



Lambeth Palace Library is the historic library and record office of the Archbishops of Canterbury and the main archive for the documentary history of the Church of England.

Founded in 1610 by the will of Archbishop Bancroft, its collections have been freely available for research ever since, making it one of the oldest public libraries in England. Lambeth Palace Library holds collections of outstanding national and international importance, with manuscripts, books and archives dating from the 9th century to the present day.

The new building, completed in 2020, houses more than 20km of books, manuscripts and archives, over 6 floors, in controlled environmental conditions.

The new Library combines the collections of Lambeth Palace Library and the Church of England Record Centre to create a single national library and archive for the Church of England, telling the story of the involvement of the church across the country in towns, villages and in schools all over England.

Those using the Library include clergy, academics, students and journalists. As well as providing a full range of services direct to readers, staff work on ensuring the effective cataloguing, conservation and preservation of the material, and its promotion through exhibitions, leaflets and group visits.

Guidance for the wider church, including parishes, dioceses, cathedrals and bishops' offices covering topics such as safeguarding, clergy personal files, managing email, looking after paper records and data protection is also available here.

Other resources

The Cathedral Archives, Libraries & Collections Association aims to advance education by the promotion, preservation and protection of cathedral libraries, archives and collections in the United Kingdom and Ireland and to provide appropriate access to such information.

A full list of member institutions with ecclesiastical libraries and archives can be found on their website.

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