



# St Hilda's College, Oxford



## *Alternative Prospectus*



**St Hilda's College JCR**

**Catherine Kola-Balogun, Access Officer**

# Welcome to St Hilda's!

Welcome to the St Hilda's College Alternative Prospectus! This booklet will give you an insight into what living and studying at St Hilda's is like, and hopefully support you in making a well-informed decision about applying to the college. Contrary to typical preconceptions, life at Oxford is just as much about academic pursuits as it is about having a bustling and vibrant social life. True to its pioneering roots, the college accommodates both goals, as it embraces the ethos of excellence and equality while offering a friendly atmosphere, and communal spirit for its undergraduates. St Hilda's was the last all women's college established in Oxford, and the last to become mixed as of 2008. Since then, the college has proudly embraced a mix of male-female undergraduate/graduate students, offering them everything life at Oxford has to offer and much more! From the pastoral support, punting in the summer, free reign to walk on the grass, round tables in the dining hall, and our college cat (Teabag), the college is welcoming, friendly, progressive, and challenging in the best ways. We would be delighted for you to embark on your academic journey as part of the "*Hildabeasts*" family and make precious memories with us along the way! So what are you waiting for? Flip through and see more of the enriching opportunities the college has to offer!





# All About St Hilda's!

## Equality and Welfare

### A little bit of history

The College was founded in 1893 by Dorothea Beale, Principal of Cheltenham Ladies College. It was first established as St Hilda's Hall in 1896 and was named St Hilda's College in 1926 following a Royal Charter. The college became fully mixed in 2008. As of 2023, the college has 693 students, 410 of which are undergraduates.



When it comes to growth and personal development, St Hilda's offers excellent financial opportunities for students in need who are looking to develop their skills and competencies across various fields. From the arts to music, literature, and sports, the college offers a range of scholarships, bursaries, and grants to support its students. For further details on finances, please refer to the college and university websites.

### Location

St Hilda's College is located in tranquil grounds on Cowley Place adjacent to the River Cherwell near Magdalen College. The campus itself is extremely bio-diverse with lots of different garden spaces and 55 hectares of ancient woodland near the rest of the college facilities. Onsite accommodation is in the northwest and southeast of the college, and we also have a punting dock available for student use in the summer! The college is based in East Oxford near Cowley Road, a multicultural enclave that consists of an array of restaurants, shops, and pubs. The college is also conveniently close to the University Sports Centre on Iffley Road, making the short distance from the city centre worth it! Other colleges close to St Hilda's include: Magdalen, Merton, and St Edmund Hall. Therefore, despite St Hilda's reputation for being further off, it is walking distance away from the rest of Oxford and also near hidden paths found along Rose Lane and Christ Church Meadows, which lead to other colleges including Christ Church.

### Academic Excellence

We are an aspirational academic institution and this is reflected in the fact that 91% of St Hilda's students graduated with a 1st or 2:1 in 2023. We have also celebrated four undergraduate Gibbs Prizes for Classics, Modern Languages, and Psychology, Philosophy & Linguistics.

### Cycling

As many students choose to cycle to get around the city, the college offers bicycle racks onsite and where possible offsite as well. To help prevent theft, students are encouraged to purchase bike locks and register their bicycles with the college upon arrival. Further details about bike registration can be found on the college website. General guidelines about cycling in Oxford can be found on the University's website.

# First Year Accommodation

Accommodation is offered to all undergraduate students at St Hilda's College. Upon admission, a £250 damage deposit is paid before moving in and this remains with the college for the duration of your course. All first years are given onsite accommodation in either the Garden or Wolfson building, while a small minority are allocated to the South Building. Rooms in all three buildings have similar facilities including a sink, drawers, hanging space, a desk, a lamp, and a chair. Rooms are randomly allocated and all first-years are given 27-week contracts, meaning accommodation is only paid for during term time and students are required to move out during the holidays. Although moving out each term can be challenging, students can save a lot of money outside of term time and lockable storage is provided in the rooms so you can leave some items there. International student storage is also available! All rooms in the college are cleaned by a college scout, and there are three laundry facilities on the main college site, and these machines operate via card/mobile phone payment on an app called Circuit. Dryers and ironing facilities are also provided. Finally, to top it all off, the rooms have WIFI provisions which can be accessed via Eduroam, the university-wide network that operates both onsite and offsite. In terms of security concerns, the college lodge (receptionist area) is manned 24/7 with college personnel and CCTV.



Garden is one of the 4 undergraduate buildings on the main site in Cowley Place. It houses 50 first-year students across 3 floors. Each floor is shared between 12-14 students and contains kitchen and bathroom facilities (3 shared toilets, 2 shared showers). The kitchen contains 2 mini-fridges, a freezer, a kettle, an air fryer and a microwave. There are no ovens or hobs, but students can bring their electrical appliances including hot plates. For further details on electrical appliances, check the St Hilda's College Student Handbook, which can be found on the website. The building was designed by Peter and Alison Smithson and formally opened in 1971. It is a Grade II listed building. It has a very unique architectural style which features winding corridors and large windows.

## Garden Building

The building was designed by Peter and Alison Smithson and formally opened in 1971. It has a very unique architectural style which features winding corridors and large windows.



Wolfson Building consists of 55 student rooms on three floors with a kitchen on each floor. The kitchen area is shared between approximately 12-14 students, containing two mini-fridges, a grill, an oven, four hobs, a microwave, a toaster, and a kettle. Similarly to Garden, students can bring additional kitchen appliances. Wolfson Building also has a small laundry room with a washing machine and one dryer. The ground floor also has a larger kitchen with a table. Furthermore, the nurse's office is also situated on the ground floor of the building where students can meet the nurse and book appointments.

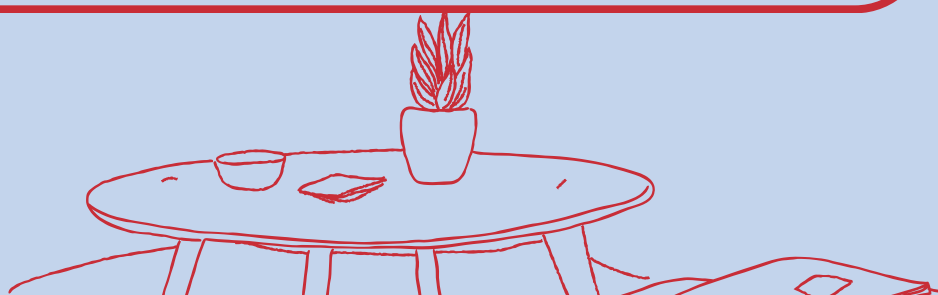
## Wolfson Building

The building was formally opened in 1964 by H.R.H Princess Margaret following a grant from the Wolfson Foundation.



South Building contains 17 student rooms arranged in clusters or along a corridor where most rooms overlook the river. There is a small kitchen with two mini-fridges, two ovens, four hobs, a microwave, toaster, and kettle. The building was officially acquired in 1949 and later remodeled.

## South Building





# Second-Year and Finalists' Accommodation



## Hall Building

Built in the 18th century, it is the oldest part of the College. Both the Kathleen Major Library and St Hilda's Archive are located in the building.



## Anniversary Building

This is one of St Hilda's newest buildings, completed in late 2020. The building includes a new entrance to the College and Porters' Lodge. It provides more student accommodation, teaching and social spaces, including a Middle Common Room and meeting rooms at the top of the building.



## Jocelyn Morris Quad

The Jocelyn Morris Quad comprises a cluster of student accommodation buildings on the junction of Iffley Road and Stockmore Street in Oxford. The buildings - Stockmore House, Rosalind Hill House (extension to Stockmore House), Catherine Fulford House (formerly Fulford House) and Sylvia Mann House (formerly 85/87 Iffley Road) - all share a central garden.

## 38 St Giles

The property at 38 St Giles is a pair of five-storey, Grade II listed Georgian townhouses with 1,500 square metres of floor space and currently offers 29 bedrooms, as well as extensive communal facilities. This site mainly hosts undergraduate students.

## Christina Barratt Building (CBB)

Christina Barratt Building was opened in 2001. The building was funded by a legacy left by Professor Rosalind Hill, a graduate of St Hilda's. It was named in memory of one of her closest friends. Finalist students are given the first option to live in the Christina Barratt Building.

These rooms offer a range of amenities, with some rooms holding single or double beds, and some rooms having en-suites, while others have shared bathrooms. These all have a desk, a lamp, two chairs, sinks, and lots of storage space with lockable cupboards for the holidays. In terms of laundry facilities, there are washers and dryers across the site. There are some in the Anniversary Building, the Christina Barratt Building (CBB), and a washer and drier in the Wolfson Building. The laundry rooms operate with a smart appliance called Circuit Laundry, and this allows students to wash and dry their clothes by making payment with their cards or contactless payment. Laundry prices as of 2025 are £2.80 for a 40 minute wash and £1.50 for a 60 minute dry. For more information on accommodation visit the college website.



# Food and Formals



St Hilda's Dining Hall is located in the South Building. It is the only college dining hall in Oxford to have round tables and allows for more sociable meals! The term menu for the Hall is updated weekly and put onto the College website. The kitchen staff offer a variety of meals and adequately cater to various dietary requirements and allergens. The ingredients are displayed prominently on a flat screen, allowing students to eat safely and make informed decisions at meal times!

Upay is the college's cashless card system and this allows you to monitor your food credits on your phone, check the weekly menu, and book formal dinners in advance! This app is linked to your University (Bod) card, which you tap to make payment, and allows students to top up at a minimum of £20. It is a very convenient app and makes getting meals that much easier! Meal credits of £150 are put up as part of your termly Battels (Invoice), which you can spend in the dining hall and top up when necessary. There is also a new meal plan option, which allows payment of £675 for 16 meals a week for Weeks 0 to 8.



During term time the Dining Hall usually offers three meals a day from Monday to Friday and each meal lasts for about 2 hours. Breakfast is usually served from 8 am, lunch from noon and dinner from 5.30 pm.

Exceptions include the weekend where only one meal is served in the day. On Saturday that meal is brunch from 11am-1pm and dinner on Sunday from 5.30-7:30 pm.



Formals! St Hilda's has its Formal Dinners on Wednesday for most weeks of the term. Students can book their tickets for the formal via Upay and also invite friends from other colleges to come along as guests! The formals are great fun as they allow students to engage in the Oxford tradition, dress up, take pictures, and make memories!





# College Facilities

## Junior Common Room and Old Law Library (OLL)



The Junior Common Room, or JCR, is the centre of student social life at St Hilda's and refers to confusingly both the undergraduate cohort (years 1-4) and our social space! As the main area used for undergraduate student events in the college, it is fully equipped with a pool table, table football, and a bar! The JCR is home to many events including Welfare Socials, Open Mic Nights, Gig Nights, BOPs (Big Organised Parties), and the JCR Committee Meetings!! There is always guaranteed to be some sort of event happening at the JCR during term time, and it's conveniently near the library as well to allow for study breaks and chill time!

Adjacent to the JCR is the OLL, another college space that students can use for activities and is often the location for sit down activities including pottery, painting, drawing and bracelet making! The room is also equipped with a TV, sofas, a ping pong table and has Matriculation pictures from various years hung up on its walls!

## College Bar and Buttery

St Hilda's College Bar is integrated with the college JCR space! It is student-run and offers a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks at decent prices. Students can pay for their drinks using their University (Bod) Cards, or a normal bank card, or contactless payment. In addition to common room space and a Bar, the college also has a Buttery available for students! The Buttery is a JCR-run food stall that is available at points in the term (often at irregular points in term). The Buttery only accepts card or contactless payment.



## The Library



St Hilda's College Library (the Kathleen Major Library) is relatively big with 3 floors and an entrance compatible for students with all access needs. The library has over 70,000 books with a number of different study spaces. Students can use the Oxford books online service SOLO to access books online, renew books, reserve books, request copies, and find out which ones are available.

## Jacqueline Du Pré Music Building (JdP)

The Jacqueline Pré Music Building has an auditorium space which hosts college and external music and theatre performances. The building also contains music rooms for practice and students can make bookings for the space using the College portal. For more details visit the college website.





# College Life

## Sports



What about sports and exercise? At Hilda's we have got it covered. From netball, to rugby, to football, the college offers a range of sports to get involved in. The college's welcoming attitude extends to our sports atmosphere and community as students at all levels are welcomed and encouraged to participate. Students can also form their own sports societies and sports teams by proposing it to the JCR and seeking JCR funding! In addition to this, the college has free gym facilities that Hilda's students can use! The college gym is equipped with treadmills, bikes, rowing machines, a variety of weight machines and weights for student use. Students who wish to use the gym are required to complete a short gym safety induction which can be booked via the student portal on the college website.

## Entertainment

When it comes to curating a social calendar, the St Hilda's Entertainment Representatives make a huge effort every year to put on a variety of events for students. The college can boast a fun and relaxing atmosphere where everyone can destress after weeks of essays. From college BOPs, to the annual carol service that takes place during Oxmas (Christmas at Oxford), there are always different events taking place! BOPs are often themed with awards or prizes being given to those with the best costumes. The entertainment scene at St Hilda's does not disappoint and offers a chance for bonding and relaxation.



## Music

The Hilda's community prides itself in the array of music events it's able to put on each term. Gig nights, live music, karaoke and other musical performances are a Hilda's staple and you will always find that there is some sort of event on. As the home of the JdP building, students also have the opportunity to attend student-led concerts and performances, as well as performances from professional musicians. It helps make the community lively and is a massive part of college life.



## Art

Art and crafts are also a major part of life at St Hilda's. Our Arts Rep works hard each year to help foster a creative environment within the college and host events that allow students to express all of their artsy talents. Hilda's also runs an annual Arts Week in Hilary Term which offers a range of creative activities such as: Origami, Stained Glass Painting, Bookmark making and much more!





# College Welfare

We are proud to say that welfare is something St Hilda's does particularly well! The college has designated welfare officers, whose role is to be the key link between students and all the welfare-related support provided by the college. Welfare at the college is very nicely divided on student level and adult level so students have various avenues to refer to including the dean, junior deans, counsellor, student welfare officers and the college welfare officer. There are also college families which usually consist of a student in the year above of incoming students who act as "parents" to help give them support and advice. Details for college families usually come out before arrival in October, and are a great way to cater for student welfare needs informally.

## Welfare Tea

Every Sunday afternoon, welfare tea is organised by the student welfare officers. Everyone is welcome to come down to the JCR and have some free snacks, chill with friends on the sofas or play a game of pool- it's difficult to name a better way to spend a Sunday afternoon! It is also a great way for cross year bonding to happen, enabling a strong sense of community within college.

## Welfare Weeks

Understandably, the intense eight-week terms can sometimes wear down even the toughest mental constitution. This usually comes around halfway through the term and is colloquially known amongst Oxford students as 'The 5th Week Blues'. Luckily, the welfare team is on hand to provide a bit of light-hearted fun during this week. They organise events every day in 5th week, ranging from cupcake decorating to petting farm animals (a guaranteed crowd pleaser) to remind everyone that life continues outside of any degree worries or essay deadlines!

## Sexual Health

The Welfare Team is fully stocked with condoms, lube, pregnancy tests and rape whistles – all of which are free to access on request. Students are encouraged to speak to the Welfare team to obtain the items and can also speak to the student welfare officer, the college welfare officer, and the deans' office, if they have anything they need to discuss.



# Diversity and Inclusion

## BAME at Hilda's

St Hilda's works hard to support cultural and religious events and allows students to organise or arrange funding for celebrating any religious or cultural event, through contact with the JCR or the JCR BAME Officer. Examples of previous events supported by BAME Reps at Hilda's include Diwali, Holi, and Ramadan celebrations. The college also aims to support students from diverse backgrounds through BAME social and welfare events. This usually takes the form of bi-weekly sessions for free food, drinks, and a chill time away from the day to day stresses of uni life and the annual BAME X International formal in Hilary term: the perfect event to connect, dress-to-impress and eat good food! The college also forms BAME families, where students from the year above act as college parents to incoming students and offer them advice. These are a lovely way for students to integrate better.



## LGBTQ+ at Hilda's

At St Hilda's, with the help of the LGBTQ+ and Trans Officers, a range of activities and events are organised across the year to get the queer community together and have fun! Examples include the Hilda's Pride BOP and Pride Formal which allow members of the queer community to get together in a social and welcoming space.

The college also offers Rainbow Families, which are organised by our LGBTQ+ Reps. Rainbow families operate similarly to college families, except you are matched with a rainbow parent based on your sexuality and/or gender identity as well as your personality/shared interests. Your rainbow parent(s) will be an additional source of support and an introduction to queer life at Oxford!





# Finances

At Hilda's we understand that university can come with certain financial pressures - to help alleviate these, there are various sources of funding available in college to help you with living expenses during times of hardship.

- **Travel for Research and Study Grants**

These help students with the costs for travel when they want to visit libraries and archives, fieldwork, overseas placements and other travel related trips. Awards are normally between £500-£1000.

- **Vacation Study Residence Grants**

This is a grant that supports undergraduate students who want to stay in college during a vacation period for legitimate academic reasons or personal reasons, which prevent study at home.

- **Financial Assistance**

This financial assistance may be provided to support unforeseeable circumstances which are insurmountable by other means.

- **Extra-curricular Grants**

These help students to pay for sports and engage in other extra-curricular activities. Awards are normally up to £50.

- **Book Grants**

This is a grant for undergraduate (and graduate students in the first year of a postgraduate course), and allows students to purchase course books up to a maximum value of £60.

- **Language Courses**

This is a provision usually given at a value of £50 per year for a fast track language course at the University Language Centre.

- **Oxford Bursary Holders**

The Adams Bursary (£1000) is for final-year Oxford Bursary holders studying at St Hilda's in financial need.

# JCR Committee Responsibilities

The JCR is the student body that represents undergrads at Hilda's- the committee is mostly made up of second-year students who take on their role for a year. Elections (called 'hustings') are held in the summer, where all students are welcome to run for a role they are passionate about! Here are some short descriptions of the roles that aim to represent all parts of our student community.

## **President**

The President is responsible for representing the voice of the JCR, and its members, to the College and also working with the other members of the executive committee (VP, Treasurer, and Secretary) to oversee the work of the JCR committee throughout the year!

## **Vice-President**

Works closely with the JCR President, offering practical support, help and advice and supporting the JCR Committee in meeting their goals! They also Chair the JCR meetings where funding is allocated to JCR members for various activities and events.

## **Treasurer**

Manages the JCR accounts and completes the budget for each term via a balance sheet and ensuring the account books are updated.

## **Secretary**

Sends weekly newsletter emails about college events and takes the minutes at JCR meetings, ensuring they are circulated to the whole JCR mailing list. Also has the very important role of creating our weekly Loo News!

## **Freshers Rep**

Responsible for the induction of Freshers, including the organisation of JCR Freshers' Week events in liaison with other JCR Officers.

## **Welfare Rep**

Provide welfare information to JCR and adhere to confidentiality. They also run lots of welfare events for students both during and outside of welfare week.



## **Entertainment Rep**

Responsible for organising all the amazing social events within college and with other colleges.

## **Music Rep**

Responsible for looking after JCR music equipment and storing it properly. They also run and promote Thursday Night Live (TNL), karaoke nights and other live music events.

## **Returning Officer**

Ensure that JCR elections for the next committee are run and ensure the members are aware of the role and function of the SU.

## **Bar Team**

Responsible for working and managing the bar alongside college staff.

## **Buttery Managers**

Responsible for the security of the buttery and ensuring that food is stocked up and the Buttery is run at different points in the term.

## **Charities Rep**

Ensure that money is raised and divided between three elected charities each year.

## **Trans Rep**


Represent all JCR members who identify as transgender or gender nonconforming, or who for other reasons believe they should be represented by the Transgender Students Officer.

## **LGBTQ+ Rep**

Represent all JCR members who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, questioning or transgender or those who feel they should be represented by the officers. They organise events and also provide welfare support.

## **Disabilities Rep**

Represent all students with disabilities and other health issues, including (but not limited to) dyslexia, dyspraxia, other learning difficulties, mental health issues and physical conditions.



## **Environment and Ethics Rep**

Responsible for raising awareness about environmental issues and promoting them in college.

## **Sports Reps (Men's and Women's)**

Encourage people to participate in the various sports within college and the wider university. In addition, they support captains organising practices and fixtures.

## **Arts Rep**

Encourage arts and crafts in college and work with the JCR to organise various arts events in college.

## **Ball President**

Organises the St Hilda's Ball, which traditionally takes place every year in Trinity Term.

## **Internationals Rep**

Represents all the International students in college and works to ensure their voices are heard.

## **College Affairs Rep**

Liaises with the Domestic Fellow, Catering Manager and other relevant college officers to help with the organisation of formals and raise domestic concerns.

## **Access Rep**

Attends meetings with the Senior Tutor, and the Admissions and Outreach Officer every term to discuss admissions and Outreach. They also support the College Open Days, and the Offer-Holders' Day.

## **BAME Rep**

The BAME Rep is responsible for representing ethnic and minority students at JCR meetings, ensuring that their needs are met and their voices are heard. They also run various events celebrating different cultures and allow minorities to come together.

## **Womxn's Rep**

Represents all JCR members who identify wholly or partially as a woman, as well as those who feel they experience structural misogyny or would otherwise be represented by the Womxn's Officer.



## Student Insight

**"St Hilda's is a friendly college. The staff are incredibly supportive on both academic and welfare advice. I'd recommend considering Hilda's to all prospective applicants."**

**"The JCR is a thriving community for undergraduate students. There is ample opportunity for students to develop their voice and take up roles to support their fellow students."**

***~ Freya Cushman, History Student ~***

# **Goodbye!**

**Thank you for reading this booklet, we hope it has given you a more informal insight into what life at St Hilda's is like. Students are encouraged to thrive both academically and socially at St Hilda's, and are offered a range of activities and opportunities in order to do so. That is all for now, but we hope you choose to apply to St Hilda's and we look forward to welcoming you!**