ST BENET’S HALL · OXFORD

FRESHERS’ PACK 2019
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 about 24 undergraduates a year and about the same number of 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 talent show, a garden play, Pimm’s socials, cheese and wine nights, the weekly JCR Bar and much 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.

Leone Astolfi  JCR President
Hi freshers, to continue the welcome letter, let me introduce myself properly. I’m Leone, your JCR President, which means I coordinate the committee which organises student events in the Hall, and represent your views to the Hall and University.

I’m a third year historian, and other than the degree I occasionally forget I’m doing, I like to get involved in a bunch of things. Last year, I was the Benet’s Boat Club Men’s Captain, and the football captain as well as playing football for Brasenose College, and am part of the Oxford Law Society and the Oxford Union. Our experiences throughout the University, hopefully put me and the committee in the best position possible to support you.

As an Italian and international student, I am perfectly aware of the challenges (and excitement) of the transition from home to a new place. Thankfully, Benet’s is a great safe space and community, which you can enrich with experiences outside of college. I can imagine a lot of you are nervous about coming to Oxford and Benet’s specifically. It is important to remember that, it is not uncommon to have not applied here directly, so don’t worry about it if that’s the case. Also remember that you all deserve your place and everyone, from Tutors to students, is excited to have you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. Huge congrats on getting in Oxford, I can’t wait to meet you in October.

Hey! I’m Bartek your JCR Treasurer and responsible for the JCR’s spending, accounts, inventory, and finances. This also includes carrying heavy things and help run the JCR Bar. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you want to have a look at the JCR budget spreadsheets, or have any other questions.

I am in my second year of studying Philosophy and Theology, and besides studying, you can usually find me with my friends discussing history or playing Fifa. Otherwise I’ll likely be rowing
for Benet’s, kicking a ball about, or organising a one-off Benet’s team for a more uncommon sport. That said, you shall find many much better sportsmen at Benet’s, which despite its size has a multitude of Blues.

I came here from Dagenham, but I grew up in Poland. Whilst initially afraid I may not fit in, I couldn’t be more wrong. Not just the students but the staff at Benet’s too, make you feel appreciated and part of a real family. You got into the friendliest, most supportive college, with the cosiest atmosphere. When you come here, do not be intimidated - whatever background you are from, you will be made welcome. I am not just sweet-talking in saying that I am excited to meet you; everybody at Benet’s is a pleasure to be around.

See you soon!

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**Secretary**
Nadia Adal | nadia.adal@stb.ox.ac.uk | Sanskrit

Hi freshers!

I’m Nadia, the JCR Secretary and I study arguably the best subject oxford has to offer - Sanskrit. Being secretary means I take the minutes for the meetings and am responsible for general JCR admin. I also keep the most valuable document the JCR has - it’s constitution.

You’re all probably feeling nervous about coming to benets (or searching up exactly what benets is) so I’m free to talk to you all any time if you have any problems or concerns! Benets is an extremely friendly college and you’ll get to know everyone within your first couple of days, we’re all nice and approachable so you won’t have any problems making friends here!

See you soon!

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**Graduate Officer**
Servane Hardouin | servane.hardouin@stb.ox.ac.uk | MPhil Egyptology

Hi there, welcome to Benet’s!

My name is Servane and I’m the Graduate Rep. I am also in the 2nd year of my MPhil in Egyptology, studying the history & language of ancient Egypt. Besides that, I’m French and I come from Paris, where I did my BA in politics, law & economics.
As Grad Rep, it’s my job to bring any concerns or ideas graduate students have to the JCR committee, the Master, or other parts of the Hall administration. More generally, I’m here to support graduate students in their academic & social life in whatever way I can, and ensure that they feel part of the (amazing) community that is Benet’s. Although my job focuses on the grads, I am always available for any of you to come talk to me - whether seeking advice on grad life or just dying to share a funny drunk story.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, and I look forward to meeting you in October!

Welfare Officer
Caitriona Quigley | caitriona.quigley@stb.ox.ac.uk | Classics

Hello Hello, I’m Caitríona and I am your Female Welfare Officer, which basically means you can come and have a chat whenever you need anything.

If you want to know about me, I’m going into my third year studying Classics, and I’ve spent the past two years doing very little other than rowing. Now, though, my spare time is taken up with purchasing sanitary products and painkillers for the JCR, or arranging cupboards of contraception (I’m clearly very multitalented).

I’m very excited to get to know you all and I can’t wait to see you in October. If you’re worried or stressed about anything, don’t hesitate to get in touch (you can email or find me on facebook). There’s going to be a lot of change in your life over a very short space of time, so it’s totally normal to find it a bit overwhelming. Benet’s is so good at helping you through the process, and there’s a whole network of people who will be looking out for you, so if you need anything, all you’ve got to do is say. Otherwise, I hope you all enjoy the rest of your summer!

Welfare Officer
Jezian Tudor | jezian.tudor@stb.ox.ac.uk | Classics

Heya, I’m Jez, and for this year I am your Male Welfare Officer! I’m a second-year student of Oriental Studies and Classics from London/North Wales.

University can be a pretty awful place at times, and it might seem like there is no-one to go to. Luckily, St. Benets is actually an unusually pastoral community, where you’ll never fly under the radar. It is genuinely successful at creating a wholesome, friendly environment. Being in a small college, however, does create its own issues like being the subject of gossip, cliques or
feeling claustrophobic and worn of people. So while Benets is immensely cute and much better than not, like any place it’s good to have an awareness. So please, please, please talk to someone if there is ever a concern about mental health or literally anything else stressing you out. I am not a stranger to a great deal of things. I will always be an ear for them.

I look forward to meeting you all!

**Social Secretary and LGBTQ Rep**
Grace Beckwith | grace.beckwith@stb.ox.ac.uk | History

Hi freshers! I’m Grace, a second year historian, and I am one of your JCR social secretary and the JCR LGBTQ Rep. You’ll probably find me procrastinating in the calefactory, rowing, or in an essay crisis induced by too much procrastination and rowing.

As social secretaries, we help organise all JCR events and are essentially here to make sure you have fun. Benet’s might be small, but we have a well-established calendar of social events during the year, like the termly Benet’s Party (an absolute highlight). Outside of JCR events, there’s lots of informal fun to be had in Oxford. Our nightlife is much better and more varied than its reputation suggests - from the ever-popular Bridge and Park End, cheesy Fever, to the edgy Bully - and there’s plenty of non-alcoholic ways to socialise as well. Rory and myself will be around during Freshers’ Week to run club nights and their non-alcoholic alternatives, so if you have any concerns or questions, please talk to us. It’s also my job to keep you informed of any interesting social events coming up around Oxford (such as balls) so fire any questions about these my way.

As your LGBTQ Rep I am responsible for looking out for the welfare and interests of any JCR members who fall under the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer umbrella. I've found Oxford to be an open and welcoming place, and Benet's is no exception. It is certainly gayer than you’d imagine a Catholic college with monks to be! However, nowhere is perfect, and university can be isolating and lonely for some people, especially if you’re LGBTQ. I’m always happy to be a confidential listener, and I can point you in the direction of resources from the student union or the university-wide LGBTQ Society. On a brighter note, I’m also here to introduce you to the Oxford LGBTQ scene if that’s something you’d like - if you want some company in going to LGBTQ Soc events or nights out at Plush, let me know!

Enjoy the rest of your summer, I can’t wait to meet you all soon!
Hello Freshers, my name is Rory and I’ll be the other half of your social secretary alongside Grace. Without repeating anything Grace has already said, let me introduce myself.

I’m a second year reading History and beyond the JCR I’m the treasurer of the Doctor Who Society. It’s a great idea to join societies outside of the college to meet new people and indulge in your interests, no matter how obscure they are! You’ll get an opportunity to see and talk to the various societies in freshers week, but you can look online at a full list whenever.

Even if you don’t feel like joining any societies, in such a friendly and welcoming community there’ll be stuff to do with people all term, whether it’s Bridge on Thursdays or a quick pub trip to the Royal Oak. It’s wise to remember that the second and third years have all experienced what you will this year, so if you want any advice on work/social life balance or just have questions on your course generally (I had many), don’t keep quiet. We’re here to help and make sure your experience is even better than ours was. Enjoy!

Hello, congrats on your place and well done for getting into Benet’s! I’m James, and for this year I’ll be the Food and Environment Liaison Officer, so I’ll be sitting on the House Committee, where I can represent the students’ views on everything from potatoes to light switches.

If ever you have any questions, complaints or suggestions about the food, accommodation, or really anything about hall life, feel very free to come and have a chat and I’ll pass it on to the higher powers as soon as possible. As I’m sure you’ve heard, Benet’s is a hugely welcoming and supportive environment, but even so if you think there are any ways to improve the life of the hall do let me know.

Outside the JCR I’m a second year Classics and Orientalist from Oxfordshire – I also play trombone in a few of the OUMS ensembles and a New Orleans brass band, so I’m happy to answer any queries about university or smaller group music at Oxford too. I try when I can to fit in some hockey (including the newly formed St Benet’s Mixed XI!) and cricket in Summer, so let me (or Paul) know if you’re interested in university or college sport and we can get you sorted.
Hello, I’m Bulak. I’ll be your women representative for the JCR till the end of Hilary term 2020, and I am really looking forward to meeting you all! I am very excited for this year group to enter St. Benet’s Hall – finally, our little community will be co-ed right the way through!!

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 third year reading Arabic with Islamic Studies. 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 – think of me as a sort of excess welfare rep. But in the meantime, have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you all in October!

Hi! I’m Haewan, a third year PPEist and your BME rep for the year.

This basically means that I ensure that everyone from all different backgrounds is well represented, respected, and integrated within the Hall. As a part of this, I’ll be organising BMEals this year, so please let me know if you know of any good brunch places!

Other than that, I’m part of the wider welfare team in the Hall, so if you need any help and someone to talk to, do not hesitate to contact me!

I can’t wait to see you in October!
Sport’s Secretary
Paul Roddam | paul.roddam@stb.ox.ac.uk | PPE

Hello, firstly, I would like to congratulate all of you who have read this far into the freshers’ pack.

I am your JCR sports secretary. My job is to organise Benet’s and promote university-wide sport. Oxford has a huge range of sports from the common to those you probably haven’t yet considered, that will be on show at the fresher’s fair. We have a great deal of University sport participation at St Benet’s at all levels. We have one of the highest ratios of blues of any College of PPH in Oxford, such as rugby and lacrosse.

Benet’s also offers a range of college level sports. Our Rugby sevens team have won the cuppers tournament for the second year in a row. We also have a joint 15 rugby team with Keble that has a very strong Benets presence. During the first two terms we have our football team and then in the third term this year, we had our first mixed hockey team, which proved both popular and successful. I am also looking to introduce more sports into the Benet’s community so am very open to any ideas. Whatever sport at whatever level you have interested in taking up or continuing at Oxford please come to me with any questions.

Arts and Music Representative
Fintan Simmons | fintan.simmons@stb.ox.ac.uk | Classics

No doubt as freshers you will address yourselves valiantly to the pursuit of seeing how much alcohol can fit inside you, however I would suggest considering a few other options as well. In fact music is a lot like alcohol but better because its free and you can make it yourself without going blind. In any case it is probably best to tackle both and this can often be done simultaneously. In all seriousness the most valuable commodity at Oxford is time and it is crucial that you find a break from your studies.

At St Benet’s it is my job to assist our large group of talent in whatever they want to do (within reason) and to organise certain cultural events. These are things like our annual showcase ‘the Smoker’ and the Summer Garden play but are flexible year in year out depending on suggestions and appetite.

To make it easier this year for musicians and creatives to coordinate with one another we are setting up a St Benet’s arts and music Facebook page, which you will be invited to join. If you are searching for actors or an accompanist for a performance or needing some advice on where to practice or information about university competitions then this is the best place to find it. Although we are lucky to have many talented thespians and musicians we are a very friendly Hall and anyone that wants to perform or offer a suggestion will be heard. If you have any questions about Music, arts or literary opportunities before you arrive please don’t hesitate to email me.
The JCR is the student body at St Benet’s, made up of undergraduates, graduates, and monastic students, with elected or appointed officials. About twice a term, we meet collectively to discuss issues which affect you – ranging from biscuits to our representation with the governing body of the Hall!

The JCR also organises a lot of the social events that will become many of the highlights of your university experience. The JCR Bar for example is a weekly institution in the hall, which provides cheap drinks and a place of a communal meeting place. The Benet’s Party happens at the end of each term: in Michaelmas it sees the renowned Black Tie Christmas Party; in Hilary Term it often has a masquerade (Benetian Venetian); and in Trinity it is a Summer Garden Party, with Pimm’s and plenty of food and cheer.

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 1960s Hippie Peace and Love 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 Garden Play, “The Liar” by Pierre Corneille, 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!
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 copy of the *Handbook*, 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 and some graduates 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!)
Meals | All new undergraduate members of the Hall are expected to attend lunch and dinner in Freshers’ Week (0th week). After 0th 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 few like-minded student 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 undergraduate 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

### Weekdays
8:00am–9:30am Breakfast
12:30pm–1:30pm Lunch (Self-service)
3:00pm–4:00pm Afternoon Tea
7:15pm Dinner (Served)
(7 pm Tuesdays, guest speaker)

### Weekends
8:00am–9:30 am Breakfast
11:30am–12:30pm Brunch (Self-service, Saturday only)
1:00pm Lunch (Served, Sunday only)
7:00pm Dinner (Self-service)

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.

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 cozy and comfortable places to work. There is one library at the St Giles’ site, and another at Norham Gardens. The Librarian is Holly Dowse. 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](http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/library-regulations-borrowing)

**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** | Caitriona and Jezian 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 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. For graduate members, the Hall assigns an academic member of staff to be your College Advisor who is there to complement the role of your academic supervisor, but above all to look after your overall welfare. 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

**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](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).

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**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!

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.

Freshers’ Fair: Oxford provides international students with a lot of support, including special information stands at the Freshers’ Fair.
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-visitors/Pages/access-services-in-England.aspx

Extra-Curriculars

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
Despite being so small, Benet's is extremely successful in sports, and you’ll have loads of opportunities to get involved. The mindset when coming to Benet’s sports is that everyone gets involved, even if you are not an Olympian at a specific sport. For us to compete with the bigger colleges, we need everyone to get involved in the increasing Benet's teams.

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. Our newly created Mixed Hockey XI is incredibly popular, and will be a regular team next year. Our Rugby Sevens team has been incredibly successful and has won Cuppers for two years in a row! We are looking to expand the number of sports teams in college, so if you are keen to get anything started let us now!
Other than Benet’s teams, the JCR Committee strives to make sure that you can play the sport you want, at the level you want. We have ties with other college teams such Rugby XV at Keble, Cricket at Sommerville and many more. At University level, Benet’s has the highest number of Blues per people in college in the University. Last year, we had two rugby blues, a Lacrosse blue, a swimming blue, a horse riding blue and a taekwondo blue to name a few.

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 Paul Roddam (paul.roddam@stb.ox.ac.uk)

Music

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

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.

Benet’s music is quickly expanding. A great tradition at Benet’s is the Smoker (talent show) every Hilary Term. A wonderful highlight of the past few years was the Benet’s girls (The Bennettes) performing ‘It’s Raining Men’. We also have ties with St John’s Choir, and the St Benet’s choir sings three times a week in the chapel. We have many talented musicians including violinists, trombone players, organ and piano players.
As said before, to make it easier this year for musicians and creatives to coordinate with one another we are setting up a St Benet's arts and music Facebook page, which you will be invited to join.

For more details, please contact Fintan Simmons fintan.simmons@stb.ox.ac.uk

Drama

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.

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 'The Liar' by Pierre Corneille – a comedy illustrating the dangers of lying.

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!

For more details, please contact Fintan or Martha Harla (martha.harlan@stb.ox.ac.uk)
Boat Club

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 with the first women’s crew being introduced in 2017. This year saw for the first time three crews competing for St. Benet’s, as well as a blade winning men’s crew and a historic first (and second, and third) ‘bump’ for the women. The boat club is excited for the continued success of all our crews.

Unlike larger colleges, our boat club is fully integrated in Hall life, with most members of the Hall taking the opportunity to row at some point during their time here. Breakfast is frequently filled with hungry, post-outing rowers and you’ll always find someone to head down to the river with.

Throughout the year there is the opportunity to be involved in three main races, one a term. Christ Church Regatta is towards the end of first term and is a race only open to novices. Torpids and Summer Eights are the legendary bumps races in second and third term where the aim is to chase and ‘bump’ into the crew in front. Participation in these races is made better by St Benet’s having one of the largest supporting crowd of any college. If the sight of dozens of your friends running down the river bank in support doesn’t get your blood pumping, then the appearance of one of our monks, habit flowing, shouting support surely will.

The boat club also offers social events throughout the term which are a great way to relax with each other and even socialise with rowers from other colleges. Every term ends with a boat club dinner, which a large proportion of the Hall attends, with prizes, speeches, good food and celebrations for that terms success.

Whether you are experienced rower or a complete novice, whether interesting in a leisurely paddle down the Isis or fancy the annual selection trials for the Great Britain squads, St Benet’s is a great place to get involved with the sport.

As this year’s Men’s and Women’s Captains we are your main point of contact so, if you have any questions about rowing at St Benet’s, or wider...
Oxford rowing opportunities, and please feel free to contact us: Lucy Hubbard (lucy.hubbard@stb.ox.ac.uk) and Jake Liebers (jake.liebers@stb.ox.ac.uk). We are looking forward to meeting you all very soon.

Somerville-Benets Christian Union

Hi I’m Jenny, a fourth 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: Tom Channer (thomas.channer@stb.ox.ac.uk)
Secretary: Johnnie Furse (jonathan.henry@new.ox.ac.uk)
Monastic Life at St Benet’s

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>7.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Matins and Lauds <em>(Monday to Saturday; recited in English)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Mass <em>(Monday to Saturday)</em></td>
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<td>10.00 a.m.</td>
<td>Sunday Mass <em>(Sunday)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Vespers <em>(English)</em> <em>(Monday, Wednesday, Friday &amp; Saturday)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Sung Plainsong Vespers <em>(Latin)</em> <em>(Tuesday, Thursday, &amp; Sunday)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Sung Compline <em>(English)</em></td>
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*The motto of St Benet’s, the opening words of the Rule of St Benedict: ‘Listen, o child, to the precepts of the master!’ You’ll find it stamped in all the library books.*

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 Contacts

#### Useful Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>St Benet’s Hall</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>
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<td><a href="https://nexus.ox.ac.uk">https://nexus.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<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>NHS Choices</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a></td>
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<td>Oxford Health &amp; Welfare</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw">www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw</a></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Oxford contact search</td>
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#### Welfare

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<th>Service</th>
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| University Counselling Service | The University Counselling Service: 11, Wellington Square 01865 270300 rese
| Jericho Health Centre        | Dr Leaver, Hall Doctor Monday - Friday 8.30am - 6pm Tel: 01865 311234     |
| The Samaritans               | 01865 722122 or 08457 909090                                             |
| National Drugs Helpline      | 0800 776600                                                              |
| LGBTQ Switchboard           | 020 7837 7324                                                            |
| OUSU Student Advice          | 01865 288461                                                             |
| Thames Valley (Oxford) Police | 101                                                                      |
| OU Security (emergency)      | 01865 289999                                                             |
| OU security (all other calls)| 01865 272944                                                             |
| NHS Direct                   | 111                                                                      |
| St Benet’s Hall Office       | 01865 280556                                                             |

#### Hall Email Addresses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Richard A Cooper</td>
<td><a href="mailto:master@stb.ox.ac.uk">master@stb.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Stephen Rumford</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fr Oswald McBride OSB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Bernard Gowers</td>
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<td>Mr Jason Bean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms Holly Dowse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Frances Reynolds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Yvonne Cornish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fra’ John Eidinow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Mary Marshall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Nicholas Waghorn</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nicholas.waghorn@stb.ox.ac.uk">nicholas.waghorn@stb.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr George Bitsakakis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:george.bitsakakis@stb.ox.ac.uk">george.bitsakakis@stb.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Alex Barker</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alexander.barker@stb.ox.ac.uk">alexander.barker@stb.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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</table>
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/BATELLS: 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 presence.
COWLEY RD: An area in East Oxford with lots of international restaurants, bars and cafes, and home to the Cowley Road Carnival in summer.
CREW DATE: A sports team goes out for a social with another sports team, normally in fancy dress. They are a lot of fun.
CUPPERS: Any official inter-collegiate competition.
DoS: (Undergraduate) Director of Studies.
DPHIL: Oxford’s name for a PhD. Ask a graduate!
EIGHTS: A rowing competition in Trinity Term.
ENTZ: abbr. “entertainments”.
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.
NOUGHTH 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 Oxf.).
PORT MEADOW: A meadow in north Oxford where we have our JCR picnic in the summer.
PROCTORS: University officers with disciplinary powers.
PUNTING: Messing around on the river, propelled by a long pole liable to stick in the river bed. 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.
SCHOOLS: 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.
| **FRA'**: Ask Fra’ John. | **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 blouse; a black tie, white bow tie or black ribbon; mortar board (academic cap). |
| **GAUDY**: College celebrations for alumni and current members. St Benet’s hosts one in London on 9 November – look out for your invitation! | **SUPERVISOR**: The person who co-ordinates graduate study. |
| **GERARD’S CHARI-TEAS**: Teas organised by the JCR to raise money for charity; named after the alumnus of the Hall who began them, Gerard Miles. | **TAB**: Cambridge student. From its Latin name *Cantabrigia*, abbr. Cantab. |
| **GUEST NIGHT**: Benet’s hosts one a term for distinguished guests. Four courses, plus wine and port. Gowns are worn - it’s fancy. | **THE OTHER PLACE**: University of Cambridge. A lame joke you’ll get bored of. |
| **HILARY TERM**: Spring term. | **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. |
| **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. | **TORPIDS**: Another rowing event, in Hilary term. Has slightly different rules from Eights. |
| **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. | **TRINITY TERM**: Summer term. |
| **MICHAELMAS TERM**: Autumn 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. |