in protecting Scotland's heritage. Every single one of you has played a key part in safeguarding the many places in the charity's care. Well done and thanks again."

The SOS appeal inspired incredible fundraising challenges across the world. In America, 74-year-old Scot, George Russell, completed a sponsored 3000-mile cycle across the States from California to Florida raising over £40,000. Closer to home, Trust Patrons, Simon and Bridget Fraser took on a 100km walk along the Berwickshire coast, raising over £15,000.

While the Trust's financial situation has stabilised, the charity is still on course for a £20million deficit in 2020 and is encouraging people to keep offering their support so it can continue its recovery.

Ali MacLeod, Head of Fundraising at the National Trust for Scotland said: “This has been an incredibly challenging and difficult year for the Trust. Our ability to care for Scotland’s built, natural and cultural heritage was in jeopardy.

“The response from our staff and supporters has been inspirational and quite overwhelming. From small, personal fundraisers to bold plans such as George’s marathon cycle across America, every single person has played their part in securing the National Trust for Scotland’s future.

“Through their efforts, we have been able to save jobs, re-open more properties and locations to the public and continue to look after the heritage in our care. We are enormously grateful to all who acted so quickly and with such kindness to Save Our Scotland.

Director of Customer & Cause at the National Trust for Scotland, Mark Bishop continued: “This has been the biggest appeal in our history. The success of the Save Our Scotland Appeal has been driven by the compelling need we were able to demonstrate, and the near-perfect engagement plan from the fundraising team. This success is something we are really chuffed to bits about.

“The bringing together of marketing and fundraising functions into one unified delivery team has been key. The debate in the sector about to-integrate-or-to-keep-apart has filled many forums and magazine pages. I’m a firm believer in integration. The marketing side has repositioned the Trust’s brand so that the public can increasingly see us as a charity rather than being wrongly labelled a government agency. That shift in public perception has built a cause platform for the fundraising experts to then leverage.

“The pandemic was clearly not something we could have planned or indeed wished for but it did create the ideal circumstances for us to see how many of our members and the wider Scottish public really saw the Trust as a charity they could give a donation to. The fact that we have had over 10,000 donations is proof of concept that building a cause platform is an essential driver for fundraising performance.”

“We closed the appeal at the end of September so that we could have a very time-driven sense of urgency to our ask. The biggest opportunity we now need to address is how to get the first-time donors who responded to us in our hour of need feel compelled to give again to a future appeal – emergencies drive a one-off emotional response in all of our giving patterns, but converting these givers into repeat supporters is where a deeper challenge lies ahead.”

To find out more about how you can become a member of the National Trust for Scotland or donate to its fundraising appeals visit [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk).

[You can watch Brian Cox’s thank you message here.](#) This video is free to use on your website and social channels.

**ENDS**

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**Editor’s Notes:**

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland’s heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland exists to protect the national and natural treasures we all love. To plan your visit today, enter your postcode at [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk).

**IMAGES:**

