

# Bush Theatre

## Using the Building Survey Tool to find priorities for funding applications

### At a glance

#### Location

Shepherd's Bush,  
London

#### Tags

Funding  
Heating  
Insulation  
Heritage building

### Overview

The Bush Theatre is housed within a repurposed Victorian library building. The theatre moved into the library in 2011 and in 2016 undertook a second capital works project, which involved installing a green roof and solar panels, changing the lighting to LEDs or sensor lights, and improving operations. During the COVID lockdown, the Bush team started thinking about what the next stages might be to continue making their building as sustainable as possible.

### The Challenges

The theatre is a building of local historic interest, which limits the works that can be done. The team at the Bush Theatre knew that the biggest areas they could make improvements on were heating and water use. Heat loss through the external walls and the roof was also identified as a target area for improvement. The building is historical and doesn't have cavity walls, making installation of insulation difficult. Around the same time, they were starting to consider this, they also needed to repair their pitched roof, which they received a small grant from the Arts Council for.



### Using the Building Survey Tool

The local council was looking for capital project grants to make use of the Creative Enterprise Zone Greater London Authority funding pot available at the time. The team at the Bush Theatre used the Building Survey Tool to work out what they could and should prioritise in the funding application. They also used the new objectives in the Arts Council Investment Principles, and their existing Environmental Policy, to create success metrics and identify the clear outcomes they wanted to achieve.

They identified insulation and renewable heating to replace their gas boiler as key priorities. In late 2022 they were informed that their funding bid had been successful. In Spring 2024 consultants commenced surveys and monitoring work for air quality and energy usage. At the end of the consultation, the team decided to undertake the work in three phases:

Phase 1: installation of secondary glazing and internal solar film to windows, [smart bricks](#), [direct electric hot water](#), and a solar PV array.

Phase 2: fitting of air-to-air heat pump and local ventilation

Phase 3: instillation of insulation to the Pennard Road side of the building

Capital works are planned to commence in late 2024. Phase 2 and 3 will need further funding.

Using the Building Survey Tool, and their existing knowledge and aims, the team at the Bush knew what they need to do to improve the building but needed to get experts in to advise on the construction detail and when is best to make the changes. As the adaptation of the building to theatrical use was only ten years ago, some of the equipment is still relatively new. The consultants did advise that decarbonisation of the heating system would be beneficial as soon as possible especially given the issues with the current boilers since they were installed 11 years ago.

### Keeping the Bush Theatre team informed

The desire to become more sustainable stretches across all areas of work at the Bush Theatre. It has a Green Working Group where they can keep each other updated on sustainable practices and changes. They also have Sustainability as an agenda item on the weekly producers' meeting, and a sustainability champion on the Board.

**Content provided by**  
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