



17 November

GROWING CONCERN - DEDICATE A TREE TO HELP REVITALISE SCOTTISH WOODLANDS

- **National Trust for Scotland launches Tree Appeal to help replant those lost in 2021/22 storms**
- **Conservation charity will plant nearly half a million trees with generous support**

The National Trust for Scotland is appealing for support to help it replace thousands of trees lost on its properties after brutal storms Arwen and Corrie battered the country in late 2021 and early 2022.

The storms, which occurred in November 2021 and at the end of January 2022, devastated hundreds of acres of natural habitats - the equivalent of 20 Murrayfield Stadiums, and the conservation charity is asking for support to help replant these areas by dedicating a tree for as little as £7.50 per sapling. The conservation charity's properties in the North-east, the Highlands and Argyll and Bute saw vast swathes of woodland destroyed by the sheer force of the storms. The launch of the fundraising appeal will help to replace trees that are vital in the fight against the climate crisis and provide important habitats to a host of wildlife.

With a tree's natural ability to absorb up to 1 tonne of carbon emissions throughout its lifetime, it is crucial for the National Trust for Scotland to undertake replanting on a huge scale. As the new saplings are planted they will be shielded from herbivores using bio-degradable tree guards in keeping with the Trust's conservation agenda. The replanting will replace lost trees, strengthen woodlands and help tackle climate change as well as support the Trust's objective to become carbon negative by 2031, as part of its 10-year strategy, Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone.

The Tree Appeal will help to repopulate woodlands with native trees that provide habitat for rare species such as the red squirrel, capercaillie and wild cats and will allow the charity to continue its work to care for and protect Scotland's natural assets. A mix of native trees such as oak, rowan and pine will be planted, with each property having a tailored planting plan based on its original woodlands, taking predicted climate change considerations into account. This will ensure that the Trust plants for the future, building resilient woodlands and habitats that will benefit generations to come.

Chris Wardle, National Trust for Scotland's Gardens and Designed Landscape Manager for Aberdeen and Angus, said: "The devastation left by the storms at the start of the year and the sheer extent of the damage caused is unimaginable.

"Our Aberdeenshire properties were badly affected with Castle Fraser and Crathes Castle losing hundreds of trees, and the Pittendreich woodland at Leith Hall completely devastated. Other National Trust for Scotland places like Inverewe and Arduaine Gardens lost ancient specimens and had their vital shelterbelts destroyed so the Tree Appeal is vital for us to begin reinstating these natural wonders for the benefit of wildlife, local communities and the environment.

"Take Craigievar in Aberdeenshire, for example. Here we'll be planting over 37,000 Scots pines that will link smaller parcels of ancient woodland together. Not only will this store over 37,000 tonnes of carbon, but the new trees will create woodland corridors for species such as the red squirrel to spread into, creating new habitats for this endangered animal to thrive. In turn, the squirrels will also help spread native tree seeds across a larger area of land, encouraging natural woodland regeneration in the area.

"Over the coming years, in addition to supporting natural regeneration we want to plant at least 475,000 trees across Scotland. It'll cost £7.50 to plant each sapling and a donation today helps us plant another tree in one of the many woodlands we're restoring. Dedicating a tree could make the perfect Christmas gift. As a thank you, we'll send you a personalised certificate to keep or send to a loved one if you're dedicating a tree to them. Your support will help us restore our damaged forests and play a part in mitigating the climate crisis and the loss of Scotland's natural ecosystems. Together, we can protect the places we love both now and for the future. To make a donation and dedicate a tree that will support the work of the National Trust for Scotland, please visit www.nts.org.uk/trees."

The damage caused by the storms was evident across Scotland with the Trust's Highland properties Inverewe Garden in Wester Ross and Arduaine Garden in Argyll badly affected.

Inverewe Garden

On the night of 30 January 2022, Storm Corrie carried 90mph winds from the North-west Atlantic, which hit the northern part of Inverewe Garden. By the morning of 1 February, just over 60 mature trees lay on the ground and a further 90 large shrubs and rhododendrons had been destroyed, flattened as these giant trees fell. Of the trees that came down, many were mature specimen trees, including pine, beech, eucalyptus and fir, with some dating back to the garden's founder Osgood Mackenzie's original plantings. The recovery plan and the opportunity of renewal will see areas replanted with appropriate saplings or propagated specimens from the fallen trees. This will conserve the plants' genetic diversity, crucial for the vitality of the woodland and its adaptation and resilience to climate change.

Arduaine Garden

Arduaine Garden sits on a headland jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean where the warmer climate from the North Atlantic Drift allows it to grow more exotic plants. The garden is protected from strong, salty winds by a shelterbelt – a planting of trees that acts as a windbreak. During winter storms, the shelterbelt was ravaged, and lost hundreds of trees. Parts of the garden had to close this year to allow for the removal of fallen debris and ensure the area is safe for visitors. Once cleared, replanting will begin, and the Trust's gardeners have created a matrix to work out which trees to repopulate the shelterbelt with. It will be a mix of native trees but also exotics, like rhododendrons, which will help to retain the essence of the garden and build resilience in the face of a changing climate.

To make a donation and dedicate a tree for yourself or a loved one that will support the work of the National Trust for Scotland, please visit www.nts.org.uk/trees.

The Tree Appeal contributes to the National Trust for Scotland's vision to deliver Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone. Its 10-year strategy, unveiled earlier this year, refocuses its vision of caring for, sharing, and conserving Scotland's heritage, contributing to its conservation objectives, specifically to:

- Stabilise and improve the condition of its estate
- Enable nature to flourish
- Enrich Scotland's protected heritage to make it relevant to more people

Read more about the strategy at: <https://www.nts.org.uk/our-work/our-strategy>

ENDS

Editor's notes:

- Donations could help us purchase a woollen casing to protect the saplings from hungry herbivores. These casings are entirely biodegradable and reduce use of single use plastic
- Dedicating one tree can lead to many more trees appearing in the area. With careful management, natural woodland regeneration will be encouraging, helping to increase the number of trees across the National Trust for Scotland estate.

About the National Trust for Scotland

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens,

coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

Scotland's largest membership organisation, the National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit www.nts.org.uk.

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.