

The Church Commissioners for England has agreed a 15-year lease with the National Theatre for a 36,000 sq. ft. warehouse in South Bermondsey, London, to promote the sustainable reuse and recycling of the theatre company's costumes, props and scenery.

"We are delighted to have partnered with one of the UK's most treasured cultural institutions," said James Parker, Asset Manager at the Church Commissioners for England. "As the former home of the Church Commissioners' own archives, this warehouse has a historical significance for us. We're pleased to secure an innovative new future for the site by helping the National Theatre to reuse and recycle its props, costumes, and scenery – bringing them under one roof for the first time."

The National Theatre will use the Bermondsey warehouse as part of a new large-scale sustainability initiative, bringing together costumes, props, and recyclable scenery under one roof to encourage reuse and reduce carbon impacts. The site was chosen for its short distance from the National Theatre's famous South Bank location, the theatre company's home since 1976.

The Church Commissioners for England acquired the warehouse in the 1980s for use as the Church of England Record Centre, housing the archives of the Church Commissioners, the General Synod and its predecessors, and other bodies relating to the Church of England. In 2020, the archives moved to Lambeth Palace Library.

As with all of its new commercial lettings, the Church Commissioners has agreed a green lease with the National Theatre, following best practice in line with Better Building Partnership recommendations. The Church Commissioners outlined its approach to sustainability for its real assets portfolio, including the use of green leases, in a report published in July 2023.

Paul Handley, Director of Production and Technical at the National Theatre said: "We're delighted to have found such an ideal home for our production resources in Bermondsey. This new space will unlock so much potential in terms of sustainable theatre practice, not just for the National Theatre but we hope for the industry as a whole. As a sector, we all need more efficient management and usage of our existing resources if we are to achieve the circular economy that a net zero carbon future demands. This is the first step on this exciting journey that supports our ambitions to be environmentally and economically sustainable, putting reusing and recycling at the heart of our work. The green lease agreed with the Church Commissioners further matches our ambitions, and we look forward to this next chapter."

Kalmars acted for the Church Commissioners.

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