

NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE

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Storm damage limits access to Fingal's Cave

Conservation charity the National Trust for Scotland is warning visitors to Staffa that access to the world-famous Fingal's Cave will be limited this spring.

The concrete walkway which provides entry to the cave has been damaged by violent winter storms. As a result, entry to the cave on foot will not be possible.

Visitors will be able to view the cave from the entrance and from the sea and will still be able to access Staffa, which is a National Nature Reserve, to enjoy its fantastic puffin colony and amazing views.

Staffa Ranger Emily Wilkins said:

"This year's winter storms have really taken their toll and the concrete walkway has been badly damaged. To keep our visitors safe, we are asking them not to enter the cave on foot, but to enjoy the views from the entrance or from boats.

"We are currently working with a team of engineers on possible solutions. Repairing a structure like this in such a remote location is a real challenge and realistically it will take several months before even a short term fix can be carried out.

"Staffa is still a fantastic place to visit, and we'll be running our usual programme of summer events in the months ahead. Boat trips will continue as usual too."

Lying 6 miles west of the isle of Mull, Staffa is small (½ mile long and ¼ mile wide) and formed of hexagonal columns that were created millions of years ago by volcanic eruptions and a vast blanket of lava that spread into the Atlantic Ocean.

Years of waves crashing against these columns created the magnificent Fingal's Cave.

Staffa was hardly known until 1772, when the botanist Joseph Banks highlighted the wild, natural beauty of the island. It soon became a must-see location.

Famous visitors have included Queen Victoria, Lord Tennyson, Jules Verne, Robert Louis Stevenson and John Keats; all fell under the island's spell.

The island came into the care of the National Trust for Scotland in 1986, a gift from John Elliott, Jr, of New York in honour of his wife Elly's birthday and was designated a National Nature Reserve in 2001.

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Images: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/C2ZLL4>

