Welcome to Benet’s!

Congratulations on having been offered a place to study at St Benet’s for the next academic year! I hope you are enjoying your summer free from the stresses of exams and the tensions of results day. This letter, and the rest of this pack, aim to provide some information about the Hall and student life.

St Benet’s Hall was founded in 1897, and is owned by Benedictine monks from Ampleforth Abbey, North Yorkshire. Since 1918, it has been a Permanent Private Hall (PPH) of the University of Oxford, and is, today, governed by the St Benet’s Trust. From a student perspective, its status as a PPH has little obvious impact; St Benet’s students are fully matriculated members of the University and enjoy the world-class teaching and the benefits of the tutorial system. The Hall is an integrated and active part of the University, admitting 20-25 undergraduates and about 15 graduates, alongside the occasional monastic student. The Hall boasts a student body from a multitude of backgrounds - both religious and secular. College life is one of the University’s greatest assets, since a college community provides a welcoming second home for students who are, in some cases, living away from home for the first time. St Benet’s is justly and proudly the closest and friendliest institution in Oxford, providing you with a sense of community and belonging in the somewhat overwhelming and eccentric city of Oxford.

Hospitality is an important aspect of life at St Benet’s, and we are renowned within the University for the welcoming and fun atmosphere at meals. The Hall hosts three formal meals each week: Tuesday and Thursday dinner and Sunday lunch, which include three-courses with wine, preceded or followed by drinks. At Tuesday formals we enjoy the company of a distinguished guest speaker who gives us a short ten-minute speech on his or her life or work. Students are encouraged to invite guests to the formal meals, so there is frequently a unique mix of interesting people. It is a great way to show friends from across the University, friends from home, or even relatives, what St Benet’s is like at its best. At St Benet’s everyone sits at a common table. Unlike other Oxford colleges,
where there is a High Table for the Master and Fellows, there is no such segregation at Benet’s. It is an important part of the Hall’s ethos and emphasis on equality that all, students and tutors alike, dine together. It allows you to build relationships with your tutors that students at other colleges don’t have access to.

We are fortunate at St Benet’s to have a “Joint Common Room” (JCR), meaning that the student body comprises both undergraduates and graduates, as well as student monks. You will find this a great experience, as you rub shoulders with a wide mix of people. The JCR hosts several social events throughout the year. There is a party for the entire Hall at the end of each term, as well as teas, charity events, a garden play, Pimm’s socials, cheese and wine nights, Eurovision nights and many more - all organised by the JCR Committee. Unlike other colleges, the JCR does not charge for the parties – it is a long-standing principle that students, fellows, staff, and guests enjoy them for free. These parties will likely be among the highlights of your time in Oxford.

I am delighted that you will be joining us in October and I hope you will enjoy your time at St Benet’s Hall. If, after reading through this pack, you still have any questions about St Benet’s or the transition to Oxford, please get in touch with me or another member of the Committee. I look forward to meeting you during Freshers’ Week.

Jack Williams  
JCR President

The JCR Committee

President  
Jack Williams | jack.williams@stb.ox.ac.uk | Classics

Hi Freshers, and as a continuation from the welcome letter, let me introduce myself properly. I’m Jack, your JCR president, which means I coordinate the committee who organises student events in the Hall, and represent your views to Hall and University.

I’m now in the fourth year of studying Classics, and I’m also president of the St Benet’s Hall Boat Club. I’ve pretty much seen all Benet’s has to offer, so I’m in a perfect position to answer any and all questions you may have about any aspect of life here. So, if there are any questions at all (academic or other), or concerns you want to discuss, feel free to email me at any time.

Other than the degree, and the rowing, I like to take part in the long-standing Benet’s JCR tradition of fielding some of the least qualified teams for as many other sports events as possible throughout the year, from Tennis and Rugby to Croquet and Dodgeball. There is a huge amount on offer at Benet’s and Oxford,

Benet’s provides you with an amazing community, as you will find out when you arrive. It is not uncommon to have not applied here directly, so don’t worry about it if that’s the case. Finally, congratulations on getting into Oxford, I can’t wait to meet you all in October!
Hi all, I’m Joe and I’m the 2018-9 JCR Treasurer, meaning I handle the JCR’s accounts and spending and liaise with the Hall over our finances. If you have any questions about our funds or expenditure, or Committee in general don’t hesitate to get in touch!

I’m also the JCR’s LGBTQ rep, serving to represent the members of the Benet’s community who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or another identity under the ‘Queer’ umbrella, and to support them in the struggles they may face in a university environment. Coming to Oxford may be the first time someone decides to come out, or interacts with LGBTQ people, so I’m here to be a listening ear and hopefully provide some useful advice and support. The fun part of my job involves publicising the social events run by the University wide LGBTQ society, like nights out or welfare teas. Benet’s is a friendly and welcoming environment, but can always be improved - I hope you find it as amazing and warm as we do!

Beyond the JCR, I’m also Boat Club treasurer and coxed the women’s boat last year, and am keen to chat things rowing and non-rowing. Outside of the myriad of committee roles I seem to have acquired, I’m a third year Classicist on course II, and love a good night in, a cup of tea and a gin and tonic.

Congrats on getting into Oxford’s friendliest college/hall, and I can’t wait to meet all of you!

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Hello everyone and congratulations on making your offers! I’m your JCR Secretary, which means that I take the minutes for the JCR meetings, sit on committee, and am generally responsible for JCR admin. I am also the guardian of the JCR’s precious constitution, a crucial document for when Benet’s politics heats up (notable motions this year have included an ironic, lengthy attempt to shorten meetings themselves and an attempt to purchase an over-sized paddling pool in Norham Gardens).

I’m also your Sports Secretary, which means that I spend a lot of time procrastinating by organising various sporting events. Any sport you can possibly think of is available to play at Oxford, including those that you probably haven’t thought about, like quidditch and underwater
hockey. I would hugely encourage you to get involved in some level of sport, whether that be college, university or a more casual sports society. Last year Benet's had its highest number of blues in history and (potentially aided by our size) we had the highest ratio of blues out of any college (or PPH...)! Additionally, we won rugby 7s cuppers at the end of last term (with a little help from Keble college, whom we team up with for rugby), and have our sights on winning 15s Rugby Cuppers this year. Whether it’s football, rowing, hockey, badminton or croquet that you are interested in, please come and speak to me and I’ll look to help you out!

Finally, I can imagine a lot of you are feeling nervous or apprehensive about stepping into the much talked about, but unfamiliar environment of Oxford general, or of the not-so-talked-about St Benet’s specifically. I remember exactly how it felt. My main piece of advice to all of you would be not to doubt yourself; it is the norm to feel intimidated by Oxford but you have to remember that you have now passed every test to earn your place here and are thus, all here for a reason. St Benet's is arguably the most friendly and welcoming college you could possibly have ended up in at Oxford, and is quite the opposite of intimidating. It is above all else a very happy place, with notoriously lovely people and I can honestly say that I wouldn't rather be anywhere else. Enjoy your summers and I look forward to meeting you all in October.

Hi, I’m William and I am the president of the St Benet’s graduate society and the graduate rep for the St Benet’s JCR. I’m also in the second year of my MPhil in Cuneiform Studies, with particular interests in the spread of writing, gender theory and magic. It’s my job to bring any concerns or ideas graduate students have, academic or otherwise, to the JCR committee, the Master or other parts of the Hall apparatus, and represent their interests and needs. I’m also here to support and help graduate students in whatever way I can, and most importantly to ensure that graduate students feel fully part of the Hall’s student community. Don't be afraid to come talk to me about anything you feel like, as long as it’s not spoilers for the new season of Better Call Saul.

When I’m not doing grad rep stuff or mucking about with ancient clay tablets, I like to spend my time writing bad poetry, playing Dungeons and Dragons, binge-reading and trying to remember to do yoga
Food Liaison Officer
Giulia Zileri | giulia.zileridalverme@stb.ox.ac.uk | Classics

Hi freshers! I’m Giulia, and I’m your Food Liaison Officer. This means that I sit on the Hall House Committee, where I can represent your views about more than just food (though that’s a pretty important part) but also student problems with the Hall and housing in general.

Whenever there is a problem or a suggestion that one of you wants to make about food or maintenance I can report it directly to the kitchen staff or to the administrators. I’m always happy to talk and I’ll make sure any problems you could have will be brought forward and solved in the best and quickest way possible. I’m sure you’ll find Benets a very welcoming and friendly environment!

Other than that, I’m a second year Classicist from Italy. I love everything to do with food, mostly eating it, but cooking it too. I’m also a rower, and I’d recommend the Boat Club if only for their termly dinners. Being an international student can be kind of tough, so if you ever feel like you want to talk to someone, whether you’re homesick or not, feel free to come to me.

See you soon!

Welfare Officer
Serena Reeve-Tucker | serena.reeve-tucker@stb.ox.ac.uk
Philosophy and Theology

Hello, my name is Serena, I am the Female Welfare Officer for the St Benet’s Hall undergraduates.

I am in my second year studying Philosophy and Theology. The start of university is a big adjustment, especially Oxford. Luckily at St Benets we not only have a great welfare team to provide support whenever it is needed but we are also a very small community, which means struggle does not go unnoticed and I found there are always people on hand to help, offer advice or even just an ear for your problems.

I will always be available for any of you to talk to, and everything will always be kept strictly confidential. If it is necessary I can also help people go through official channels and make sure that you are out in touch with the appropriate university services. In short, there is never a need to suffer in silence, and however insignificant you may think your worries may sound to someone else, this is not the case, we create an environment of care and closeness in St Benets that rivals every other college.
I will run a welfare talk in Freshers week to cover all bases and on top of this run welfare events during term time. I am looking forward to meeting you all and hope you have a lovely rest of summer.

**Welfare Officer and BME Representative**

James Baxter | james.baxter@stb.ox.ac.uk | Theology and Oriental Studies

Hi everyone, I’m James, and I’ll be both your Male Welfare Officer and your BME rep. I’m a finalist in Theology and Oriental Studies, studying classical Arabic. I’m half English, half Turkish (even though there’s this random French guy in fourth year who speaks Turkish better than me for some reason), and I’m from London. Life at Oxford can be very tough and, for many students, very lonely. Luckily for you, you’ve landed yourself a spot at the friendliest place on earth outside Disney World. You’ll know everyone at the college within a couple of weeks, so you’ll never walk into a room feeling like a stranger. You should never be short on someone to talk to, either, but if you ever have any mental health issues (or indeed any issues for that matter) that you’d like to talk about in confidence, then know that my door in St Giles is always open. At the risk of sounding like a Vietnam War veteran, I’ve been through some things myself and have seen friends and family go through them as well, so rest assured that I will understand if ever you do feel like you need to talk to someone.

Looking forward to meeting you all and I hope you have a great year!

**Social Secretary**

Beata Kuczynska | beata.kuczynska@stb.ox.ac.uk | History

Hi freshers, congrats on getting in and welcome to Benets!

My name is Beata and I’m your social secretary. It basically means that I’m somewhat responsible to make sure you have as much fun as possible in first year and especially in freshers week. Some of you may be under the impression that Oxford is lacking in nightlife and I’m here to show you this is definitely not the case. There’s a bunch of great clubs - from the sporty Parkend and Fever, to the highly popular Bridge, to the more edgy Cellar and the Bullingdon, there should be something that takes your fancy! And for those who aren’t that into clubbing, Oxford is known for its vast number of pubs and I’m sure there will be many a pub trip - they’re usually pretty spontaneous!
The JCR events are some of the highlights of the year (and should be credited to me). We have a party at the end of each term, which is kind of like a mini ball with unlimited alcohol and a band, and there are events such as the Pimms Party and the Cheese and Wine night to tide you over during term time.

I’m a second year reading History and so going out is a big part of my uni life - don’t tell my tutors! I’m more than happy to give advice on balancing social life with academic work, so feel free to chat to me about that. I’ll also be your first point of contact for any upcoming major events or college balls, which I would highly recommend you go to, as they were some of the highlights of my first year.

That’s all from me for now, so enjoy the rest of your summer and I’ll see you in freshers week! xoxo

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**Women’s Representative**  
Martha Harlan | martha.harlan@stb.ox.ac.uk | Philosophy & Theology

Hello, I’m Martha and I’ll be your women representative for the JCR till the end of Hilary term 2019, and I am really looking forward to meeting you all! I am very excited for the third year of men and women to enter St. Benet’s hall, and the changes that having another mixed gender year may have on our little community.

St Benet’s Hall is a very interesting place to be based in Oxford, and it is our close-knit student body where everyone knows everyone that is our greatest asset. It is probably one of the least intimidating colleges, and the welcoming atmosphere is one I know I really appreciated.

I am a second year reading philosophy and theology, and I do a lot of acting. My role as women’s rep is not a particularly defined one, but I suppose what is clearest is that I’m here to help with any issues that pertain to gender and inclusivity like harassment or unfair treatment, as well as stocking up the toilets with (emergency!) sanitary products. However, I am quite aware that first year is a difficult one, and whatever the issue I am always here for a chat. But in the meantime, have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you all in September!
The Joint Common Room

The JCR is the student body at St Benet’s, made up of monastic students, undergraduates and graduates, with elected or appointed officials. About twice a term, we meet collectively to discuss issues that affect you – ranging from biscuits to our representation to the St Benet’s Trust last year! As mentioned, the JCR hosts several social events. There is a party at the end of each term: Michaelmas sees the renowned Black Tie Christmas Party; the party at the end of Hilary term has had a masquerade theme (Benetian Venetian) and, more recently, a Mardi Gras theme; the Summer Garden Party is one of the high-points of the year with Pimm’s and plenty of food and cheer. At the end of Trinity Term, there is also the JCR Picnic on Port Meadow, from seven in the evening until seven in the morning.

We are proud of the fact that students, fellows, staff, and guests enjoy them without charge. To give you an idea of the sort of events we organise, here are the highlights from last term:

To finish the year in style, our Committee organised a Tropical themed garden party. With many Benetians and guests out and dressed for the occasion, it was a brilliant summer’s evening outside with a great live band!

The Benet’s top secret Pimm’s recipe went down a storm at our garden events, and always provides the perfect accompaniment for a game of croquet!

The Garden Play, “Fatal Loins” by Perry Pontac, was a hilarious performance put on by a stellar cast of students.

Towards the end of term, the JCR also held the picnic on Port Meadow. A team effort ensured there were burgers barbecued for all, while for drinks we had an entire keg of ale. Testimony to its success is that the bravest among us stayed out until the early hours.
The ever-popular ChariTeas continued to be a popular event this year raising money for the Kipungani Schools Trust. Highlights included hosting a bake-off event and adding samosas to the traditional tea and cakes!

Life at St Benet’s

For all the excitement, expectation and anxiety, most people at the very least want to know about the basics, so here they are...

**Handbook** | You will receive a hard copy of the *Handbook* when you arrive, and it will be explained to you by the Junior Dean at an induction for new students. It contains information about how the Hall operates and sets out the rules you agree to follow by joining the Hall – so be sure to read it!

**Norham Gardens** | Since 1922 St Benet’s Hall has been located in a single building at 38 St Giles (formerly at Woodstock Road and later, Beaumont Street), but from October 2015 St Benet’s expanded to a second building at 11 Norham Gardens. This building contains student accommodation and other facilities, a library area, teaching rooms and offices, as well as a flat for the Master and his family. It also has workspace for the graduate students.

**Accommodation** | Accommodation for all first year undergraduates is provided at 11 Norham Gardens. Other students live either in 38 St Giles, or live out in private or University rented accommodation.

For students living either at Norham Gardens or St Giles, the Hall provides all bedding – a pillow, a duvet, and a mattress with covers for all of them. Amazingly, these get washed for you once a
fortnight! If you have a favourite Little Mermaid duvet cover from when you were six, you can of course bring it instead. Most rooms only come with one pillow, so bring an extra if you like. Each room contains at least:

- Bed with bedding
- Wardrobe, bookcase, desk & chair
- Chest of drawers
- Lamp
- Pin Board (please do not bring Blu-tack!)

Graduate Accommodation at 140 Walton Street is a 5-minute walk from St Benet’s. It consists of 7 en-suite rooms with a communal kitchen. You can find all the details here:

http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/accommodation/documents/handbooksaugust2013/132-133-140_Walton_St_2013.pdf

Meals | All new undergraduate members of the Hall are expected to attend lunch and dinner in Freshers’ Week. New graduates are very welcome and strongly encouraged to attend. After Noughth Week, students must book meals online themselves using the meal app on the Hall’s homepage, which will be explained in Freshers’ Week. You do not have to sign in for breakfast or afternoon tea. In particular, afternoon tea provides a welcome break from study and there are usually a few like-minded students to chat to and relax with. There is also coffee and tea served after lunch and dinner in the Calefactory or garden.

It is a tradition of the Hall that new members take it in turn to help the staff serving at dinner and Sunday lunch. The JCR draws up the rota for this and for the short reading from the Rule of St Benedict which follows the Grace. Although this is customary, it is not obligatory.

www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/our-common-table
Formal meals ('Formal Hall' in Oxford speak) are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday at lunchtime, and are preceded or followed by drinks in the garden or Calefactory, depending on the weather. Dress for formal meals is jacket and tie for men and smart separates or dress for women. Students are encouraged to invite guests to these, who may be signed in, at a guest charge, through the meal app. Gowns are only worn once a term, at guest night.

You can find details of meal, and other, charges here: http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/table-of-charges  Note that there is a wastage charge if you book a meal and then don’t turn up!

If you have any special dietary requirements, you can enter them on the handy ‘preferences’ tab on the meal app. If you want to bookmark the app now, you’ll find it here: http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/www/index.html#/login

Library | The Hall Libraries are open 24 hours a day during term time, and are cosy and comfortable places to work. There is one library at the St Giles’ site, and another at Norham Gardens. Most of the core books for all the undergraduate subjects are available. Don’t forget to sign books in and out with your Bod Card (the Oxford University library card which you will receive upon arrival). http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/library-regulations-borrowing

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<td>7:00pm Dinner (Self-service)</td>
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Library in St Giles

Library in Norham Gardens
IT | There are four computers in the basement of 38 St Giles, which all have printing facilities, but bringing a laptop is extremely useful. Every bedroom at 11 Norham Gardens has an ethernet point and picks up the WiFi. WiFi is available at 38 St Giles too. New students must attend an IT induction in Freshers’ Week where individual WiFi passwords will be issued. There is a generous, termly printing allowance, after which a small charge applies. [http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/it-support-info](http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/it-support-info)

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Calefactory and Solar | The Calefactory and Solar are the Hall Common Rooms. They are the social hub of St Benet’s and unrivalled in any other college as a space where students, monks and staff can read the papers, sip coffee, or chat. Laptops, tablets and mobile devices may be used in the Calefactory and Solar, providing that they are silent, and that their use does not disturb others’ enjoyment of the Calefactory or Solar, and remembering that the Calefactory and Solar are intended as social spaces so if you’d rather kick back – that’s where the JCR comes in!

JCR | The Joint Common Room, as well as being the body of all students at St Benet’s, is also the room in the basement with sofas, TV, fridge, and tea and coffee facilities. Someone usually brings a games console and leaves it there for others to use. Feel free to bring DVDs too. It’s a good place for chilling, without the formality of the Calefactory, but leave it clean and tidy or you’ll incur the Junior Dean’s wrath!

Welfare | Serena and James are the JCR’s Welfare Officers, but as soon as you get here, you’ll realise that in practice everyone is everyone’s welfare rep, and there’s a really friendly atmosphere. For anything more personal, more delicate or more private, there are various ports of call, all confidential. JCR Welfare Officers are always happy to help, but you can also approach our Junior Deans, who chair the Hall’s Welfare Committee. The senior monk, Fr Oswald (Prior and Chaplain) is also available. Dr Nicholas Waghorn and Dr Susan Doran are the senior Welfare Officers and Harassment Advisers; Dr Doran is also the Equality Officer.

The Senior Tutor (who is also the Disability Officer) and Directors of Studies are there to make sure your academic career is on track, so you can talk to them too. Undergraduates often find that the easiest thing is to ask someone reading their subject if they have a question, but if it’s a bit more sensitive, there are subject mentors who’ll be happy to listen. There is a list of contacts at the end of this pack which will be useful for most welfare issues. You will also receive the Hall Welfare Guide at the beginning of term which contains more detailed information about welfare provision across the University. The welfare noticeboard in the basement is also filled with lots of helpful information. [http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/welfare](http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/welfare)
Health | New members of the Hall are required to register with the Hall doctor (you’ll receive the relevant information separately). Details of healthcare in Oxford, dentistry, and what to do in an emergency, can be found in the Hall’s Welfare Guide (see above).

Calendar | The weeks of term are numbered 0-8, and just to confuse you, they begin on a Sunday. You can sync term dates to your device calendar here: http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term. Blackwell’s bookshop (on Broad Street) sell the official University pocket diaries, which usefully number all the weeks for you (they cost about £10).

What to Bring

This is not an all-encompassing list, just a bit of advice. Also remember if you forget anything you can probably buy it in Oxford or borrow it from someone else!

Bedding | It’s a good idea to bring extra pillows and your own duvet cover if you want. See the Accommodation section above.

Clothes | A dark skirt/trousers for women, or suit for men, is pretty much essential for Oxford – you’ll need it for Matriculation (see Glossary) and Exams when you come to do them. Plain dark and black shoes are best. Non-essential, but useful, is Black Tie attire for men and equivalent formal attire for women – Oxford being what it is, you’ll find that there are a few Black Tie events in the year, including the Benet’s Christmas Party. Less essential and less useful, but more fun, is fancy dress. There will be at least one, if not 10, fancy dress parties happening somewhere in Oxford every week. There are fancy dress shops in the city, and it’s not too hard to be creative, but if you have one or two items that you think will make you sparkle at the Bop then don’t be afraid to bring them down.

Please do not purchase an academic gown, cap and white bow tie (men) or ribbon (women) prior to coming up; part of the Freshers’ Week programme includes a trip to one of the University outfitters.

Laundry | Benet’s has washing machines and dryers in both buildings. The cost is included in the battels facilities charge (termly living costs) so do not worry about bringing lots of 20ps for the machine, nor detergent – it is all provided, though bringing a laundry bag for your room isn’t a bad idea. If you’re really lazy, there are plenty of dry cleaners who offer delivery! The machines are very easy to use and instructions are displayed on the wall. Ironing facilities are also available.

Passport sized photos | If you join clubs and societies they may ask for a photo so it’s useful to have a few.

Towels | These are useful for drying oneself, although they are provided in Norham Gardens.
**Electricals** | Kettles, if already PAT tested, are allowed in Hall bedrooms, though there is a kettle and microwave in the JCR – accessible 24/7. No other electrical appliances are allowed in Hall bedrooms (e.g. fridges, toasters) without the explicit written permission of the Bursar.

**Sports/Musical Equipment** | Avid guitarists or tennis players, make sure you bring a racquet or a guitar.

**Crockery** | Mugs, glasses, cutlery are useful for a raucous cup of tea or for a quiet drink.

**Books and stationery** | These are vital so that you can read and write. Although, hopefully these are skills you will have learnt before you arrive at Oxford.

**Funding and loans paperwork** | The Hall will need student loan details and Battels payment very early on in term, so make sure you have the documents, including your formal SLC letter, with you.

**Bicycle** | Even though the Hall is superbly located in the centre of Oxford, some students do prefer to use a bicycle to get around quicker. It is possible to buy one in Oxford or bring your own. Two things are important regarding bicycles: they must display a Hall tag (provided during Freshers’ Week) to confirm that you can park it on the Hall’s premises. Secondly, you must use a D-lock; no other locks are secure enough.

**Don’t forget:** Bank details/cards, chequebook, NHS and National Insurance cards, medical details!

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**International Students**

Moving to Oxford from a different country can be a daunting step to take. The Hall provides you with as much support as possible, first by providing you with a tight knit community, but also by other practical measures. Below is a list of some advice our current international students’ would like to give:

**Open a bank account as soon as possible** | It may seem like an obvious step to take, but it is well worth booking an appointment with a bank in advance, before the term starts. Banks are a lot busier at the start of term, so it is worth booking an appointment before term begins so that you avoid getting this crucial step delayed due to the how busy the back are. Also remember to check you have brought the correct paperwork, but also requested the documents you need from the Hall or University too.
International Students Orientation | Oxford provides international students with a lot of support, so it is well worth attending the international students’ orientation.

NHS | It is beneficial to familiarise yourselves with the NHS if you are not already familiar with it. You will all meet the College doctor during Fresher’s week, and he will be welcome to answer any questions you have. In the meantime, this website is helpful for learning about how to use the NHS http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/uk-visitor/Pages/access-services-in-England.aspx

Societies | There are also many country based societies you can join if you feel homesick, which are more informal.

Extra-Curricular

Students at St Benet’s are involved in many clubs, societies and activities around the University. If you are interested in any of the following, speak to the relevant person (see the table) who will be very happy to help you get started. For anything else, ask a member of the JCR Committee, who will help you find out more.

Sport

In previous years, Benetians often decide to play for other colleges in an assortment of sports. We have connections with rugby at Keble, hockey at Hilda’s, cricket at Somerville and many more. However, as Benet’s grows this is the right time to start thinking more about producing teams of our own and encouraging a more consistent and enjoyable sporting scene within Benet’s itself. Of course, that does not mean you have to play sports for Benet’s, but that we hope to be providing you with more and more sporting opportunities from Benet’s itself as time goes on. Everyone is encouraged to try out for the Blues’ teams; if you are keen to play any sport at any level, just let our Sports Secretary know, he’ll set you up.

Benet’s football can only be described as an institution, albeit a recent one. In the past years the feisty Benet’s XI has entered the Cuppers competition and pulled out some remarkable performances. This year we will playing in the Oxford Colleges League, meaning regular fixtures. Henri Du Perier last year was playing football in the university teams’ set-up. Beyond football, we have rugby player Charlie Poznia winning a blue in Rugby, and Henry - representing the University Rugby seconds beating Cambridge, along with Eleanor Lambert gaining a blue in Lacrosse.

For those just keen on keeping fit, there are a number of local gyms with good student deals, and the Boat Club has rowing machines on site, and runs regular sessions at the boathouse gym to which all hall members are welcome.

For any other sporting inquiries, please contact Ned Seagram (edward.seagram@stb.ox.ac.uk)
Music

Whatever instrument, whatever standard, there is something for you in Oxford!

Hi everyone, I’m Tasha! Being in a small place like Benet’s gives you the brilliant opportunity and motivation to really explore what the university has to offer music wise. Although getting involved can seem a little daunting, all the while dealing with a new work load and trying to settle in, there is still time to continue/rekindle/discover a love for music.

There really is everything here; bands of ever genre; orchestras; chamber groups; musical theatre; societies; choir; acapella – you name it, Oxford probably has it, and Benetians are taking over! (Remember ‘Out Of The Blue’ from Britain’s got talent 2011, or the ‘Alternotives’ from BBC’s Pitch Battle?) Music is also hugely important within Benet’s, from after dinner sing-alongs, to the Carol Service. Most excitingly, as of last year Benet’s has started its very own choir!
Perhaps the musical highlight of the year is the Smoker (talent show) every Hilary term. My personal highlight from this was the Benet’s girls (The Bennettes) performing ‘It’s raining men’.

There is a piano in the Benet’s main building, and one in Norham Gardens in the blue room. The blue room can also be booked as a practise room.

If you think you might be interested in taking part in musical life, please get in touch! I am more than happy to answer any questions you have, advice you about time commitments and audition processes, and put you in touch with the relevant people.

Looking forward to meeting you all in October!

Natasha Frank
natasha.frank@stb.ox.ac.uk

And for everything else... | At Freshers’ Fair in Freshers’ Week you will be introduced to all kinds of sports and societies you may want to join. There is quite literally a society for everyone here in Oxford.

A list of what’s on offer can be found at: http://ousu.org/freshersfair/
Welcome to Benet’s and well done on achieving your offer! Here at the Hall, we’re firm believers that size doesn’t matter; it’s what you do with it that counts. This is true most of all for any of those who ‘dream of one day playing the Dane’, for at Benet’s we traditionally have a thriving drama scene.

As freshers, your first opportunity to tread the boards will come with ‘Drama Cuppers’, a competition in the first term which involves putting on your own (short) play in the Burton-Taylor Studio. This is always a huge amount of fun, and because of the supportive nature of Benet’s you are guaranteed a full house for your performance.

Within the Hall, we have a number of events each year. At the end of Michaelmas Term a couple of years ago we staged a Pantomime and hope to do the same this year! There is also a Smoker, a traditional variety show where Benet’s students perform an array of different acts. Finally, we have our pièce de résistance, the Garden Play, which takes place in Trinity term. This is always a highlight of the calendar, and last year we performed ‘Fatal Loins’ by Perry Pontac – a comedy representing an alternative ending to the famous story of ‘Romeo and Juliet’.

Whether you see yourself as the next Olivier or Mirren, or you fancy yourself as a playwright, or even just in a supporting role backstage, there are plenty of opportunities at Benet’s, and I strongly encourage you to take part!

Outside the Hall, there is ample opportunity for anyone wishing to get into the Oxford theatre scene too. Come and have a chat and make sure to sign up to the OUDS (Oxford University Drama Society) newsletter at the Fresher’s Fair, and don’t be afraid to get out there and audition!

Ned Seagrim
edward.seagrim@stb.ox.ac.uk
Rowing at Oxford is a necessity. Well... almost! It is at least a longstanding tradition at St Benet’s. We have had a boat on the river since the 1920s, but it was 2017 that saw the introduction of our first Women’s crew and a blades win. The boat club is excited for our continued success in both the Men’s and newly formed Women’s squads. Whether you seek a leisurely paddle down the Isis’ gentle meanders, or fancy your hand at the annual selection trials for the Great Britain squads, Benet’s has the expertise to set you on the right path. I, Caitriona Quigley, and Leone Astolfi are the Women’s and Men’s Captains and will be your two main points of contact for rowing related business.

Unlike larger colleges, the Boat Club is fully integrated with Hall life, as most of the Hall has had the opportunity to row in an all-powerful Benet’s eight at some point in their university career. Breakfast will traditionally open to the hungry throngs of Benet’s rowers post-outing, and in the early mornings you will always find a friend or two at the front door waiting to head down to the river together. The Boat Club aims to have social events weekly which are a great way to relax with each other and even meet new people from other colleges. Every term ends with a Boat Club dinner, which a large proportion of the Hall attends, and at which prizes are awarded, speeches are shared, and memories are made.

There are three races each year, one per term: Christ Church, Torpids, and Summer Eights. As well as fielding strong crews in each event, we also regularly achieve Oxford’s (un)officially largest supporting crowd. If the sight of dozens of your friends running down the river bank screaming your name doesn’t get the blood pumping, then the appearance of Benet’s monks, habits flowing, shouting at you to crush Regent’s Park College, surely will. Christ Church Regatta is towards the end of first term, and will be your first race, open only to novices. Torpids and Summer Eights are the legendary bumps races, where the aim is to chase and ram your opponent crews - it was at Eights two years ago that our Men’s crew caught a crew on every day of racing, winning “blades”, and where last year our first Women’s crew qualified to a bumps regatta.

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If you have any questions about rowing at St Benet’s or wider Oxford rowing opportunities, feel free to email me or Leone (caitriona.quigley@stb.ox.ac.uk and leone.astolfi@stb.ox.ac.uk) We have something for everyone at Benet’s, so even if you’re just curious, or are coming from many years’ experience, do get in touch. I look forward to meeting you all very soon,

Caitriona Quigley
St Benet’s Hall Boat Club Women’s Captain
Hi I'm Jenny, a third year Arabist. I'll be the Christian Union rep for Benet's this year. In first year at Benet's I got involved in college rowing, OICCU and attended St. Ebbe's church, I enjoyed the challenge of taking up Arabic and generally had a great experience at Benet's (I hope you all feel the same at the end of your year!) I spent my second year abroad in Jordan and likewise had a great time getting involved in local church-life, social-life and immersing myself in the beautiful Arabic language. I'm so excited to be back in Benet's and be a link for anyone interested in exploring the claims of Jesus to the CU community both at college-level and university-wide.

Benet's (being pretty small) and Somerville (which is conveniently close-by) have a joint CU, we meet weekly to chill out, study the Bible together and pray for our colleges. We have breakfast together on Sunday mornings before people head out to their different churches and dinner on Wednesdays every other week. As a CU we're eager to give every student in Oxford the opportunity to hear and respond to Jesus' message, so we put on college events and the uni-wide society hosts events all over Oxford throughout the year- all generally involving free food and great discussion topics. Whether you're interested in these things or not, I look forward to meeting you and hope you're excited to join Benet's.

Love, Jenny
Dear Benetian Freshers,

The Oxford Companions of the Order of Malta are students of the University who give their time and energy to serve the poor and marginalised in Oxford. We work particularly with homeless people, elderly people, and children with special educational needs.

The Order of Malta (more formally known as the Order of St John) was founded in Jerusalem more than 900 years ago and has devoted itself to the service of poor and sick people, Our Lords the Poor, ever since. It is a Catholic religious order (of which Fra’ John, the Hall’s Classics Tutor, is a member); but those who volunteer with us come from a wide range of religious and non-religious traditions and backgrounds.

Our flagship project is a drop-in centre for homeless people, which operates on Saturdays all year round. And during term time we also operate soup-and-sandwich runs and breakfast runs; we work in care-homes; we organise workshops at the Ashmolean for children with special educational needs; and we arrange talks and training. Every year we also organise Christmas and Easter lunches for our homeless guests. The way we arrange things means that our volunteers don’t have to commit to regular involvement on a particular day, but without volunteers we obviously couldn’t achieve anything at all.

Benetians have played key roles in the work of the Companions since we started in Oxford in 2011: they have served on the Committee, organised projects, and in particular have made a huge success of the soup-runs for homeless people that have been operated out of the Hall three times a week. (The Hall kindly gives us the soup.)

There will be opportunities during Freshers’ Week to learn more about what we do. We hope very much that you will consider helping to continue this wonderful Benetian tradition of serving Our Lords the Poor in Oxford.

facebook.com/COMOxford

Senior Member: Fra’ John Eidinow (john.eidinow@stb.ox.ac.uk)
President: Jamie Wilmore (jamie.wilmore@trinity.ox.ac.uk)
Secretary: Jonathan Henry (jonathan.henry@sjc.ox.ac.uk)
In mediaeval Oxford, most of the Colleges were founded as religious houses, places of both study and prayer. This strong tradition survived the Reformation, and the chapels of the Colleges and their choirs are one of the most distinctive features of Oxford University today.

While students at St Benet’s practise any religion and none, the Hall is a home for Benedictine monks and priests, so this page gives some information about its Monastic life. More information can be found on the website here: http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/monastic-community.

The Monastic Community

St Benet’s Hall is more than a Permanent Private Hall of the University; it is also a house of studies for Benedictine monks, and, uniquely in Oxford, a residence for both lay and monastic students. In addition to the Prior and Chaplain (Fr Oswald), there is currently one student monk in residence (Br Yarek). Most of the monks belong to monasteries in the English Benedictine Congregation (EBC), which was established in AD 1216 and re-founded in AD 1607. Throughout its long history, the EBC has always been dedicated to the Christian instruction of the English people, either in education or missionary work. St Benet’s Hall is therefore part of a long and continuing tradition of Benedictine scholarship and education in England.

Monastic Life in the Hall

The monks at St Benet’s Hall live according to the Rule of St Benedict, who founded the abbey of Monte Cassino in AD 529. Their daily life is structured around the Mass and the Divine Office, which is a cycle of daily prayers said by priests and religious throughout the world. They also set aside at least an hour each day for private prayer and for Lectio Divina, the prayerful reading of the Scriptures and other spiritual texts. They spend the rest of the day in labour, common meals, and recreation. The goal of this communal life of prayer and work is to grow in holiness in order to reach the desired end of union with God. As members of the Hall,
you are welcome to participate in the spiritual life of the monastic community, should you wish to.

**Chapel Service Times**

The Divine Office is said daily in the Chapel during Full Term. All services are open to every member of the Hall. The Chapel also remains unlocked to enable quiet contemplation and prayer outside of the service times. Daily mass is said in English, with Latin plainsong. Sunday Mass is said in English with Latin plainsong, a homily, and English hymns. The Sacrament of Confession is always available from the Chaplain upon request.

- **7.00 a.m.** Matins and Lauds (*Monday to Saturday; recited in English*)
- **7.30 a.m.** Mass (*Monday to Saturday*)
- **10.00 a.m.** Sunday Mass (*Sunday*)
- **6.30 p.m.** Vespers (English) (*Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday*)
- **6.30 p.m.** Sung Plainsong Vespers (Latin) (*Tuesday, Thursday, & Sunday*)
- **9.00 p.m.** Sung Compline (English)

![Icon of St Benedict](image-url)

*Icon of St Benedict painted for St Benet's by recent alumnus Fr Alex Echeandia. It hangs on the main staircase at 38 St Giles. St Benedict is holding the Rule in his left hand. You will find a similar image at the bottom of the St Benet’s homepage – refresh the page a few times and St Benedict may surprise you…!*

Useful information can be found on the following websites:

- St Benet’s website: [www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/chapel](http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/chapel)
- Oxford University Catholic Chaplaincy: [www.catholic-chaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.catholic-chaplaincy.org.uk)
- Oxford University Chaplaincy pages (covering all religions represented in the city): [http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/chaplaincy](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/chaplaincy)
### Useful Websites

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<td>St Benet’s Hall</td>
<td><a href="http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk">www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Oxford</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk">www.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOLO (library search and loans)</td>
<td><a href="http://solo.ouls.ox.ac.uk">http://solo.ouls.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Nexus (email)</td>
<td><a href="https://nexus.ox.ac.uk">https://nexus.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxford University Student Union</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ousu.org">www.ousu.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weblearn (subject resources)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.weblearn.ox.ac.uk">www.weblearn.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw">www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info">www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxford contact search</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/gsearch/">http://www.ox.ac.uk/gsearch/</a></td>
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### Welfare

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<th>Service</th>
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<tr>
<td>The University Counselling Service</td>
<td>11, Wellington Square 01865 270300 <a href="mailto:reception@counserv.ox.ac.uk">reception@counserv.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Leaver, Hall Doctor</td>
<td>Jericho Health Centre Monday - Friday 8.30am - 6pm Tel: 01865 311234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightline</td>
<td>01865 270270</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Samaritans</td>
<td>01865 722122 or 08457 909090</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Drugs Helpline</td>
<td>0800 776600</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQ Switchboard</td>
<td>020 7837 7324</td>
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<tr>
<td>OUSU Student Advice</td>
<td>01865 288461</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thames Valley (Oxford) Police</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>OU Security (emergency)</td>
<td>01865 289999</td>
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<tr>
<td>OU security (all other calls)</td>
<td>01865 272944</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHS Direct</td>
<td>111</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Benet’s Hall Office</td>
<td>01865 280556</td>
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### Hall Email Addresses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Peter Davidson – Interim Master</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>tbc - Alumni Relations Officer &amp; PA to the Master</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Jason Bean – Maintenance &amp; Housekeeping Manager</td>
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<td>Dr Frances Reynolds – Presiding Fellow &amp; DoS Oriental Studies</td>
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<td>Dr Yvonne Cornish – DoS History</td>
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<td>Fra’ John Eidinow – DoS Classics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Mary Marshall – DoS Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Alex Barker – DoS Politics</td>
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Oxford language can be rather confusing to the uninitiated, with people happily using terms without ever realising how ridiculous they sound to everyone else. So that you can converse successfully in Oxford, we’re pleased to present a dictionary of the most common terminology. Once you’ve grasped this part of the language we will try to teach you ‘Boatie’, otherwise you won’t be able to understand what rowers are saying…

The Oxford-Benet’s Dictionary

ALUMNUS: A former student of the Hall/University.
BALL: Like school leavers’ ball, but three times more expensive. Plenty of food, drink and music; though.
BATTLES/BATTELS: College bills. Paid at the beginning of each term. Include your rent and such like.
BENETIAN: A member of St Benet’s, student or staff (for LIFE).
BLUE: Oxford’s sports teams/the award for participating in one.
BOATIE: Rower.
BOD: abbr., Bodleian Library.
BOD CARD: Much more than just a library card. It has a photo on it which is supposed to look like you, and it lets you into libraries and other buildings. It also gets you student discounts in many local shops.
BOPS: What happens when you have a bunch of students with nothing to do on a Saturday night, all the pubs have kicked you out and you have a basement available with a few disco lights and a sound system? That’s right. Expect sweatiness, cheap cocktails and fancy dress.
BR: abbr., Brother. A monk who has not (yet) been ordained a priest (Father, Fr.).
CALEFACTORY: This is the formal sitting room shared by senior and junior members of the Hall. If you want a boring explanation of why it’s called the Calefactory, please do ask.
COLLECTIONS: 1. Exams held at the beginning of term to test you on work from the last term. Don’t worry, none of these until January at the earliest. 2. End of term oral reports given by your tutor to the Master, in your work from the last term. Don’t worry, none of these until January at the earliest. 2. End of term oral reports given by your tutor to the Master, in your
DR: abbr., Doctor.
GUEST: Any official inter-collegiate competition.
ENTZ: abbr. “entertainments”.
FRA: Ask Fra’ John.
GAUDY: College celebrations for alumni and current members. St Benet’s hosts one every other year, the next will be in November 2019.
GERARD’S CHARIT-TEAS: Teas organised by the JCR to raise money for charity; named after the alumnus of the Hall who began them, Gerard Miles.
GUEST NIGHT: Benet’s hosts one a term for distinguished guests. Four courses, plus wine and port. Gowns are worn - it’s fancy!
HILARY TERM: Spring term.
JCR: abbr. Joint Common Room. A smaller version of a student union. Meetings are open to members of college to go and discuss issues. It is also our sitting room, and has a TV. In most colleges, ‘JCR’ means Junior Common Room, as opposed to ‘MCR’ (Middle Common Room) for graduates.
MATRICULATION: Induction ceremony for new members of the University held in the Sheldonian Theatre. You turn up in subfusc, get spoken at in Latin for a while, and then leave as a member of the University.
MICHAELMAS TERM: Autumn term.
MODS: abbr. Moderations. Some subjects have these in the first year. Others, like Classics, in the second. Others don’t have them at all. They’re exams. You should try to pass them.
MST/MPHIL: Graduate degrees. Master of Studies/Master of Philosophy.
NORHAM GARDENS: The location of the Hall’s second building.
NOUGHTTH WEEK: The first week of term. Term weeks are numbered 0-8, and begin on Sundays.
OSB: It’s written after monks’ names and means ‘Order of St Benedict’.
OUSU: abbr. Oxford University Student Union.
OXFORD UNION: Not the same as OUSU. The Oxford Union is a members only club with a bar, library etc. World famous for its debates and speakers. Also home to the Purple Turtle nightclub. “The Union” will always mean this, rather than OUSU.
OXON: abbr. If you see it after someone’s name, it means they have a degree from Oxford (sometimes replaced by Ox.).
PORT MEADOW: A meadow in north Oxford where we have our JCR picnic in the summer.
PREFS: Preliminary Examinations. See Mods.
PROCTORS: University officers with disciplinary powers.
PUNTING: Messing around on the river, propelled by a long pole liable to stick in the riverbed. More fun to come in Trinity term.
REFECTORY: This is our common dining hall where we eat.
RUSTICATION: Suspension of studies for a year. This is rare, and largely happens for academic reasons.
SCHOLAR: If you get a first in your mods or prelims you’ll become one, wear a different gown, and get some money from college.
SCHOOL: Exams. Usually refers to the final exams of a degree (‘Finals’). The Schools Dinner is a Hall celebration for finalists after their last exam.
SENDING DOWN: Rustication for life. Very rare.
SMOKER: The Hall’s annual talent show.
ST BENET: abbr. St Benedict.
SUB FUSC: This is what you wear for matriculation and exams. A dark suit with dark socks, or a dark skirt with black stockings or trousers with dark socks and an optional dark coat; black shoes; plain white collared shirt or plain white blouse; a black tie, white bow tie or black ribbon; mortar board (academic cap).
SUPERVISOR: The person who co-ordinates graduate study.
TAB: Cambridge student. From its Latin name Cantabriga, abbr. Cantab.
THE OTHER PLACE: University of Cambridge. A lame joke you’ll get bored of.
THE RULE: The Rule of St Benedict, from which a short abstract is read aloud before dinner, and according to which the monastic life is governed.
TORPIDS: Another rowing event, in Trinity term. Has slightly different rules from Eights.
TRINITY TERM: Summer term.
UNI PARKS: The University’s park, which is open to the public and is a short walk from St Giles. The Hall’s new building at Norham Gardens backs onto it.
ST BENET’S HALL
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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