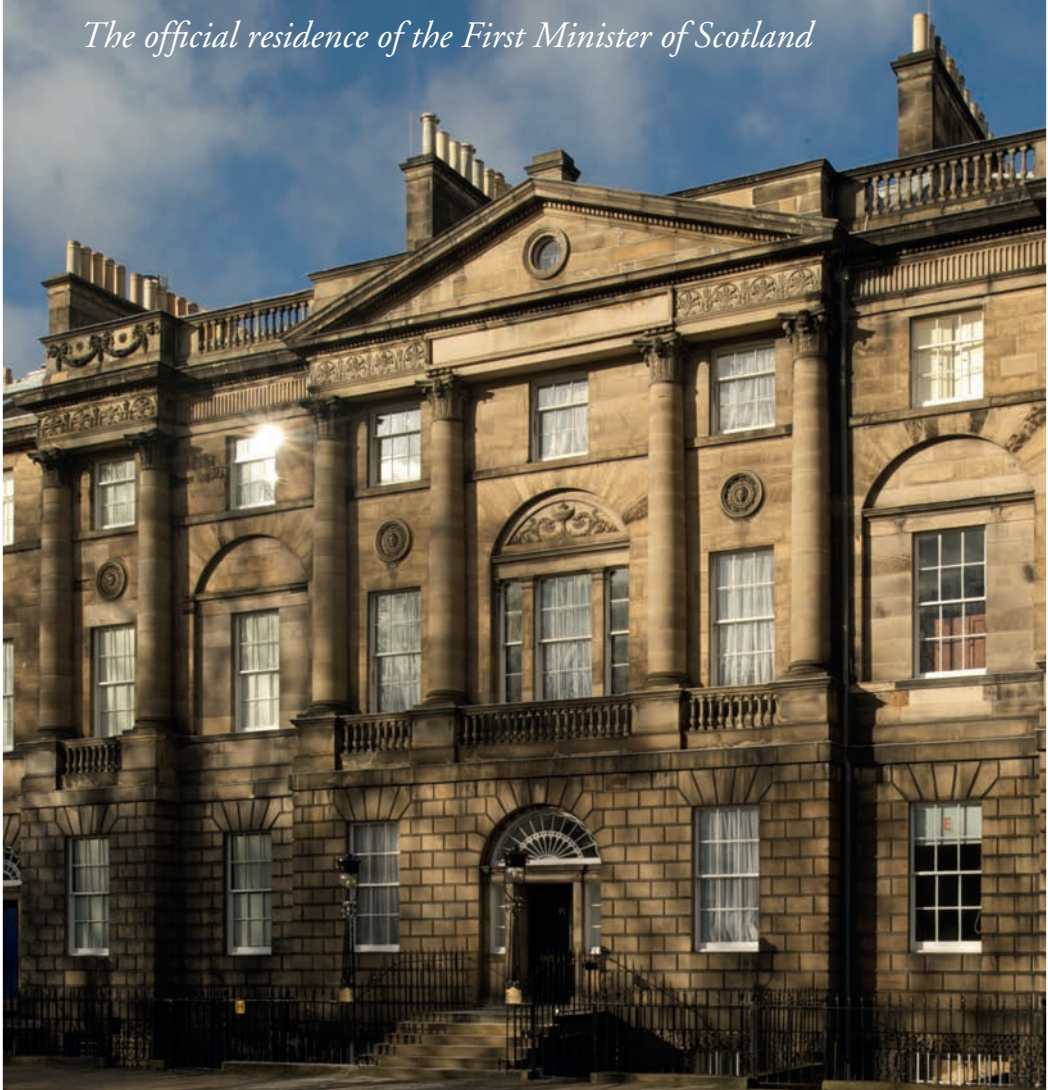


# Bute House

*The official residence of the First Minister of Scotland*



Office of the First Minister of Scotland

**FirstMinister.gov.scot**

Prìomh Mhinistear na h-Alba

# Welcome to Bute House



Since I became First Minister, I have welcomed thousands of people to Bute House. As the official residence of the First Minister of Scotland, it is here that I host official guests from this country and overseas on behalf of the nation. Bute House is also the meeting place of the Scottish Cabinet and the venue for official functions including meetings, receptions, lunches and dinners. Within these walls, I get to bring together people from all walks of life through meetings with business leaders, public service employees and the voluntary sector, and receptions to celebrate all aspects of Scottish society and success. Every Christmas, I even get to welcome youngsters from around the country for an annual children's party.

All year round Bute House performs a dual role of both residence and place of work for the First Minister. All four of my predecessors lived here too, and their portraits line the wall of the staircase leading to the Cabinet Room. Before the Scottish Parliament was reconvened in 1999, Bute House was home to eight different Secretaries of State for Scotland from 1970 onwards. Many of the key conversations and decisions in recent Scottish political history have taken place within these walls.

Even without its modern role, however, Bute House would be of significant historic interest. It was built in the late 18th century, and is at the heart of one of the great masterpieces of Georgian architecture – the north side of Robert Adam's Charlotte Square. At that time, Edinburgh's New Town was the focus for the Enlightenment, a flourishing of new ideas about culture, politics and economics.

The building was also used as a hotel for almost 20 years, and in 1832 was briefly home to the exiled King Charles X of France. Later, the Marquesses of Bute owned the property for more than 60 years until 1966, when it was preserved for the nation.

Bute House is at the heart of public life in Scotland today, but still retains many fittings and features of a Georgian town house. It combines a rich history with an important modern role. It is a unique building. I hope that this guide helps you to discover more about what is behind the black door of No.6 Charlotte Square.

Nicola Sturgeon  
First Minister



1

1. Robert Adam.
2. One of Robert Adam's drawings of Charlotte Square.

## About Bute House

This fine 18th-century townhouse is the official residence of the First Minister of Scotland. It is used for Cabinet meetings, welcoming important visitors and other governmental business, and provides an Edinburgh base for Scotland's political leader – equivalent to No.10 Downing Street in London. It has served in this role since the Scottish Government was established in 1999.

From 1969 until 1999, Bute House was the official residence of the Secretary of State for Scotland, a Cabinet minister of the British Government who was then Scotland's most senior politician. Prior to this, the house served as a private house, a doctor's surgery and a hotel.

Bute House is part of two wider architectural schemes: Charlotte Square and the 'first' New Town.

Edinburgh's original New Town comprises the grid plan from St Andrew's Square in the east to Charlotte Square in the west, centred on the broad avenue of George Street. It was built in 1767–1820, and later extended to the north, west and east.

Charlotte Square was designed as a single scheme by Robert Adam, the pre-eminent architect of his time. Adam died in 1792, soon after completing the designs, but the square was built to his specifications, aside from St George's Church (now West Register House) on the west side.

The square remains a masterpiece of urban design, in which individual houses are integrated into a single, harmonious 'palace front' terrace on both north and south sides.

Over two centuries, the New Town has seen a great deal of change, but Charlotte Square has been preserved very much as Adam intended, thanks largely to the efforts of the 4th Marquess of Bute, who acquired and restored several of the houses in 1903–30.

The north side, with No.6 – Bute House – as its centrepiece, remains perhaps the finest architectural achievement of Georgian Edinburgh.



2

# Introduction

## The Old Town and the New

In 1766, Edinburgh Town Council ran a contest to appoint a planner. The aim was to develop new land it had acquired north of the Old Town, which had become overcrowded, rundown and squalid. The successful entrant was a local man, James Craig, and the outcome was the New Town, one of finest urban schemes in Europe.

Craig proposed a grand neoclassical grid-plan, elegant and orderly – a marked contrast with the teeming lanes and towering tenements clustered along the spine of the High Street. Its streets were named in honour of the Hanoverian royal family: George Street for King George III, Princes Street for his sons, Queen Street for his consort, Queen Charlotte, for whom Charlotte Square was also named.

The first house was built in George Street by Mr John Young, who claimed a £20 inducement. Its first stone was laid by Craig in person on 26 October 1767.

At this time, Edinburgh was at the heart of an intellectual and cultural flowering known as the Enlightenment. The city had become a focus for great minds, including Robert Adam, architect of Charlotte Square, the philosophers David Hume and Adam Smith, the writers Robert Burns and Walter Scott, the scientist Joseph Black, the engineers Thomas Telford and James Watt, and the founder of geology, James Hutton. These men – together with other great thinkers and innovators – met, discussed and debated in the streets, coffee houses and taverns of Edinburgh.



1

The Scottish Enlightenment brought cultural riches, but financial wealth was also growing, powered by the Industrial Revolution, agricultural improvement and, particularly in the Lothians, coal-mining.

The Enlightenment did not exist in isolation. It was part of an exchange of ideas between Scotland and the wider world, including Revolutionary France and soon-to-be independent America. Benjamin Franklin, a Founding Father of the United States, visited Edinburgh in 1759 and 1771. *The Rights of Man* (1791) by Thomas Paine, another Founding Father, was widely read and discussed in the city.

New ideas brought upheaval. There were at least nine riots in Edinburgh between 1736 and 1790, and another came in 1792, the year when work began on Charlotte Square. On King George's birthday, 4 June, a mob of radical reformers set out to burn an effigy of their political foe, Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville. The authorities intervened and three days of rioting ensued.

As recently as 1788, Edinburgh had been scandalised by the trial of Deacon Brodie, a respected town councillor unmasked as a housebreaker and hanged – his name to endure as the inspiration for *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. We should not forget, either, that many Scottish soldiers and sailors saw action in the wars with France of the 1790s and early 1800s.

So Georgian Edinburgh was not as peaceful as might be imagined – but the New Town's order and grandeur speak loudly of confidence and wealth. The new architecture was smart, comfortable, private and relatively clean. Those who could afford it soon began to abandon the tenements of the Old Town for expansive townhouses on the New Town's broad streets.

James Craig died in 1795, but work continued on his scheme. Charlotte Square, the last part to be completed, was conceived as its glorious culmination. The

square was designed by Robert Adam, the leading architect of his day, who died in 1792, before building work even began. For the most part, it was built faithfully to his designs.

By 1820, Charlotte Square was complete. Within a couple of years, the New Town's expansion had begun, initially to the north of Charlotte Square. The eminent lawyer, Henry, Lord Cockburn, resided at No.14. He lamented this development: 'We then thought with despair of our lost verdure, our banished peacefulness, our gorgeous sunsets ...'

In 1815 there were 2,000 houses in the New Town; by 1830 this had swollen to 5,000. Development continued until around 1850.

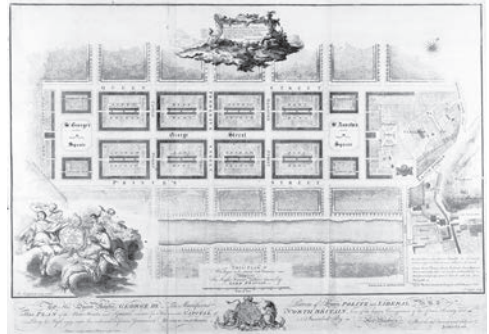
It is remarkable that this sprawling scheme has survived largely undamaged. With the possible exception of Dublin in Ireland, and Bath in south-west England, no city can rival Edinburgh for sweeping Georgian streets, terraces, squares, crescents and circles.

In 1995, the cultural importance of Edinburgh's two historic quarters – the medieval and the Georgian – was recognised by UNESCO. The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site remains one of the largest and most visited in the world.

1. James Craig, planner of the original New Town.
2. Charlotte Square today.
3. James Craig's original plan for the New Town.



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# No.6 Charlotte Square

## Notable owners and occupiers



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1796–1970

### Orlando Hart (1796–97)

The first owner was a prosperous shoemaker and town councillor. He bought No.6 in 1796, but died the following year, before the house was completed.

### Sir John Sinclair (1806–16)

The Whig MP for Caithness was an agriculturalist and writer, best known as the instigator of the first Statistical Account of Scotland (1791–92). This pioneering project employed nearly a thousand parish ministers to compile information about the Scottish land and people.

### Lieutenant-Colonel William Gabriel Davy (1816–18)

Davy had an impeccable military pedigree, distinguishing himself in the Peninsular War against Napoleon. He was knighted in 1836 and ultimately became a general.

1. Orlando Hart.
2. Sir John Sinclair.
3. Provost Mitchell Thomson in 1899.
4. Charles X of France.

James Craig  
draws up initial  
plans for the  
New Town

1766–67

Robert Adam  
designs Charlotte  
Square

1791

Building work begins  
on Charlotte Square;  
Robert Adam dies

1792

Charles Oman  
converts No. 6 to  
a hotel, but dies  
the same year

1825

#### **Charles and Grace Oman (1825–44)**

Charles Oman was an established Edinburgh hotelier, who bought No.6 and No.4 in 1825, opening them as Oman's Hotel. He died the same year, after which the hotel was run by his widow, Grace, until her death in 1844.

#### **Charles X of France (1832)**

The French king was living in exile in Edinburgh, following the July Revolution of 1830. Vacating his usual quarters at the Palace of Holyroodhouse for two months, he brought his family to Oman's Hotel.

#### **Alexander and Catherine**

##### **Campbell (1844–87)**

The house's most enduring residents were Alexander Campbell, brewer, and his wife Catherine. She gave birth at least five times in the house. Campbell was a keen contributor to good causes, among them 'The Unemployed Operatives in Lancashire and the other Cotton-Manufacturing Districts of England'. Campbell died in 1887 and the house was sold.

#### **Mitchell and Eliza Thomson (1889–1918)**

Another long-term resident, Thomson was a timber merchant who served as Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1897–1900), after which he was created Sir Mitchell Mitchell-Thomson, 1st Baronet of Polmood.

#### **4th Marquess of Bute (1922–47)**

John Crichton-Stuart, 4th Marquess, had already bought Nos. 5, 7 and 8, and in 1922 he acquired No.6. He restored the houses to Adam's original design, and in 1930 the Town Planning (Charlotte Square) Scheme Order was enacted, securing the square's conservation.

#### **Dr A.H.H. Sinclair (1926–45)**

Lord Bute's most notable tenant was Arthur Sinclair, a distinguished ophthalmic surgeon, who practised here for 20 years. During his tenure, the iron railings were removed to assist the war effort.

#### **5th Marquess of Bute (1947–56)**

In 1947, the 4th Marquess died, and his son, also John Crichton-Stuart, inherited the Charlotte Square houses. He moved his family into No.6 in 1949. He had inherited a vast fortune, but was faced with accordingly large death duties.

#### **6th Marquess of Bute (1956–70)**

On his father's death in 1956, John Crichton-Stuart, 6th Marquess began negotiations with the Inland Revenue. The eventual outcome was that No.5, No.6 and No.7 were conveyed to the National Trust for Scotland in part payment of taxes.

In 1966, the Bute House Trust was formed, with Lord Bute among its members. Its purpose was to transform No.6 into an official residence for the Secretary of State for Scotland, then the country's most senior political office-holder.

Charles X of France stays at Oman's Hotel



1832

4th Marquess of Bute buys No.6



1922

Town Planning (Charlotte Square) Scheme Order



1930

Transfer of Nos.5, 6 and 7 to the National Trust for Scotland



1966

## 1969–99 An Official Residence

The first Secretary of State for Scotland to live at Bute House was **Willie Ross**, who moved in towards the end of 1969, but was replaced by **Gordon Campbell** in June 1970.

The following month, HM The Queen visited the house, together with HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, HRH the Princess Royal and the serving Prime Minister Edward Heath.

Willie Ross moved back to Bute House in 1974, when the Labour Party returned to power. He was followed by **Bruce Millan** (1976–79), **George Younger** (1979–86), **Malcolm Rifkind** (1986–90), **Ian Lang** (1990–95), **Michael Forsyth** (1995–97) and **Donald Dewar** (1997–99).

During this time, other government ministers also used Bute House as a base during visits to Scotland. Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher stayed here a number of times.

Bute House also welcomed other high-profile guests, including the future Russian premier **Mikhail Gorbachov** in December 1984. At this time, the Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko fell severely ill and Gorbachov cut short his visit to Edinburgh. He was elected General Secretary on Chernenko's death in March 1985.



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1. The Trustees of Bute House, pictured in the Drawing Room in 1970.
2. The Royal Family at Bute House with Prime Minister Edward Heath in July 1970.
3. Mikhail Gorbachov leaving Bute House in December 1984.
4. The first Cabinet meeting of the Scottish Government at Bute House, in May 1999.
5. The Scotland Women's Football Team celebrating at Bute House in March 2016, when the First Minister was announced as their Patron.

Bute House becomes official residence of Secretary of State for Scotland

1969

Willie Ross, MP becomes first Secretary of State for Scotland to occupy Bute House

1969

Bute House is occupied by successive Secretaries of State for Scotland Gordon Campbell, Bruce Millan, George Younger, Malcolm Rifkind, Ian Lang, Michael Forsyth and Donald Dewar

1974–99

Mikhail Gorbachov comes to Bute House, during the first visit to the UK by a senior Russian politician since 1956

1984



**1999–present  
Devolution and  
the First Minister of Scotland**

In May 1999, the Scottish Parliament was re-established and **Donald Dewar** was elected as First Minister. Bute House became an official residence for this new office, while the Secretary of State moved to Melville Crescent, a short distance away.

Bute House began to play a more prominent role in Scottish political life, above all as the usual venue for Cabinet meetings of the Scottish Government.

Donald Dewar died in office in 2000. He was succeeded by **Henry McLeish** (2000–01), **Jack McConnell** (2001–07), **Alex Salmond** (2007–14) and **Nicola Sturgeon** (2014–present).

Throughout this time, Bute House has continued to welcome high-profile visitors. They include the former Vice President of the United States, **Al Gore**, who came to Edinburgh in September 2011 as keynote speaker at the Scottish Low Carbon Investment Conference.

In recent years, the house has been used to host press conferences and to welcome particular groups for special events. Invitees have included Scottish Government apprentices, the national Women's Football Team and Members of the Children's Parliament and Scottish Youth Parliament, who attended the first annual Children's Cabinet in February 2017.



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5

Scottish Executive established; Bute House becomes First Minister's official residence

1999

Donald Dewar becomes First Minister, resident at Bute House

1999–2000

Bute House occupied by successive First Ministers Henry McLeish, Jack McConnell and Alex Salmond

2000–14

Alex Salmond steps down in the wake of the independence referendum and Nicola Sturgeon becomes First Minister

2014

# Bute House: A Short Tour

## *The Exterior*

The whole of Charlotte Square was designed by Robert Adam in 1791–92. The Lord Provost had requested a design ‘not much ornamented but with an elegant Simplicity’, but Adam conceived the square as a grand statement, in contrast to the rather staid architectural style of the New Town up until then. His initial proposals were rejected as too elaborate and expensive, but even the final version is far more ambitious and striking than anything else in James Craig’s original grid-plan.

Adam’s contract was to design the exteriors only, and those who bought fees – the plots on which individual houses could be built – had to conform to this scheme, though they were given a free hand over interior detail. Adam’s contract was for 200 guineas, but following his sudden death in March 1792 the Town Council paid only half of this fee to his heirs.

2



1. The south side of Charlotte Square, with Bute House at its centre.
2. One of the four carved medallions on the façade of Bute House.
3. A decorative frieze adorning the façade.
4. A lamp lighting the steps up to the front door.

10 Bute House



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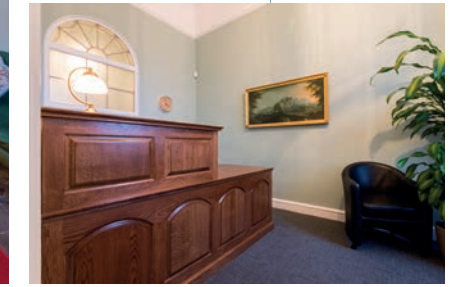
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The 11 houses forming the square’s north side were the first to be completed, with No.6 at their centre. As with the south side opposite, the whole row was designed to form a grand and harmonious palace front. The overall effect is restrained and regular but with exuberant splashes of ornamentation, such as the carved heads of the pilasters, and the two sphinxes perching on top of its east and west corners.

Adam’s unified design was disrupted by various alterations over time – for example, fixings can still be seen for the hotel sign that hung above the front door of No.6 in 1825–44. However, it was largely restored by the 4th Marquess of Bute in the early part of the 20th century.



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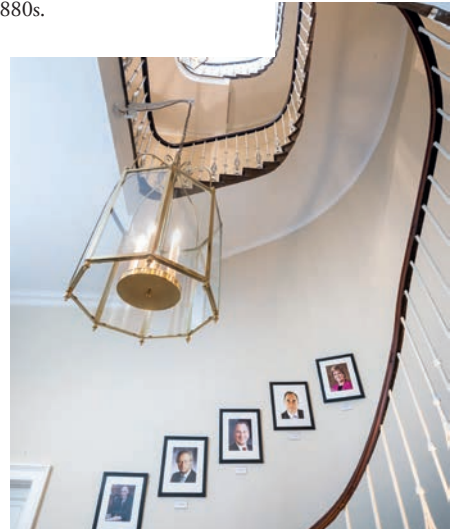
## *The Vestibule*

Adam's symmetrical design for the central house was very unorthodox in the New Town, where most front doors were set to one side. As a result, No.6 has a T-plan vestibule with a fireplace directly opposite the main door.

The vestibule has a stone paved floor interspersed with black squares and an elegant rosetted ceiling. Both are in the Adam style, though they can only be dated to Lord Bute's restoration of 1923. The former cloakroom next to the main entrance now holds a handsome reception desk which was designed by Historic Scotland staff and made at their joinery workshop.

## *The Staircase*

The cantilevered stone staircase may originally have reached only to the second floor, with a boxed-in ladder stair to the servants' quarters above. It was probably extended to the top of the house at a later date, possibly by Mitchell Thomson, who installed a billiard room at the top of the house in the 1880s.



7

5. Inside the T-plan vestibule.
6. The French-polished reception desk.
7. The staircase, with a cupola window at the top.

## *The Cabinet Room*



1

This room once served as a library or study but was adapted in 1999 for use as a meeting room for Scottish ministers. Cabinet meets here every Tuesday, with the First Minister or Deputy First Minister always in attendance.

The room has two curved doors of elegant design, set into a curved wall, allowing access to press cupboards. This feature was introduced by Lord Bute and his architect A.F. Balfour Paul in the 1920s, replacing double folding doors that would have allowed this room to act as part of a function suite.

The handsome long table and sinuous ladder-back chairs are modern reproductions to a Georgian design. The chandelier was brought here from Lord Bute's downstairs dining room.

In 1999, the portrait painter Harry More Gordon used this room as the setting for a conversation piece featuring all eight Secretaries of State for Scotland who had lived at Bute House. They include Donald Dewar, who later that year became Scotland's first First Minister.

1. The Cabinet Room laid out for a meeting of the Cabinet.
2. Harry More Gordon's portrait of all the Scottish Secretaries who lived at Bute House, painted in the Cabinet Room. Willie Ross, who died in 1988, is represented by a photograph on the mantelpiece.

2



## The Dining Room

This room was probably the house's original dining room, and the cornice may be original, though the shallow recess for a sideboard was added by Lord Bute.

The mahogany table and chairs are reproductions commissioned in 1967. The chairs were copied by the cabinet-makers Whytock and Reid, Lord Bute's tenants at No.7, from a set owned by Sir James Clerk of Penicuik. He was the elder brother of John Clerk of Eldin, a prominent figure of the Enlightenment who was Robert Adam's close friend and brother-in-law.

The gilded curtain boxes, commissioned by Lord Bute for No.5, were modelled on designs produced by Robert Adam for the 3rd Earl of Bute's house in Luton.

One wall is dominated by a large painting by Thomas Faed entitled 'Sir Walter Scott and his Friends'. Scott was a great poet, author and antiquarian of the Romantic age. His friends depicted here include such major figures as the Enlightenment philosopher Adam Ferguson, the author James Hogg, and the English poet William Wordsworth.

Also on display here is the Millennium Silverware Collection, which was commissioned from 15 of Scotland's top silversmiths to mark the reopening of the Scottish Parliament. It is on permanent loan from the Scottish Goldsmiths Trust.

3



3. One of a pair of water jugs made by Michael Lloyd for the Millennium Silverware collection.
4. Meeting of the Children and Young People's Cabinet in the Dining Room, February 2017.



4



1

## *The Drawing Room*

This first-floor room is the grandest in the house, and considered one of the finest created in the years following Robert Adam's death.

The doorway nearest the fireplace once gave access via double doors to a secondary drawing room (now the Cabinet Room). In the 1920s it was blocked and replaced with a false door.

The ceiling was repaired in the 1980s but retains its 1790s style, incorporating neoclassical ornamentation within a geometric design. This is in keeping with Robert Adam's work, though the interior decoration began after his death.

The matching friezes above the doors were added by the 4th Marquess of Bute in the 1920s.

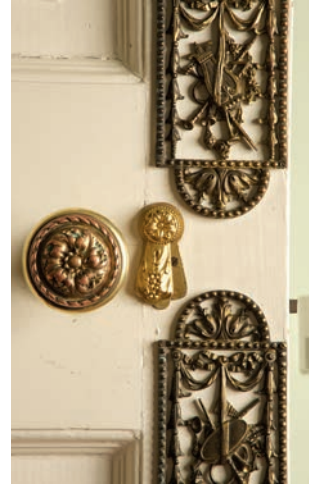
So too was the the white marble fireplace. Its central panel depicts Venus and Cupid, both carried by dolphins.

Above the fireplace hangs a gilt mirror in the rococo style, highly fashionable in the 1700s. It features acanthus leaves and ho-ho birds, both popular motifs of rococo design.

The mirror was brought here from the drawing room at No.5. It had originally been supplied by the London cabinet-maker John Mackie for the drawing room at Duff House in Banff, designed by Robert Adam's father William.



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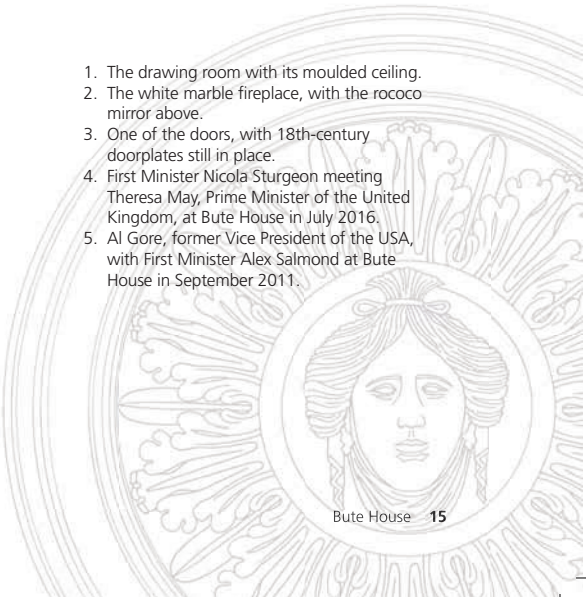
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In recent years, this room has been used to welcome many important visitors, and to hold meetings, press conferences and other events.



5

1. The drawing room with its moulded ceiling.
2. The white marble fireplace, with the rococo mirror above.
3. One of the doors, with 18th-century doorplates still in place.
4. First Minister Nicola Sturgeon meeting Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, at Bute House in July 2016.
5. Al Gore, former Vice President of the USA, with First Minister Alex Salmond at Bute House in September 2011.



# Key Works of Art

## *Cabinet Room: Women artists*



### **Playa de San Cristóbal**

*Painting by Anne Redpath, on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland*

This dramatic seaside composition was produced after the artist visited Tenerife in 1959. Its intense palette was suggested by the bright sunshine and otherworldly volcanic landscape typical of the Canary Islands. ‘The sands were black as if they were made of cinders,’ she commented. ‘Purples, browns and black.’

Born in Galashiels, Anne Redpath (1895–1965) studied at Edinburgh College of Art during the First World War, but then focused on raising her children in France. On returning to the Borders in the mid-1930s, she took up painting in earnest, inspired by Post-Impressionists including Gauguin and Van Gogh. She was awarded an OBE in 1955. By the time she produced this painting, Redpath had adopted a free handling of paint influenced by Abstract Expressionism.

### **Glacier Chasm**

*Painting by Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland*

This painting is one of a series produced by the artist in 1951, following a spell in Switzerland, where she was profoundly inspired by walking in the Grindelwald glaciers. ‘The likeness to glass and transparency, combined with solid rough ridges, made me wish to combine in a work all angles at once, from above, through, and all round, as a bird flies, a total experience,’ she explained. Throughout her career, the artist’s work was poised between the representational and the abstract, often with landscape as a starting point.

Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912–2004) was born in St Andrews and trained at Edinburgh College of Art. In 1940, she moved to St Ives, Cornwall, where she came into contact with an influential circle of modernist artists, and spent most of her working life, though she travelled extensively on mainland Europe. She became one of Britain’s most admired abstract artists.





# Key Works of Art

## *Dining Room: Music and conviviality*

### **Niel and Donald Gow**

*Portrait by David Allan, on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland*

The fiddler Niel Gow (1727–1807) was among Scotland's most celebrated musicians. Born in Perthshire, he showed early musical talent but trained as a weaver. Of the many tunes Gow composed, at least one was adopted by Burns, who wrote of Gow's 'interesting face, marking strong sense, kind open-heartedness mixed with unmistrusting simplicity'. These qualities are conveyed in this portrait of Gow with his cellist brother Donald.

Alloa-born David Allan (1744–96) was among Scotland's most prominent artists in the late 1700s, when this portrait was painted. After studying in Glasgow, he lived in Rome and London before settling in Edinburgh, where he became director of the Academy of Arts in 1786.



### **Marjory Kennedy-Fraser**

*Portrait by John Duncan, on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland*

The singer, musician and song collector Marjory Kennedy-Fraser (1857–1930) was born in Perth and from an early age performed as a pianist with her singer father David Kennedy as the Singing Kennedys. As an adult, she learned Gaelic and drew inspiration from the folk songs of the Hebrides, many of which she recorded and helped to preserve. She found great success, publishing song collections, and singing and lecturing in London and the USA. This vivid portrait depicts her on the Isle of Eriskay, which she visited with the artist in 1905.

John Duncan (1866–1945) was born in Dundee and became a successful portrait painter with a keen interest in mythical subjects. His involvement in the Celtic Revival movement led to a close friendship with Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, and he helped foster her enthusiasm for Gaelic song.

# Key Works of Art

## *Drawing Room: Prominent Scots*

### **Robert Burns**

*Portrait by Alexander Nasmyth, on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland*

Widely considered Scotland's greatest poet, Robert Burns (1759–96) was feted in Enlightenment circles, and spent much time in Edinburgh in 1786–88.

During this period, he experimented with classical forms, but also wrote 'Address to a Haggis', a boisterous and well-loved work in Scots. His ballad 'Bonnie Jean' (1793) was written for Jean McMurdo of Drumlanrig, who later lived at No.6 Charlotte Square.

Edinburgh-born Nasmyth (1758–1840) was a leading artist of his era. He became a close friend of Burns, of whom he made several portraits. This one was painted in 1828, 32 years after Burns's death: Nasmyth had supposedly conceived the pose during a walk with his subject. The background includes the Brig o' Doon at Alloway, the poet's birthplace. The bridge features in his great poem *Tam o' Shanter*.



### **Winnie Ewing**

*Portrait by Norman Edgar, on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland*

Winifred Margaret Ewing (b.1929) was born and studied in Glasgow, where she became a lawyer. In 1967 she stood as the Scottish National Party (SNP) candidate in the Hamilton by-election, winning the seat. She served as an MP for much of the 1970s, becoming an MEP in 1979 and an MSP in 1999. As the oldest member of the Scottish Parliament she presided at its first session. She served as president of the SNP, 1987–2005. This painting emphasises her forthright personality, which made her a prominent and respected figure throughout her long career in politics.

Norman Edgar (b.1948) was born in Paisley and studied at Glasgow School of Art, where he later became a teacher, leaving to paint full-time in 1990. He is known for boldly coloured portraits, seascapes and still lifes. In 1993 he became president of the Glasgow Art Club.



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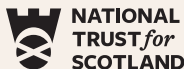
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