

## **NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE**

9 June 2020

### **CONSERVATION CHARITY SETS OUT ITS PLANS FOR RE-OPENING PROPERTIES**

Conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland has revealed its proposals to begin re-opening properties as and when allowed by the Scottish Government's 'route map' away from Coronavirus lockdown.

However, in line with previous revelations about the charity's loss of income resulting from the pandemic, the charity is also listing those properties, primarily buildings, that it is proposing to delay opening until at least 2021, either due to lack of resources or because they cannot be adequately adapted to ongoing social distancing restrictions.

The Trust is already beginning to remove barriers to access at some of its key countryside properties, such as Corrieshalloch Gorge and Ben Lawers, albeit that this is for local access (from within five miles) as per government advice.

With access to other types of properties and travel from further afield expected to be permitted under stage three of the route map, Trust staff are also beginning to prepare for this, making sure processes are in place to ensure the safety of staff and visitors and to uphold social distancing, particularly in enclosed grounds and gardens.

It is hoped that if sufficient progress is made in tackling Covid-19, enclosed grounds and gardens can be re-opened in late June or early July.

It is also hoped that some built heritage properties may begin opening in mid-August.

Despite the Trust's financial difficulties as a result of the coronavirus public health emergency, which has forced the placement of over 400 staff at risk of redundancy, the Trust's Chairman has said how much he is looking forward to visitors returning as and when that becomes possible.

The Trust's Chairman, Sir Mark Jones said: "Our core purpose is to protect Scotland's heritage for the benefit of everyone; we exist to ensure that people can access and enjoy the places we care for.

"I'm therefore delighted and encouraged to see that the Scottish Government has laid out the conditions and stages that now begin the process of allowing us to start welcoming our members and visitors again. I know from the many messages we have received that people are sorely missing our wonderful landscapes.

"Initially visitors will be returning to our natural heritage sites and I hope people will abide by the Scottish Government's restrictions that enable local travel only. In other words, stay local, stay safe and please don't travel more than five miles to reach our properties. This is not just a civic duty but also for the wellbeing of rural communities.

"I must also point out that local travel excludes Canna and Fair Isle and sea-borne visitors should stay away in order to protect island residents.

"Notwithstanding, the acute problems we are working through due to the loss of half of our income, our dedicated teams are now making places ready and safe for the return of visitors. Although it seems self-evident that nature takes care of itself, that isn't strictly true. Landscapes do need to be managed, habitats need to be guarded, footpaths need to be repaired and gardens and woodlands need to be tended, and we've been doing as much as we can during lockdown.

"Even though our magnificent countryside belongs to us all, and we revel in Scotland's unique 'right to roam', the reality is that our stewardship of the natural environment in our care costs money.

"That's why in our hour of need, we're asking for help so that we can keep doing what we do to safeguard our unrivalled landscapes."

In early May, when the Trust first announced its financial challenges and resultant emergency measures, the charity confirmed that it did not anticipate opening more than half of its built heritage properties again this year due to a number of factors. It has now shared the list of such properties it hopes to re-open this year, possibly in mid-August, those that are likely to stay closed until Easter 2021 and a few that may have to stay closed until 2022.

Simon Skinner added: "I said at the outset that the Trust is in trouble through no fault of our own – our only way back is to take action now and make some difficult choices.

"We are going to have to live within our means – not just at the moment while lockdown is still effectively in full force, but in the coming months too when such public sector support as there is dries up and the wider visitor economy remains badly wounded. For the Trust to remain a going concern, we have to decide which properties we can afford to open, either because they will generate sufficient visitor numbers to help with our recovery or because we can find ways to re-open them that will be compliant with the new normal of public health restrictions.

"We have already missed the busiest season for some properties, and it simply isn't viable to re-open them in the latter part of the year. So, we will keep them closed until the 'new' season begins in Easter of 2021. Having said that, in some cases where the historic building or centre is closed, it will still be possible to admit visitors to grounds and gardens.

"In a few cases, such is the unsuitable configuration of the buildings in terms of social distancing, or the scale of their running costs, that we will have to consider keeping them closed longer – perhaps into 2022 – until when we hope conditions will have improved sufficiently to bring about a return to better days.

"I appreciate that many people will be disappointed if their favourite property is closed for a time longer. These are not choices we wanted to make, but we need to take them to ensure that the Trust gets through this period and emerges from the other side ready to do what it does best.

"We have approached the Scottish Government for financial support and, if this were forthcoming, it may allow us to open more properties more quickly.

"Nonetheless, if people want to help us recover faster, going beyond basic survival, I urge them to support us by remaining as members or donating to our new emergency appeal. We have always existed for the benefit for the people of Scotland as funded by our members and supporters - with a little more help we can save the Trust and in turn we can return to saving Scotland's national treasures at our full capacity."

**- ENDS -**

National Trust for Scotland Press Office. Contact Jim Whyteside on 07889 456779 or Sarah Cuthbert-Kerr on 07713 786277.

## Notes for Editors

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).

## National Trust for Scotland

### Countryside Properties re-opening imminently (local access only until Stage 3 of Scottish Government Route Map)

Region	Property	Current situation	Open/Close A/W 2020/2021	Open/Close Full Year 2021/2022	Type (BH/NH)
Highlands & Islands	Ben Lawers	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Burg	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Corrieshalloch	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Iona	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Kintail	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Mingulay, Pabbay & Berneray	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Staffa	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Torrison	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Unst	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	West Affric	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
South & West	Ben Lomond	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
South & West	Goatfell (Brodict Castle) Ranger	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
South & West	The Pend	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
South & West	Rockliffe	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	St Abbs Head	Partially Open/Partially Operational (car park will be open by 12 <sup>th</sup> June, toilets and Visitor Centre remain closed)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	The Pineapple	Open Unstaffed	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage

***Please note that the following is still subject to formal consultation:***

**Properties proposed to re-open in 2020 (Gardens and grounds possibly by July; Some historic buildings and visitor centres possibly from mid-August)**

Region	Property	Current situation	Open/Close A/W 2020/2021	Open/Close Full Year 2021/2022	Type (BH/NH)
Highlands & Islands	Mingulay, Pabbay & Berneray	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Staffa	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Unst	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Iona	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Burg	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Boath Doocot	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Scheduled/Seasonal)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Brodie	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Canna	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Culloden	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Fair Isle	Closed to public (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Glencoe	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built/Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Glenfinnan	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Inverewe	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Moirlanich	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	St Kilda	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Coronavirus/island travel restrictions)	If possible – could be conservation access only	Yes	Natural Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Urquhart Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes – subject to HES operations	Yes	Natural Heritage
North East	Crathes Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	Drum Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Arduaine Garden	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Burns Birthplace	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Brodick Country Park	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Crarae Garden	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Culzean Gardens and Country Park	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Geilston House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Greenbank	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Hill House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage

South & West	Threave	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
-	Mar Lodge Estate	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Balmerino Abbey	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Branklyn Garden	Closed to public (Scheduled/Seasonal)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Culross	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Garden will open at stage 2 but palace and retail will stay closed.	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Dollar Glen	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Car park is open now	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Dunkeld	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Not a property as such but if refers to El shop, it is closed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Grey Mare's Tail	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Car park is open now	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Hermitage	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Car park is open now	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Inveresk	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Killiecrankie	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Car park is open now, toilets and Visitor Centre will remain closed	Yes	Yes	Natural Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Malleny	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Culross	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Garden will open at Stage 2 but palace and retail will stay closed	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Preston Mill	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Priorwood	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Robert Smail's Print Works	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage

### Properties proposed to stay closed until season 2021/2022

Region	Property	Current situation	Open/Close A/W 2020/2021	Open/Close Full Year 2021/2022	Type (BH/NH)
Highlands & Islands	Abertarff house	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
Highlands & Islands	Hugh Miller's Cottage	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	JM Barrie's Birthplace	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	Barry Mill	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Grounds open	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	Craigievar Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Grounds open	Yes	Built Heritage

North East	Fyvie Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Grounds open	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	Haddo House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Grounds open	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	House of Dun	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Grounds open	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	JM Barrie's Birthplace	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
North East	Pitmedden	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Bachelors' Club	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Ben Lomond (Bunkhouse)	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Brodick Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Broughton House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Carlyle's Birthplace	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Culzean Castle	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	Yes	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Pollok House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	May reopen or part reopen in 2020 – to be confirmed	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Tenement House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
South & West	Weavers Cottage	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	No	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Alloa Tower	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Scheduled/Seasonal)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Falkland Palace	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Gardens will reopen in 2020	No	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Georgian House	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Gladstone's Land	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Scheduled/Seasonal) Closed due to conservation project - anticipate opening by August 2021	No	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Kellie Castle	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Coronavirus) Gardens will open in 2020, no access to castle	No	Yes	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Newhailes	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Grounds and car park will reopen next week	No	Yes	Built Heritage

### Properties proposed to stay closed until season 2022/2023

Region	Property	Current situation	Open/Close A/W 2020/2021	Open/Close Full Year 2021/2022	Type (BH/NH)
North East	Leith Hall	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	No	Built Heritage

South & West	Holmwood	Closed to public (Coronavirus)	No	No	Built Heritage
South & West	Souter Johnnie's Cottage	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Coronavirus)	No	No	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Bannockburn (Visitor Centre)	Closed to public (Coronavirus) Car park, grounds and monuments are currently open	No	No	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Hill of Tarvit	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Coronavirus) Grounds and car parks will be open by July 2020	No	No	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	House of the Binns	Fully Closed/Not Operational (Scheduled/Seasonal) Grounds will be open in 2020	No	No	Built Heritage
Edinburgh & East	Kippen Smiddy	Closed to public (Scheduled/Seasonal)	No	No	Built Heritage

