

Press release

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Major new public space for London is unveiled at Bishop's Square Development, Spitalfields

The completion of Foster and Partners Bishops Square development was celebrated today by the Spitalfields community, local retailers and schools. Officially opened by the Mayor of London, the scheme provides a major new public space for London larger than the Piazza at Covent Garden. It completes the regeneration programme of this historically important neighbourhood bridging the City and the East End.

Comprising 4 acres of landscaped civic space, a new covered market area, 40,000 sq ft of retail space and 774,000 sq ft of high spec offices, the scheme extends the original wholesale fruit and vegetable market to create a new urban destination with an eclectic mix of offices, residential buildings, shops and a network of pedestrian routes and plazas.

The development includes the restoration of the 1928 buildings along Brushfield Street, with a new covered pedestrian road to the rear. Lined on both sides with shops, it opens up new views of Hawksmoors Christchurch. Bishops Square itself, accommodating an outdoor performance area and water feature - sits between the new building and the existing buildings along Bishopsgate. The Spitalfields Development Group is running an ongoing programme of temporary art installations in this area. A new market, Crispin Square, which is covered by a lightweight, glazed canopy to the East, connects the offices with the old Spitalfields Market.

Charnel House, a 12th century chapel discovered during archeological excavations, has been

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preserved below street level and is exhibited within a sunken courtyard. Sheltered beneath a glass pavement, it is also visible from above. Illuminated glass cases containing found archeological objects are set within the squares paving.

A new headquarters building for Allen & Overy steps back from the site in a series of green tiers with lush roof gardens overlooking the plaza below. The building incorporates the largest commercial photovoltaic installation in Europe and will produce enough energy to power the landscape lighting across the site.