



7 September 2023

## **Media Release from Glasgow City Council and the National Trust for Scotland**

### **Pollok House to undergo major refurbishment**

Glasgow's iconic Pollok House is set to close to allow a comprehensive refurbishment project to go ahead.

Managed by Scotland's leading conservation charity, the National Trust for Scotland, Pollok House will close on 20 November 2023 for approximately two years to facilitate the second phase of a £4M programme of investment led by Glasgow City Council. The works will comprise roof and general building fabric repairs.

A key part of the city's heritage, Pollok House and the surrounding Pollok Country Park is owned by people of Glasgow after the historic mansion was gifted to the city by the Stirling Maxwell family in the 1960s. The National Trust for Scotland has managed the house under contract to Glasgow City Council for 25 years.

The renovation work at Pollok House follows Glasgow Life's award-winning refurbishment of the Burrell Collection, situated close by in Pollok Country Park. Glasgow City Council are also developing an integrated plan for the entire Country Park which includes the £15m refurbishment and repurposing of the stables and sawmill adjacent to Pollok House funded by the UK Government's Levelling up funding programme.

Up until November, visitors and members of the National Trust for Scotland will have a last chance to enter the house and view the opulent upper rooms used in the past by the Stirling Maxwell family, the precious works of art displayed and also the lower-level spaces in which staff and servants worked. The popular café and shop in the old servants' wing in the ground floor and its outdoor space will remain open until the spring of 2024.

Councillor Ruairi Kelly, Glasgow City Council's City Convener for Neighbourhood Services and Assets, said:

“Pollok House is one of Glasgow’s most important heritage assets and I’m very pleased we are investing in a building that adds significantly to the enjoyment of visitors to Pollok Country Park.

“We have been working in close partnership with the National Trust for Scotland on Pollok House and we want to ensure the whole process of renovation is managed as carefully and as sensitively as possible.

“A huge amount of work has gone into improving Pollok Country Park and the renovation of Pollok House will add another dimension to one of the most popular parks in Scotland.

“While Pollok House is closed for refurbishment, we will also be looking closely at how we can improve the visitor experience and we look forward to when this historic home can reopen again to the public.”

The National Trust for Scotland’s Chief Executive, Phil Long OBE said:

“It’s been a great privilege for the National Trust for Scotland to have managed Pollok House over the last quarter of a century, especially as it was here that the earliest discussions leading to our charity’s founding took place at the beginning of the 1930s.

“We’re therefore delighted that the house’s owners, Glasgow City Council, have confirmed that they intend to invest in its refurbishment, following on from their very successful project at the adjacent Burrell Collection.

“We at the Trust will also be delighted to play whatever part we can in assisting the city to develop its new vision for the Pollok Country Park, working closely with Glasgow City Council over future plans for the house.

“While access to the house will necessarily be limited by the works from November, the Trust will continue to welcome visitors and members to the sites we own and care for around the city, namely the Tenement House, Alexander ‘Greek’ Thomson’s Holmwood and Greenbank Garden.”

The Trust is in discussion with its staff and volunteers based at Pollok House, as well as their trades union representatives, about possible arrangements following the house’s closure, although it will be maintaining services at the shop and popular café there until at least March 2024.

Pollok House was built in 1752 close to the site of earlier dwellings dating back to medieval times and was extended between 1890 and 1904. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and through to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century it was the home of Sir John Stirling Maxwell, 10th Baronet, a great benefactor to Glasgow, and one of the founders of the National Trust for Scotland – it is said that the conversation that led to the Trust being established took place in Pollok House's Cedar Room at the beginning of the 1930s.

The house and the collections contained therein were gifted to Glasgow by Sir John's daughter, Dame Anne Maxwell Macdonald, 11th Baronetess in 1966.

## **ENDS**

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### **Notes for Editors:**

1. Glasgow City Council holds Pollok House and Pollok Country Park on behalf of the over 620,000 residents in its area;
2. Glasgow Life is the charity set up improve the people of Glasgow's mental and physical wellbeing through culture and sport, and is responsible for the collections of art and artefacts contained in Pollok House and operates the adjacent, world-famous Burrell Collection;
3. Pollok Country Park, which comprises the original estate held by the Stirling Maxwell family is the city's largest park and the only Country Park within Glasgow.
4. 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 92 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most important buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It is Scotland's largest membership organisation and relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work.

### **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](http://www.nts.org.uk).

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