

**NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE**  
**June 23 2021**

**National Trust for Scotland urges people to ‘Love this place, leave no trace’**  
New campaign asks for visitors help to protect the places we all love

The National Trust for Scotland is urging visitors to ‘Love this place, leave no trace’ in a new campaign which aims to protect Scotland’s areas of scenic beauty and encourage visitors and campers to minimise their impact on these places.

Scotland’s national conservation charity launched the campaign today (June 23) with a series of graphic images of the serious damage caused at some the properties and wild locations it cares for.

Over the past year, when lockdown restrictions have lifted, National Trust for Scotland staff have been delighted to welcome record numbers of visitors to world-renowned areas of natural beauty, such as Glencoe, Ben Lomond and Mar Lodge Estate.

People have been able to explore and discover the treasures on their own doorstep with the national conservation charity, which for 90 years has cared for and protected many of the country’s most loved places, following Government advice on Covid-19 and social distancing.

With international travel still uncertain, Trust staff and volunteers anticipate high-levels of visitor numbers in the months ahead.

The cumulative effect of large numbers of people visiting the countryside can lead to unintended damage and the Trust has addressed this over the past year with campaigns highlighting the impact on local wildlife and ecosystems and providing advice on how to visit safely and responsibly.

However, staff have witnessed a rise in anti-social behaviour which is endangering the natural environment, harming local communities and having a devastating effect on long-term conservation projects.

Fences and trees have been uprooted and used for firewood. Trust teams have been forced to deal with an unprecedented rise in littering and both human and animal waste. Livestock and wildlife have been attacked and ‘worried’ by dogs running loose and irresponsible parking has seriously impact on the landscape and local people.

The charity is now launching a new campaign urging people to 'Love this place, leave no trace' and raise vital funds to support clean-up efforts and also help people understand how to minimise their impact on these beautiful places.

One of the areas seriously affected over the past year has been Glencoe National Nature Reserve and Glenfinnan Monument and Emily Bryce, Operations Manager, explained: "While the vast majority of visitors here in Glencoe and Glen Etive respect the landscape, unfortunately our ranger team spend a considerable proportion of their time dealing with those who don't.

"Clearing up litter and human waste; repairing damage to paths, verges and fences; addressing the impact of deer entering new woodland enclosures due to gates being left open; and discouraging inconsiderate parking when car parks are at capacity – these activities are all essential, but they also take our valuable time away from ongoing nature conservation projects and wildlife monitoring.

"Chatting with outdoor enthusiasts and championing responsible countryside access has always been a rewarding element of a ranger's role, and we find it makes a real difference when it comes to reducing anti-social behaviour at busy countryside places. Our team have been out and about more than ever recently – on a busy Saturday walkabout we might engage with over 400 walkers and wild campers.

"We've been working in partnership with our local community, neighbouring landowners and authorities to clearly signpost local facilities and develop long-term plans to sustainably accommodate visitors to the glens, with sensitively designed infrastructure improvements.

"We need your help to continue with this work and empower people with the motivation and skills to 'leave no trace'."

Spanning some 29,000 hectares in the Cairngorms and standing as Britain's largest National Nature Reserve, Mar Lodge Estate has seen a dramatic rise in 'dirty campers' and taken a novel approach to the issue, introducing a 'Trowel Station' where people can borrow a trowel and bury their waste when camping.

"We're also finding lots of litter," explained Paul Bolton Head Ranger at Mar Lodge Estate National Nature Reserve. "Some people have even left entire campsites for us to clear away – food waste, sleeping bags and tents included! Litter not only ruins the landscape but it can also kill wildlife.

"Campfire remains are becoming a common sight as well," he added. "The burnt circles on the ground are not only an eyesore but a serious fire hazard. In the first three months after lockdown, we dealt with more fires than we normally would in a whole year.

"A stone circle does not keep a fire contained, for the heat can ignite peat soil, spreading the fire unnoticed underground. We've also discovered that some people have cut down young, healthy trees, or dismantled fences for their campfires, destroying decades of conservation work."

Paul added: “In truth, it takes an enormous amount of work to conserve Scotland’s iconic mountains, woodlands and coastlines, which we all love. As a charity, we can only protect these places with your support.”

The National Trust for Scotland is urging people to get out and visit the locations and properties it cares for responsibly. To help, rangers have drawn up ten top tips – which you can read below.

You can donate online and find out more about ‘I love this place, leave no trace’ and the work being done in your local area at: [www.nts.org.uk/leave-no-trace](http://www.nts.org.uk/leave-no-trace)

You can also download a file of free to use images showing the impact of irresponsible visitors at National Trust for Scotland locations here: <https://we.tl/t-Q1oEsOvJV5>

### **The Top Ten Tips from National Trust for Scotland rangers to ‘Love this place, leave no trace’**

#### **1. COME PREPARED WITH A PLAN B**

Move on if it’s too busy or car parks are full.

#### **2. PARK WITH CARE**

Please do not damage verges or obstruct other vehicles, narrow roads, passing places or field gates.

#### **3. LEAVE NO TRACE**

Take your litter home and never leave rubbish beside a full bin.

#### **4. STAY ON PATHS TO HELP PROTECT HABITATS**

By avoiding bypassing muddy patches, you’ll reduce the risk of erosion spreading.

#### **5. REMEMBER FOOTPATH ETIQUETTE**

Need to let someone past? Step to one side, then step back onto the path again.

#### **6. THINK YOU MAY NEED TO ‘GO’ WHILE YOU’RE OUT?**

Come prepared with a bag and sealable container to take away human waste and soiled tissues safely.

#### **7. CHOOSE YOUR CAMPING SPOT CAREFULLY**

Give busy areas a rest and take as long to clear up as you take to set up.

#### **8. USE A STOVE INSTEAD OF LIGHTING A FIRE**

This will help prevent wildfires, scorched earth and tree damage.

#### **9. KEEP DOGS UNDER CONTROL OR ON A LEAD**

This ensures your dog will avoid disturbing wildlife or livestock.

## **10. LEAVE SOMEWHERE EVEN BETTER THAN WHEN YOU FOUND IT**

Bring a litter picker and collect rubbish while you're out.

We hope you have a great time exploring Scotland's beautiful landscapes. Please share these tips with your family and friends!

**ENDS**

**Issued on behalf of National Trust for Scotland by Frame PR. For media enquiries contact:  
Gregor Kyle, 07415 537 087, [gregor.kyle@framecreates.co.uk](mailto:gregor.kyle@framecreates.co.uk)  
Katie Brunsmann, 0794 429 213, [katie.brunsmann@framecreates.co.uk](mailto:katie.brunsmann@framecreates.co.uk)**

### **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).

We would be grateful if, when referring to the National Trust for Scotland that our name is not shortened to 'the National Trust'. We are an independent organisation, separate from the National Trust. The National Trust for Scotland is commonly shortened to NTS or 'the Trust'.

