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National Trust for Scotland unveils new 'gateway to nature' at Corrieshalloch, the site of one of Britain's most spectacular gorges

- **Corrieshalloch Gateway to Nature will help to protect and provide access to one of Scotland's most treasured natural heritage sites**
- **On-site conservation expertise, new visitor facilities and over 800m of new pathways and viewing points will allow more people to enjoy this beautiful location**

A new 'gateway to nature' at one of Britain's most spectacular gorges and National Nature Reserves in the Scottish Highlands has opened to the public.

The works undertaken at the Corrieshalloch Gorge, which is owned and managed by conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland, include the creation of sensitively designed low-impact visitor facilities and over 800m of new pathways to allow visitors to discover previously unseen parts of the nature reserve, while also protecting the flora and fauna around the site.

With a focus on conserving this magnificent gorge, which is the result of glacial meltwater, the project will ensure the nature reserve can be enjoyed for generations to come.

A dedicated on-site ranger service will be on hand to engage with visitors about the charity's sustainable management and conservation activities at the National Nature Reserve - from protecting native species, to monitoring how the site is used by the public, to providing the best possible visitor experience.

One highlight of the project is the creation of four new viewing points within the reserve, with their positions carefully chosen by the local team to enable visitors to enjoy the stunning scenery from different perspectives. In honour of the area's Gaelic heritage, Martin Hughes, local Operations Manager for the National Trust for Scotland, has given Gaelic names to these four new vantage points: *Eas creagach* which means rocky falls, *Eas stapach* which means stepped falls, *An sruhan* which means the streamlet and *Na leacan* which means the slabs.

Visitors will also be able to enjoy a takeaway café, a covered outdoor seating area, toilets and a new much-needed car park, along with electric vehicle charging points. Blue and grey waste disposal facilities will be available for touring vans.

The design of the project has been led by Oberlanders Architects, which has studios around Scotland, including two in the Highlands. Among the sustainable design features

incorporated in the new facilities are air source heat pumps, electric vehicle charging, rainwater harvesting from the large canopy roof for toilet flushing, and grey water recycling.

The Corrieshalloch Gorge Gateway is one of the key projects delivered through the National Trust for Scotland's 10-year strategy to deliver *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, and its objectives to enrich Scotland's protected heritage, allow nature to flourish, and enable a greater diversity of people and communities to access its properties to improve their health and wellbeing.

Martin Hughes said: "As an outdoor and geology enthusiast, I have a special place in my heart for Corrieshalloch but it's not only me that finds it breath-taking. Despite Corrieshalloch meaning "ugly hollow" in Gaelic, this couldn't be further from the truth; it really is one of Scotland's most spectacular natural treasures. Like many English words that don't translate directly into Gaelic, it also means "the curving of waters" which is much more reflective of what people see when they visit. The gorge is one of a kind and people are always amazed when they arrive here as the surroundings are almost rainforest-like, despite being located in the heathered and expansive surroundings of the Scottish Highlands.

"When I look back to when we started the improvement works, I can't quite believe we've gone from having no phone signal as recently as 2018, to having modern facilities which will help visitors have an even better experience at this extraordinary place. It really demonstrates the work we do at the National Trust for Scotland to conserve, restore and improve the site for generations to come."

Philip Long OBE, Chief Executive of the National Trust for Scotland, added: "Corrieshalloch Gorge is such a significant site, from its unique geology and Victorian infrastructure to the walkways, views and wildlife visitors experience while they are here. The improvement and conservation works that have been carried out demonstrate in practice the National Trust for Scotland's new strategy in wanting to share the nation's wonderful nature, beauty, and heritage with everyone.

"By providing easier and more sustainable access to this very special place, we can help more people to experience Corrieshalloch's extraordinary and breathtaking beauty, while also making a valuable contribution to the local area and people who live and work here. We're very grateful to the partners and Trust supporters who have helped us to deliver this project through their generous financial support."

The £3.1 million project has been made possible by £1,297,071 funding from the Natural and Cultural Heritage Fund which is led by NatureScot and part-funded through the European Regional Development Fund. The purpose of the fund is to promote and develop the outstanding natural and cultural heritage of the Highlands and islands in a way that conserves and protects them, creating and sustaining jobs, businesses and services in local communities through this.

In addition, work on the paths and interpretation on-site has been supported by players of the People's Postcode Lottery through the Love Our Nature project.

The remainder of the investment for the work at Corrieshalloch is due to the on-going generous support and commitment of the National Trust for Scotland's members and other supporters. Alongside the unique geology of the mile-long canyon, which is around an hour from Inverness and just 15 minutes from Ullapool, visitors can gaze 100m down at the crashing waterfalls of the River Droma from the site's Victorian suspension bridge which was built by Sir John Fowler in 1873. Sir John went on to design the Forth Bridge and was heavily involved in designing the London Underground. The suspension bridge has recently undergone £10,000 of maintenance works.

The bottom of the gorge has its own microclimate which can be one to two degrees warmer than ground level. This enables unique species, including cranefly, to thrive and is a contributing factor to the gorge's SSSI status (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Martin continued: "We are very excited to welcome visitors from near and far, from engaging with nearby school children, to educating visitors from abroad about our country's rich outdoors tapestry. We look forward to welcoming you to the Corrieshalloch Gorge Gateway soon."

Kirsten Makins, Natural & Cultural Heritage Fund Project Manager at NatureScot, added: "The Corrieshalloch Gorge Gateway is a fantastic resource which will improve visitor accessibility to one of Scotland's most popular National Nature Reserves. This sensitively designed centre, along with an enticing network of paths, is a great example of how the Natural and Cultural Heritage Fund helped projects to invest in the Highlands and Islands. We congratulate the National Trust for Scotland on completing this exciting project which will greatly help visitors enjoy Scotland's wonderful natural and cultural heritage."

Laura Chow, Head of Charities at [People's Postcode Lottery](#), said: "We're thrilled that funds raised by our players will help improve access and enhance the visitor experience at Corrieshalloch Gorge, by supporting work on footpaths and interpretation at this fascinating National Nature Reserve. People's Postcode Lottery was created to provide long-term support to charities, and we are proud to support the National Trust for Scotland with its vital conservation work through the Love Our Nature project."

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland or the Corrieshalloch Gateway to Nature, visit www.nts.org.uk.

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Notes to editors

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.