

New life for St Peter's Seminary

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NVA's Hinterland at the St Peter's Seminary Alan McAteer

HLF has helped mark Scotland's Year of Architecture, Innovation and Design with a £4.2million grant for what is regarded as one of Europe's greatest modernist buildings.

The funding will help breathe new life into the derelict St Peter's Seminary transforming it, and the estate surrounding it, into a truly unique arts venue and heritage destination.

St Peter's, which is currently the centrepiece of a sell-out sound and light installation marking the launch of the Festival of Architecture, originally opened as a training centre for young priests in 1966 - its ground-breaking design by Isi Metzstein and Andy McMillan of Gillespie, Kidd and Coia. It closed in 1987 and has lay abandoned since with the effects of weather and vandalism contributing to it now being a ruin.

[quote=Lucy Casot, Head of HLF Scotland]"Its transformed estate will become a natural haven for the local community to explore, enjoy and be proud of."[/quote]

The HLF grant will see key elements of the building restored allowing the public safe access to events of all sizes. The triple-height chapel will be partially restored and converted into a 350-seater venue while the former sacristy and crypt will be a focal point for exhibitions.

The transformation will include the 140-acre rural estate surrounding the architectural masterpiece – an estate which includes the remains of the 15th-century Kilmahew Castle. A path network based on the original 19th-century designed landscape will be reinstated, historic bridges restored and the Victorian walled garden brought back into use. The rejuvenated estate will encourage new audiences to visit and it is expected that over 200 people will become involved as volunteers.

Lucy Casot, Head of HLF Scotland, said: “After 25 years of decline, this ground-breaking project has the potential to save an internationally significant building, exploiting it’s commanding presence to produce an exceptional arts venue. Its appeal will attract new audiences from near and far. Its transformed estate will become a natural haven for the local community to explore, enjoy and be proud of.

“We are delighted that, thanks to players of the National Lottery, we can help mark the launch of Scotland’s Festival of Architecture by funding St Peter’s Seminary. Highly regarded across the world, it’s a unique record of its time which is in very real danger of being lost.”

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[**£4.2m funding to save St Peter’s Seminary**](#)