“I thought it would be a long time before I considered anywhere other than where I came from to be my home, but I’m already so attached to Teddy Hall that I can’t face the idea of leaving one day”

Josh, History & Politics
First things first, ‘Teddy Hall’ is our pet name for St Edmund Hall. Somewhere down the line somebody shortened Edmund to Ed, which then became Teddy, and now you’ll never hear anyone call it by its proper name.

We like to think that the name suits the College. Its buildings are often described as ‘cute’ and a far cry from the towering walls you might find elsewhere in the city. The Front Quad (the grassy rectangle just beyond the entrance), with its colourful flowers and quaint architecture, is more reminiscent of a village green than your conventional image of an Oxford college - and despite its size, it’s considered by many to be one of the prettiest in the university. As soon as you walk in you get the sense that this is a place where you’d be as happy to live as you would to work.

However, buildings don’t make a college, and it’s the community spirit that really sets Teddy Hall apart. From the moment you step in - whether that’s on an open day, for an interview or even at the start of your first term - you’ll find current students on hand to offer friendly conversation and advice. It’s a sense of camaraderie known as ‘Hall Spirit’ which stays with you long after you’ve left - as demonstrated by the many ‘Aularians’, or past students, who return every year to reminisce about the time they spent here.

Doing a degree at Oxford is a challenge no matter which college you go to, but being part of a friendly and inclusive community like this one can make things a whole lot easier - and hopefully over the next few pages you’ll see what makes Teddy Hall so special!

- The Teddy Hall JCR
Helena
Fine Art

What does a normal day look like for you?

I normally start with a run around Christ Church meadows or University Parks and then head to college breakfast. My work is quite independently led, so I have to structure my days around what I am working on in my art. I normally get into the studio for about 9:30, and spend the day editing footage, reading books, and making notes for essays or classes in history and theory. In the afternoons I have either anatomy class, tutorials, history and theory lectures and seminars or artist talks, but if not, I head to the Ruskin site in Cowley to work in the editing suites. Twice a week I will play netball in the afternoon as well. I then head to college dinner and the library or studio afterwards to do a bit more work before chilling for the evening.

What do you do to relax?

To relax I tend to run in the mornings or afternoons - there are some lovely routes around Uni Parks or Christ Church Meadows. I also play college netball and football, and like taking my cello down to the music room and playing in there sometimes.

What do you think sets Teddy Hall apart from other colleges?

I think the community sets Teddy Hall apart from the rest, the JCR acting as our social hub, putting on lots of events and films for everyone to watch. Because college is so small you get to know a lot of different year groups and there is usually someone walking around that you know. Everyone is really friendly and happy to help with anything you need or have a chat.

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Harjas
History

What does a normal day look like for you?

A normal day for me begins with an early start and then 2-3 hours of lectures at the physics department. Then I might have a football game with the college team, or maybe just go to the library to do some work. After this I have 2-3 tutorials a week where I go over problem sheets I have done in advance with my tutor. Then I would get dinner in college with mates and either do some more work or go for a drink in the college bar!

What do you do to relax?

I meet up with friends, through either just going for a game of pool in the JCR or sports like the football team. I also sing in the chapel choir on the weekends. It's really easy to meet like-minded people at Teddy Hall if you get involved with activities, whether it's sport or artier stuff.

What do you think sets Teddy Hall apart from other colleges?

Teddy Hall has quite a small physical site and so because of this you’re always bumping into friends around college. This means the college has a real sense of community which you can see when the college gets out to support its sports teams!

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Richard
Physics

What does a normal day look like for you?

As a history student, I have very few contact hours (living the dream) so I’ll usually have a lazy morning and then go to the library to do some reading for my next essay. Some days I may have a lecture at 12 - outrageous! - or a tutorial, but after that it’s back to reading or writing my essay. Because I can structure my day however I want, I’m usually always around to get involved with whatever is going on, whether that’s playing football for college or watching a college rugby game.

What do you do to relax?

There are yoga classes at college, taught by one of the students here, which I really enjoy - they are loads of fun when going with your friends and relaxing after a day of work. I also like running but my main form of stress-relief is just hanging out with friends.

What do you think sets Teddy Hall apart from other colleges?

It’s a really friendly, inclusive college and it’s got great Hall spirit. It’s the sportiest college and even if you’re not particularly sporty yourself, the whole college gets together to support the teams and get over-excited at matches. You really wouldn’t get the same experience anywhere else.
**WELFARE OFFICERS**

As Welfare Officers, we are responsible for taking care of the wellbeing of students at the Hall. This includes providing drop-in sessions for any students who would like to come and have a chat about an issue they’re having, representing student welfare needs to the college, and organising events to help and bring students together and reduce stress.

- Katie, Female Welfare Officer

There are also a number of peer supporters in College too, who have completed 30 hours of peer support training to help anyone at the Hall with any problems they might be facing.

**COLLEGE PARENTS**

When you arrive, you’ll be assigned ‘college parents’ - students in the year above, at least one of whom will be studying the same subject as you. This makes it a whole lot easier to settle in and it means that you’ll have someone to call upon if you have any concerns. You’ll also get to go over to their house for a home-cooked family meal in freshers’ week. (Standards may vary.)

**JCR TEA**

Every Friday afternoon a large array of snacks are ordered into college, and everyone is free to come into the JCR and help themselves. It is a great way to take a break and spend some time relaxing with friends, and also is an excellent source of motivation to get through some work when you know countless amounts of pitta and humous and biscuits are going to be there in the afternoon!

**BME, LGBTQ+, INTERNATIONAL & DISABILITIES OFFICERS**

We’re a really inclusive JCR, with officers for LGBTQ+, BME, international and disabled students. While the welfare provisions are there if you need support, Oxford is usually really fun, and Teddy Hall is particularly famed for its relaxed atmosphere.
**A YEAR AT TEDDY HALL**

**Freshers’ Week**: your first week as a student in Oxford. There are lots of social activities to help you get to know everyone, from quizzes to film nights, and from nights out to sports matches. You also get the opportunity to sign up to clubs and societies both within College at the College Freshers’ Fair and university-wide equivalents at the main Freshers’ Fair.

**Matriculation**: the ceremony in which you officially become a student of the University. You wear the University academic dress, known as ‘sub fusc’, and go as a college year group to attend the ceremony in the Sheldonian Theatre. Everyone migrates back to college for brunch, this is then followed by a Matriculation Bop (‘big organised party’) in the evening.

**Equality & Diversity Week**: an annual event providing thought-provoking workshops and discussions such as ‘Decolonise the Curriculum Panel’, ‘History of Hip Hop with Andy Ninvalle’, a Positive Masculinity panel; film screenings, with films like ‘Hidden Figures’, ‘Moonlight’ and ‘How to Survive a Plague’; the International Food Fair; and a cultural formal dinner taking place in college with a special menu.

**Oxmas**: The Oxford equivalent of Christmas, held on the last weekend of term. There are several festive events, such as the JCR and MCR Christmas formals, Christmas Bops and Carol-signing in the front quad around the Christmas tree with mince pies and mulled wine. It is a lovely way to end the term by beginning to feel festive before saying goodbye to friends for six weeks.

**Teddy Hall’s Got Talent**: the annual talent show (no talent necessary). Hosted and judged by members of the JCR, MCR and SCR, organised by the Arts & Culture Representatives for college.

**Centre for the Creative Brain’ event**: this year, it was ‘The Importance of Telling Stories’, exploring how the brain encodes information through stories and narrative, and how good stories can be harnessed to allow more effective communication. This was followed by a workshop in which attendees could practise telling their own stories.

Political editor of BBC News Laura Kuenssberg delivered 2018’s Geddes Lecture. This is an annual journalism lecture held in memory of Philip Geddes, an alumnus of St Edmund Hall and a promising young journalist who was killed in the IRA’s Harrods bombing in 1983.
Teddy Hall Writers’ Forum celebrated its fifth anniversary with the launch of two books including Now we are Five (an anthology of the Hall Writers’ Forum’s work) and Challenges, an online compilation of winning entries set on the Forum since it started in 2013. The Forum is an online community that was launched to support and encourage creative writing, dialogue and collaboration among staff, students and alumni of Teddy Hall.

Freshers’ Parents Dinner: A chance for first years to bring their parents along to a formal meal in College. (There’s also one for parents of all other years in the Winter.)

Trinity (April-June)

Teddy Hall Ball: the biennial ball sees college transferred to another place and time for the evening, with copious amounts of food, drink and entertainment provided. In recent years we’ve had ‘Chroma’, ‘Camelot’ and ‘Road to Rio’ as themes.

Parents’ Garden Party: an outdoor gathering held for students’ families in Teddy Hall’s beautiful churchyard. A lovely experience for students and their parents to meet tutors and other parents.

Teddy Hall Basketball and Rugby teams win their Cuppers (inter-collegiate competition) final!

Graduation: final-year students return to the Sheldonian Theatre to attend their graduation ceremony, then usually come back to enjoy a dinner and drinks reception in college.
First year undergraduates are lucky enough to be guaranteed on-site accommodation with breakfast and dinner, and the vast majority of rooms are very spacious but still cozy, and have plenty of storage space. There are also kitchenettes, toilets and shower rooms on every floor. One of the novel things about Teddy Hall is that everyone in first year is living closely together, so it is very easy to get to know and spend time with people - especially thanks to the large communal spaces.

Everyone ‘lives out’ in their second year, renting private accommodation in Oxford. The majority of people opt to live in Cowley, just a fifteen-minute walk or five-minute cycle from College. This is a fantastic experience as you get the opportunity to have your own independence and your own space, cook for yourself and host house parties - an experience you would not get in many colleges.

Rooms for third years are drawn fairly via a random ticketed ballot; the higher in the ballot, the greater the choice of room you receive. Around half return to living on-site in college, and half are boarded either in college accommodation on Dawson Street or in the Isis Guest House on Iffley Road, which are both self-catered but under ten minutes’ walk from college. Also, you can leave your things in your room in these annexes over the vacation, which is particularly handy if you live far away.

**Kelly** has spacious rooms, large communal areas and plenty of kitchenettes. Kelly is built above the dining hall which means there are a lot of stairs, but you get fantastic views over all of Oxford from the top floor.

**Emden’s** rooms are the same as Kelly’s and the kitchens are large and modern. Emden rooms are a great place to ‘people watch’ those opposite who live in Kelly.

**Whitehall** rooms are cosy and bright. The carpeted corridors and warm lighting give this block a homely feel.

**Besse** is ‘architecturally interesting’, with no two floors - or even two rooms - being the same. It’s a friendly block where people in different years can get to know one another.

The **Front Quad** rooms are the most sought after in the 3rd year room ballot, as they are often large, and a few are even en-suite. They also have beautiful views over the Quad and Churchyard.

**South Parks**, near Cowley - a great place for a morning run if you’re an early bird.
CREATIVE WRITING is a strength of the Hall, with a particularly thriving community which you cannot often find in other colleges. Each Wednesday student-led creative writing workshops are held in the college bar; this inclusive environment encourages students to bring and discuss their own writing (although there is no pressure to do so!) in a relaxed atmosphere among their peers.

THE GALLERY is an annual Teddy Hall publication showcasing the best student art and literature; the anthology having a different theme each year. The book is curated, designed and published solely by Teddy Hall students, and there is also a launch in the third term that includes music and poetry readings.

DRAMA It’s easy to get involved in drama right from the start of your first term, as the Oxford University Dramatic Society host a Drama Cuppers (inter-collegiate) Competition exclusively for first years, in which each college can put forward as many half-hour play entries as they wish. It is a great opportunity to meet people who you may have not already come into contact with in college, and try out writing, directing, producing, costume-designing or acting in an environment which gives you a lot of support. You will then be in touch with people who have different skills with whom you may want to work with on a future production, either in college or university-wide. There is also a Drama Freshers’ Fair, where you can find out about how to get involved in more theatre, or sign up for auditions for upcoming plays or musicals.

SPORTS Teddy Hall is known for having a thriving sports scene and there is something for everyone here: from rugby, netball, football, hockey, badminton, swimming and rowing teams to the more relaxed third teams, or rounders, or the weekly (and free of charge!) yoga classes going on in college. In almost every sport you can participate in the annual Cuppers (inter-collegiate) competitions in which Teddy Hall have often proved very successful: the men’s football and cricket first teams came first in 2017, and the women’s first-division rowing squad achieved ‘blades’ in the Summer 8s rowing competition (managing to ‘bump’ other colleges throughout every day of the competition!). Evidently sports are a great way to meet people, and even if you are not particularly sporty, there is always a huge Teddy Hall contingent going to watch matches together. Equally, if college do not play the sport you want to, there is funding available, or there is sure to be a University team.

Extracurricular
THE MASTERCLASS FUND
There is no need to be concerned that you might not be able to continue a particular extra-curricular activity because of financial constraints once at university, as Teddy Hall students who have already attained a high level of achievement are eligible to apply for the college Masterclass Fund. This funds students with up to £1000 in order to pursue further training to develop and hone their skills. These activities may include, but are not exclusive to the areas of writing, drama, sport or art.

MUSIC
Although not offered as a degree, Teddy Hall has a lively and inclusive musical community. Regular lunchtime concerts are hosted with a range of performers giving recitals. We occasionally host professional musicians and hold formal evening chamber music concerts. Singers are welcome to join the Chapel Choir, which is non-auditioning and supported by eight choral scholars. The Choir practise on weekends and perform at services and other special occasions; members get a free formal meal each Sunday and partake in various tours both in the UK and abroad during the vacations.
We’ve only just scratched the surface...

If you’d like more information about the College, including information about financial support, there’s plenty of places you can go:

- Check out the official prospectus, available on the college’s website: www.seh.ox.ac.uk/study

- Visit our JCR website at: www.teddyhall.weebly.com

- Find out about courses and general information on the university website at www.ox.ac.uk/study

- If you can, come and visit us on an open day! We’d love to have you and it’s a great way to get a feel for the place. www.seh.ox.ac.uk/open-days

For a couple of years in a row a pair of breeding ducks have taken up residence on our main site, usually found wandering around the graveyard. Once we even had to rescue their ducklings after they fell down the stairs!