



St. John's College, Oxford
Middle Common Room

Constitution and Standing Orders

Constitution

Preamble

The Middle Common Room (MCR) is a self-governing body of graduate members of St. John's College, Oxford. It acts to promote the interests and welfare of, and social activities among, its members, and to represent the interests of its members to the Governing Body of College and to institutions within the University of Oxford. It shall be operated in a fair and democratic manner. The MCR does not pursue political aims and it does not discriminate against its members on the basis of gender, ethnicity, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or national origin.

Part I – Membership

- 1) There shall be two categories of membership.
 - a) Full membership
 - b) Associate membership
- 2) Full Membership
 - a) The following persons shall be entitled to full membership.
 - i) All members of St. John's College enrolled for postgraduate studies within the University of Oxford.
 - ii) All members of St. John's College enrolled for undergraduate degrees who already have a first degree.
 - iii) Graduate students recognised as affiliated to the College.
 - iv) Those whom, from time to time, St. John's College requests to be full members.
 - b) Full members shall have the following rights.
 - i) The right to use any MCR property or facilities.
 - ii) The right to attend and speak at meetings.
 - iii) The right to vote at meetings and referenda, elections of the Committee, and in secret ballots.
 - iv) The right to stand for election or appointment for a Committee position.
 - v) The right to enter the MCR room ballot.
 - c) Any member of St. John's College entitled to full membership has the right not to take up this membership, with no student exercising this right being unfairly disadvantaged with regard to the provision of services or otherwise by reason of their having done so.
- 3) Associate Membership
 - a) A person who is not automatically a full member may be nominated for associate membership, by a motion to a General Meeting. No full member shall be permitted to nominate more than six persons for associate membership in any one academic year.
 - b) Associate membership may be granted through a motion put to the General Meeting in accordance with the Rules of the MCR. Persons nominated for associate membership, and the two full members who nominated them, must attend the meeting at which the nomination is being considered, unless given special exemption by the President. Unexcused non-attendance shall result in the motion becoming void.
 - c) The Committee, by majority vote, shall have the power to reject nominations for associate membership without submitting them to General Meetings if it deems that facilities have or may become overstretched.
 - d) Associate membership may be granted to a person for a term limited by time or other conditions. In the event that no conditions are set, the membership shall expire after a period of two years. If associate membership expires, the former associate member may apply again to become an associate member.
 - e) In addition, the President of the St John's College Junior Common Room shall automatically enjoy associate membership for the duration of their term in office, and any visiting postgraduate student at St John's College shall enjoy associate membership for the duration of their visit to the College.
 - f) Associate members shall have the following rights.
 - i) The right to use any MCR property or facilities if they are members of St John's College. In the case of associate members who are not members of St John's College, any access to MCR facilities is at the discretion of College authorities.
 - ii) The right to attend and speak at meetings.
 - g) Associate members have no voting rights, cannot stand for any position on the Committee, and are not entitled to enter the MCR room ballot.
 - h) Associate membership may be revoked through a motion put to the General Meeting in accordance with the Rules of the MCR.
- 4) The sum of all full and associate members shall be titled the membership body.

- 5) Responsibilities and Suspension of Members
 - a) Members are required to look after the common room and all MCR property and treat their fellow members with respect. Each member may share the facilities with up to three persons who are not members of the MCR. For additional guests, permission must be sought from one of the Executive Board Members. Members are responsible for their guests and can be held accountable for any damage or disturbance they cause.
 - b) In the light of misconduct and/or violation of MCR rules, the Committee may, by a simple majority vote, suspend a member's rights and access to facilities. If this suspension is still in effect at the time of the next General Meeting, it is subject to ratification by a motion put to that General Meeting. A member whose possible suspension is under consideration by the Committee shall be notified, by letter or email from the Vice President, of the Committee's consideration of possible suspension at least a week before the Committee votes on the issue, and the member shall be given the opportunity to make submissions to the Committee before the voting takes place.

Part II - The Committee

- 6) The Committee shall comprise the following groups.
 - a) Executive Board Members
 - b) Non-Executive Committee Members
- 7) Executive Board Members
 - a) The Executive Board Members shall comprise the following positions.
 - i) President
 - ii) Vice President
 - iii) Treasurer
 - b) Each Executive Board position is held by one full member who is in residence during the term of office, with "in residence" defined as: living within the University-stipulated distance from Carfax Tower, paying (or having paid) University or College fees if these are applicable, and not having suspended their studies.
 - c) A person may not stand for election as an Executive Board Member if they are not in residence at the time of the election, or will not be in residence for part of their term of office.
 - d) If an Executive Board Member is no longer in residence, their Executive Board position falls vacant.
 - e) No Executive Board Member may be out of Oxford for longer than three consecutive weeks during term.
- 8) Non-Executive Committee Members

The Non-Executive Committee Members shall comprise the following positions, which may ordinarily be held by up to the number of people listed in brackets afterwards at one time:

 - i) Social Secretaries (3)
 - ii) Victuallers (3)
 - iii) Welfare Officers (3)
 - iv) Culture Officers (2)
 - v) Women's Officer(s) (2)
 - vi) LGBTQ Officer(s) (2)
 - vii) Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer(s) (2)
 - viii) Disabled Students' Officer(s) (2)
 - ix) Culinary Events Officer(s) (2)
 - x) Environment and Ethics Officer (1)
 - xi) International Students' Officer(s) (1)
 - xii) Sports Officer (1)
 - xiii) Returning Officer (1)
 - xiv) Any other such position as the Executive Board may, by majority vote, from time to time create (3) although the Executive Board may allow more people to hold any of the positions in (iv)-(viii) above, to a maximum of three, where they consider exceptional circumstances require this.
- 9) The Executive Board
 - a) The Executive Board shall comprise the Executive Board Members, and shall have a quorum of two.
 - b) When the Executive Board is required to make a decision, this shall be decided by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tied vote due to absence or abstention, the President shall have the casting vote.
- 10) Operation of the Committee
 - a) The Committee members' responsibilities shall be as laid down in Standing Orders.
 - b) The Committee shall be bound by the decisions of the General Meeting, but has the power to act on its own initiative, in the best interests of the MCR, where the General Meeting has expressed no opinion.

- c) Before making a major commitment that cannot readily be rescinded, the Committee must make all reasonable efforts to inform, and receive responses from, the membership body.
 - d) The Committee has a general duty to keep the membership body informed of its actions.
 - e) Any full member shall not hold more than one Committee position.
 - f) When the Committee is required to make a decision, the decision shall be decided by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tied vote among the Committee, the President shall have the casting vote.
 - g) When the Committee is required to vote, each Executive Board position shall have one vote each, and each Non-Executive Committee position shall have one vote each. If more than one person holds a Non-Executive Committee position, everyone in that position must agree in their decision or else the vote shall be recorded as an abstention.
- 11) Vacant Positions
- a) If an Executive Board position is vacant, by resignation or otherwise, a by-election shall be held for that position in accordance with the Rules of the MCR.
 - b) If a Non-Executive Committee position is vacant, the Committee should appoint, by majority vote, a full member in that position.
 - c) If a Committee position is not held by the maximum number of people in section 8, the Committee may appoint, by majority vote, a full member in that position.
 - d) The duration of any appointment under subsections b) or c) above shall not exceed the term of office of the Committee that made it, and any appointment is subject to ratification by a motion at the next General Meeting after the appointment. Until that meeting the member in question shall act in that position.

Part III - General Meetings

- 12) Authority of the General Meeting
- a) The General Meeting shall be the final authority on all matters relating to the MCR, subject to referenda.
 - b) The General Meeting may debate and determine any question, subject to the Rules of the MCR.
 - c) The decisions of the General Meeting shall be binding on all persons acting in the name of the MCR.
 - d) The procedure of General Meetings shall be in accordance with Part I of the Standing Orders.
- 13) Holding of General Meetings
- a) There are three kinds of General Meetings.
 - i) Ordinary General Meetings
 - ii) Extraordinary General Meetings
 - iii) The Annual General Meeting
 - b) The quorum of any General Meeting shall be fifteen full members.
 - c) A minimum of two General Meetings shall be held each term. The Vice President shall determine the dates for Ordinary and Annual General Meetings, having consulted with the President.
 - d) Notice of a General Meeting shall be distributed by the Vice President using the MCR emailing list not less than seven days before the meeting is scheduled to take place. Such an email must be devoted exclusively to the notice of the General Meeting.
 - e) Motions must be submitted by two full members to the Vice President not less than seventy-two hours before the meeting is scheduled to take place.
 - f) The agenda for a General Meeting shall be distributed by the Vice President using the MCR emailing list not less than forty-eight hours before the meeting is scheduled to take place. Such an email must be devoted exclusively to the agenda for the General Meeting.
- 14) Extraordinary General Meetings
- a) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at the request of thirty full members or by a majority vote of the Committee.
 - b) The request to hold an Extraordinary General Meeting must be delivered to the Vice President in writing, must include evidence that it is supported either by thirty full members or by the majority of the Committee, and must specify the reasons for which the Extraordinary General Meeting is being called.
 - c) Upon receipt of the request, the Vice President must call an Extraordinary General Meeting to take place within seventy-two hours. Notice of, and motions for, such an Extraordinary General Meeting must be distributed by the Vice President using the MCR emailing list not less than forty-eight hours before a meeting is scheduled to take place. Such an email must be devoted exclusively to the notice of the Extraordinary General Meeting.
 - d) Discussion at an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be restricted to the motions for which it has been called, and to related procedural motions.
- 15) The Annual General Meeting shall be held before Fifth Week of Trinity Term.

Part IV - Financial Arrangements

- 16) The Treasurer shall be responsible to authorise all expenditure subject to the concurrence of either the President or the Vice President.
- 17) The Budget
 - a) The leaving Treasurer shall submit a preliminary budget report at the final General Meeting of Hilary Term.
 - b) Appropriate arrangements shall be made by the new Treasurer for the approval of the Budget by at the Annual General Meeting.
 - c) The Budget shall contain all of the following items.
 - i) A statement of the MCR's financial position.
 - ii) Audited accounts for the year ending 31 March
 - iii) A budget of income and expenditure for the year commencing 1 April.
 - iv) A detailed list of external organizations to which the MCR has made donations.
 - d) Accounts shall be audited by at least two full members, chosen by the new Treasurer, who are not also members of either the leaving or new Committee.
 - e) Should the Budget not be approved at the Annual General Meeting, it must be submitted, in amended form if necessary, to another General Meeting so as to obtain approval of it before the end of Trinity Term.
- 18) The MCR rules out College-internal third-party funding, such as funding for clubs or societies.

Part V - Complaints and Censure/Recall Motions

- 19) Complaints procedure for members
 - a) A full member, or any person who has opted out of membership in accordance with their rights given in Part I, may make a complaint about their dealings with the MCR in accordance with this section.
 - b) Where the complaint concerns the Returning Officer, or where there is no Returning Officer, it will be considered by the President, unless it concerns the President, where it is considered by the Vice President.
 - c) Where the complaint is about any other matter, it should be considered by the Returning Officer.
 - d) Complaints should be made in writing to the college address of the relevant person listed above.
 - e) The person considering the complaint shall handle the complaint fairly and promptly.
 - f) The person considering the complaint shall, if upholding the complaint, try to provide a complainant with an effective remedy, which may include bringing a motion of censure or recall.
 - g) Where a complainant is unhappy with the handling of the complaint, they retain the legal right to contact the College's Governing Body, who may appoint an independent person to review the complaint.
- 20) The complaints procedure for non-members shall be in accordance with the Code of Practice of St. John's College as prescribed under the Education Act 1994 (UK) s.22(3), which is available from College.
- 21) Motions of Censure
 - a) Any member may be censured through a motion put to the General Meeting in accordance with the Rules of the MCR. Such a motion must state the reasons why censure is brought against the named member.
 - b) While a motion of censure of a member of the Committee is under consideration in a General Meeting, the Returning Officer shall occupy the Chair, unless the motion is directed against the Returning Officer, in which case the President shall occupy the Chair.
 - c) A simple majority is required to pass a motion of censure.
- 22) Motions of Recall
 - a) A motion of recall is a motion to a General Meeting that, if passed, requires the resignation of the member of the Committee to whom it is directed. In addition to the requirement that a motion be submitted by two full members, a motion of recall must also deliver to the Vice President evidence that it is supported by thirty full members or the majority of the Committee, and the reasons for which recall is sought.
 - b) While a motion of recall is under consideration in a General Meeting, the Returning Officer shall occupy the Chair, unless the motion is directed against the Returning Officer, in which case the President shall occupy the Chair. A simple majority is required to pass a motion of recall.

Part VI - Affiliation to External Organisations

- 23) The MCR is affiliated to any organisation listed in Standing Orders.
- 24) Affiliation to External Organisations
 - a) The MCR may affiliate to an external organisation by adding the organisation to Part III of the Standing Orders, by motion in a General Meeting or referendum. Any details of affiliation should also appear in Standing Orders. Where this happens, the President shall ensure that notice of the affiliation and of any fee

- or donation made is distributed using the MCR emailing list and to the Governing Body of College.
- b) The Executive Board shall ensure a review of details regarding payments made to any external organisation, as well as the renewal of any affiliation to an external organisation is put before the Annual General Meeting, and given to the Governing Body of College.
- 25) Continuing Affiliation to External Organisations
- a) The continuing affiliation to any external organisation must be approved at the Annual General Meeting. Where the Annual General Meeting does not approve continuing affiliation, the Standing Orders shall automatically be amended to delete the name of the external organisation, and the Vice President shall ensure this deletion takes place in the copy available on the MCR website.
 - b) A requisition may be made by five per cent of the full members that the question of continuing affiliation to any particular organisation be decided upon a secret ballot in which all full members are entitled to vote. Such a request must be delivered to the Vice President, with evidence that it has the support required.
 - c) Upon the receipt of the request specified in subsection (b) above, a referendum shall be organised by the Returning Officer in accordance with the Rules of the MCR, except the Executive Board shall have no power to veto the question.

Part VII – Elections

- 26) Timing of Elections
- a) An annual election shall be held for all Committee positions during Hilary Term. The new Committee shall hold office from the midnight that marks the end of the Saturday of Eighth Week of Hilary Term.
 - b) A by-election shall be held not more than three weeks after the vacancy requiring the by-election occurs or, if the date of three weeks does not fall within a full term, then the by-election must take place before the end of Second Week of the following term.
- 27) Candidates may only stand for one position in an election. Eligibility for a position is determined by a member's rights under Part I and the special rules for Executive Board positions in Part II.
- 28) Nominations
- a) A candidate must be nominated by at least two full members.
 - b) Each nomination shall consist of the following items.
 - i) A manifesto, summarising the candidate's principles and intentions for their potential tenure in the nominated position.
 - ii) A statement signed by both the nominating members and by the candidate indicating the candidate's willingness to stand for the position.
- 29) Process of Elections
- a) The Returning Officer shall distribute information about the details of an election and the closing date for nominations using the MCR emailing list. Such emails must be devoted exclusively to electoral matters.
 - b) A period of at least seven days must elapse between the distribution of information under subsection a) and the closing of nominations.
 - c) Once nominations have closed, details of all nominations and manifestos shall be distributed using the MCR emailing list and the MCR notice board. Other than emails sent by the Returning Officer, the MCR emailing list shall not be used to campaign for or against any candidate.
 - d) Once nominations have closed and before any voting begins, hustings must be held in which the members may interrogate the candidates in attendance about their candidacy.
 - e) The period between the opening of nominations and the closing of all voting must not exceed 21 days.
- 30) Process of Voting
- a) Voting must take place using an online voting system chosen by the Returning Officer. Voting shall be available for a period of at least three days.
 - b) The Returning Officer may allow voting by email or by means of a physical ballot paper, in the event that an online voting system is (or becomes) unavailable.
 - c) The Returning Officer shall keep secret all ballots in any election.
 - d) The MCR uses the Single Transferable Vote system, in accordance with rules published by the Electoral Reform Society. Candidates shall appear on the ballot as individuals, but are permitted to openly campaign with other candidates for the same position.
 - e) A ballot will be considered spoiled if and only if it is illegible or incomprehensible.
 - f) Re-Open Nominations (RON) shall be a ballot option for every position, and in the event of RON being 'elected' above all other candidates, the position shall be considered vacant and a by-election held.
 - g) For each Committee position, the Returning Officer shall deem elected all candidates elected above RON, up to the maximum numbers listed in Part II.

- 31) The Returning Officer shall publish the election results within twenty-four hours of closing of all voting.
- 32) Electoral Disputes
 - a) The Returning Officer shall be the arbiter in all electoral disputes and may order a new election if they believe that substantial irregularities have taken place.
 - b) The General Meeting may, by a two-thirds majority, order a new election within two weeks of the closing of voting if it disagrees with the Returning Officer's verdict on an election.

Part VIII - Referenda

- 33) A referendum may be called at the request of forty full members or by a majority vote of the Committee. A referendum may be on any question relating to the MCR, subject to the following conditions.
 - a) It may not name any person (or persons) in the MCR, nor may it refer to any such person (or persons) by the position (or positions) that they hold on the Committee.
 - b) It may not propose the censure or recall of any member of the Committee.
 - c) It must call for a 'Yes' or 'No' answer, although the Returning Officer may permit abstentions.
- 34) The request to hold a referendum must be delivered to the Vice President in writing, must include evidence that the holding of the referendum is supported either by forty full members or by the majority of the Committee, and must specify the question which is to be put to referendum.
- 35) Upon receipt by the Vice President of a request to hold a referendum, the Executive Board may, by majority vote, determine that the question discriminates against members on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, race, disability, sexual orientation or national origin and may disallow the question. The Executive Board shall communicate this decision and the reasons for it to the supporters of the referendum.
- 36) If the Executive Board have not disallowed the question, the Returning Officer must call a referendum to take place within twelve days of the receipt of a valid referendum request. Notice of a referendum must be distributed by the Returning Officer using the MCR emailing list not less than forty-eight hours before the polls are scheduled to open. Such an email must be devoted exclusively to the notice of the referendum.
- 37) The MCR emailing list shall not be used to campaign for or against a referendum question.
- 38) Process of Voting
 - a) Voting must take place using an online voting system chosen by the Returning Officer. Voting shall be available for a period of at least two days.
 - b) The Returning Officer may allow voting by email or by means of a physical ballot paper, in the event that an online voting system is (or becomes) unavailable.
- 39) A referendum question is carried if it is supported by a simple majority of those voting in the referendum, ignoring any abstentions. A successful referendum question shall be deemed to have the same effect as if it had been a motion successfully carried at a General Meeting, even if that motion would have required a two-thirds majority in the General Meeting.
- 40) The Returning Officer shall publish the referendum results within twenty-four hours of closing of all voting.

Part IX – Amendment, Interpretation and Miscellaneous

- 41) The Rules of the MCR shall consist of this Constitution and the Standing Orders. Documents annexed to the Constitution do not form part of the Rules and are altered in the same manner as if they were not so annexed.
- 42) The Constitution may be altered though the approval of a constitutional motion by a two-thirds majority in each of two successive General Meetings, at least one week having intervened between the two meetings. In all other respects, the procedure for such a constitutional motion is the same as for ordinary motions.
- 43) Parts I and II of the Standing Orders may be altered through the approval of a motion by a two-thirds majority at any General Meeting, while Part III may be altered in the same manner but by a simple majority. In all other respects, the procedure for such a motion is the same as for ordinary motions.
- 44) Part I of the Standing Orders may be suspended by a three-quarter majority for a single General Meeting.
- 45) According to the Education Act 1994 (UK) s. 22, Governing Body has certain rights with regard to the statutory rights of the MCR. Details are provided by the College Code of Practice, as well as in related information material, which are available from College.
- 46) An updated copy of the Rules of the MCR, including all interpretations, shall be available on the MCR website.
- 47) Questions of interpretation of the Constitution shall be settled by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board, after consulting the Committee. The results of such a vote shall be announced at the next General Meeting, and a copy of the question and the resulting interpretation, with a record of the vote, shall be filed with the copy of the Constitution and Standing Orders available on the MCR website.

Standing Orders

Part I: General Meetings

- 1) Members are at all times expected to respect the right of other members to listen and to take part in discussions at meetings. At the discretion of the Chair, a procedural motion may be put to eject from a meeting of the MCR any member disruptive to the proceedings of that meeting. The motion must be passed by a two-thirds majority of the members attending the meeting.
- 2) Chairing of the General Meeting
 - a) The President shall ordinarily take the Chair at General Meetings, subject to the Constitution.
 - b) The voting rights of the Chair are not prejudiced, and the Chair has a casting vote in case of a tied motion.
 - c) All remarks shall be made through the Chair.
- 3) Order of Business
 - a) The business of the meeting shall be arranged as follows
 - i) Minutes of the previous Ordinary (or Annual) General Meeting
 - ii) Matters arising from the Minutes
 - iii) Reports from the Committee
 - iv) Questions to the Committee
 - v) Motions submitted
 - vi) Matters for Discussion submitted
 - vii) Any other business
- 4) Minutes
 - a) The Minutes of the last meeting shall be approved by the General Meeting and signed by the President.
 - b) If Minutes encompass decisions made and votes taken that turn out to be in violation of these Standing Orders, approving the relevant Minutes shall retrospectively validate such decisions and votes.
- 5) Substantive Motions
 - a) Substantive motions may not be introduced once the meeting has been declared open.
- 6) Procedural Motions
 - a) The following procedural motions may be put if proposed by two full members of the MCR
 - i) that the motion now be put
 - ii) that the motion be taken in parts
 - iii) that the motion be decided by secret ballot
 - iv) that the order of business be amended from that printed on the agenda
 - v) that the meeting proceed to the next business
 - vi) that the meeting do now adjourn
 - b) For procedural motions, one speech for and one against the motion shall be allowed.
- 7) Points of Order
 - a) Points of Order to draw the attention of the Chair to a violation of the Rules of the MCR may be made at any time.
- 8) Once declared quorate, a meeting shall remain so until a member requests a quorum count.
- 9) Amendments
 - a) Amendments may be put to any substantive motion, even if already amended.
 - b) If the initial proposer of a substantive motion accepts the amendment, it is automatically incorporated.
 - c) Amendments which are not accepted by the initial proposer of the substantive motion shall be discussed and voted on immediately. Where the amendment is accepted, and the original proposer no longer wishes to propose the motion, the proposer of the amendment becomes the proposer of the amended motion.
- 10) Summation
 - a) The proposer of any substantial motion has the right to sum up before a motion is put to a vote.
 - b) Members may question the proposer of any motion on the purpose and scope of the motion. The answers to these questions shall be minuted to aid the understanding of the motion if passed.
- 11) Voting
 - a) A vote shall be taken by a show of hands, except during a secret ballot. The Chair shall declare the motion carried or defeated and give details of the votes cast in favour, against or in abstention.
 - b) A simple majority is needed for all votes, unless specified otherwise in the Constitution.
 - c) Any member may ask for a recount, except where a procedural motion has passed for a secret ballot.

12) Policy Motions

- a) Once a motion is carried at a General Meeting, the President, in consultation with the Vice President, shall decide whether that motion establishes ongoing policy intended to have continuing effect in the future.
- b) Any policy shall be annexed to the MCR Rules in order that it should not be subject to gradual oblivion.

13) Charities Motions

- a) All donations by the MCR to charitable organisations shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures described in this Section. Where there is a vacancy for Environment & Ethics Officer, the Vice President or their nominee on the Committee shall be responsible for ensuring this Section's procedures take place.
- b) There shall be a division of the MCR Budget containing money for charitable donation (hereafter referred to as the 'MCR Charity Fund').
- c) Donations from the MCR Charity Fund shall be made once each term, at the final General Meeting of the term, although the Environment & Ethics (E&E) Officer may hold this at another General Meeting at their discretion. The E&E Officer shall publicise the approach of this meeting and the availability of donations from the MCR Charity Fund using the MCR e-mailing list.
- d) The E&E Officer shall distribute a nomination form for charities, which shall solicit information including: the relationship of the charity to the MCR or to MCR members, the financial need of the charity, the degree to which the applicant is directly involved in the charity, the long-term benefit which the donation may provide, and the registered charity status (in the UK or elsewhere) of the charity.
- e) Applications for donations from the MCR Charity Fund must be received by the E&E Officer not less than forty-eight hours before the relevant meeting is scheduled to take place.
- f) No single charity may receive more than one donation from the MCR Charity Fund in any academic year.
- g) The procedure for conducting a charities motion at a General Meeting shall be as follows
 - i) The applicants for charitable donations shall each present their proposed charity, making reference to the criteria listed in subsection (d) above.
 - ii) The sum of money from the MCR Charity Fund available at that particular meeting shall be notionally divided into x equal parts (with x being a convenient number determined by the E&E Officer).
 - iii) The E&E Officer shall distribute secret ballot papers to full members, listing each proposed charity.
 - iv) Full members shall each have x points to allocate amongst the proposed charities (with each point notionally representing a certain sum of money). Members may allocate all their points to one charity alone or may divide them amongst some or all of the proposed charities. Members need not allocate all, or indeed any, of their points.
 - v) The E&E Officer shall collect the ballot papers and shall calculate the total number of points received by each charity, and the percentage which this number represents of the total number of points capable of allocation (i.e. x multiplied by the number of ballot papers collected).
 - vi) The E&E Officer shall communicate to the Vice President the percentage of total allocatable points received by each charity and the MCR shall be deemed to have voted to divide the sum of money available for donation accordingly. The percentages shall be recorded in the minutes.
 - vii) Money not donated in any term shall be carried forward in the MCR Charity Fund to the next term.

Part II - Committee Positions

14) All Committee members shall be responsible for the general running and upkeep of the MCR.

15) The President shall have the following main responsibilities:

- a) Chair General Meetings, in accordance with the Rules of the MCR.
- b) Make representations on behalf of the MCR to members of other bodies of the College, of OUSU, and of the University, including the Rents and Charges negotiations in Trinity Term.
- c) Collate the MCR newsletter once a week, and distribute this via the MCR emailing list.
- d) Deal with the correspondence of the MCR.
- e) Oversee the activities of the Committee.
- f) Deliver a Presidential Report at the Annual General Meeting following the end of the term of office, which shall be annexed to the Rules of the MCR.

16) The Vice President shall have the following main responsibilities:

- a) Organise General Meetings and Committee meetings, in consultation with the President.
- b) Take minutes, and maintain a record of minutes, of all General Meetings.
- c) Maintain a current version of the Rules of the MCR.
- d) Maintain a list of the membership body.
- e) Organise the Couples Ballot in Hilary Term, and the Room Ballot in Trinity Term.

- f) Attend all College Committees to which the MCR is invited, including the Rents and Charges negotiations in Trinity Term.
 - g) Act as substitute for the President when the President is absent.
 - h) Be a point of contact to MCR members regarding issues of discrimination or unjustified unequal treatment which does not fall within the responsibilities of the Women's Officers, LGBTQ Officer(s), Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer(s) and Disabled Students' Officer(s).
- 17) The Treasurer shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Make all duly authorised financial transactions on behalf of the MCR.
 - b) Act as substitute for the Vice President when the Vice President is absent.
 - c) Assist with the Rents and Charges negotiations in Trinity Term
 - d) Perform all further duties and obligations of the Treasurer as specified in Part IV of the Constitution.
- 18) The Social Secretaries shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Organise social events, including (but not limited to): bops (usually two per term) and Exchange Dinners.
 - b) Organise the MCR Christmas Dinner at the end of Michaelmas Term.
- 19) The Victuallers shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Organise two Guest Dinners per term.
 - b) Organise two SCR/MCR Wine & Cheese events per term.
 - c) Organise any other similar events as the Victuallers see fit.
- 20) The Welfare Officers shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Organise welfare events, including (but not limited to) brunches following bops, Sunday cakes and other events.
 - b) Be a point of contact to MCR members regarding issues of health and wellbeing.
 - c) Be responsible for welfare initiatives within College.
 - d) Oversee the Peer Supporters.
 - e) Provide sexual health supplies to members of the MCR.
 - f) Ordinarily, attend College Decanal Committee.
- 21) The Culture Officers shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Manage MCR periodical and magazine subscriptions.
 - b) Organise events related to culture and the arts, including (but not limited to) film nights and cultural trips.
- 22) The Women's Officer(s) shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Represent the interests of women and other minority genders within the MCR and to other bodies of College.
 - b) Be a point of contact for women and other minority genders regarding gender discrimination and harassment.
 - c) Work with the JCR Women's Officer to organise events including (but not limited to) women's lunches, women's dinner, and the annual garden party.
- 23) The LGBTQ Officer(s) shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Represent the interests of people who identify as LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and Questioning) within the MCR and to other bodies of College.
 - b) Be a point of contact for LGBTQ people regarding gender and sexuality discrimination, harassment, and other LGBTQ issues including welfare support.
 - c) Work with the JCR LGBTQ Reps to organise events including (but not limited to) LGBTQ drinks and film nights.
- 24) The Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer(s) shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Represent the interests of people who identify as BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) within the MCR and to other bodies of College.
 - b) Be a point of contact for BME students regarding discrimination and harassment on the grounds of race or ethnicity, and other related issues including welfare support.
 - c) Work with the JCR BME Reps to organise cross-common room events.
- 25) The Disabled Students' Officer(s) shall have the following main responsibilities:
- a) Represent the interests of people who identify as disabled within the MCR and to other bodies of College.
 - b) Be a point of contact for disabled students regarding discrimination and harassment on the grounds of disability, accessibility, and other related issues including welfare support.
 - c) Work with the JCR Disabled Reps to organise cross-common room events.
- 26) The Culinary Events Officers shall have the following main responsibilities
- a) Organise events including (but not limited to) food or desserts nights.
 - b) Be responsible for provision of refreshments in the MCR, including tea and coffee.

- 27) The Environment & Ethics Officer shall have the following main responsibilities:
 - a) Promote a positive environmental and ethical stance within the MCR.
 - b) Organise events relating to the environment or ethical issues in the MCR.
 - c) Be responsible for the MCR Charity Fund distribution, in accordance with these Standing Orders.
- 28) The Returning Officer shall have the following main responsibilities:
 - a) Organise any elections or referenda under the Rules of the MCR.
 - b) Have any further responsibilities listed under the Rules of the MCR, including the chairing of General Meetings in certain circumstances and the handling of certain complaints at first instance.
 - c) Ordinarily, to attend and have the MCR's second vote at OUSU Council.
- 29) The International Students' Officer shall have the following main responsibilities:
 - a) Represent the interests of people who identify as international within the MCR and to other bodies of College.
 - b) Be a point of contact for international students regarding discrimination and harassment on the grounds of nationality, and other issues including welfare support.
 - c) Work with the JCR International Reps to organise cross-common room events.
- 30) The Sports Officer shall have the following main responsibilities:
 - a) Organise sports-related events for MCR members.
 - b) Liaise with the JCR Sports Rep and College on sports-related issues
 - c) Maintain the MCR sports cupboard.
- 31) Other positions created by the Executive Board shall have responsibilities designated by the Executive Board.

Part III – External Organisations

- 32) The MCR is affiliated to the following organisations: Oxford University Student Union.
- 33) The MCR's two votes on OUSU Council shall be taken by the President and the Returning Officer, or, where either are not able to attend, by full members appointed by the President.

Policy Motions

Policy Motions are motions passed by the MCR at a General Meeting which the MCR President, in consultation with the Vice President, has decided “establishes ongoing policy intended to have continuing effect in the future” (MCR Standing Order 12a). They are collected in this annex to the MCR Constitution in order that they should be easily remembered and referred to in subsequent years.

Policy Motions are passed in the same manner as any other non-constitutional motion, that is, by a simple majority at a single general meeting. They may be amended or repealed in this same manner. Once passed, they continue to apply according to their terms unless and until amended or repealed.

POLICY MOTION: MCR independence from JCR

Proposed by: David J. Townsend, MCR President

Seconded by: Matthew McCormick, MCR Secretary

The MCR notes:

- 1) That the Constitution of the St John's College Junior Common Room states that "full membership of the JCR shall be automatic for all members of College in statu pupillari".
- 2) That full membership of the JCR entitles MCR members to vote in all JCR elections.
- 3) That 'in statu pupillari' is not defined in the JCR Constitution, nor is the term defined in the University Statutes.
- 4) That the interpretative practice in relation to the JCR Constitution is to acknowledge all MCR members as JCR members.
- 5) That the closest explicit definition of the phrase 'in statu pupillari' is found in the Cambridge University Statutes, wherein it is effectively defined as any student, not yet holding a doctorate or master's degree, who is within 3 1/2 years of admission to their first degree.
- 6) That if the definition of 'in statu pupillari' contained in the Cambridge University Statutes applied to the JCR Constitution, some MCR members would also be JCR members, but other MCR members would not be JCR members.
- 7) That the JCR receives a larger capitation from College than does the MCR on the grounds that the JCR provides certain services to all students, graduate and undergraduate, without distinction.

The MCR therefore resolves:

To renounce all claim to membership of the Junior Common Room of St John's College, on condition that services hitherto provided by the JCR to all JCR members (i.e. graduates and undergraduates) without distinction, should henceforth be provided to all JCR and MCR members without distinction.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 10 March 2011

POLICY MOTION: Fair Trade policy

Proposed by: David J. Townsend, MCR President

Seconded by: Matthew McCormick, MCR Secretary

The MCR notes:

- 1) That the Fairtrade certification mark is awarded to products from more than 70 developing countries which are produced and traded in compliance with the FLO International Fairtrade Standards.
- 2) That the FLO International Fairtrade Standards include democratic decision making and capacity-building reinvestment of profits in small farmers' collectives, the payment of a Fairtrade premium to hired labourers and the ability of those labourers to bargain collectively, adherence to health and safety regulations, and no use of slave or child labour.
- 3) That College has been pursuing Fairtrade certification for some years.
- 4) That certification depends on the College, and its associated entities such as the MCR, being able to show certain commitments to the use of Fair Trade products.
- 5) That a draft of the necessary commitments, including those incumbent on the MCR, is set out in the annexed document 'St John's College - Fairtrade Policy Draft'.
- 6) That a final Fairtrade policy will be determined in discussion with the JCR, MCR, SCR and staff, and will be subject to approval by the Governing Body before becoming effective on the whole of College.

The MCR therefore resolves:

- 1) To support the College's pursuit of Fairtrade certification.
- 2) To provisionally subscribe the MCR to the relevant commitments contained in the annexed document while awaiting the development of a final binding policy.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 10 March 2011

POLICY MOTION: Length of MCR Presidential Reports

Proposed by: David J. Townsend, MCR President

Seconded by: Matthew McCormick, MCR Secretary

The MCR notes:

- 1) That the MCR President is required by the MCR Constitution to deliver a Presidential Report at the Annual General Meeting following the end of his or her term of office, which Report is annexed to the MCR Constitution.
- 2) That if there is no specified maximum length of such Presidential Reports.
- 3) That a series of overly long Presidential Reports would soon result in excessive annexes to the Constitution and such Reports no longer fulfilling their function as brief summaries of each year in the life of the MCR.

The MCR therefore resolves:

That each future MCR Presidential Report should not exceed two A4 pages (i.e. 2 sides) in length.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 10 March 2011

POLICY MOTION: MCR Room Booking

Proposed by: Ant Hibbs, MCR President

Seconded by: Ross Haines, MCR Vice President

The MCR notes:

- 1) That at a previous OGM, the MCR resolved to adopt a policy of not letting societies (or other large groups consisting largely of non-members) book out the MCR building.
- 2) That this was primarily to avert three main concerns: that the use of the MCR by its members was limited by such bookings; that flexibility to organise MCR events was compromised by bookings made far in advance; and that the large number of non-members using the facilities might have contributed to the number of MCR items which were being stolen or broken.
- 3) That the resulting room booking policy allows that the only people who can book rooms in the MCR are MCR members, for groups with a ratio of one member per 3 guests.
- 4) That, despite the increase in availability of the MCR this year following the change in policy, the usage of the MCR has not significantly increased.

- 5) That concerns of theft and breakage can be alleviated by requiring a deposit for large bookings in cheque form, which is returned after the event if the MCR Committee is satisfied that the building has been left in its original, undamaged and tidy form. If the Committee is not satisfied with this, they would be able to use the money to repair or clean the MCR.
- 6) That concerns of bookings filling the calendar and reducing flexibility to run events can be alleviated by refusing bookings made more than three weeks in advance, and limiting large bookings to two in total in a given week.
- 7) That maintaining links with University societies is beneficial to this MCR.

The MCR therefore resolves:

- 1) To allow large groups of more than twelve people, which do not satisfy the required 1:3 member to guest ratio, to book rooms in the MCR subject to the following conditions:
 - a) A full MCR member is to book the event through the MCR President. This member will be wholly responsible for the event and required to attend it.
 - b) A cheque for £100, made out to 'St John's College MCR', will be delivered to the MCR Treasurer no later than three days prior to the event, otherwise the booking will be cancelled, and this will be returned if the MCR is returned to an acceptable state.
 - c) The usual decanal permission must be obtained.
 - d) Events can be booked no earlier than three weeks in advance.
 - e) A maximum of two such bookings will be allowed in any given week.
 - f) MCR members will be allowed full access to events held in the MCR building and, for society events, MCR members shall receive the same rights as society members.
 - g) The MCR Committee reserves the right to reject and cancel bookings at its discretion.
 - h) This policy applies to the main room in the MCR.
- 2) To allow groups of twelve people or fewer, which do not satisfy the required 1:3 member to guest ratio, to book the main room, meeting room, games room and TV room in the MCR subject to the conditions a) and g) above.

Motion passed at Annual General Meeting on 5 May 2013

POLICY MOTION: Compulsory Consent Workshops during Freshers Week

Proposed by: Eden Tanner

Seconded by: Emma Claussen, MCR Women's Officer

The MCR notes:

- 1) A sexual consent workshop is an activity in which a small group of people (ca. 10 – 15) participates in an hour long facilitated discussion around the notion of sexual consent. It begins with a setting of ground rules, followed by a framing of the discussion by examining statistics of sexual violence within the UK, and specifically within UK universities. It then proceeds through three scenarios sequentially.
- 2) OUSU co-ordinates the training and provides resources for MCRs and JCRs to run sexual consent workshops in their communities.
- 3) Feedback on the workshops is overwhelmingly positive.
- 4) That several common rooms have made these workshops compulsory for incoming students.
- 5) That sexual consent is necessary, not optional for sexual interactions.
- 6) That the Freshers' Week committee is responsible for the timetabling of Freshers' Week events.

The MCR believes:

- 1) That consent workshops are an appropriate and desirable way of highlighting the issues surrounding sexual consent and creating a dialogue for incoming students.
- 2) That St John's MCR should be a community in which sexual consent is respected, and sexual violence is not tolerated.

The MCR therefore resolves:

- 1) To mandate the head of the Freshers' Week committee to set aside a one hour slot during the earliest days of Freshers' week, in which will be held consent workshops for incoming students.
- 2) This slot is to be highlighted as a compulsory event in the timetable, but there will be no repercussions for those

- who do not come, or for those who choose not to stay after the establishment of the ground rules.
- 3) To mandate the women's officer and welfare officer(s) to attend training to facilitate the workshops.
 - 4) To invite all interested parties to attend trainings to help the MCR officers facilitate the workshops.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 22 January 2014

POLICY MOTION: Room Ballot Privileges

Proposed by: Marina Lambrakis, MCR President

Seconded by: Nick Cooper, Returning Officer

The MCR notes:

- 1) That currently, several members of the MCR committee receive privileges on the room ballot. These are as follows: the President and Vice President are given first and second place respectively on Ballot 1, the Treasurer is placed on Ballot 1 below all finalists but ahead of non-finalists, and the Social Secretaries are placed immediately below the Treasurer (ranked according to the average of their room scores, from lowest to highest). These entries do not count as ballot entries by these students in future ballots (that is, it does not detract from their ability to use Ballot 1 in the future, assuming they have not already used it), though the score from these rooms does count to their room score average.
- 2) That a survey was circulated to gauge current opinion within the MCR community on the system as it stands, which had a response rate of 28.7% (78 respondents).
- 3) That, of the 63 respondents to the question of who should get room ballot privileges, 77.8% were in favour of the President, and 44.4% were in favour of the Vice-President receiving room privileges. That 20.6% were in favour of the Treasurer receiving this, and 27.0% were in favour of the Social Secretaries receiving this.

The MCR Resolves:

- 1) To retain the first and second place on the room ballot for the President and Vice-President.
- 2) To scrap room ballot privileges for the Treasurer and Social Secretaries.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 3 December 2014

POLICY MOTION: Harassment Policy for MCR Events – Proposed Amendments

Proposed by: David Heaton, Social Secretary

Seconded by: Kieran Fitzpatrick, Social Secretary

The MCR notes:

- 1) the value of its Harassment Policy for MCR Events (the Policy) and the importance of its being properly and effectively enforced at all MCR events
- 2) that, in view of the experience in the first two terms operation of the Policy, it is useful to make express in the Policy several elements of how it has been applied in practice
- 3) that, in view of the workload of the Social Secretaries (which appears to have deterred candidates in the most recent MCR elections) and the possibility that the MCR Committee may at times need to operate without Social Secretaries, changes to the Policy to clarify that the Welfare Secretaries are primarily responsible for executing and maintaining it are desirable

The MCR Resolves:

This policy supplements the St John's College Harassment Policy and Procedure. It establishes role and procedures for applying that policy at MCR events. The MCR maintains that there should be no tolerance for harassment.

- When a complaint of harassment arises at an MCR event, the event organiser or person agreed between the event organiser and the Welfare Officers are the first point of contact for the witness to or victim of the harassment.
 - An MCR event is defined as any event hosted by an MCR committee member in an official capacity.
 - The event organiser is the individual who booked the MCR space.
 - Where a person is agreed between the event organisers and the Welfare Officers to be the first point of contact in relation to a particular event, that person is the first point of contact, and is required to be present for the duration of the event.

- In the case of bops, the Social Secretaries and Welfare Officers will agree beforehand on at least three first points of contact for the duration of a bop (which may be more than three people working in shifts), none of whom is a Social Secretary. The Welfare Officers are responsible for identifying and arranging the attendance of such persons. They are also responsible for ensuring that the Harassment Policy is properly advertised at bops.
- The Welfare Officers are responsible for organising such training sessions as are required to qualify sufficient members of the MCR to act as points of contact for events.
- If agreement cannot be reached for any reason or the Welfare Officers cannot arrange at least three people to act as points of contact for the duration of a bop, the Welfare Officers (or as many as are required to ensure there are sufficient points of contact at all times) will attend bops themselves and act as points of contact, unless this is inappropriate.
- The witness or victim is either the direct victim of the behaviour or another attendee at the event who saw or heard the behaviour.
- When the event organiser or designated person is told about an instance of harassment, they must contact the Junior Dean on duty unless explicitly asked not to by the victim or witness.
 - Subsequent decisions about expulsion, followup, and application of the College Harassment Policy are to be made by the Junior Dean.
 - The event organiser or dedicated person may also contact the Porters, either because the Junior Dean is not immediately available or because of an imminent threat of physical violence.
 - The event organiser or designated person is not responsible for judging whether harassment has or has not taken place, nor are they responsible for removing the alleged harasser.
 - The event organiser or designated person and all members of the MCR Committee must maintain confidentiality around the identities of the victim/s, witness/es, and alleged harasser, except in conversations with the Junior Deans, Porters and members of the MCR Committee.
 - In the exceptional case when a Junior Dean is not available, the event organiser or designated person must contact the Porters, and the alleged harasser will be asked to leave.
 - If the event is held off-site, so that the Junior Deans or Porters are unable to respond, the event organiser or designated person is expected to follow up with them as soon as practically possible.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 5 March 2015

POLICY MOTION: Couples' Accommodation Ballot Rules

Proposed by: Eden Tanner, MCR President

Seconded by: Anthony Payne, MCR Vice President

The MCR notes:

- 1) This motion is not to make any procedural changes to the ballot, but only to update the wording to reflect current practice

The MCR Resolves:

That the allocation of couples' accommodation will be decided based on the following rules:

- 1) The Domestic Office will allocate rooms to the following students, assuming the students request accommodation from the College:
 - Couples with children with at least one of the persons at St John's College
 - New students arriving at St John's College with partners
- 2) Any couples' accommodation remaining thereafter will be allocated by the MCR according to the following rules:
 - St John's College couples' accommodation will be allocated on an annual basis, and the normal tenancy period will be one year with the start and end dates of the normal tenancy period set by the Domestic Office.
 - Couples, at least one party to which is a student at St John's College, who wish to obtain couples' accommodation for the following year may enter a ballot for available couples' accommodation (the MCR Couples' Accommodation Ballot) by communicating their wish to the MCR Vice President by the date announced by email by the Vice President in Hilary Term.
 - After the closure of the ballot, couples entered in the MCR Couples' Accommodation Ballot will be

ranked randomly and available couples' accommodation will be allocated in order of rank at the time announced by email by the Vice President.

- In the event that further couples' accommodation is released by the Domestic Office subsequent to the conduct of the ballot, such accommodation will be allocated in order of ballot ranking.
- In the event that more couples' accommodation becomes available part way through the normal tenancy period, it will be allocated according to ballot rank, however the tenancy will only run to the end of the normal tenancy period.
- In the event that all couples on the ballot have been allocated couples' accommodation or have been offered couples' accommodation and have declined the offer, any couples' accommodation remaining or subsequently becoming available will be allocated by the MCR Vice President after informing all MCR members of the availability of the accommodation and ranking respondents randomly.

Motion passed at Ordinary General Meeting on 18 June 2015

Presidential Reports

The St John's College Middle Common Room, whether measured against the subjective expectations of its own membership, the objective achievements of comparable common rooms, or the sensible esteem in which it is held by other components of the College and of the University, may be judged to be a highly successful institution. Nevertheless, like all student-run organisations, it faces a structural problem of information retention, as institutional memory may be swiftly lost due to the near-complete turnover of personnel on the MCR Committee each year, and the near-complete turnover of membership of the MCR as a whole within four years. This creates an imbalance against other components of the College and of the University, in which individuals may remain in office for decades at a time, and restricts the MCR's capacity to defend and advance its interests.

It is to staunch, to some degree, this loss of institutional memory that I have written this brief and utile report of the affairs of the MCR during my tenure as President, and, upon its delivery, I shall propose that the communication of such brief reports by the immediate past President be written into the MCR Constitution as a mandatory component of the Annual General Meeting, and that each report then be annexed to the MCR Constitution after its delivery.

David J. Townsend
MCR President 2009-2010

Presidential Report 2009-2010

Rents & Charges: At the Rents & Charges negotiations in Trinity Term 2009, the MCR, JCR and the College negotiated a rise in room rents and general facilities charges for of 4.75% over 2008-2009 levels, as against an Oxford Colleges Cost Index rise of 4.96%. The price of food increased by 4%. The capitation grant to the MCR and JCR also increased by 4.75%. In addition, we negotiated an increase in the academic grant of 9.4% (to a total of £304 for graduates, up from £278) and an increase in the level to which 100% grant is given (to £100, up from £80). The College also committed itself to the institution of termly deadlines for submissions under the academic grant scheme, and although the Finance Bursar expressed her hope that such termly deadlines would be operational from Hilary Term 2010, they have yet to come into effect. The College continues to adhere to its policy of aiming for the middle of the Rent Table, stating that while they are happy to consider greater academic support (like the academic grant), they distinguish this from domestic support (lower rents). The MCR remains unconvinced as to the legitimacy of this distinction, since residence in Oxford is a requirement for all students under the University Statutes, and the College as an academic community is premised on domestic cohabitation.

Constitutional Review: I conducted a thorough review of the MCR Constitution and suggested amendments, which were all approved. The major effect of these amendments was to change the system by which undergraduates could become Associate Members of the MCR. Previously, they would all just get the President and Secretary to nominate them (regardless of whether the President or Secretary actually knew them), turn up to one meeting at the start of Michaelmas Term (or maybe not even bother) and all be put through in one motion of acceptance, with very little explanation of why they wanted to be Associate Members. The new system approved by the MCR requires that an applicant for Associate Membership have two full members of the MCR nominate him or her, and requires that the applicant and the two nominators actually attend the relevant meeting (unless given special exemption by the President) or the motion falls void; each application is voted on separately, with the applicant and the two nominators explaining why the applicant wants Associate Membership; no full member may nominate more than 6 persons for Associate Membership in any one year (so the President and Secretary don't end up being the mules they were in the past). This change seems to have had the desired effect of better integrating Associate Members into the MCR community because they now become better known as individuals than was the case before. It should be noted that s 22(2)(b) of the Education Act 1994 (UK) requires that Governing Body review the MCR's Constitution at least every five years, and that the MCR Constitution be subject to Governing Body's approval. The practice of Governing Body in this respect seems to be to indicate consent to any changes we make by remaining silent, as various members of Governing Body are on the MCR mailing list, and so presumptively aware of the minutes of our meetings and any constitutional changes contained therein.

High Table Dining: Recognising that the existing system of graduates having to wait for their Supervisor/College Adviser to invite them to High Table was clearly not working, I proposed a scheme (to be trialled for one term) whereby there would be 5 places on High Table 3 nights a week into which graduates could book themselves at the start of term, only being allowed to go once a term (unless there are vacant spaces), having to pay for the dinner themselves, being required not to sit as a single group all together, and being reminded of their booking by the MCR Secretary at the start of the week for which they had booked. The proposal was formulated after talks with the Steward of High Table, the Senior Tutor, the Domestic Bursar and the SCR Butler and went through Joint Council, Domestic Committee and ultimately to Governing Body; in the end it was not endorsed by Governing Body, although some support was expressed, and Governing Body chose instead to remind Supervisors/College Advisers that they have the power to invite graduates to High Table. In the view of the MCR, the reasons for rejecting the proposal seemed to hinge on an under-appreciation of the importance of relaxed interaction between the SCR and the MCR in making graduates feel like part of the College community, an overestimate of the success of existing schemes (such as SCR-MCR wine tasting and graduate lecture suppers, both of which are attended by very few SCR members) and unfamiliarity with the details of the proposal (although it was circulated with other Governing Body papers, many SCR members seemed not to have read the proposal closely as they adverted to supposed problems which had in fact already been obviated in the very design of the scheme). Governing Body did have a more cogent objection on the grounds that High Table had been growing too large and it needed to be cut back just at the moment, but this did not seem to be a permanent problem. There was also an associated proposal for one place on one day each week for a JCR and an MCR delegate (not necessarily always the respective Presidents) so as to ease relations between the student representatives and the SCR, but this was always secondary to the wider scheme. It would be advisable to keep pushing this wider scheme, as it seemed to make some progress, with more and more SCR members coming around to the idea over time; direct conversations with the Tutor for Graduates, the Senior Tutor and the Domestic Bursar might cement the support of these important officers for the scheme.

Library Opening Hours: After a campaign stretching over several years (which had originated in 2007 with a petition for a 24 hour library), in Trinity Term 2009 the termtime opening hours of the Library were extended from Mon-Sat 09:00-23:00/Sun 10:00-23:00 to Mon-Sat 09:00-00:00/Sun 10:00-00:00, and the vacation hours extended from Mon-Fri 10:00-13:00 and 14:00-17:00 to Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00. After further lobbying, including my soliciting of many new graduate student invigilators to cover the extra hours, it was agreed to trial in Trinity Term 2010 a further extension, so that termtime opening hours would be Mon-Fri 09:00-02:00/Sun 10:00-02:00 and vacation opening hours Mon-Fri 09:00-21:00. It would be advantageous to confirm these hours as permanent, as they allow graduates to use the Library more, especially during vacation, and provide valuable employment opportunities for graduates trying hard to fund their studies. In addition, it would be advantageous to support the further extension of opening hours such that the Library should open at 07:00 Mon-Fri during termtime, on condition that students using the Library then should have to put up with cleaning and maintenance staff going about their business at that time.

College Tortoise: From Michaelmas Term 2009, I initiated a campaign for the College to obtain a pet tortoise as a way of building a greater sense of College community. A cat has been discussed in the past (to replace Oscar, the unofficial College cat, who died in 2004), but cats cause allergic reactions in some students and leave faeces and dead birds around College, the latter being particularly objectionable to the College President's wife. After discussions with the College President, Keeper of the Groves, Head Gardener and Senior Dean, the issue was taken to Garden Committee and received their approval, with the tortoise to be housed on the MCR lawn in a fenced off area with a heated kennel, and for the hibernation period to be kept in a refrigerator located in the Head Porter's office (for security reasons) with a hole cut into the door seal to allow an air pipe and electric thermometer leads to be fed in; there would be a JCR and an MCR 'Custos Testudinis' or 'Testudent' elected each year to take care of it. The JCR and MCR passed motions to cover the expense of buying and maintaining the tortoise. I suggested, and the MCR and JCR approved, that it be called 'Bowser'. Governing Body approved the proposal subject to Dr Burt, Tutorial Fellow in Zoology, investigating whether the College would be subject to the normal standard of care or the very high standard of care (as for university research animals), and whether the College would be liable for accident or injury suffered by the tortoise. Dr Burt decided that, although it was an unclear area, she could not exclude the possibility that the College would be subject to the higher standard of care and would be liable for accident and injury, so she could not recommend the purchase of the tortoise. I have suggested to Dr Burt that we could adopt the solution used by University College, in which the Head Porter (in his personal capacity) is the legal owner of the tortoise but he keeps it on College grounds; additionally, he could allow 'friends' of his amongst the JCR and MCR take care of it. The Head Porter has indicated that he would be happy with this solution, subject to Dr Burt's approval, and at the time of writing I am still waiting on her reply.

JCR and MCR Charities Money: After enquiries with the Finance Bursar, I established that 50% of the battels entry 'JCR Overseas Scholar Levy' (which is apparently an optional payment) goes to fund scholarships for graduate students and 50% goes to the JCR for charitable distribution; the JCR then passes on an amount to MCR. For some years successive MCR Charities Officers have been concerned that the MCR was not getting enough money passed on from the JCR, but having obtained data from the Finance Bursar on how many MCR members are actually paying the 'JCR Overseas Scholar Levy' on their battels, it appears that the JCR has not been underpaying us in the last year at least. Nevertheless, it would be wise to change the payment practice such that the money collected from JCR members is paid directly to the JCR and the money collected from MCR members is paid directly to the MCR so that no problems of underpayment can arise in the future.

Kendrew Quadrangle: With the construction of Kendrew Quadrangle nearing completion, we have been given figures on how this will affect the number of graduate rooms available. Kendrew Quadrangle will bring online 38 new graduate rooms and 30 undergraduate rooms (and 2 disabled-access rooms for either graduates or undergraduates). The 27 graduate rooms in 19-20-21 St John Street will be taken offline for refurbishment, and the 30 undergraduates moving into Kendrew Quadrangle will vacate the Blackhall Road rooms, turning them over to become graduate rooms. In 2010-2011, then, there should be a net increase of 41 graduate rooms. The longer term future of the graduate housing on St John Street is unclear, as the College has declined to state whether they plan to sell all these houses or not. The Kendrew Quadrangle is in very many ways a magnificent construction which will immeasurably improve the student experience at the College by the addition of another gymnasium, a large bop room, music practice rooms and so forth; nevertheless, the MCR and JCR have both expressed disappointment at the poor use of space in the Kendrew Quadrangle student rooms, which are already of limited size. This poor use of space is primarily the result of the superfluous inclusion of a bathroom in every single student room, rather than the normal situation of one bathroom being

shared by 5 or 6 people. Questions have been raised about the utility of having one third of the total space in student rooms taken up by a bathroom that is only in use for a few minutes each day, and whether the rooms have been designed principally with students or with conference guests in mind. The extra labour required from scouts to clean 70 individual bathrooms rather than about 15 shared bathrooms also seems an unnecessary imposition on them. Furthermore, there have been concerns over the lack of storage/shelf space and the lack of bed space in student rooms: on an inspection tour, one of the MCR Culture & Media Officers was not physically able to fit into the bed 'enclosure' without significant contortion of his body. The MCR and JCR Presidents were in Hilary Term 2009 for the first time invited to attend, as observers, the meetings of the Committee for the Development of the Kendrew Quadrangle where the major decisions about the outfitting of the quadrangle are decided (before these decisions are presented to Domestic Committee for general approval, without minute scrutiny by that Committee). In reply to the concerns expressed by the MCR and JCR at least as far back as early 2009 about bathrooms, storage/shelf space and bed space in the Kendrew Quadrangle student rooms, SCR members have stated that previous MCR and JCR Officers were extensively consulted on the construction plans; however, even taking into account the possibility of previous MCR and JCR officers being particular fond of the idea of having their own individual bathrooms, the fact that the MCR and JCR Presidents were only very recently admitted to the committee that actually makes the ongoing detailed decisions about the planning of Kendrew Quadrangle tends to undermine the SCR's argument on this point. I would very strongly suggest that future MCR Presidents lobby hard to be admitted to the actual decision making committees in respect of any future construction or major redevelopment works on student accommodation, as it is we, the students, who are the primary users of these buildings, not the academics of the College, much less the architects of the construction, and so it is we, the students, who are in the best position to represent how these buildings will be used and what the users of these buildings will consider important in their design and construction.

Miscellaneous: I ensured that the Appointments Committee which chose the President, Secretary and Treasurer of the 2011 SJC Ball would have equal JCR and MCR representation on it and that all positions on the Ball Committee, including Ball President, should be open to MCR members. When it turned out that no MCR members ended up being on the Ball Committee, I negotiated with the Ball President to appoint an MCR Ball Representative to be installed on the Ball Committee. The MCR Committee and I worked to beautify the MCR building and make it a more personalised and welcoming place for the graduate community. I arranged the taking of an MCR Committee photograph (which I hope will be the first of very many to grace the walls) and encouraged keen MCR photographers to start taking photographs of MCR life which we might frame and put on the walls as replacements for the black and white 'atmospheric' photographs of smashed windscreens and tumble driers. After some years of successive MCR Committees talking about getting a coffee machine, this year's Epicure researched and selected a Nespresso coffee machine for the MCR to buy, the ongoing costs of which are covered from the MCR's budget, making it free for MCR members and their guests to use. It has made the MCR a more interesting place to spend time during the day, particularly after lunch (when people used to have to go to the College Bar to obtain coffee, for a price, and of a coarser quality). By chance, early in my term of office, I caught some unauthorised undergraduates in the MCR building playing pool one evening, and, not recognising who I was, they spontaneously confessed that their keyfobs gave them access to the MCR even though they had no right to such access. Having made some further enquiries with MCR members who had been undergraduates at the College some years ago, I discovered that this phenomenon had been current even as long as 5 years ago, and surmised that it resulted from a creeping error in the administration of keyfob access by the MCR: when undergraduates are admitted as Associate Members, their keyfobs are enabled for access to the MCR building, but if the MCR President does not remember to ask the Clerk of Works to disable this access when these undergraduates leave/change rooms at the end of the academic year, then the inheritors of these enabled keyfobs will have access to the MCR despite not being themselves Associate Members of the MCR. Recalling that there had been a problem with theft of books and a laptop in the MCR building the previous year, and not knowing how many unauthorised undergraduates could get into the MCR building, I considered that I had no choice but to tighten the security of access to the MCR building, and so collected genuine MCR members' keyfob numbers by e-mail over several weeks (checking them against the list of MCR members provided by College), and then asked the Clerk of Works to wipe all student access to the MCR and enable it again only for the keyfob numbers I had supplied to him. Most MCR members managed to provide me with their keyfob numbers in time for the wiping and restoring, and so experienced no disruption of access, but there has been a trickle of requests for re-enabling of access by genuine MCR members who did not send me their keyfob numbers in due time, either because they were out of Oxford at the time of the wiping and restoring or because they did not get around to replying to the numerous e-mails I sent about the matter before it was necessary to wipe and restore access. With much expenditure of time, I have compiled a list of MCR members and their fob numbers, including Associate and Honorary Members with information about when they will cease to hold that membership status and so when their keyfobs should be disabled for MCR access. If the list is kept up to date in this fashion, it should be very easy to e-mail the Estates Manager (who has taken on this duty) at the end of the academic year and tell him which keyfob numbers to disable so that the problem of unauthorised access will not recur. After the JCR President and I expressed concerns about students not being represented on certain committees (most importantly Finance Committee) and, for the committees on which we did sit, the division between Agenda A (unreserved business) and Agenda B (reserved business, for which we had to leave), the College President agreed to hold informal summit meetings of himself, the JCR President and I to brief us on what had been decided at recent committee meetings at which we did not have representation at all and what had been decided under Agenda B on the committees on which we did have representation on unreserved matters. He affirmed that for committees with an Agenda A/Agenda B split, the default position was that matters should be on Agenda A unless they were commercial in confidence or related to the treatment of a particular individual, in which case they would be moved to Agenda B. Neither the JCR President nor I was entirely happy with being excluded from commercial in confidence matters, as these seem to be important to the lives of students and without us there was no direct student voice being heard on these matters. We were both of the opinion that College should be able to repose trust in us, as adults elected by adults to be their representatives – as beneficiaries of the College charitable trust elected by the majority of the beneficiaries of the College charitable trust to be their representatives – not to divulge confidential information. Nevertheless, these summit meetings with the College President are a step in the right direction and should be regularised to once or twice a term; they should ideally occur before the meeting of committees without student representation or with an Agenda B, as occurs in student representatives' briefings with their Head of House/Senior Tutor/Senior Dean at other colleges, so that the College President may speak indirectly for students in such situations. The refurbishment of the College Bar has largely been driven by the hard work of JCR members. In the Rents & Charges negotiations, the JCR President secured a promise from College to fund refurbishment of the Bar and Bar Extension and it has been the research and detailed costings provided by the JCR Domestic Secretaries which really got the project moving. If renovations to student areas are desired, it seems that they work best with enthusiastic student involvement impelling them forwards. In Hilary Term 2010 the MCR approved the creation of a division of the MCR Budget to fund the purchase of video games, since video game consoles had been purchased over the last couple of years without an ongoing funding commitment to keeping the game library up to date and interesting. The MCR Committee appointed two Representatives during its term in office: an Electronic Equipment Representative who was to have oversight of the speakers, bop electronics, television, subscription television package, video games, DVD player and so forth; and a Bicycle Representative who was to provide free minor repairs to MCR members' bicycles and advice on how to procure major repairs. After the MCR website had been limping away for some years without major updating and had not been updated at all for a couple of terms, I raised at an MCR meeting the possibility of asking College to formally take it over (including assuming editorial control), but fortunately a member of the MCR volunteered to become Website Officer and he has since been building a new MCR website. Near the end of my term, I saw that the MCR Committee handover process could be made a good deal easier if, as in the JCR, MCR Officers had generic e-mail addresses (e.g. mcr-president@sjc.ox.ac.uk), under which they could be subscribed to various mailing lists. With the aid of the College Computing Officer, I organised for these generic e-mail addresses to be established.

Acknowledgments: I would like to offer my whole-hearted gratitude for the hard work, enthusiasm, competence and good humour of the rest of the MCR Committee 2009-2010. While I cannot, unfortunately, engage in an individual appraisal of the great qualities of each MCR Officer, it is enough to say that they toiled cheerfully, successfully and voluntarily, for no more substantial reward than the hope of making the MCR community an enjoyable one, in which hope they were, in the event, well justified. I must give especial thanks to my fellow Executive Officer of the MCR Committee, Secretary Stuart Broadfoot and Treasurer Vusumuzi Nhlahlaha 'Fats' Dlamini for their labour, skill and solidarity.

David J. Townsend
MCR President 2009-2010

Presidential Report 2012-2013

This report details how the Committee in 2012-2013 organised events, provided services, and represented members.

Communication

We made significant changes to how we communicate events and services to members.

- We launched a new St John's College MCR Facebook group so that members could find out about MCR events, announce details of their own events, advertise items that they own, ask questions, or circulate information that they thought would be useful to MCR members.
- We reintroduced the weekly MCR newsletter, announcing details of news and events for members.
- We introduced Google forms for members to sign up to events, very much simplifying the sign up process.
- We revamped our website, adding new sections on communication, events, the MCR Building, and welfare.
- We reused noticeboards in the MCR Building to publicise services.

MCR Building

We introduced many new features in the MCR Building. Following these changes, members now use the MCR Building substantially more than in previous years.

- We refurbished an abandoned room to create a new Meeting Room with substantial table space for work, meetings, and social events. The Meeting Room also has a whiteboard, projector, and board games area.
- We introduced a free tea and coffee service.
- We added a new games console (PlayStation 3) and sound system in the TV Room.
- We restocked the kitchen with new kitchenware, including cutlery, cookware, and very distinctive mugs.
- We redecorated the MCR Building with plants and photographs.
- We installed new speakers for the Main Room, used for bops and social events.
- We installed shelving in the Committee Cupboard to increase and organise storage space.

Rents and Charges

We made an agreement with the College over Rents and Charges, considering the significant problems affecting graduate finance and a projected 5.07% corrected inflation (VNI) in College charges.

- We agreed a 3.6% increase in rent, food costs, the Academic Grant, and MCR capitation.
- We agreed that the College would fully fund the cost of student languages courses (LASR and OPAL) at the Oxford University Language Centre.
- We agreed that the College would fund the part refurbishment of the MCR Building.
- We agreed that the minimum temperature for student rooms would rise from 15°C to 18°C.
- We agreed that freezers would be provided in student kitchens.
- We agreed that the Academic Grant would cover the cost of monitors, desktop computers, and peripherals.
- We agreed that the College would install wireless hubs throughout student accommodation.

Constitution

We updated our Constitution following a review from a Constitutional Committee and ratification at two consecutive General Meetings in Trinity Term.

- We agreed that the MCR Committee should have the following structure: the Executive (including President, Vice President, and Treasurer), the Secretaries (including Cultural Secretary, Social Secretary, and Victualler), and the Officers (including Desserts Officer, Environment and Ethics Officer, Returning Officer, Welfare Officer, and Women's Officer). The Executive and Secretaries form the Board.
- We agreed that Board positions should be put to annual elections in Trinity Term. The elected Board would then appoint Officers subject to ratification at a General Meeting.

Freshers Week

We made significant changes to Freshers Week over the last two years.

- We ran a varied social calendar during Freshers Week (Welcome Party, Freshers BBQ, Quiz Night, College Bar Crawl, Culture Night, Oxford Tour, Cocktails Night, Desserts Night). We provided (as at all social events) good-quality, non-alcoholic drinks at all events.
- We introduced a Help Desk, staffed by volunteers, who could answer questions from Freshers, provide advice, and ensure that someone friendly could meet Freshers in the MCR Building.
- We created new online materials that provided comprehensive information for Freshers.
- We rewrote and restructured the Freshers Guide.

Services

We introduced several new services for members.

- We trained the first MCR members as peer supporters. Peer supporters offer accessible and informal opportunities to talk through issues that might concern students.
- We introduced welfare supplies, provided through the Welfare Officers.
- We introduced a bicycle rental scheme, shared between the JCR and MCR, allowing students to rent bicycles, helmets, and lights for a one-off annual charge.
- We introduced a DVD rental system so that members could rent from our DVD collection for free.

Policies

We agreed several policies to standardise how we make decisions.

- We agreed that, in most cases, only people who do not have access to comparable, alternative service providers (such as other JCRs and MCRs) should be eligible for associate membership. Exceptions include mature undergraduates and fourth year undergraduates at St John's College. We introduced this policy to ensure that graduates at St John's College benefit from MCR events and services, and are not restricted due to demand from people who already have access to comparable, alternative service providers.
- We decided not to allow external societies to hold events in the MCR Building, except in cases when there is substantial benefit to members. We introduced this policy in response to complaints from members due to disruption and blocked access to rooms, damage and loss of property, and significant interference to scheduling MCR events.
- We agreed that the allocation of members to limited capacity events should be decided randomly through the use of a random number generator. This also applies to other allocation decisions such as the flat ballot when we used a public, random allocation system.
- We agreed that priority should be given to full and associate members above members' guests at all limited capacity events.
- We agreed to provide good-quality, non-alcoholic drinks at social events.

Committee

- The Vice President (Madu Jayatunga) organised the room ballots, General Meetings, and Committee meetings.
- The Treasurer (Leigh Paton) organised the MCR's finances.
- The Cultural Secretary (David Lewis) organised cinema trips, concert trips, a trip to Stratford-upon-Avon, a tour of the Houses of Parliament, and other cultural events. David also managed our periodicals.
- The Social Secretaries (Gaelle Coullon, Ross Haines, Ant Hibbs, and Tobias Wiczorek) organised six bops, six exchange dinners, our Christmas Dinner, and other social events.
- The Victuallers (Johnny Crockett and John O'Rourke, Tom Blackburn and Jeongmin Thomas Han) organised six guest dinners.
- The Desserts Officer (Sarah Davidson) organised six desserts nights.
- The Environment and Ethics Officer (Nick Cooper) organised our termly charity donations, chaired a Charity Committee that distributed profits from St John's College Ball 2011, and led our recycling efforts.
- The Returning Officer (Adam Povey) organised the annual election, and reviewed electoral procedure.
- The Sports Officer (Ross Haines) purchased new sports equipment for the Sports Cupboard.
- The Welfare Officers (Miriam Hillyard and Paolo Ronchi) significantly increased our welfare provision, including free welfare supplies, and organised six post-bop brunches. Paolo also organised six wine and cheese events.
- The Women's Officer (Klara Wanelik) organised women's informal formals and other social events.

I thank all of the Committee for their efforts over the last year. Everything we do in the MCR, from the events we attend to the services we use, is entirely dependent on the generosity of volunteers who give up their time to make them happen. I wish the very best to the next Committee.

I hope that you have all enjoyed the last year. The MCR is a remarkable community and, to each and every one of you, I hope that it is an amazing part of your time here at St John's.

Richard Lau
President 2012-2013

Presidential Report 2013-2014

Committee

- The Vice-President (Ross Haines) organised the room ballots, General Meetings and Committee meetings, as well as acting as Sports Officer, maintaining the sports cupboard and organising trips. He also assisted the President with rents and charges discussions and other projects.
- The Treasurer (Gauri Ang) managed the MCR finances.
- The Culture Secretaries (Tom Blackburn, Flora Kennedy McConnell, Carly de Jonge) organised a variety of events and excursions, including film nights, theatre trips, cinema trips and visits to places of interest. They also reviewed and managed the periodical subscriptions.
- The Social Secretaries (Sean Robinson, Steph Larcombe, Tom Han) organised six bops, seven exchange dinners and other social events, including grad tables, the Christmas dinner and the summer garden party.
- The Victuallers (Nick Cooper, John Harfield, Paolo Ronchi) organised six guest dinners and six wine & cheese tasting events.
- The Desserts Officer (Caitlin Clunie O'Connor) organised six desserts nights.
- The Environment & Ethics Officer (Melissa Bailey) organised the termly charity donations and worked with the College to ensure goods are sourced in an ethical and environmentally friendly way. She also organised special E&E events jointly with the Victuallers and Welfare Officers.
- The Returning Officer (Tom Preston) organised the annual election.
- The Welfare Officers (Marina Lambrakis, Ed Peveler) organised welfare events, including six post-bop brunches, maintained and distributed a range of welfare supplies and coordinated welfare provision alongside the Peer Supporters.
- The Women's Officer (Emma Claussen) organised women's lunches and other events. She was also involved in formulating plans and running events for the '2000 Women' celebrations.

Rents & Charges

- We agreed a 2.5% increase in rent, food and MCR capitation.
- We agreed a 12% increase in the academic grant, as well as initiating an investigation into the possibility of termly repayment of the grant and forward spending (which would allow students to spend multiple years' grants in one go for large cost items such as personal computers). These are yet to be implemented and I encourage the new (and future) MCR Committees to continue pursuing such changes.
- We agreed that the thesis binding grant would be increased to £40 per thesis, up to a maximum of £80 in total.
- We voiced concerns about the criteria for allocating funds via the special grant, in particular the requirement that the recipient must present at any conference for which they wish to receive funding.
- We proposed that the costs of electricity and insurance were covered by the College, rather than the students.
- We proposed that the College create a grant to cover the costs of Visas for international students who require them to study in the UK.
- We proposed that clinical medicine students are reimbursed for the costs of travelling to and from placements, including the John Radcliffe Hospital.
- Discussions of these proposals opened the door for further consideration by the Rents & Charges Committee, should representatives from the MCR wish to pursue them.

Freshers' Week

- We organised a variety of events across Freshers' Week which were intended to accommodate a range of interests and primarily to provide new graduates with a relaxed environment to meet other MCR members.
- We published detailed information on the MCR website for Freshers, ran a help desk in the MCR, organised tours of the College and offered the 'meet and greet' scheme for those new to Oxford.
- This year saw a dramatic increase in the graduate student intake, from 60-70 in the previous year up to roughly 100. This made the task of organising Freshers' Week even more difficult, and I thank all those who volunteered to help.

MCR Building

- We opened up the MCR room booking policy, most notably allowing external groups such as University societies to use our facilities. Constraints on bookings were carefully considered and discussed to ensure that the security of the building and its contents was not compromised, and access was not restricted for MCR members. Many of the events held have also been of interest to MCR members.
- We created an online booking form for rooms in the MCR building, simplifying the process and making it more efficient.
- We installed a ceiling-mounted projector in the meeting room.
- We installed a surround sound system in the TV room.

Miscellaneous

- We trained additional Peer Supporters, increasing the total number and therefore the accessibility of this service.
- We oversaw the activities of the 2014 Ball Committee, by hearing reports from the President at each General Meeting, and by representing the MCR on the Ball Steering Committee. In particular, this allowed ideas and concerns to be actively discussed at every opportunity.
- We were involved in formulating the proposals for the new library and study centre project, with the College welcoming feedback on all aspects of the plans. This project is ongoing, and I hope that graduates will maintain an active interest in its development.
- We were involved in planning the '2000 Women' celebrations. In particular, our Women's Officer and other volunteers worked closely with the organisers to arrange varied and exciting events to celebrate this milestone.
- We conducted a survey of opinions from graduates about formal and informal hall. The results demonstrated that many graduates feel these could be improved in a variety of ways, and I hope the new MCR Committee investigates options further with the College to incorporate some of these ideas.
- We encountered a problem with one of the MCR Committee budgets, particularly towards the end of the year. This issue, largely down to a breakdown in communication resulted in a significant over-expenditure in this budget. Going forward, it is essential that committee members are prompt in submitting claim forms and maintain regular communication with the Treasurer to ensure that problems like this do not occur.

I am extremely proud of what the MCR Committee achieved this year, and I thank its members for volunteering their time to offer support, provide services and organise events. They did this specifically to ensure that our experience here is one that we will all remember fondly. Looking ahead, I wish all the very best to the new MCR Committee.

I end by saying that it has been a privilege to serve this amazing community. I thank every one of you for your support, and for making my time as MCR President enjoyable, interesting and fulfilling. Best wishes to all of you for the future.

Anthony J. Hibbs
MCR President 2013-2014

Presidential Report 2014-2015

Committee

- The President (Marina Lambrakis) oversaw the Committee's activities, chaired General Meetings, represented and lobbied on behalf of the MCR to College, OUSU, and other bodies, and dealt with the MCR's correspondences, including collating the weekly newsletter.
- The Vice-President (Ross Haines; Eden Tanner) organised the room ballots, General Meetings and Committee meetings, as well as attending College committees, taking part in the Rents & Charges negotiations and assisting the President on various projects throughout the year.
- The Treasurer (Gauri Ang) managed the MCR finances, including dealing with the Sky account and the Punt Club.
- The Culture Secretaries (John-Mark Allen, Sarah Penington, Ed Peveler) organised a variety of events and excursions, including film nights, theatre trips, cinema trips, and walks. They also managed the periodical subscriptions.
- The Desserts/Pizza Officers (Andreas Goebel, Stefano Ortona, Lisa Choi) organised food nights.
- The LGBTQ Officer (Thomas Preston) organised events, including socials and film nights.
- The Returning Officer (Nick Cooper) organised the annual election, as well as a by-election for the position of Vice-President in Michaelmas term 2014. He also acted as the MCR OUSU rep, attending OUSU Council, and organised the termly charity donations.
- The Social Secretaries (Kieran Fitzpatrick, David Heaton, Jan Cosgrave, Rita Nissim) organised bops, exchange dinners, grad tables, and other social events, including the Christmas dinner, the summer garden party, and whiskey and coffee tastings.
- The Victuallers (Max Emmerich, Steph Larcombe, Pirada Trongwongsa) organised guest dinners and wine & cheese tasting events.
- The Welfare Officers (Paul Gerstmayr, Jon Templeman, Katherine Fender) organised welfare events, including post-bop brunches, teas, and awareness events and workshops, maintained and distributed a range of welfare supplies, and coordinated welfare provision alongside the Peer Supporters.
- The Women's Officer (Shana Caro) organised women's lunches, the annual women's dinner, and women's garden party, as well as more informal gatherings and film nights. She was also involved in formulating plans and running events for the '2000 Women' celebrations.

In our final term, the Committee also created the positions of BME Officer and Disabled Students Officer, in order to allow these to be included in the Committee elections. This means we are now one of the few graduate common rooms to have officer positions for all the liberation groups. The position of Environment & Ethics Officer remained vacant.

Rents & Charges

The Rents & Charges negotiations were attended by the President and Vice-President (with input from the Treasurer), where we presented a report on graduate finances. Prior to beginning the negotiations, we conducted a survey of the MCR to establish where the community's priorities lay, in order to best represent these.

- We agreed a 3% increase in rent and the academic grant (to £388), and 3.5% increase in food costs.
- The committee also agreed various administrative changes to the academic grant. It was agreed that the grant could be claimed for termly (to avoid the rush of applications in Hilary term), and that graduates with at least one full fee-paying year beyond the current academic year would be able to forward spend against the following year's allowance for large purchases.
- To account for the fact that graduates are based in Oxford outside termtime, it was agreed that the MCR grant would be increased by 20% as a one-off adjustment to the baseline budget, in addition to the 3.5% increase agreed across the common rooms.
- We negotiated a £5000 budget to refurbish the Pool Room in the MCR, in order to make it into a space that is more widely used.

Freshers' Week: Freshers' Week 2014 ran along similar lines to previous years, with a broad range of events across the week. A separate Freshers' Week Committee was set up, and was headed by the President. It is **recommended** that in future years, the organisation of Freshers' Week is formalised and a procedure established for the appointment and operation of the Committee, to streamline the process and ensure that institutional memory is maintained, particularly over such initiatives as the meet and greet scheme.

MCR Building & College Facilities: Various changes were made to MCR facilities this year, including the acquisition of a new coffee machine, and the restocking of the MCR kitchen's equipment. More substantially, we passed a motion to make the **MCR toilets** gender neutral (by removing the gendered signs). Throughout Michaelmas and Hilary terms the MCR lift was out of order, and as a result of the considerable delay in getting it fixed College agreed to change the engineer company in charge of maintaining the lift. After a consultation in the Rents & Charges survey and discussion in the Hilary term OGMs, the **Pool Room** was refurbished over the Easter holiday with new furnishings (sofa, armchairs, beanbags), and has been repurposed as a games/lounge room (name to be concluded, currently known as the Room Formerly Known As The Pool Room). A new TV was installed in the TV room and the old one moved here; our games collection has been expanded, and the space made more

comfortable and welcoming. Our hope is that this will lead to this room being used much more by MCR members, as a relaxing social space that can double up as a quieter, more comfortable workspace.

There were also a few changes made to some College facilities, mainly on request from MCR members. The most significant of these concerned **security at Hart Synnot House**, particularly in terms of bikes. (A motion was passed at an OGM mandating us to lobby College on this issue.) As a result, new, more secure bike racks have been installed, and the College have committed to improving security at the Leckford Road sites, including Hart Synnot House. We also secured a commitment from College to provide **food waste bins for Hart Synnot House** (upon request from residents), and it is hoped that this provision might expand to other College sites in the near future.

Communication: The MCR newsletter continued to be sent out weekly, with notices of events and other news items. The format was changed slightly, so that the introductory message includes a summary of MCR events for the week, along with an update from the President on current Committee projects and initiatives. This was also reflected in the running of General Meetings, which now include **updates from Committee members** at the start of each General Meeting in the interests of transparency.

Constitution & Elections: The Returning Officer undertook a major review of the Constitution, mainly with the purpose of deleting extraneous or inaccurate clauses to streamline the Constitution and bring it in line with current practice. There was also a consultation on proposed changes with MCR members. The final version of the Constitution was passed at a General Meeting on 5th March 2015, with the following substantive changes:

1. The **structure of the Committee** was simplified, so that we moved from the tripartite structure (Executive, Secretaries, Officers) to a bipartite one, collapsing the distinction between Secretaries and Officers. The Committee is now composed of Executive and Non-Executive Board Members. According to the new Constitution, all Committee positions are now up for election in Hilary term (where previously, Officer positions were appointed after a new Committee had taken office).
2. **Role descriptions** for each Committee position were added to the Rules of the MCR (appended to the Constitution). This means that they are enshrined in MCR governing documents, but are easy to amend if the MCR deems it necessary.
3. The **elections** process was clarified and updated (Part VII of the Constitution). The main clarifications were to state that we use the Single Transferable Vote system, and to clarify that candidates who campaign in teams will nevertheless appear on the ballot as individuals. Further, as already mentioned, all Committee positions are up for election in Hilary term.

Policies & Mandates: Much of this year's work was around policy and campaigning, both within College and more broadly.

1. **MCR Events Policy**, passed at a General Meeting on 26th June 2014. According to this, we agree that harassment will not be tolerated at MCR events. To this end, there shall always be a designated point of contact at every event, which shall normally be the event organiser, except in the case of bops, where there will be trained First Responders on shift throughout. It is the responsibility of the designated point of contact, upon receiving an allegation of harassment, to notify the Junior Deans, who are tasked with adjudicating this. The First Responders will be overseen by the Welfare Officers.
2. A motion was passed at a General Meeting on 26th June 2014 mandating the President, Welfare Officers, Women's Officer, LGBTQ Officer, and Social Secretaries to attend a **Sexual Violence training** session, run by OUSU.
3. A motion was passed at a General Meeting on 28th January 2015 mandating the President to oppose the resolution to Congregation on demolishing the **Castle Mill** accommodation complex, and to conduct a letter-writing campaign to all members of Governing Body expressing the MCR's opposition.
4. **Room Ballot Privileges**, passed at a General Meeting on 3rd December 2014. After conducting a survey of MCR members, a motion was brought in accordance with the survey results to remove room ballot privileges from the Social Secretaries and the Treasurer, and to maintain them only for the President and Vice-President.

In addition to these, the President and Vice-President worked on various campaigns with College. We were successful in lobbying for a scheme whereby College will pay for **transport to and from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre** if this is required by a College member. Together with the JCR, we established **working groups** to look at the College Harassment Policy and Suspended Status Students Policy, both of which were ongoing during handover.

It has been a privilege to lead the 2014-15 MCR Committee, and I am immensely proud of and grateful to all those who served on the Committee across the year, as well as those who served on the Freshers' Week Committee. The MCR relies on people volunteering their time and efforts to organise events, provide services, and make graduate life at St John's that much more enjoyable and supported, so a huge thank you to everyone who did so this year. Thanks are also due to MCR members, for your support but also for challenging me to represent you to the best of my ability. I hope I have done you proud.

I'm also honoured to have been on the first all-woman team leading the SCR, MCR, and JCR, with women Presidents and Vice-Presidents in each common room. I hope you will agree that the College is making leaps and bounds in the areas of welfare, equality, and liberation (including in the MCR), and keep in mind how lucky we are to be at St John's, a college which offers an extraordinary amount of support to its students. I wish all the best to the new Committee for the coming year.

Over and out,

Marina Lambrakis
MCR President 2014-15