

8 October 2024

TRUST COMMENCES MAJOR PROJECT TO UPGRADE LANDING JETTY ON STAFFA

- **The National Trust for Scotland has commenced a major project to upgrade the landing facilities on the island of Staffa**
- **With tens of thousands of visitors each year, the existing access infrastructure requires urgent improvement and repair**
- **The conservation charity is closing the jetty access and undertaking the improvements outside of the seabird breeding season and during the quietest time of year for visitors**

A major repairs project has commenced on Staffa in the Inner Hebrides to upgrade the landing jetty and improve accessibility to one of Scotland's most beloved islands.

Visitor numbers to Staffa have risen dramatically in recent years and the existing access infrastructure requires urgent improvement and repair. The National Trust for Scotland, which cares for Staffa, is currently making improvements to the landing facilities to reduce congestion and improve the experience of the tens of thousands of annual visitors when arriving and leaving the island. The significant works will take place over the autumn and winter months, during which time access to the jetty will be closed, with a projected reopening date in spring 2025.

This phase of infrastructure upgrades is part of a complex multi-year project that also includes work to replace the staircase to the upper island and puffin colony. These works are being undertaken with great care for nature, especially seabirds; all work has been scheduled to avoid seabird breeding seasons.

The Trust has appointed TSL Contractors Ltd to carry out the work on the landing jetty, based nearby at Craignure, Isle of Mull. An Environmental Clerk of Works will be monitoring the environmental and wildlife impact, and a biosecurity and breeding bird protection plan is in place.

Clea Warner, Regional Director of the Highlands & Islands at the National Trust for Scotland, said: "Staffa is loved by many, drawing visitors from all over the world, and it is an important site for cultural and natural heritage. With its wildlife, geology, and dramatic scenery, more and more people want to come and experience this extraordinary wonder of nature for themselves, and our charity is proud to share Staffa with visitors.

"This is a key project in our conservation charity's 10-year strategy to care for, share, and protect Scotland's nature, beauty, and heritage for everyone to enjoy, and our work on Staffa is ensuring continued access to this important National Nature Reserve."

The Staffa infrastructure project is supported by Argyll and Bute Council and VisitScotland through the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

Will Boyd-Wallis, Operations Manager for the North West Highlands at the National Trust for Scotland, said: "This is an extremely challenging and ambitious project to upgrade the visitor infrastructure on Staffa. The island's wildlife and geology are our top priority, so we are undertaking the improvements outside of the seabird breeding season and at the least busy time of year for visitors. This means that the work must be done in the winter months when days are shortest and the weather and sea conditions can be at their most severe.

"We've been able to take account of the island's multiple designations and special features to come up with plans that will ensure that visitors have an enjoyable, memorable and safe experience, while continuing to protect everything that makes Staffa special.

"We'd like to thank Argyll and Bute Council and VisitScotland for the funding they have provided to support this project, and the boat operators in the region for their assistance and cooperation during the jetty closure. This investment in such an iconic Scottish place will benefit the care of Staffa, the local community, and tourism in the region for many years to come."

Staffa has been in the care of the National Trust for Scotland since 1986. It's a world-famous National Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and sits in the centre of the Loch na Keal, Isle of Mull National Scenic Area. The sea around Staffa is also a Marine Protected Area and Special Area of Conservation.

The Staffa project supports the National Trust for Scotland's vision to care for, protect, and share Scotland's nature, beauty and heritage for everyone, as outlined in its 10-year strategy, launched in 2022. For more information on the National Trust for Scotland, visit www.nts.org.uk.

ENDS

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.