

**17<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**Agenda Item [*for office use*]**

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**Kilmahew/St Peter's Update**

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**Summary**

This report a) highlights the contribution that NVA's internationally significant Kilmahew/St Peter's project in Cardross makes to outcome one 'the economy is diverse and thriving'. It does this through the development of a major cultural and heritage destination which provides opportunities for visitors, residents, businesses and volunteers, and brings significant funding into the area for its development. This was demonstrated at the recent Hinterland event which ran over ten days and attracted over 8,000 people to the area. The report also b) invites a discussion around how NVA can work with the CPP to maximise benefits.

**1. Purpose**

1.1 This report provides an overview of the Kilmahew/St Peter's project in Cardross as requested by community planning partners at their recent meeting. It provides background to the presentation which will be delivered by NVA at the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members of the CPP note the contents of this report and formalise the mechanisms through which NVA can work with the Community Planning Partnership to maximise the benefits to the community of the development of Kilmahew / St Peter's.

**3. Background**

3.1 The Kilmahew/St Peter's site is a disused Roman Catholic seminary near Cardross. The seminary was designed by the firm of Gillespie, Kidd and Coia and has been described by the international architecture conservation organisation, DOCOMOMO, as a modern "building of world significance". The building is one of only 42 post-war buildings in Scotland to be listed at Category A, the highest level of protection for a building of "special architectural or historic interest". It has been abandoned since the end of the 1980s, and is currently in a ruinous and dangerous state and without urgent

intervention the seminary building will need to be demolished. NVA plan to bring the site back into use and create a new cultural and heritage asset in Argyll & Bute that contains enormous potential to act as a catalyst for economic development across the region. Recent CNN and BBC Scotland coverage of the site are examples of the level of publicity and importance attached to the building.

**3.2** NVA is a registered charity with a proven track record as a cultural producer. Information on their work can be found on their website [www.nva.org.uk](http://www.nva.org.uk)

#### **4. Detail**

**4.1** The aim of the proposed project is for the regeneration of the building and surrounding grounds including an extensive woodland which will:

- bring major capital investment to the region > £7.5m
- save an iconic Category A listed building for the nation
- preserve and conserve the natural environment across the 140 acre estate and improve biodiversity
- remove significant public health risks and other dangers from the site and enable public access
- increase learning and skills training opportunities for local people
- improve community cohesion through access to an annual cultural programme.

**4.2** Specific benefits arising from the project include;

- 9 FTE jobs created directly in the management of the new resource
- 40 jobs during the 18 month construction phase including opportunities for apprenticeships
- 40 temporary jobs created annually through event based programmes
- 10 traineeships each year targeted in areas of high deprivation (partnership with Argyll Training)
- Projected annual turnover £500k
- Increased visitor numbers boosting local business - current projections are around 25,000 each year
- Contribute to a robust tourism sector with an extended season, higher value proposition and increased turnover (Winter Lights Festivals/ Co-productions NTS / International Book Festival etc.)
- Supporting existing local business and create opportunities for new social enterprises across the site (catering/woodland craft/horticultural training/outdoor

nursery)

- Increase profile through international media coverage attracting new audiences to KSP and other attractions across Argyll & Bute.
- Extensive volunteering programme, engaging local people in a range of activities linked to the operation and management of the buildings, woodlands and special events.

**4.3** Partnership working is a key element of the project and NVA have been working with local partners and projects to develop the site and its potential economic impact on the area. The most recent example of this is Hinterland, which achieved worldwide publicity and sold all tickets, attracting at least 8,000 people to the area over a period of 10 days in March and offering 82 volunteering opportunities. NVA worked with Argyll and Bute Council, local business, tourism development agencies, third sector and communities to promote local business and activities to both resident and people across the UK and internationally.

**4.4** The project has commenced its delivery phase with all funding being in place and the timeline is as follows;

- May 2016 - Recruitment of key staff
- June to November 2016 - Stage E–F Design
- November 2016 to January 2017 - Tendering and appointment of contractor
- February 2017 - Site start
- September 2018 - Project completion
- October 2018 - Soft launch

## **5. Conclusions**

The re-development of Kilmahew/St Peter's site is a significant project with the potential to bring tangible economic and cultural benefits to the area. Partnership working is a key element of this to ensure that the benefits can be maximised. The delivery of Hinterland has enabled NVA to successfully demonstrate its commitment to partnership working and to delivering benefits to individuals and communities. The public response to Hinterland further demonstrates the interest in the site's development in the longer term, and the worldwide media exposure that Hinterland has brought to Helensburgh and Lomond provides a solid foundation for NVA and other tourism partners in the region to build upon in future partnership initiatives.

## **6.0 SOA Outcomes**

This project relates to four outcomes but in particular to SOA outcome one – the economy is diverse and thriving as described below;

1.6.2	Create partnership structures with the capacity and desire to develop the culture and heritage sector to maximise the unique opportunities provided by the unique culture and heritage of the area.
1.6.3	Support the delivery of high quality tourism experiences across Argyll and Bute

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