



## PUTTING ENVIRONMENTAL THINKING AT THE HEART OF REFURBISHMENT

Lambeth Palace is a historic venue that's pioneering how ancient buildings can be reimagined to help create a greener neighbourhood for everyone.

### Introduction

Built over 800 years ago, Lambeth Palace is the official London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Located on the south bank of the Thames, the palace embodies the rich and varied history of the area, providing a focus for the spiritual life and wellbeing of its community through the centuries.



SUPPORTED BY  
MAYOR OF LONDON

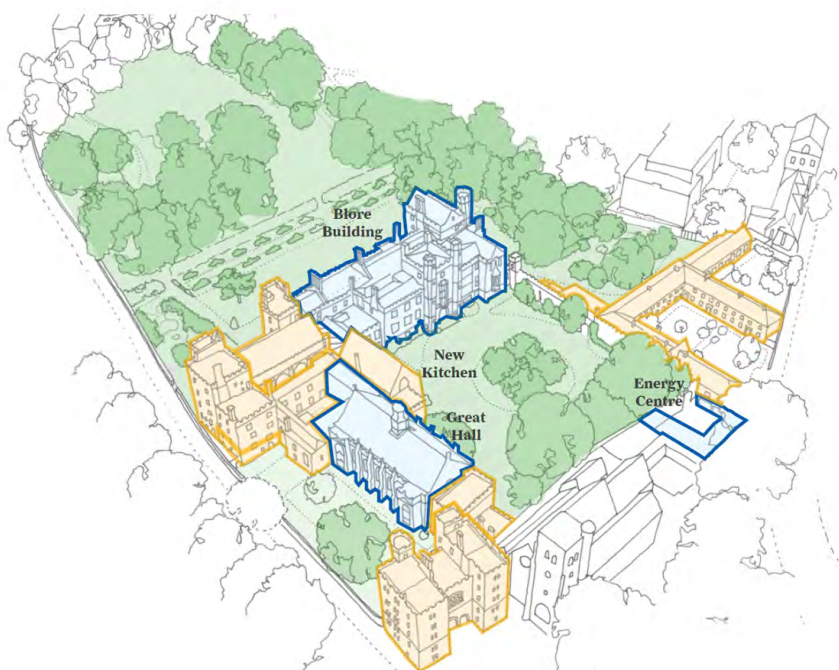


## The challenge

### Older buildings often present big challenges when it comes to energy efficiency

Common issues include limited insulation, outdated heating systems and poor temperature regulation. All this wasted energy typically leads to a greater reliance on the types of fuel that contribute to climate change. Addressing the problem of how to futureproof such buildings is crucial to the Church of England to help them save on cost, energy consumption and reduce negative environmental impacts.

When approaching the refurbishment of Lambeth Palace, this meant finding a range of practical solutions to ensure the site works in greater harmony with its environment for years to come.



## The approach

**The desire to meet long-term environmental sustainability goals drove much of the early thinking around the project.**

The idea was to ensure that the palace would be at the heart of a thriving, healthier and greener neighbourhood. This clarity allowed architects Wright & Wright to focus on innovation and finding creative ways to put these principles in action, including:

### **A new Energy Centre**

Supported by modern heating technology, which will replace their old gas boilers with heat pumps which can use renewable electricity, allowing the main palace building to eliminate its current reliance on gas, a fossil fuel that contributes to accelerating climate change.

### **A 'fabric first' approach**

Special attention is paid to the materials being used as part of the refurbishment such as the insulation, to ensure the building can be heated and cooled as efficiently as possible, leading to an overall reduction of carbon emissions. This bold approach also allowed for improvements to accessibility, including a new wheelchair-friendly entranceway to the building.

## The approach (cont.)

### **A new Library and Archive**

With state-of-the-art storage, was opened in 2021. Solar panels installed on the roof provide half the building's power, while rainwater is channelled into a new pond in the archbishop's garden, which also includes a collection of beehives, all part of an effort to improve the natural habitat for local wildlife on the site.



## Key learnings

When it comes to refurbishing older properties so that they are sustainable long into the future, Lambeth Palace shows how important it is to find a designer that works in a way sympathetic to the existing space, while at the same time pushing the practical and creative possibilities of how to reduce negative environmental impacts.

It is important to interrogate the designs at every stage, always keeping the original goals in mind. Careful attention paid to the fabric of the building, for instance, not only improves the overall energy efficiency of a building but can also lessen the need for maintenance over time, and thus prove more cost effective over the long term.

While drawing on new innovations in renewable technology can lessen the reliance on fossil fuels and help reduce emissions considerably.

## Find out more

Visit the [Wright & Wright](#) website to find out more about the innovative refurbishment of Lambeth Palace.

Follow the palace on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) to get the latest progress on the work and for updates on when bookings to visit in 2025 reopen.

Read more [here](#) about South Bank and Waterloo's action plan for a fairer, greener neighbourhood.

