

Bromley & Sheppard's Colleges £1 Million Appeal



Bromley and Sheppard's Colleges provide self-contained dwellings as retirement homes for clergy widows as well as retired Anglican clergy and their spouses, widowers, divorcees and unmarried daughters. The term 'college' has no connection with education; this old usage simply means a body of people with shared functions and privileges. The 44 self-contained flats offer safe, sheltered accommodation in a community with others of similar experiences - people who have spent a lifetime serving others.

However, we also have a vital responsibility for the well-being of the buildings themselves as outstanding examples of national architectural heritage. Their protection and maintenance are in our hands. It is our duty to ensure that both the function and fabric of the Colleges flourish for this generation and long into the future.

Our history and buildings

Bishop John Warner of Rochester, who died in his palace in Bromley in 1666, left £8,500 to build a 'Hospitall or Almshouse for twentie poore widowes of orthodox and loyall clergiemmen'.

In 1674 the 'widowes' were installed in what is now the front quadrangle of Bromley College. The building was designed by Captain Richard Ryder - one of Sir Christopher Wren's surveyors. A second quadrangle was

added in 1744 matching the original. In 1840, Sheppard's College was built to care for five caring daughters of deceased widows who had resided at Bromley College. Finally, in 1863, the present Chapel was built.

Bromley College is a Grade 1 listed building whilst Sheppard's College is Grade 2.

We need your help to raise £1 Million

The Colleges have very little in the way of endowment beyond the bare necessity to maintain the present accommodation. Such splendid historic buildings, including some of the finest 17th century architecture in the country, are very costly to look after. Yet our buildings are not simply valuable examples of national heritage, they also perform a vital practical and charitable purpose.

The accommodation for our residents is now out of date in many respects and requires serious and urgent upgrading. We must make considerable alterations to care for residents whose average age is almost 80, so that they can enjoy a safe, comfortable and dignified way of life. This work must be carried out while protecting the heritage of buildings of which many parts are over 300 years old. Indeed all our remedial works must be carried out under the auspices of English Heritage. The cost of this vital work is considerable. The building alterations alone have been costed at £812, 000.