

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

19 August 2020

Conservation charity confirms re-opening of Broughton House following financial contribution and donations

The National Trust for Scotland has confirmed that Broughton House and Garden in Kirkcudbright, which was expected to remain closed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, is to open again this month.

The staggered opening of the property, the Edwardian home of 'Glasgow Boy' artist EA Hornel, will begin with Broughton Garden opening its gate on Thursday 20 August. Broughton Garden will open five days a week (Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday), 10am to 5pm.

Broughton House will reopen for weekend visits (timed slots, online advance booking encouraged) from Sunday 6 September, 10am to 5pm.

Confronted with an almost £30 million hole in the Trust's finances due to the negative impact of the pandemic, Broughton House & Garden had been considered for closure until next year during a three-month consultation with staff and local stakeholders on emergency measures to mitigate the damage caused by the virus.

Broughton House & Garden has been the focus of much renewed attention in recent years, with over £100k in capital investments to install conservation heating, a new exhibition space, vital structural repairs to the roof, and improved access for all abilities into the famous garden.

With the Trust opening a major Hornel exhibition at Edinburgh City Art Centre this November, Broughton House & Garden will play an important role in the Trust's recovery.

Despite the positive news of the property re-opening, redundancies were unavoidable given the scale of the impact of Covid-19 on the Trust and, regrettably, four posts at Broughton are being made redundant, but two new permanent ones have been created. Every effort will be

made to find alternative employment with the National Trust for Scotland for individuals who are not able to have new positions at Broughton.

Following an announcement that the Scottish Government has made a financial contribution of £3.8 million towards the National Trust for Scotland in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, the charity has confirmed that it is now in a better position than originally hoped.

The government contribution adds to nearly £2.5 million donated to an emergency appeal and follows on from a formal consultation on emergency measures intended to save the charity from going under.

With the financial support and donations, and with changes made to proposals by the Trust's managers following consultation, the Trust is now able to reduce redundancies to the minimum possible and open or partially more properties than originally hoped:

- Across Scotland, the number of redundancies falls from 429 to 188; most of the affected posts are seasonal;
- 33 built heritage properties will re-open this year, rather than the 27 originally planned, in addition to natural heritage properties which opened from July;
- The Trust avoids the risk of ceasing to be a 'going concern' and now has the space and time needed to reconfigure its strategy and forward planning and look towards full recovery in due course.

The National Trust for Scotland's Chief Executive, Phil Long OBE said: "I want to offer my profound thanks to the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and particularly to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture, Fiona Hyslop.

"We were confronted by the worst crisis in our charity's history and we had a very real fear that this history was about to end abruptly. The generous support from the Scottish Government, together with the inspiring number of donations made by many individuals, has diverted us away from that terrible outcome.

"My joy at this announcement is tempered by the fact that the effects of Covid-19 are so devastating that we're still having to say goodbye to many friends and colleagues. I wish it were not so, but much to my regret redundancies are unavoidable, although this support has helped us to keep them to the absolute minimum possible.

"While many of the affected posts are seasonal, and staff would have been finishing up for the year in a matter of weeks, we have modified our redundancy policy. If the situation improves sufficiently next year and we are able to recruit again, former staff can apply for posts after six months without having to repay their redundancy money.

"Through our consultation process on our emergency measures we received sage advice from staff and Trust members on the functions and expertise we needed to retain, especially

from the Friends of Broughton. As a result, we were able to come up with a resilient operating model that I'm confident will weather the aftermath of the Covid crisis.

"It has been a tough and demanding year so far, but I am glad that we have been able to begin the return to some form of normality. As we re-open properties we have been very busy ensuring that they are safe places to visit as we abide by the government guidelines designed to ensure the wellbeing of our welcome visitors and our volunteers and staff who I would also like to thank for their immense hard work and fortitude during this deeply concerning time."

Sam Gallacher, Operations Manager for Dumfries & Galloway who is the manager of Broughton House & Garden said: "I think for everyone, these months have brought home how important the National Trust for Scotland is to us all, so I hope we can rally together as we continue to confront and overcome the difficult months and years ahead of us. My deepest thanks to our many supporters for their time and energy championing the property."

"At Broughton House, special thanks must go to Mike Jack, Broughton's gardener, who has worked diligently throughout this difficult period. I think our visitors will be overawed by the garden and how much Mike has been able to achieve without the usual support and resources. It will mean a great deal to him, as it does to us all, that Kirkcudbright will have its treasured garden at Broughton House open for locals and visitors to again enjoy."

Mike Jack, First Gardener Instructor at Broughton House and an instructor at the Trust's School of Heritage Gardening said: "After a challenging few months, I am delighted that that we are now able to re-open Broughton House garden to the public. I look forward to welcoming back visitors and allowing them to enjoy Hornel's garden. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those in the local community and beyond who have supported the property during these difficult times. For visitors coming only to the garden, entrance will be via the side gate. It is important that they follow instructions to socially distance and are mindful of one another while navigating the paths. Hand sanitiser will be available at the garden entrance and until further notice there will unfortunately be no access to the glasshouse. We hope that these measures will allow you to safely enjoy the garden."

Mike Duguid, Chairman of NTS Friends of Broughton House & Garden has campaigned for Broughton's reopening said: "The Friends are absolutely delighted that the NTS has responded positively to the campaign we led for the reopening of the house and garden. It is great news for the town and on behalf of the Friends group I should like to send a massive thank you to everyone who supported the campaign. It's been really heartening to see how much this place means to people."

“Clearly, we are saddened that some of the staff will be losing their jobs, especially after such a successful season last year which saw a record number of visitors to the property.”

Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: “The National Trust for Scotland is responsible for promoting and protecting many of Scotland’s most important natural and built sites, which are crucial to our heritage and tourism sectors.

“The Scottish Government has worked extremely hard to support as many jobs as possible. Whilst we have a long road ahead of us on the way to recovery as we begin to emerge from the coronavirus lockdown, reopening more of the National Trust for Scotland’s most iconic properties is testament to all of the work that has gone on behind the scenes and will enable the Trust to continue its responsibilities to protect, promote and celebrate Scotland’s heritage.”

Visitors should check the Trust’s website (nts.org.uk) for details about visiting the property.

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Notes for Editors

1. The National Trust for Scotland announced a consultation on a series of emergency measures in light of the coronavirus pandemic in May 2020 – full details here: <https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/trust-confirms-emergency-measures>
2. The charity launched its biggest ever fundraising appeal – Save Our Scotland – in response to the crisis with the aim of raising £2.5 million: www.nts.org.uk/donate .
3. Almost all Trust gardens and estates have now re-opened to the public and in the past week the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum and the Hill House were amongst its first built properties to re-open. The current list of openings is available here: <https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/gardens-and-grounds-get-ready-for-visitors-again>
4. Broughton House & Garden in Kirkcudbright, DG6 4JZ, will reopen the garden to the public on Thursday 20 August. Broughton Garden will be open five days a week (Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday), 10am to 5pm. Broughton House will reopen on Sunday 6 September (weekends only), advance booking recommended.
5. 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.

6. 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. Join us at www.nts.org.uk.

