

Applying to live in the College of Matrons
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Thank you for your enquiry about coming to live at the College of Matrons almshouses. We hope that the answers we give to the following frequently asked questions may prove helpful and will enable you to decide if you want to apply to us for housing.

Where are the almshouses?

We maintain 27 accommodation units:

- 7 one-bedroom flats in 38 The Close, and 8 two-bedroom terraced cottages (39-46 The Close), situated in the Salisbury Cathedral Close, SP1 2EL
- 11 one-bedroom and one two-bedroom flats, built in 1997, at St John's Priory, Wilton, SP2 0JN.

Can I apply for a College of Matrons property?

The College of Matrons provides low cost housing in Salisbury and Wilton for needy and deserving women resident within the area of benefit with a preference being given to widows and daughters of Ministers of the Church of England.

The criteria for being accepted onto our waiting list are:

- You must be a woman, and
- You must be a resident in our area of benefit, which includes the Dioceses of Bath & Wells, Exeter, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Truro and Winchester, and
- You must have a housing need or be experiencing some other form of hardship, and
- You must be capable of living independently, as no on-site care is provided.

Our properties are only suitable for single occupancy.

Please note that none of our flats or cottages in The Close are suitable for applicants with mobility problems. Our Wilton flats, on the other hand, are much more accessible.

What happens when I send my form back?

When we get your form back we will check to see if you are eligible and if so will ask you to come in to see us. When we meet you we will go through your form with you and will give you a tour to see if you feel it is the right housing for you.

If you are not eligible for our accommodation we will write to you as soon as possible to say so.

If we register you on our waiting list this does not mean we can help you straightaway and we would advise you to keep looking at other options, particularly if your housing need is urgent.

When we are in a position to offer you accommodation we will contact you to make sure you still want to be considered and check all your details are up to date. At this time we will also take up the references you have given us. All eligible applicants on our waiting list, who wish to be considered when a vacancy occurs, will be interviewed by the Trustees.

How are the Almshouses run?

By a staff of three. The present staff are:

Nicholas Stiven	Steward	9am-4pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
Kate Roberts	Warden, Salisbury	Resident
Debbie Boyes	Warden, Wilton	Resident (shared with St John's Hospital)

Our office is at:

The College of Matrons, The Old Laundry, 42A The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP 2EL

01722 321558

steward@collegeofmatrons.org.uk

What accommodation is provided?

There are two types of property – flats and cottages. The properties all include modern facilities whilst the older buildings retain many features of interest. All the properties have a kitchen, bathroom, sitting room and bedroom. The properties are unfurnished, although cookers and floor coverings are provided. All the properties benefit from gas central heating.

Both sites (in The Close and at St John's Priory) have resident management staff, a garden maintained by the residents with the help of a professional gardener, and are within easy walking distance of their respective town centres. Weekly social activities organised by the residents and wardens include coffee mornings, whist groups, and communion services.

The St John's Priory site at Wilton, which is shared with almshouses run by St John's Hospital, who have 16 flats and three cottages of their own, has use of the chapel at St John's Priory, which is also used as for residents' events and as a meeting room.

How much would I pay?

Our residents are not tenants but are beneficiaries of the charity - you would be given a licence to occupy rather than a tenancy agreement. So you wouldn't pay rent but something called a monthly maintenance contribution (MMC). The MMC for 2024 is £495 per month, paid in monthly instalments, in arrears. This includes all service charges. If you need help with your housing costs, all but water charges are eligible for Housing Benefit, if you qualify. You would pay for all your other bills yourself – electricity, gas and council tax.

Can I bring a pet?

No, unfortunately not.

Is there parking?

Yes, there is limited provision for parking in The Close and at St John's Priory.

Do I have to join in social events?

Residents lead completely independent lives and you are free to make choices about which, if any, social events you choose to attend.

Are there lots of rules?

We aim to interfere as little as possible in the lives of residents. However, as with any community we need to have some guidelines as to what is acceptable. A Resident's Handbook is given to each resident when they move in which sets these out in more detail and you would be asked to sign a form known as a 'Licence to Occupy', to confirm you understand your rights and obligations. You should note that as a licensee your security of tenure is limited and you should bear this in mind and seek advice if you are giving up secure accommodation. We rarely if ever however have to ask people to leave, unless you are no longer able to look after yourself or if you have broken the terms of your license in a serious way.

Is there a no smoking policy?

Smoking is prohibited in all common (i.e. 'public') areas of the almshouses, in line with the law. We ask residents not to smoke in the properties; in extremis, a resident could be liable for the cost of repair or redecoration resulting from damage caused by cigarette smoke.

Can I have friends and relatives to stay?

Yes, if bedroom space permits, but your home is designated as sheltered housing for you and is not intended to accommodate extra people for long periods of time.

What happens next?

Please complete the application form available from the office or to download from the website.

We look forward to receiving your application