



Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone

Building Phase 2025-28



Welcome

I'm delighted to introduce the second phase of our ten-year strategy, Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone, which we launched in 2022. We have worked hard across the Trust to reset our direction and recover from the effects of the pandemic and as a result, our charity has grown strongly, attracting record visitor numbers, securing unprecedented support from donors and funders, improving our commercial income, and growing our membership too. All of this has helped us invest more than ever in vital conservation work and in growing audiences so more can get involved and be inspired by all we care for. Our focus in this next Building phase is to develop and deliver the ambitions set out here, guided by objectives which have also evolved. Most importantly, our strategy reaffirms our commitment to the importance of conservation and nature and the significance of heritage in everybody's lives. Given all we have been through in the last few years and the wider deep uncertainty there is in the world, the protection of our heritage and our environment – for its own sake and for our wellbeing, our communities, our society, the economy, and, vitally, the earth's climate – has never been more important.

Philip Long OBE
Chief Executive

What we do and why

We want everyone to experience and enjoy Scotland's beautiful landscapes, breathtaking architecture and fascinating collections. We look after so many important places, so that everyone can share our love for them and protect them for now and the future.

We care for more than 100 places – battlefields, historical buildings, gardens, coastlines, islands and mountain ranges, as well as the plants and animals that live in these varied habitats. We are the largest Scottish membership organisation, and we work in partnership with communities, other charities and conservation groups to achieve our common goals, speaking out to protect Scotland's nature, history and culture.

And we protect memories and moments. Our places are important to people from Scotland and beyond. Every year at Trust places, the stories of millions of visitors are interwoven with Scotland's vast and vibrant history. We keep this rich tapestry safe, so that these stories can be remembered and relived, again and again.

Archaeology

This informs our conservation work and enriches the stories we tell about our places. We look after around 12,000 archaeological sites and features, spanning from the Mesolithic Age to the modern day.

Advocacy

We don't just care for our places – we campaign for them, using our 94 years of expertise and experience to educate, challenge, inform and pioneer public access, all so that everyone can experience the best of Scotland.

Buildings, monuments and battlefields

We look after grand castles and humble homes, as well as many other buildings that demonstrate the scope of Scotland's architectural heritage. We are also responsible for history-shaping sites such as the battlefields of Culloden and Bannockburn.



Collections

There are more than 300,000 collection items to discover in our places, each telling a story of Scotland's past and people. Displaying these artefacts in their original settings brings history to life in a relatable way and our interpretation captures imaginations young and old.

Gardens

As Scotland's largest garden owner, we cultivate more than 100,000 individual native and exotic plants, while also tackling environmental issues such as biodiversity, climate change, energy conservation and invasive non-native species.

Countryside and wildlife

We care for some of Scotland's most iconic landscapes, including eight National Nature Reserves, 46 Munros and many islands. Our trailblazing approach to conservation and tireless monitoring work helps us to protect rare and remarkable wildlife in diverse habitats all across Scotland.



Our strategy: Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone

We launched our strategy in 2022, with the mission to conserve and protect Scotland's rich heritage, to benefit everyone.

This was the Trust's first ever ten-year strategy. We wanted to take a longer-term view of our ambitions for the charity, so that we reach our 100th anniversary in 2031 being more resilient, more relevant and ready to create a new legacy for the future. We decided to split the delivery into three phases – Recovery & Planning, Building and Legacy.

What we've achieved so far

During our first Recovery & Planning phase, we have delivered many impressive projects and even added new properties to our portfolio.

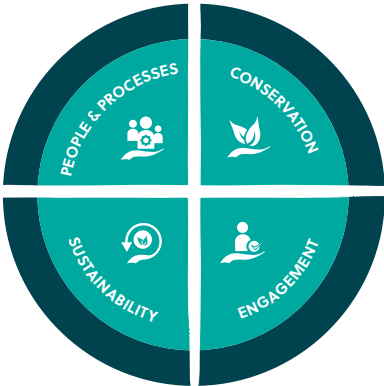
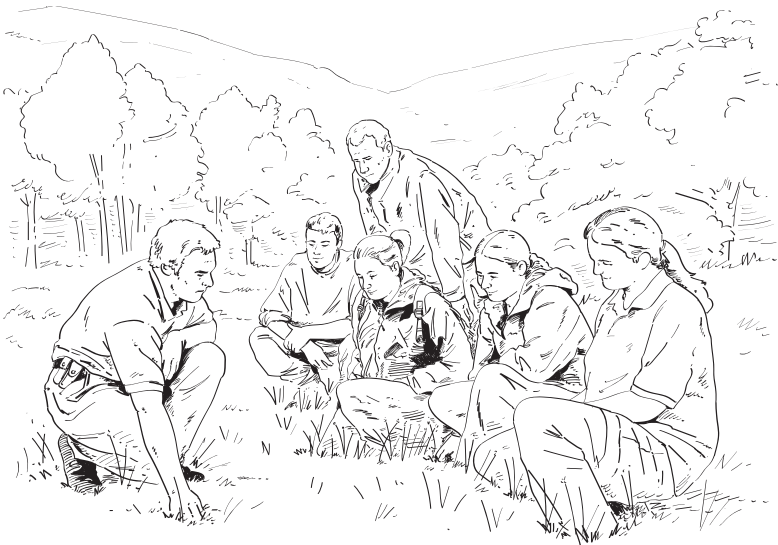
Some of our key achievements included:

1. In 2025, more than five million visitors coming back to our properties.
2. Growing our income from visitors, members, donors and funders through both charitable and commercial activity.
3. Carrying out major conservation and repair projects, including at:
 - House of the Binns
 - Craigievar Castle
 - St Kilda kirk
 - Canna House
 - Brodick Castle
 - Falkland Palace
 - Barry Mill.
4. Completing a plants inventory across all gardens and creating a new rose garden at Crathes.
5. Opening the new Corrieshalloch Gateway to Nature visitor facilities in the Highlands.
6. Adding the Treshnish Isles, Mackintosh at the Willow and Westing Holms, Unst to our estate.
7. Restoring 180 hectares of peatland and planting over 100,000 native trees in Glen Geldie on the Mar Lodge Estate.
8. Building the Glencoe Greenway, a new shared-use path enabling local people and visitors to walk, cycle or wheel into the heart of this breathtaking landscape.
9. Publishing our Plan for Nature which sets out how we'll approach regeneration and restoration across our estate.
10. Trialling our new formal education project Timesliders with primary schools in Glasgow and setting out our new formal learning strategy.
11. Launching our Robert Burns Collection online portal, digitising 2,500 items from the Burns Collection in Alloway, and putting them online for everyone to access for free.
12. Speaking out to protect heritage against plans that would harm it, especially at St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve and Culloden and Bannockburn battlefields.
13. Working with partners to acquire the Blavatnik Honresfield collection of priceless literary manuscripts for the nation.



Building on Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone

Our world and the context in which our charity works is ever-changing, so as we move into the Building phase of our strategy, we have reviewed and updated our pillars and objectives giving further emphasis to our people and processes.



CONSERVATION

1. We're improving the condition of heritage and gardens in our care to ensure they are accessible to future generations
2. We're helping nature flourish across our countryside, gardens, farmed and designed landscapes
3. We're protecting more of Scotland's heritage and nature through ownership or partnership with communities and others
4. We're protecting Scotland's heritage and nature and promoting its benefits for everyone by speaking up when it is threatened



ENGAGEMENT

5. Our charity is recognised as a leading provider of heritage, gardens and nature visitor experiences in Scotland to more than 6 million people per year by 2032
6. Our charity is providing opportunities for skills development through our own initiatives and through collaboration with others
7. We're working with research partners to generate new practices and insights into Scotland's heritage, gardens and nature
8. We're enabling more people to connect with our places for improved wellbeing and informal and formal learning opportunities
9. We're supporting a greater diversity of people to benefit from heritage, gardens and nature across the Trust

SUSTAINABILITY

10. We're working towards half a million members in support of our charity and its objectives
11. Our charity is financially secure, balancing our core income and expenditure alongside a capital investment programme of over £100 million across the lifetime of the strategy, while maintaining reserves to ensure the long-term resilience of the Trust and its assets
12. We have a thriving enterprise and fundraising culture enabling our charity to invest more into Scotland's heritage, gardens and nature for its care and for the benefit of everyone
13. We're on a pathway to be climate positive by 2045, reducing our organisational emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3 excluding visitor emissions) by 40% by 2031 – from our 2023 baseline

PEOPLE & PROCESSES

14. We support the wellbeing of a diverse and integrated workforce of employees and volunteers working towards a shared vision, values and objectives
15. We're a learning organisation. By continual learning and development, our staff and volunteers are supported through a skills development approach, and provided with knowledge, and the resources they need to succeed
16. We prioritise health and safety to manage risk to people and our places
17. We will continuously improve how we work and how people engage with our charity through more effective use of technology, systems and data



Our priorities through our Building phase

Every day, colleagues carry out an incredible range of work to conserve and care for Scotland's special places, provide access and enjoyment for all our visitors, help us be a more sustainable charity and improve our systems and the ways we work together. We call this business-as-usual, but it's anything but!

We also have some special projects to focus on over the next few years.

Mackintosh Illuminated

We are delighted to have the support and partnership of the National Lottery Heritage Fund for our ambitious plan to transform the understanding of Mackintosh and Macdonald, through digital and in-person engagement and conservation work, with the Hill House and Mackintosh at the Willow at the centre of these efforts.

Fyvie Castle & Estate

By restoring Fyvie's Old Home Farm to provide essential visitor facilities, carrying out vital conservation works at the castle and developing the wider Fyvie estate for visitors, we will help more people benefit from spending time at this Aberdeenshire gem.

Centenary Plans

Creating a plan to celebrate our 100th anniversary that boosts awareness and support through fundraising and activities, including creating a Centenary Garden.

Priority habitats and species

Protecting and monitoring priority species like corncrakes and alpine gentians, improving priority habitats and publishing a new annual nature report.

Membership review

Reviewing what we offer as part of our membership so we can better serve our existing members and encourage more to join.

Systems

Updating key IT systems, such as the Electronic Point of Sale and our People and Customer Relationship Management systems, will help our business efficiency and improve the service we provide to our supporters and visitors.



THANK YOU!

The generosity of our supporters and the tireless work from our staff and volunteers enables us to care for and share Scotland's heritage for everyone to enjoy, now and into the future.