

1st December 2020

I am writing to ask you, whether you are among the College of St Barnabas's many friends and supporters, or whether you have yet to help us, to give generously in response to our Christmas appeal. I have been chairman of the College's trustees for almost 9 years and will be standing down from the council in 2021. Perhaps I may take this opportunity to reflect on those years in a way which, I hope, will persuade my readers to continue their generous support of this place. I have greatly enjoyed my involvement with the College and have made many friends amongst the residents, painful though it is to think that a lot of them are no longer with us.

The College began as a retirement home for Anglican clergy and was always a religious community of a kind which was once much more common than it is now. It is more than just an institution in which the very elderly can spend their last years. The place is infused by a strong spiritual commitment and a sense of mutual friendship and support amongst its residents. The rhythm of daily prayer continues in a way that is still found in our cathedrals but in few other places. Whenever I visit the College I am impressed by its gentle and unchanging sense of devotion and peace.

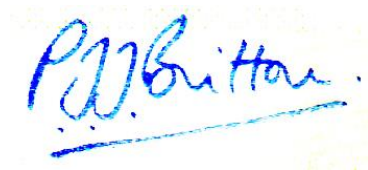
Much, of course, has changed in the last decade. The average age of our residents has increased markedly and is now more than 87 years. The people here are frailer than their predecessors and have more complex needs. Although the majority of the community still is ordained, there is now a large minority of lay Anglicans. There are more women living here than in the past, including some women priests. And though the College is still true to its Anglo-Catholic inheritance, it now has a broader base more representative of the Church of England as a whole.

The context has changed too. The financial climate is more difficult than it was 10 years ago, because of inadequate state support for the elderly with high care needs and relentlessly increasing costs. Our buildings are beautiful but expensive to maintain. The regulatory pressure to improve care standards is constant: we all want higher standards but they come at a cost.

So, we are even more dependent than in the past on your generosity. For those of you who have never been here, let me reassure you what a worthwhile cause the College is. Looking after the very elderly, many of whom have devoted their lives to the service of the Church, making sure that they have care, comfort, fellowship and stimulation and in a spiritual and peaceful environment is a noble cause.

I urge you to respond generously to this appeal because your help is vital to the continuing success of the College's mission: our work depends on the help and generosity of individuals and PCCs, many of which have loyally supported us over so many years.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P. J. Britton". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Sir Paul Britton CB, CVO
Chairman.

Sadly, the 125th anniversary of the College's foundation by Canon William Cooper, has remained largely unmarked. As you know already, we had lots of ideas for celebrating this milestone in the College's history but everything from the end of March has had to be shelved. Fortunately, as lockdown eased we were able to readmit residents' visitors, albeit socially-distanced and to a strict timetable, for visits in the grounds. Some small comfort, as we are back in lockdown now, no-one knows for sure when it will be safe to reduce restrictions again, and the onset of colder weather puts outdoor visits out of the question.

And as we begin to adapt to this seemingly cyclical "new normal" of lockdowns and easings, we have to ask you if you would kindly consider continuing your generous support for our work to provide care and accommodation to some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

We have helped many people in need over the years transforming the lives of many and indeed saving the lives of some, becoming a provider of last resort for those with nothing. Some of their stories are enclosed, out of interest. But now the ongoing risk of COVID-19 poses an ever-present threat. The consensus is that this is a virus that is going to be around for many, many years to come.

You already appreciate and value our work with elderly and infirm Anglicans, and you clearly understand that as a consequence of their advanced years and the frailties of old age, our residents are at the highest level of risk if they are exposed to the virus.

Although lockdown has been eased and society is tentatively edging towards a "new normal", coronavirus hotspots keep breaking out in communities around the country. Keeping it out of ours is a constant battle, and this places immense pressure on our residents, on our staff and on our charity.

As you may have supported our work before, you might recall from previous letters and Bulletins that every year we have to bridge a funding gap of some £150,000 in order to provide the level of care and accommodation needed by our most vulnerable residents. It is a challenge but one which we have largely been able to deal with, thanks to your help and the help of other regular supporters.

It is now almost 9 months since lockdown was first imposed, and we now know that in financial terms COVID-19 has cost us an extra £15,000 per month over that period. As we have become better at adapting to new ways of working those costs have begun to taper downwards a little. Nonetheless, we estimate that we may need as much as an additional £120,000 over the next 12 months to maintain our struggle against coronavirus. This, for the sake of our residents, is a fight we have to win.

What this means is that we now need to raise around £270,000 over the next 12 months i.e. £150,000 for the ongoing care gap plus £120,000 for COVID-19 related costs.

Thanks to your help and the help of other generous supporters our Summer Appeal was a success, so thank you for your contribution to that. It was our largest appeal for a number of years, but this year's Christmas Appeal is larger still. We are asking some 6,000 private individuals and 600 PCCs for help. We know that with so many people losing their jobs or facing the likelihood of unemployment, and with the economy in recession that this is a big ask. But we have no other option.

To reach the target of £270,000, we need each of the PCCs and individuals we ask to donate £41.00. We are sure that some will give more, that others will give less, and that very many will not give at all. So please do support this appeal as generously as you can.

Whatever the amount of your donation, your contribution is crucially important. Quite simply, without you and your help, our work is not possible. And with your help, we are confident that the College can continue to manage the coronavirus crisis and keep its residents and staff safe and secure, and still be here for those who in their time of need, in old age, in ill-health, just need someone to take them in and look after them.

As you know, we have 125 years' experience of caring for some of the most vulnerable Anglicans in the community, and you know from our track record that whatever you give, your donation will be used properly and wisely to ensure the maximum benefit of the physical and spiritual well-being and the quality of life of our current and future Residents.

Only you know what is right for you to give but please do help to the best of your ability, and please do consider again if it is at all possible for you to set up a monthly standing order rather than making a one-off gift – given the nature of the issue, regular, reliable income is of crucial importance to us. Not only that, but bank fees for standing orders are lower than for cheques, so more of your gift goes to supporting the work, and as we don't physically have to handle post and cheques they are easier, cheaper – and indeed safer in the COVID-19 environment – for us to process. Thank you for your understanding and your help.

In view of the operational difficulties caused by the lockdown and the risk of transmission of the virus, we would prefer to avoid donations being sent in by post, if at all possible. If you do not have access online banking and wish to send a cheque, please make it payable to "*The College of St. Barnabas*" and send it to us in the enclosed prepaid envelope. Similarly, if you wish to set up a standing order, please complete and PART A (the standing order mandate) of the accompanying form, and return it to us in the envelope provided. You



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should know, however, that in order to protect our vulnerable residents all but essential staff are working from home so there will regrettably be some delay in acknowledging and banking your donation.

If you are able to donate through online banking / BACS, we would prefer you to use that option. It is easier for you, easier for us, and makes your giving more effective as processing costs are lower than for cheques. Our sort code is 20-23-97 and our account number is 50653594. Please use as your reference: **X +House Number + Postcode**. This format can be used for both one-off gifts and for setting up a monthly standing order. Thank you so very much. We are only checking our bank statement once a month for online gifts, so here too, there will be some delay in acknowledging gifts. Thank you, in advance, for your patience.

Lastly, we really do understand that these continue to be very difficult times for everyone, times of great uncertainty and anxiety for many and so, however you decide to help us, we thank you very sincerely, in advance, for your compassion, your kindness and your generosity, and hope that you and your families are safe and well, and doing whatever is necessary to remain so.

Thank you for all you do to help.

Patrons: The Archbishops of Canterbury York and Wales;
Lord Williams of Oystermouth; The Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey
Mr Peter Ainsworth; Dame Judi Dench; Dame Sarah Goad; Mr Adrian Plass; Mr Timothy West CBE
Warden: The Rev'd Kevin J. Scully Bursar: Mr. Paul G. F. Wilkin, DChA
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