# Inside Rothesay Academy: haunting decay of a Scottish school set for demolition



Unsettling photographs of an abandoned Scottish high school on the Isle of Bute have recently gained attention online, illustrating the haunting beauty of decay at the former Rothesay Academy. This once-vibrant educational institution, located in Rothesay, has stood empty since relocating to a new campus in 2007, and its gradual decline is both stark and poignant.

Urban explorer Natasha McCallum, who runs the blog "Exploring with Natasha," shared these striking images that reveal how nature has begun to reclaim the building. Walls are now festooned with mould and creeping greenery, while shattered windows allow the elements to infiltrate classrooms filled with remnants of the past. In her exploration, McCallum remarked on the "amazing" sight of intact science rooms, adorned with old wooden desks, characterised by a "beautiful" decay. Speaking to the Daily Record, McCallum recalled her experience: "It was pretty amazing exploring the school and getting to see inside before it gets demolished... the views from the top classroom windows looking over Rothesay I will never forget," she said.

Rothesay Academy, a modernist architectural statement designed by D. Harvey and A. Scott, opened its doors in 1959, replacing a Gothic Revival structure destroyed by fire five years earlier. Despite its cultural and architectural significance, the building has faced a fate common to many historical sites in Scotland. With its closure in 2007, efforts to preserve or repurpose the academy have largely failed, and it has increasingly become a target for vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The condition of the building has deteriorated to such an extent that Argyll and Bute Council recently received consent for its demolition, as plans are now underway to develop a housing project on the site. This decision raises questions about the balance between urban development and heritage preservation.

Local responses to McCallum's photographs have been positive, with many social media users praising her for capturing the essence of the decay rather than focusing on vandalism. This sentiment reflects a broader appreciation of how time and nature can contribute to a building's character, transforming neglect into a form of visual storytelling that resonates with many.

As the former Rothesay Academy awaits its fate, it stands as a poignant reminder of the passage of time and the histories held within its walls. The images captured by McCallum offer a window into a world long gone—a world where students once filled its halls, a world now left to silence and decay. While the impending demolition may signal the end of this chapter, the memories and stories of Rothesay Academy are intricately woven into the fabric of the Isle of Bute, ensuring it will not be forgotten easily.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/gallery/inside-creepy-abandoned-scottish-high-35294462), [[4]](https://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/articles/consent-granted-to-demolish-former-rothesay-academy)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/gallery/inside-creepy-abandoned-scottish-high-35294462), [[2]](https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/weird-news/inside-creepy-abandoned-high-school-24642797), [[3]](https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/details/915160), [[5]](https://www.helensburghadvertiser.co.uk/news/24552681.former-rothesay-academy-building-set-demolition/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://thelochsidepress.com/2017/05/31/heritage-rotting-away-the-councils-historic-buildings/), [[7]](https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/3570929)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/gallery/inside-creepy-abandoned-scottish-high-35294462> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/weird-news/inside-creepy-abandoned-high-school-24642797> - An urban explorer documented the eerie state of Rothesay Academy on the Isle of Bute, Scotland, which has been abandoned since 2007. The building, constructed in 1959, now exhibits significant decay, with classrooms displaying students' work amidst deteriorating conditions. The explorer noted the haunting beauty of the decay and the intactness of science rooms with old wooden desks, highlighting the school's historical significance before its impending demolition.
3. <https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/details/915160> - Rothesay Academy, built between 1956 and 1959, is a modernist-style school located on the Isle of Bute. Designed by architects D. Harvey and A. Scott, the building replaced a Gothic Revival school that was destroyed by fire in 1954. Despite its architectural interest, the building has been disused since 2007, with its condition deteriorating significantly over the years.
4. <https://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/articles/consent-granted-to-demolish-former-rothesay-academy> - Argyll and Bute Council has received consent to demolish the former Rothesay Academy, a B-listed building that has been vacant since 2007. Efforts to redevelop or sell the property have been unsuccessful, and the building has become a target for vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The council plans to develop a new housing project on the site to regenerate the area and address housing needs.
5. <https://www.helensburghadvertiser.co.uk/news/24552681.former-rothesay-academy-building-set-demolition/> - The former Rothesay Academy building, which has been empty since 2007, is set for demolition after Argyll and Bute Council's application for listed building consent was approved. The building has suffered from significant deterioration and has become a focus for vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The council intends to redevelop the site for housing to revitalise the area.
6. <https://thelochsidepress.com/2017/05/31/heritage-rotting-away-the-councils-historic-buildings/> - The article discusses the deteriorating condition of historic buildings in Argyll and Bute, including the former Rothesay Academy. Despite being a 'very fine modernist building,' the academy has been disused since 2007, with its condition worsening over time. The article highlights the challenges faced by the council in preserving these historic structures.
7. <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/3570929> - A photograph of the former Rothesay Academy, taken in 2013, showcases the building's deteriorating state. The image captures the abandoned structure, highlighting the decay and overgrowth that have taken over since the school's closure in 2007. The photograph serves as a visual testament to the building's decline over the years.