

ST CATHARINE'S COLLEGE JCR

JCR Meeting Minutes

Date and Time: 08/05/2021 at 4pm via Zoom

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

Apologies for absence: Treasurer (KP), Ents (AW), Welfare (AM)

Matters arising from the minutes of last meeting:

News and Updates:

IT Meeting on Booking Systems

- Currently the trunk room, McGrath centre and court bookings are all on different platforms and management is split between College and the JCR
- RC (President) has been in contact with College and they are working on synchronising the platforms into one booking system for all booking needs.

Rent and Catering Charges meeting 16/03

- In line with CPI/RPI inflation, rent will be increasing 3.1% and food prices will be increasing by 2%.
- Maintenance loans also rise in line with inflation so a reminder for all to reapply for your student loans for next year if need be.
- As is ever the case, if you are in College, you will be asked to pay rent; if you are not in College, you will not.
- The Bursar asks that people who are in financial difficulty because of having to pay rent for longer periods of time (e.g. if stayed over the holidays due to COVID) apply for hardship funds as they have a lot of funding for this. They have less funding to cover rent rebates (as all funds are earmarked for certain purposes).

Discrimination Reporting 16/03

- Please refer to the PDF attached to RC (President) email from 09/04/2021 on the updates from this meeting.
- In summary, Catz recognises the unacceptable incident that occurred in college last year and CamSU are currently in talks with the college on miscommunication and choice of language to use when reporting.
- If anyone wishes to anonymously report any BAME related incidents that they experience fill in the form that can be found [here](#).

All Members Meeting 15/03

- The Motion to campaign for the Reading Week and term restructuring was passed in the CamSU. They are now lobbying the University to implement this.
- The CamSU are offering training to any members of the JCR Committee that wish to get involved in this.

Student Council Meeting 04/05

- A motion was passed on the creation of a Gender Expression Fund so now the CamSU will have its own Gender Expression Fund. Catz already have one, which you can find details of here:
<http://jcr.caths.cam.ac.uk/current-students/finance-bursaries-and-assistance/>
- Two years ago the 9% of Catz staff were paid below the living wage however via campaigning, now all of Catz staff are paid above the living wage.

College Forum 05/05

- CHOP (Cambridge Homeless Outreach Program) donations as an optional add-on to Hall meals probably won't happen, as after many conversations we and College favoured other routes that might get more uptake. For instance, we could have optional donations on formals, or the Street Aid contactless giving point (see below).
- NW (Charities) is in contact with Peterhouse about how they managed to implement a Street Aid contactless giving point in College.

Black Lives Matter Vigil

- SO (BAME) is currently in conversation with College and other BME Officers to organise a vigil for Black individuals killed by police brutality.
- This is being organised for the 25th May, on the first anniversary of the death of George Floyd.
- Any artwork, music or other sentimental pieces to contribute to the vigil are being welcomed.

Time Team 20/04

- This is a team of 4 made up of the JCR President (RC) and three first year historians who are currently looking at Catz Archives to learn more about the history of Catz JCR.
- This will aid in the creation of a new blog section in the new JCR website outlined below.

Website Meeting 27/04

- RC (President) and DL (Comms) have been creating a new JCR website over Easter; its expected launch is in summer this year. It will be largely based upon the old website with some restructuring of some sections and updated versions of others.
- LM (accommodations) will be looking into creating a PDF Accommodation Gallery to assist freshers and on ballot day to allow room choosing easier.

General Estates Meeting 28/04

- The implementation of Caddy's to compost and use for everyone who signed up, there has been great uptake with over 25 households having done so at mainsite and many more at Chad's and elsewhere!

Central Space/Sherlock Court Issues

- Please see under Issues Raised

Gym - Keeping it clean and Women's hour

- There is now a women's hour everyday at the following times:
 - Mondays/Wednesdays/Friday: 09:15-10:30

- Tuesdays/Thursdays: 07:45 - 09:00
- If uptake is not great then it will be reverted back to normal use.
- On a similar note, CamSU has also made a motion to make sure university wide gyms have women and non-binary hours.

Responsible Investment Meeting

- AD and AO (Ethical and Environmental) had a meeting with College regarding JCR banking with Barclays, following previous divestment conversations. Any transitions are still under progress. AD, AO (Ethical and Environmental) and KP (Treasurer) are looking into switching from Barclays to another bank, potentially in conjunction with many other JCRs.

Issues Raised

Accommodation meeting about rent reductions

- LM (Accommodation) and some affected students had a meeting with College regarding disruptions due to building works.
- As before, building works unfortunately won't be stopped for the Quiet Period because the site cannot be left half-done, the builders and equipment can't go off work temporarily and wait for the exams to be done without needing significant compensation, and also the works would then overrun into Michaelmas.
- However, there are many options that the JCR have suggested to mitigate the effects. College have agreed to follow through on many action points.
- These include:
 - Providing a schedule of the work timings to increase transparency so that students can plan around particularly the use of the hydraulic drill;
 - College reminding builders to minimise unnecessary noise - so please get in touch with operations.director@caths.cam.ac.uk if you believe there is unnecessary noise e.g. builders singing early in the morning, etc.
 - And starting at the allocated 9am instead of before. Again, please get in touch with operations.director (email above) if there is significant noise before 9am. She will prompt them and tell them to stop whenever she hears of this happening.
 - To enforce the 9am start time, College have also called in high-level bosses at the contractor's firm to patrol the site in the early morning to ensure that the start time is 9am.
 - College are looking into the ear defenders that the workers use, as they

must be fairly heavy duty and effective at blocking out noise. Either the JCR or College can then purchase these for individuals who feel they would like them to effectively block out all noise.

- There are quiet (or quieter) spaces around College for working that have been set up. The Upper Octagon and Rushmore Room are open, as is the Library. LM (Accommodations) did point out that the McGrath is incredibly loud, though that is also open; we are looking into swapping the McGrath study space for the Ramsden Room, which is quieter and also very large. We will update on this in the near future. *(NB: the Computer Room at Chad's is very nice, too. - RC)*
- Rooms are bookable for sitting exams which are silent. Many Wolfson Court rooms are being booked out for Catz students to sit their exams away from all the noise. However, LM (Accommodation) did point out the common issue that exams are 6, 8, or 24 hours, and sitting an exam for this length of time without having to commute halfway through to your own bathroom or kitchen etc. might be difficult and a waste of exam time. However, not much can be done about this. If there are specific ways people feel we could improve the Wolfson Court rooms for sitting exams, please let us know.
- We will look into moving the Quiet Hour of the building works. At the moment, no building occurs from 12:30 to 1:30. This is not necessarily optimal because this is the lunch hour for students, so relatively few students are working at these precise times. Lorenzo pointed out that it would be better if the Quiet Hour were moved slightly earlier or later so that there was a quiet period in which to work.

L and M Accommodation concerns

- Following the recent email to vacate L and M blocks before the 23rd June, concerns have been raised from both 1st and 3rd years currently living there. There was an ultimatum to either a) vacate their rooms and go home by this date, or b) to move into an alternative room for the period lasting until the rent agreement ends. In either case, their compensation would be 5 days' worth of rent repaid.
- We take the view that this is unfair to all, and especially the 3rd year finalists who will either spend their last week in Cambridge in an alternative room or at home. The JCR opposed this development in very strong terms and is working with the College to solve the issue.
- RC (President) has emailed College asking for a variety of alternatives to be

considered to this, including for the work to be postponed a further week and thus infringe on Michaelmas, where there is less damage to be done. Further updates will be communicated.

NB from RC for those students affected by the move:

Honestly, I'm not quite sure what happened here. Most of those in L & M will know of the developments thus far. The options I have put forward for consideration are:

- *We look into condensing the renovation works so they take less time overall;*
- *We move the works backwards by a week and find alternative accommodation for those who would otherwise move in on the 2nd October for a few days;*
- *Rather than alternative accommodation, we ensure that the accommodation is ready despite the renovations not quite being finished (which I am sure is realistic, as at this point literally 99% of the works will be done - but tbc)*
- *Something else - please contact me if you have any other ideas as to how to manage this!*

So far, College have been receptive to my objections on behalf of those in L & M, which I appreciate, and they have agreed to work with me on solutions. However, they did mention that it had taken weeks of fighting with the contractors already to move the building works back this far, so it will certainly be difficult. I am, however, holding out hope!

If there's more specific things that I should know about certain situations that people have that are added difficulties, please do make me aware of them. I am holding a preliminary meeting with College on Wednesday lunchtime, and future meetings may include an open meeting for students who are currently in L and M to air various issues and discuss them directly with College. But there is a lot that will be confirmed. Keep an eye out for future communications from me, and in the Minutes next week, where I will probably discuss this further.

Noise at St Chad's

- College has made contact with the Primary School regarding the breaktime noise suggesting that they either: a) encourage their students to be quieter and considerate or b) move to the opposite end of the field.
- RC (President) will follow up and any updates will be communicated. *(Another NB from RC: I might go over and talk to a teacher at some time soon, if I see*

one, to check on the school's response to College's email, and will report back.)

Social Media policy

- There is now a new social media policy as raised in the Governing Body meeting. It can be found [here](#).
- A reminder was given to all JCR Officers to comply with it on their various social media channels.

Request for more chilled events this term

- NW (Charities), AW and VM (Ents) are under talks to put together an outdoor cinema sometime after the 17th May on Catz Pitches where all ticket funds collected will go to the charity fund. Details upon confirmation will follow.
- AB and AM (Welfare) are also considering multiple ideas with details upon confirmation to come in the near future.
- Current events already underway include the Welfare 'Tea@3' and weekly yoga that are free to attend! The Welfare Team walks to Ely will be returning soon as well.
- There is an intercollegiate swap event under organisation by the Ents officers between 3 colleges on the 25th May. Details to follow.
- SO (BAME) will be contacting other BAME officers universitywide to look into events that can be organised for BAME students as well.
- If you have any other ideas for fairly chill, exam-de-stressing events, please get in touch with us via the Anonymous form or elsewhere!

Fundraising for Oxygen Supply in India

- Oxford and Cambridge students have come together to set a £50000 donation target to help fund the shortage of oxygen supply in India, of which they are £15000 short and societies universitywide are now seeking help from JCR's. The link to donate can be found [here](#).
- NW (Charities) will be looking into how the JCR could follow in Selwyn's footsteps and donate to the cause as well.
- If you or your family have been affected by Covid-19, please reach out to the following support services: Student Advice Service, University Counselling Service, Your GP and the Welfare team.

Issues Not Raised

- Octagon WiFi - submitted an IT ticket about the Wi-Fi in the Octagon (the link for this system is in our bio on Instagram as well as other places, you can fill it in if there are ever any Wi-Fi problems around college). Turns out there was a faulty Wi-Fi point in the Octagon but it should be fixed now.
- Sherlock Court grass - Following the email we just had (22/04/21) it seem the Sherlock court situation is temporary - the Master' Lodge is being used for households in isolation and Sherlock court will be back soon once the grass has recovered
- Library - unfortunately we can't increase the capacity of the Library right now, but McGrath is coming into action next week with 19 potential seats in there. The Library will increase capacity as soon as possible!

Any Other Business

Catz Allotment

- There is a new gardening society which has started recently with all work being carried out in Catz Allotment. It is low commitment and anyone is welcome to come along. The Instagram page can be found [here](#).

Reimbursements

- Reimbursements to the JCR Committee members who have spent money on JCR related expenses will be conducted soon.

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