

St. Sophia's, Galston – Major Restoration of Historic Church



The church dominates Galston

Repair techniques, both old and new, have role to play in major restoration of listed church building.

Client	Diocese of Galloway
Principal Contractor	Balvac
Duration	14 months
Completion	March 2004
Value	£ 1.2 m



The roofs were strengthened and re-tiled

St. Sophia's Church, situated in Galston near Kilmarnock, was built in 1860 by the 3rd Marquis of Bute. The design of the church was inspired by the magnificent St. Sophia's Basilica in Istanbul, Turkey. The deteriorating condition of the building became evident when a piece of concrete fell from the roof during a service, narrowly missing the priest. The church was closed for five years until funding for the restoration was secured from the National Lottery, Historic Scotland and the congregation



Lime plaster was chosen for authenticity

Internally the vaulted roofs, an early example of reinforced concrete, were strengthened using the Helibar system, then the original reinforcing bars protected from further corrosion using sacrificial anodes. The majority of the plasterwork had failed, this was removed and replaced with traditional lime plaster, chosen for its durability and to be in keeping with the original. The plaster, after an extensive curing period, was coated with a compatible lime based paint.



Heating renewed / windows refurbished

The old boiler and central heating was replaced, the new heating system features automated windows that will open when humidity levels rise too high, safeguarding the plaster.

Externally the 30 metre high dome and other roof areas were renewed with 1000s of individually cut roof tiles. Brickwork repairs were also carried out where the original had perished or been damaged. All the new tiles and bricks were faithful copies of the originals in terms of style, colour and texture.



Brickwork repaired / drainage renovated

The leaded windows were renovated, the original glass panels were cleaned and re-fixed in new leading. As a finishing touch the ornate metal guttering and drainage was carefully removed, refurbished off-site, coated with a high quality and durable paint system then re-fixed in position

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