



NEWS RELEASE

Date 4.10.18

Dunvegan Castle & Gardens wins Scottish Land & Estate's Helping it Happen 'Tourism Award' 2018.

Winning this prestigious tourism award last night at the Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh, is further recognition that Dunvegan Castle & Gardens has recovered its rightful place as a world class heritage attraction on the Isle of Skye.

Hugh MacLeod, Estate Director, said: "I would like to thank the judges of the Scottish Land & Estates Helping it Happen Awards. I am delighted to accept this tourism award on behalf of the fantastic MacLeod Estate team who work so hard behind the scenes to give visitors our trademark warm Highland welcome.

This award comes at the tail end of another successful season for the estate (albeit slightly down on last year's record 168,000 visitors). These high visitor numbers create additional pressures on not only our team, but also the historic fabric of a Highland fortress that was designed to be impregnable. But these challenges have been largely addressed thanks to the estate's rolling programme of major capital investment in Dunvegan Castle and the wider estate, totalling £3.6 million since 2008. This has enhanced the visitor experience in all areas, a Herculean effort recognised by Visit Scotland's 5* quality assurance award in 2016. As one of the largest private sector employers on Skye, I'm very proud of what we have achieved since I took over management of the estate in 2008.

I would like to dedicate this award to my late father who had the vision to see that in order to Hold Fast in the modern world, Dunvegan had to adapt from being a medieval fortress designed to keep people out to a place focused on welcoming people in. Since those early make or break days in the 1960s, our dedicated team have extended a warm Highland welcome to millions of visitors, which has had the beneficial ripple effect of underpinning many Skye businesses that rely on the crucial visitor spend that that generates. Annually the estate contributes an average of £800,000 through a combination of employment and purchase of local goods and services and since 2008 alone, has contributed £7.4m to the Skye economy and over £11m to the Scottish economy.

This award will help us to Hold Fast to our goal of preserving, developing and sharing the unique heritage of Dunvegan Castle and the MacLeod Estate for future generations to enjoy."

Pictured at the Helping It Happen Awards in Edinburgh are (L-R): Tim Baynes from Gift of Grouse, Hugh MacLeod from Dunvegan Castle & Gardens, George McNeill and David Johnstone from Scottish Land & Estates.

For more information, visit www.dunvegancastle.com

ENDS.

Note to Editors

Dunvegan Castle & Gardens is at the heart of the 42,000 acre MacLeod Estate on the Isle of Skye. As the ancestral home of the Chief of clan MacLeod for 800 years, it is a major tourist attraction and key driver of economic growth on the Isle of Skye, acting as a magnet for over 168,000 visitors each year. With a long track record of investing in this fragile economic area, Dunvegan Castle underpins both the community and local economy of North West Skye and is well known throughout the world.

Annually the estate contributes an average of £800,000 through a combination of employment and purchase of local goods and services and since 2008 alone, it has contributed £7.4m to the Skye economy and over £11m to the Scottish economy. It is also one of the island's largest private sector employers with around 50 employees, 20 of whom are permanent. Last year Dunvegan Castle came 18 out of the Top 20 Paid Admission Attractions in Scotland according to figures released by the Moffat Centre.

For further information please contact:

MacLeod Estate Office
t: +44 (0) 1470 521 206
e: info@dunvegancastle.com