

ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE JCR

JCR Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: 27/02/2021 at 4pm via Zoom

Present: President (RC), VP (SS), Treasurer (KP), Communications (DL), Accommodation (LM), BME (SO), Disabilities (AA), Environment and Ethical (AD & AO), Fresher reps (DT & EG), Welfare (AM), Academic (CD), Access (ES), Charities (NW), Catering (JD & HP) Ents (AW & VM), International (JK), LGBT+ (MT & IW), Sports and Societies (RM), Women's and NB (GS)

Apologies for absence: Welfare (AB), International (AT)

Matters arising from the minutes of last meeting:

- Incorrect URL was included in the last minutes for the welfare hub and welfare resources, please find correct URL as follows:
www.caths.cam.ac.uk/students/welfare

News and Updates

Governing Body Meeting 26/02/2021

- You can still return back to college if personal circumstances require you to - however if you do choose to move back to Cambridge, you will not be allowed to return home for the Easter break.
- There are currently very few COVID cases at the University as a whole, however the college is still planning to continue asymptomatic testing until further notice.
- The McGrath centre now looks very spacious and airy and the stairs have been moved. The fellows car park now also has cabins.
- The Octagon at St Chad's is being looked into potentially being knocked down within the next 3 years to make room for more accommodation - but this is dependent on funding and time constraints..
- The Masters Fund is now open to all students, staff and fellows if they wish to apply to it. This is a 'catch-all' fund that can be used for anything not covered by another fund. Application can be found [here](#).

Accommodation Q&A Update

- LM (Accommodation) will soon be sending out an email with all FAQs answered regarding accommodation and balloting concerns. A further open meeting will be held on Tuesday 2nd March regarding accommodation therefore if anyone wishes to ask any questions, they are welcome to attend. The link will be posted on the JCR Facebook soon.

Access Able Scheme Update

- AccessAble is a platform where anyone with accessibility needs is able to check whether places they wish to attend will be able to accommodate these needs. Unfortunately it looks like Catz have not signed up to this scheme at the same time as other Colleges, which would've included a discount, despite the JCR Disabilities Officer's efforts. This doesn't mean they won't be signing up individually in the future. This is, however, more expensive to do. College were also looking at alternatives to Access Able. The college is looking into alternatives such as updating the current accessibility guide that is currently on the website [here](#). Any suggestions to improve this, in the meanwhile as we try and get College to sign up for a well-established scheme, will be very welcome.

FemSoc Events Update

- Friday 5th March Womens Aid will be conducting a 30 minute talk with details to follow on the Facebook page.
- There was a successful Drink and Draw that took place on Friday 26th February!
- International women's day is fast approaching on the 8th March so more events will soon be advertised!

International Officers Survey

- A form will soon be emailed/posted to gauge an understanding of how many people will be returning to Cambridge and issues they are concerned about or are currently facing.

Environmental and Ethics Update

- AO and AD (Ethical and Environmental) are currently working to get more of the

JCR actively involved in their aims. They will be introducing virtual welfare litter picks that will include weekly or fortnightly zoom calls and will be advertised very soon. These litter picks will be conducted in person next term if restrictions allow.

CamSU Sabbatical Officers election

- CamSU sabbatical officers elections will be held Monday 1st March and you can find candidates running for the roles can be found [here](#).

Issues Raised

Cambridge Period Project

- There is an open letter circulating colleges that is calling for free period products to be introduced in all faculty, college and departments building in both gender and gender neutral toilets allowing menstruating individuals to access these products in their toilet of preferred gender. There was a unanimous vote to sign this letter by the JCR, it can also be signed individually to gain momentum and can be found [here](#).
- As students are currently not in college, additional schemes of shipping these products to anyone who requires them are being looked into and a Facebook post will be put up shortly. If we are unable to do this, resources of where free menstrual products can be found will be signposted.

Email/Google Form to supervisors of Catz students regarding their thoughts on the Cambridge SU reading week

- Currently the facebook poll put up has 71 votes for the Reading week and 31 against, so the Catz JCR is leaning towards being in favour of the CamSU proposal.
- It is recognised that the reading week implementation would require further policing to make sure additional work is not set, however supervisors also are not keen on setting more work because they will have to mark it. There is a fair amount of support from supervisors themselves to implement a reading week.
- CamSU will potentially propose the introduction of a trial term in Lent 2022 which will allow the university to assess and students to voice any modifications that may be required.

- There will be a CamSU vote on the 15th March to represent the JCR's opinion on the implementation of this reading week, it will be based on the interest gauged from the Facebook poll.
- RC (President) will be emailing teaching fellows in Catz to obtain their opinions on this reading week as they are just as much affected as supervisors and students.

Suicide prevention training for Welfare/Liberation Officers

- Currently a few members of staff are trained in suicide prevention and AM and AB (Welfare) will be arranged for more members of the JCR committee themselves to obtain basic training (training program to be confirmed) as well. This will create more members of the Catz community that can be reached out to when an individual feels in need of such support.
- This will further allow individuals who are struggling to express their issues to members of staff comfortably, to be able instead to speak to the relevant liberation officers who will understand their concerns better.

Utilising Discord and other platforms with study sessions, social spaces etc

- Catz currently has a discord server that is a flexible platform for members of the Catz community to use and can be found [here](#), which has been used by former JCR officers to run events too.
- Advantages of this server include being motivated to work due to others watching, being able to meet other members of the college all possible without an admin having to administer the call itself.
- Some JCR officers believe it would be beneficial to use this for future events that may need to be held online.
- The JCR committee will also encourage use via scheduling in dedicated daily or weekly slots for an officer to be online and making the rest of the community aware of this via Instagram.

JCR Engagement - A general enquiry

- It has been noticed that engagement often decreases as members move up the years. We wonder whether this is a natural progression, or if it is an artefact of the fact that the Committee has no 3rd/4th years and few 2nd years!
- The JCR is attempting to find ways to include more of the 3rd/4th years (and in some cases 2nd years as well) in events that currently may be orientated more

towards 1st and 2nd years which may be fuelling the disengagement.

- Welfare officers are looking into creating spaces on the JCR Welfare pages to enable 3rd and 4th years to raise issues currently being addressed elsewhere (e.g. via Camfess), so that the JCR can be made aware and be able to help.

Charities Facebook

- NW (Charities) has created a new Charities Facebook page informing the Catz community on Charities related events and updates! The page can be found [here](#)

Exam Period extension concerns

- RC (President) and SS (Vice President) will be looking into addressing the concerns raised regarding rent increases from an Access point of view, if exams extensions do go ahead. It needs to be clarified under what circumstances exams are being extended and who it will apply to.
- If any individual has any concerns regarding funding and exam extensions, they can email their tutors. If they feel like their tutor is not addressing their concerns as they wish, or do not cooperate with them, any tutor or senior tutor within the college can be contacted. It must be noted that any tutor is everybody's tutor and a student can contact any tutor if they feel that their assigned tutor does not understand their concerns. A list of all college contacts can be found [here](#).

College provided Sexual Health supplies

- The LGBT+ officers, MT and IW, are currently within Cambridge, therefore if anyone has any sexual health supply requests please contact them directly [here](#).

Issues Not Raised

- Which rooms in college will be affected by construction noise going forward? - LM (Accommodations) will keep this issue in mind whilst preparing for ballot day. This can also be raised at the accommodation Q&A
- Confirmation that exams will not be changed back to in person now the University can see the roadmap for restrictions - SS (Vice President) has spoken to the SU who are confident that all exams currently planned to be online will remain online. It would be unfair to staff and students to change the arrangements again and more trouble than it's worth from a logistics and communications perspective.

Any Other Business If you have any suggestions or feedback you'd like to give the JCR, please get in touch by emailing [the Vice President \(SS\)](#) or using the [anonymous messaging platform](#).

DL, 2021-2022 JCR Comms Officer