

Press Release for immediate use

Thursday 24th May

KEY APPOINTMENTS MADE TO THREE “DREAM JOBS” IN SCOTCH WHISKY

Appointments to three of the most coveted jobs in the Scotch whisky industry have been announced today (Wednesday 23rd May) by Scotland’s leading distilling company, Diageo.

The company has appointed the lead roles for the investment project to bring the iconic Port Ellen and Brora distilleries back to life, and a new manager for the famous Lagavulin Distillery on Islay.

Georgie Crawford, one of the most respected distillery managers in the industry with seven years’ experience of running the Lagavulin Distillery, will move to be Project Implementation Manager, responsible for bringing Port Ellen Distillery back into production 35 years after it closed.

The equivalent job leading the revival of the Brora Distillery in Sutherland has been secured by Brora native Stewart Bowman, who moves from the management team at Clynelish Distillery to take on the role.

The Lagavulin Distillery Manager role will be taken over by Colin Gordon, who will move from his previous job managing Diageo’s Port Ellen Maltings on Islay, where the peated malt barley is made for Lagavulin and Caol Ila Distilleries.

The company announced last year that Port Ellen and Brora – the two most famous lost distilleries in Scotland, which have been silent since they were closed in 1983 – would be brought back into production through a £35 million investment.

Announcing the Port Ellen and Brora appointments, Diageo’s Distillation & Maturation Director, Keith Miller said: “Bringing Port Ellen and Brora distilleries back into production are dream jobs for any whisky-maker and I’m delighted to appoint Georgie and Stewart to these key leadership roles.

“They both have the experience and knowledge of their craft that we need to bring these distilleries back with meticulous care and attention to detail. I’m also pleased that they are both from the local communities where the distilleries are located and they bring a great understanding of the heritage and roots of these distilleries.

On the appointment of the new Lagavulin Distillery Manager, he said: “Running Lagavulin Distillery is one of the most highly prized jobs in Scotch whisky and I am delighted to appoint Colin Gordon to the role. Colin is one of our most promising young whisky-makers and he has built up terrific experience and skill in his time with Diageo. I know he will do a great job leading the team at Lagavulin.”

Georgie Crawford said: “It has been a real privilege to be the Lagavulin Distillery Manager and to work with the fantastic team there for so many years. However, the opportunity to bring Port Ellen Distillery back into production truly is a once in a lifetime opportunity and I am thrilled to take it on.”

Stewart Bowman said: “I am hugely excited by the challenge of bringing Brora Distillery back to life. The whisky from Brora is revered for its quality and it is an honour to have the job of bring distillation back so we can produce a new generation of exceptional Brora Scotch whisky.”

Colin Gordon said: “Lagavulin is one of the most admired and respected distilleries in Scotch whisky and it’s an honour to be trusted with this job. The team at the distillery is one of the most skilled in the industry and I look forward enormously to making whisky with them.”

Georgie will officially handover the reins at Lagavulin Distillery after the annual Feis Ile festival, which begins this Friday.

Stewart Bowman begins his role at Brora in June and will lead a local community engagement day, which will be held in the Brora on 5th June at the Scout & Guide Hall from 3pm to 7pm.

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Notes to editors:

The site of Port Ellen distillery is on the island of Islay, adjacent to Diageo’s Port Ellen Maltings and a few miles from Lagavulin Distillery. Brora is situated in the village of that name on Scotland’s north east coast, adjacent to Diageo’s Clynelish Distillery.

From the start of this millennium, limited-edition bottlings of Brora and Port Ellen have been released annually from Diageo’s rare, original stocks, and continue to be highly sought after by enthusiasts, connoisseurs and collectors.

About Diageo

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands across spirits, beer and wine categories. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, J&B, Buchanan’s, and Windsor whiskies, Smirnoff, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Captain Morgan, Baileys, Don Julio, Tanqueray and Guinness.

Diageo is a global company, and products are sold in more than 180 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the London Stock Exchange (DGE) and the New York Stock Exchange (DEO). For more information about Diageo, our people, our brands, and performance, visit us at www.diageo.com. Visit Diageo’s global responsible drinking resource, www.DRINKiQ.com, for information, initiatives, and ways to share best practice.

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About Diageo in Scotland

- Scotland is one of Diageo’s largest spirit supply centres responsible for producing nearly 50 million cases of leading brands of Scotch whisky and white spirits and over four million cases of Ready To Drink brands annually.

- Around 85% of Diageo's production in Scotland is sold overseas.
- Diageo in Scotland currently employs around 3,500 people.
- Diageo currently operates 28 malt distilleries and one grain distillery and has a 50 per cent share in a further grain distillery.
- As well as engineering and technical support functions, there are extensive warehousing and packaging operations in Scotland and the company's Scottish headquarters are in Edinburgh.