Welcome

The Church Commissioners are delighted to welcome you to this public exhibition which showcases our plans for a new Library building at Lambeth Palace.

We hope that the new library will become a landmark public building in Lambeth and will increase the accessibility of this world class collection, one of the first public libraries in England.

This exhibition is your chance to view our plans which have been developed over many months in consultation with local planners and Historic England.

Before we submit a detailed planning application to Lambeth Council, we want to hear your views about this important new building.

Members of the development team are on hand to discuss the plans with you and answer any questions you may have.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would take a moment to share your thoughts on our plans using one of our feedback forms or by visiting our website.

www.newlambethpalacelibrary.co.uk
The design team for this important and prominent new public building were chosen following a design competition which involved some of the leading architectural practices working today.

A panel of judges, including the leading architecture critic Rowan Moore, were delighted to award the design brief for the building to Wright & Wright Architects, who have exceptional experience of delivering sensitive buildings in a historic setting. They are supported by leading engineers Max Fordham and Price and Myers, cost consultant Fanshawe LLP, and Stuart A. Johnson Consulting Ltd.

Wright & Wright Architects was founded in 1994 by Sandy and Clare Wright. The Practice has been chosen to design buildings for organisations as distinguished as RIBA, the Architectural Association and the Royal College of Art. Although experienced in a range of sectors, they have particular expertise in Archives and Libraries.

Dan Pearson Studio - Established in 1987 by Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medal winning landscape designer Dan Pearson. They have collaborated with architects on a wide range of projects to deliver public parks, civic landscapes and large rural estates.
Lambeth Palace Library contains an unrivalled collection of precious books and manuscripts that have contributed to the ecclesiastical and cultural life of the Church and the nation for centuries.

The collection has been housed at Lambeth Palace since 1610 when Archbishop Bancroft bequeathed his private collection of books and manuscripts as a public library, one of the first in England.

For some years, the Church Commissioners have been exploring possible solutions to the challenge of preserving the collection for future generations and have produced a scheme to re-house it in a new purpose-built Library within the palace grounds, keeping the collections on the site that they have been on since the library was founded.
The Buildings

The Grade I listed Palace boasts exemplary architecture from the Tudor period with later additions from the 1600s and 1800s. Much of the vast library is currently housed across 20 different rooms in the medieval buildings of the Palace – the Great Hall and Morton’s Tower – as well as a warehouse in Bermondsey.

As the library continues to grow, the Palace can no longer properly protect the collection’s fragile artefacts from modern air pollutants. The Grade I Listed buildings of the Palace cannot be further adapted to meet the current standards for libraries and archives without damaging them. Many of the buildings have already suffered minor structural damage as a result of having to store such a large and valuable collection.

The decision to re-house the collection in a new purpose built library within the grounds of Lambeth Palace, not only ensures the future of these historical records, but also preserves and enhances the symbolic physical link between Church and State, as it stands directly across the River Thames, affording views of both the Palace of Westminster and Lambeth Palace.
The Site: 1000 Years of History

Situated on the south bank of the River Thames opposite the Palace of Westminster, Lambeth Palace has been the London residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury since the 13th Century – playing a central role in the relationship between Church and State.

The oldest part of the building is the late 12th Century Crypt Chapel and over the centuries the buildings and gardens have been added to, damaged and modernised resulting in what we see today.

The site, which is bounded by Lambeth Palace Road to the west and Lambeth Road to the south, has seen no significant additions for around 180 years, whereas the gardens were significantly redesigned during the 1980s under the guidance of the wife of the then Archbishop, Mrs Runcie.

The new library and archive marks the next step of the development of the rich tapestry of the palace’s history.
The Proposals: Delivering a New Library and Archive

The Church Commissioners propose to build a new library and archive at the northern end of Lambeth Palace Gardens.

Directly across the road from the site are the tall buildings of St Thomas’s Hospital, including the prominent Evelina Children’s Hospital which currently overlooks the Palace gardens.

Carefully located on the edge of the gardens so as to minimise disruption to the existing landscape, the building is intended to form a protective barrier between the busy street and the Archbishop’s garden, a rare haven of peace and tranquility within central London.

The new library is physically linked to Lambeth Palace by the historic boundary wall, emerging both physically and symbolically out of the collection of existing buildings.

Much of the building is only single storey but gradually rises to be crowned by a small 8-storey tower, mirroring those of the Palace and establishing the building as a contemporary landmark on the South Bank.
The Proposals: Inside the Library

There are many technical challenges to creating a library building capable of protecting the delicate contents of the archives from changing humidity, air pollution and flood risk. From the outset however we have sought to create a building that places paramount importance on the quality of materials and architecture, reflecting the grandeur and status of the library collection.

The building will provide space for future growth of the collection, including modern reading room facilities, conservation studio, staff workplaces and display space. The building will also including a viewing platform for visitors.

The 8-storey tower element of the building enables us to elevate the entire collection above the level of flood risk as well as avoiding the need to dig down for a basement.
During the late 1980s, Rosalind Runcie, the wife of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, implemented a successful plan of planting and restoration following decades of neglect after heavy bombing during WW2. Those changes created the garden we see today and made the grounds significantly more accessible. However they did result in the downgrading of the Listed status of the gardens with the removal of much of the historic layout and the creation of a new pond.

The brief to our landscape architects, Dan Pearson Studio, was to create a design which builds on the garden’s history and introduces religiously symbolic planting.

The footprint of the library building has been kept to the absolute minimum with much of it pulled back to the boundary wall. This allows us to enlarge the existing pond and to introduce new planting, particularly of mature trees which help soften the outline of the building and create a sense of peace and seclusion.
Sustainability

Commissioning the new library on such a sensitive site presents a great opportunity to create a building of exemplary green standards, both in its construction and future operation.

The sustainability strategy has considered environmental, economic, social and cultural issues. Some of the features incorporated include:

- Targeting BREEAM Excellent certification
- Targeting an exemplary ‘Considerate Constructors’ score of 40 or higher;
- Early consideration of building management and aftercare support to ensure that it is energy efficient
- Targeting a large reduction (at least 25%) of energy and carbon emissions with the use of heat pumps and solar photovoltaic panels on the roof, as well as primarily passive control of the archives themselves
- Well connected site designed to support walking and cycling, and sited near several amenities and public transport links, it will add no new parking (except blue badge parking)
- Reducing water use by at least 25% by using water efficient toilets, hand basins etc
- Building materials will be responsibly sourced
- The brick façade results in less environmental impact over the building’s lifetime. The green guide usually rates brick façades on framing systems as A+
- The ecology of the site will be either protected, transplanted or enhanced through new landscaping
- The pond will harvest the run-off water from the rooftops. The pond will act to attenuate and filter water through planting within the pond, before it enters the public drainage system at a slower rate
- The building is designed to cope with future climate conditions

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Although there are no endangered species on the site, the garden is home to a wide variety of plants, birds and insects which are greatly valued and nurtured by the garden staff. Our development plans include careful ecological surveying of species in the garden, as well as plans to retain the much loved beehives on the site.

As part of the ongoing management strategy of the garden, plans had already been made for the removal of a small number of mature chestnut trees which have unfortunately become irreparably damaged by Bleeding Canker.

Those trees will now be removed during the construction of the library, allowing us to implement a planned programme of long-term tree management.

Wherever possible, any trees removed will be recycled, with timber used to create furniture and sculpture for the Palace as well as being used as compost and wood chippings for the gardens.

As part of the technical studies preceding the building of the library, Museum of London archaeologists will be conducting further digs on the area proposed for development. This will allow the contents of the site to be properly recorded and catalogued before construction begins.
Key Benefits

We hope that this new library will do more than simply create a building to protect and preserve our books and archives.

As well as preserving one of this nation’s greatest collections of historic books and archives the new library building will allow us to fully realise the aspirations of Archbishop Bancroft in 1610 to create a truly accessible public library.

Our aspiration is that the new building will become a destination in itself, sitting at the most westerly end of the South Bank, alongside the Garden Museum, as part of Lambeth’s wider cultural offering.

By removing the library from its current inappropriate home in the historic Lambeth Palace buildings, it will allow us not only to repair the damage done to those buildings but also to open them up to much greater public use in future.

The space created in the existing Palace buildings, as well as in the new library, will also allow greater freedom for the Church to generate commercial income by hosting events, helping to support the continuing maintenance and development of the site.

We also hope that the library will help allow greater access to the site through the provision of a new viewing platform that will be regularly open to the public.

Most importantly the library will finally give us the facilities to engage with a far wider audience than we are able to now; making the collections more accessible than ever before, while protecting and preserving it for future generations.
Next Steps

Thank you for visiting. We would greatly appreciate it if you could take a short time to complete a feedback form before you leave.

You can also complete the feedback form online at our website or take a form away with you.

At present we hope to submit a detailed planning application to Lambeth Council at the beginning of 2017.

The Church Commissioners and all of our advisers are committed to working with the local community and will continue to keep the community up to date on our plans.

Timeline

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<td>2016</td>
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<td>Early 2017</td>
<td>Planning application</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-2020</td>
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Contact us:
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