

LANDMARK DECISION FOR MAVISBANK!

The Mavisbank Trust is delighted by the news that the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) has approved a £5.3M grant to support the first phase of the Landmark Trust's plans to restore Mavisbank House. The grant, along with support from Historic Environment Scotland and Midlothian Council, will kick start a first phase of restoration work to stabilise the ruined shell of the house and provide solutions to the longstanding issues of ownership and access.

Sarah Barron, Chair the Mavisbank Trust said, 'We have fought to save Mavisbank for over 20 years and faced many setbacks but at last there is the real possibility that this exceptional and internationally-recognised historic house will be saved from dereliction and brought back into sustainable use. The NHMF's grant represents a resounding vote of confidence in the vision to restore Mavisbank, ensuring that it will continue to inspire and enrich the lives of future generations.'

Whilst the Landmark Trust's initiative is primarily concerned with the restoration of the house, the Mavisbank Trust is now focussing on bringing together the local community, volunteers and other supporters to protect and enhance the designed landscape of Mavisbank in order to create a wonderful community greenspace for generations to come.

A Mavisbank supporters group is being set up to work with HES, Midlothian Council, other local organisations and community volunteers, to develop and support projects within the grounds. Initial projects could include improvements to public access, interpretation and biodiversity, repairs to boundary walls and fences, the removal of invasive plant species and the organisation of programmes of events and guided walks to highlight the important history of this amazing estate.

However, in the longer term, there is also the potential to explore how the grounds of Mavisbank could be brought into community ownership by, for example, the community buy out process which has been used successfully elsewhere in Scotland e.g. Bannockburn House, Stirling.

ENDS. (Background notes overleaf)

For further information please contact the Trust at

Mavisbank Trust, 109/11 Swanston Road, Edinburgh EH10 7DS
Tel: 0131 445 4025 Fax: 0131 445 4919 Website: www.mavisbank.org.uk
Emails: info@mavisbank.org.uk

A Scottish Charity Registration No.SC034064 and a Scottish Company limited by guarantee
Registration No.SC237311

NOTES:

The grounds of Mavisbank have been owned by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) since 1995. The Mavisbank Trust was formed in 2002 to campaign for the restoration of Mavisbank House and its policies as well to as raise awareness of its plight and neglect. After the Trust led a hectic campaign for viewers' votes and winning the Scottish heat, Mavisbank fell just short in the closely fought 2003 UK final of the BBC's 'Restoration' television series.

The Trust also secured international recognition for Mavisbank when in 2008 it was placed on the World Monuments Fund's list of the '100 most-endangered historic buildings in the world'. Similarly, Europa Nostra included Mavisbank on its 2016 list of fourteen buildings at risk across Europe.

The Trust prepared detailed plans for a £5M project to restore of Mavisbank house and grounds in 2005 and, following the 2012 signing of a concordat between the Trust, Historic Scotland, Midlothian Council, and the Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust, it was unsuccessful in securing a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards a £13M project in 2013.

However, in 2014 the Trust secured £100K from the EU LEADER programme and charitable donations which allowed it upgrade the riverside path and create new entrances and pathways within the grounds of Mavisbank. In addition, this funding allowed the Trust to carry out remedial work to help stabilise the ruined shell of the house, provide interpretation and signing within the grounds and prepare and submit a planning application for a new access road to Mavisbank.

In 2019 the Trust raised £26K in funding from the Dunard Trust and HES to develop a ground breaking project to digitally reconstruct Mavisbank. Based on research of the detailed historical records which still exist from the time of its construction, laser scanning and aerial photogrammetry, the Trust has been able to create highly accurate images of how house and its grounds would have appeared in 1750.

The Mavisbank Trust has continued to strongly support the Landmark Trust and Historic Environment Scotland in their recent and current efforts to secure funding from the National Lottery and has provided them with its previous Mavisbank restoration project planning information.



Digital reconstruction of Mavisbank House c.1750

© Mavisbank Trust