

The Orangery Studios, Greenwich Enterprise Board

Short description of the project

Greenwich Enterprise Board (GEB) purchased Eltham Orangery in 2007. One of the key elements of GEB's design was to put all of the services (kitchens etc.) in a new building erected next to the Orangery, thereby not affecting the historic fabric of the building. Water and power had to be provided and the site emptied of old utility cables. The Orangery opened in September 2013 and the building is fully let to seven small businesses. GEB is a not-for-profit self-funded company working for the regeneration of Greenwich. They have been operating since the mid-1980s and choose projects primarily for their regenerative affects, but also their impact on the built environment and their long-term financial potential. GEB have a passion for historic buildings and believe the Orangery regeneration will encourage further development in the area.



The old meets the new at Greenwich Orangery © Greenwich Enterprise Board

What would have happened without this project?

Restoration work carried out between 2000 and 2003 to repair the Orangery and restore lost features ensured the building was fit for development. The regeneration by GEB presented a viable use for the historic building, without which its future would have been uncertain.

What has the project achieved, or difference has it made?

Local people are extremely pleased by the improvement and seven businesses have found somewhere inspiring and impressive to work. There is new-found interest in tackling the remainder of Orangery Lane within the Council and other agencies. Equally important, The Orangery has been saved, hopefully forever. GEB holds the freehold on all of its projects, so there is no question of funds running out. By embracing the historic Orangery, GEB have built a business centre of almost unique attraction; that would not have been possible with a new-build scheme.

What were the main lessons learnt or challenges overcome?

To have a more realistic view of the time needed to obtain planning consent.

What is the future of the project?

GEB believe the Orangery Studios marks the beginning of a new role for Eltham town centre as a base for small, non-retail businesses. It is owned by an organisation that is independent of public funding and therefore has an indefinite lifespan ahead.

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