Case studies of extended use in 3 historic London churches
Implemented / On site / In planning

Extended use of church buildings provides public space, attracts and serves the wider community, opens up different funding streams and provides long-term income to cover running and maintenance costs. With appropriate uses, congregations grow, providing a further safeguard for religious heritage.

1 Implemented

St Paul’s Old Ford, London E3

Completed 2004

Grade II Listed Victorian church, rehabilitated to include cafe, community hall, full-access gymnasium, art gallery, office, meeting and project rooms whilst retaining the worship space. The central feature is the Ark, a building within a building, with a four-storey steel frame supported on curving steel columns, it stands in a space away from the windows, and the wood is so blonde there is no loss of light or spaciousness, despite the vast size of the structure. The Ark in effect adds two new floors. There are also two rooms in the tower, the gym is in the attic, and there is a lift to all floors. Achieved within a tight budget, the project has garnered international acclaim.

Project funded by grant aid.

“I was a choir boy at St Paul’s Church 50 years ago. I loved the building and was truly surprised to see what has become of it. God Bless and many thanks to all those people who worked so hard to save this wonderful building.”

Peter Strong

“This is the future of the church”

Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

2 On site

St David’s Holloway, London N4

To complete 2013

Currently on site, this locally listed church building will include space for events, local projects, and community activities (in addition to worship space). Partner organisations from the charitable and voluntary sectors will share parts of the new premises, serving prisoners and their families, excluded youth, and other marginalised people.

Project funded through sale of another church.

3 In Planning

St Mary of Eton, London E9

To complete 2014

The refurnishment of a Grade II* listed church to include a community centre (as well as worship space) within the church building and a cafe in an adjacent former garage, set in newly landscaped gardens.

Project funded through enabling housing development on the same church site.