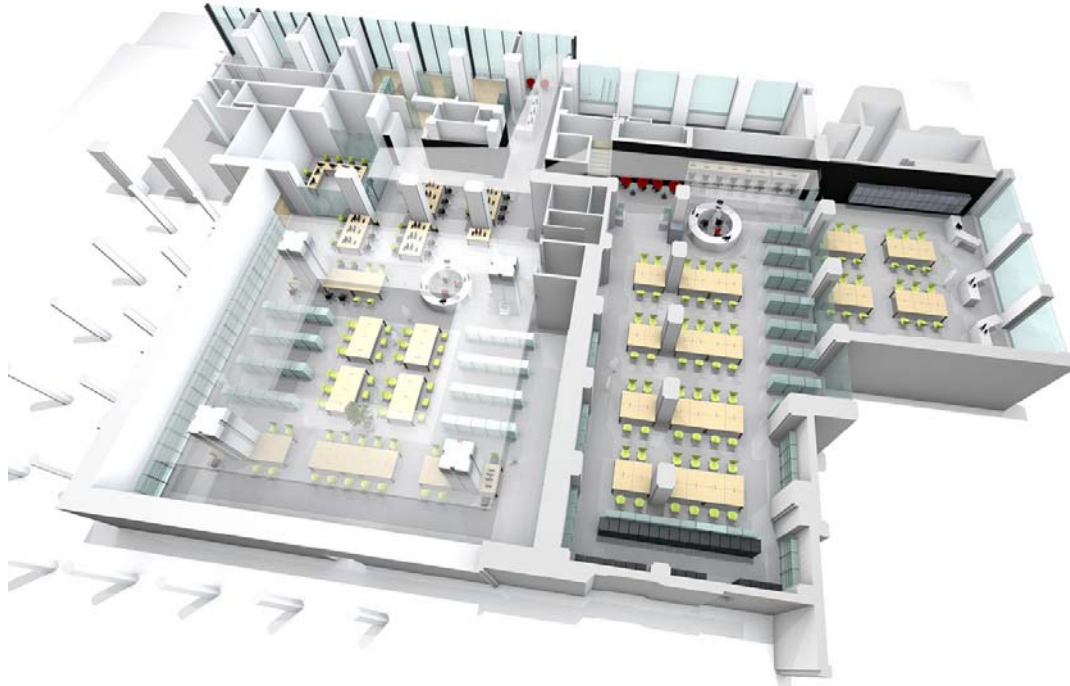




Renewing Guildhall Library

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Although they have now been modified these architectural drawings give a good impression of the interior of the new Guildhall Library. To the left you can see the City Business Library, in the middle the new Printed Books reading room and to the right, the Manuscripts reading room.

Work has now begun on the second phase of the £1.7 million remodelling and refurbishment of Guildhall Library. The first phase consisted of the expansion of the Library's underground stores into some redundant workshop areas and the replacement of 35 year old shelving systems with modern, more space efficient, rolling stacks. In the Library's first major overhaul and facelift since it moved in to its current premises in 1974 the final two phases, scheduled for completion late this year prior to the return to Guildhall of the City Business Library from its current premises in Brewers' Hall Garden, will see new shelving installed throughout; obsolete furniture and fittings replaced; lighting levels improved; existing staff work areas upgraded and expanded to replace space lost to the public areas; new reception and enquiry desks created; and the former entrance from Aldermanbury brought back into use.

Central to the modernisation of the Library's public facilities is the creation of a cluster of 62 public computers including a small, flexible, multi-purpose training area - an almost 40% expansion in the number currently provided by City Business and Guildhall Libraries combined - and the use of flexible furniture to allow study areas to be converted easily into venues for our growing events and workshops programme.

Significant improvements are also being made to disabled access, principally through the replacement of the existing wheelchair lift by a glass wall enclosed platform lift and the installation of a new infill floor to the former Manuscripts microfilm area to bring it up to the same level as the main Reading Room.

As the artist's impression shows the result promises to be a light, airy, accessible, flexible, visually attractive public building of which the City Corporation can be proud and one well equipped to meet the challenges of the twenty first century.

Guildhall Library's Prints and Maps Section moved permanently to London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), 40 Northampton Road, London EC1 OHB, at the end of April 2009 where it merged with LMA's own graphic collections to create one of the largest collections of topographical images in the world, comprehensive in its visual record of the history of London. While the process of integration continues prospective visitors wishing to access graphic materials at LMA are advised to make an appointment before visiting: telephone 020 7332 3820 or e-mail ask.lma@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Although the Prints and Maps Section has departed there will still be access in Guildhall Library to the *Collage* database of over 30,000 images as well as a wide selection of facsimile maps.

The modernisation of the Manuscripts Section's reading room, the record office for the "square mile" of the City of London, has now commenced as part of the phase 2 building work within Guildhall Library. It will result in improved facilities for readers including access to digitised family history sources. During the building work access to its holdings will be offered at the reading rooms of London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). Many records will need to be ordered 48 hours in advance as they will still be stored in the City. Guildhall Manuscripts staff will be on hand at LMA to give help and advice as usual during the closure. Telephone: 020 7332 3820 or e-mail manuscripts.guildhall@cityoflondon.gov.uk for further information

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