

Culture

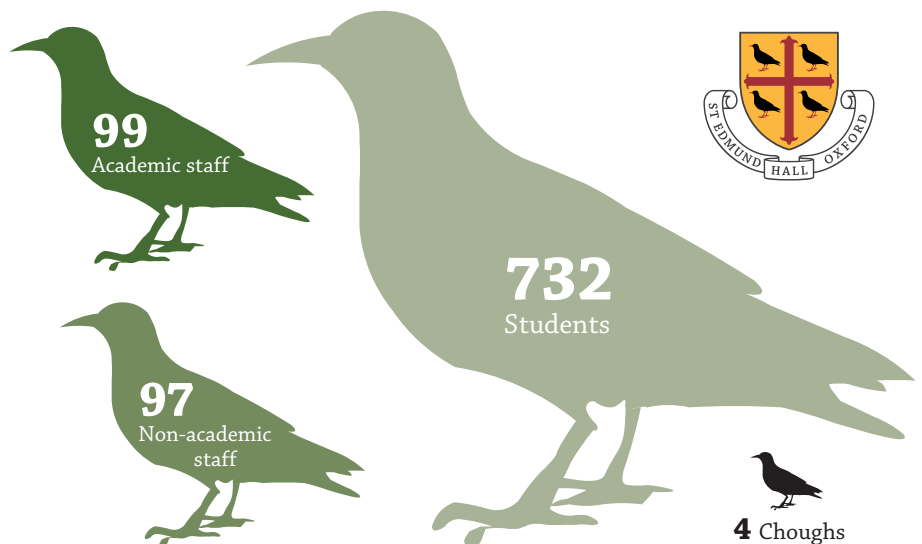
Vision: A college culture that is creative and inclusive, linking a plurality of cultural activities within a positive working environment.

‘Sporting’ and ‘friendly’ are the adjectives most frequently associated with St Edmund Hall, creating a distinctive ‘Hall Spirit’. We participate in over 20 sports, often winning inter-college matches from Cuppers to Summer Eights (Table 1).

Furthermore, the college has a lively music and art community with the college chapel choir, lunchtime concerts, poetry readings, writing workshops and art exhibitions organised by the students. We regularly make college spaces available for cultural events such as *Storming Utopia*, *Medieval Mystery Plays* and *Access Hall Areas*.

Whilst all of these activities should be maintained and enhanced, we want to open up the ‘Hall spirit’ to both speak to and properly represent all members of our diverse community.

The college community²



Left: St Edmund Hall graduate performing with the Oxford Pole Sports Society at the *Access Hall Areas* event in May 2019

Table 1: St Edmund Hall sports teams and successes for 2018–19

Athletics	Golf	Men's Cricket
Netball – 3 rd place Cuppers	Swimming – Cuppers winners	Women's Rugby
Badminton	Men's Association Football – Teddy-Fitz cup winners on their Cambridge Tour	Men's Rowing – Blades in Torpids and Summer Eights
Orienteering – Cuppers winners	Tennis	Women's Cricket
Basketball – Cuppers winners	Men's Hockey – Cuppers finalists	Mixed Hockey – Cuppers and Supercuppers winners
Pool – League winners	Women's Association Football – 3 rd place Cuppers	Women's Rowing – three boats in summer Eights (first time since 2006), all promoted a division
Cross-Country	Men's Rugby – Cuppers winners	Mixed Lacrosse
Rounders – Cuppers and League winners	Women's Hockey	
Darts – Cuppers winners		
Squash		

We would like St Edmund Hall to be associated as much with academic excellence (think University Challenge) as with rugby. We want to encourage creative overlap between sporting, artistic and academic activities, following the successful model of the *Centre for the Creative Brain*.

In tandem with these improvements, we will strive to create a more inclusive and unified working environment for both academic and non-academic staff. Our staff are part of the community and central to the college lives of tutors and students alike. As such, they are key to the cultural feel of the

Hall. We will build on our reputation as an excellent employer by providing a happy and engaging work environment. Actions include reviewing HR policies, providing a greater sense of space ownership through the provision of a staff common room and hosting events that bring together students and staff from across the college.



Cricket Cuppers Final, 2018

Looking towards a strategy for enhancing the culture of the Hall to be creative and inclusive, we propose the following actions:

1. undertake a survey of all college constituents to build an understanding of what our culture means to each individual – what we do well and not so well. This will provide an initial benchmark to inform change, repeated on an annual basis;
2. ensure cultural activities embrace all aspects of the college's diverse community, e.g. build attractive events around non-alcoholic drinks and find creative ways for greater participation and inclusivity in the College Chapel services, sporting activities, art shows, etc;
3. create a dedicated Culture Fund to encourage the development of cross-cultural activities combining a mixture of performances, writing, painting, music, literature, film and sport;
4. enhance the *Centre for the Creative Brain* to create an overarching framework for creativity, including visual culture, literature and creative writing, performance, music, film, languages and sport;
5. create a sense of ownership of college spaces with their unique combination of medieval architecture (St-Peter-in-the-East, Old Dining Hall), historic treasures (Old Library, Chapel) and living nature (gardens, green wall) and add to these a common room for the non-academic staff and a dedicated performance space;
6. celebrate our time together at Formal Hall and beyond, integrating aspects of local food and drink, international cuisine and sustainable dining;
7. develop a college award (working title 'Teddy Purple') that recognises excellence in sports, visual and film art, writing, theatre, music and community involvement;
8. communicate our culture through events which are open and welcoming and through clear statements on the St Edmund Hall website; and
9. make creative use of multiple forms of social media channels, in video, audio and print form, signalling that we strive to have a cultural identity where every student, staff member, lecturer and Fellow can feel at home in the Hall.



A performance of the 'Second Shepherds Play' in the graveyard as part of the *Medieval Mystery Cycle*, April 2019



The St Edmund Hall University Challenge team in the semi-final against Darwin College, Cambridge, April 2019

What will success look like in ten years?

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

- A student body achieving at least 40% first class degree results, with all student outcomes at II.2 or higher
- The first choice college for at least two thirds of the prospective undergraduate students that are considered for admission
- At least one Early Career Teaching and Research Fellowship (ECTRF) in each key subject area
- A strong research culture, with a defined annual programme of activities for each subject cohort
- Annual conference/symposium of interdisciplinary research on sustainability and environmentalism

ACCESS AND DIVERSITY

- A student body of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) undergraduates that at least mirrors the University average, with a target of reaching national average by 2030
- A proportion of students admitted from the two most socio-economically disadvantaged groups (ACORN categories 4 and 5) that at least mirrors the University average
- A proportion of on-course students with a declared disability in line with the University admissions target
- Annual equality and diversity training provided for Fellows, staff and students
- External accreditation (e.g. Athena Swan, Stonewall) gained as a marker of success

FINANCE

- Cost to student of studying and living at St Edmund Hall is in the mid-point of other colleges
- All tutorial fellowships endowed
- Median endowment per student achieved by 2030
- Dedicated funds to remove any financial and/or other barriers to application and continued study at St Edmund Hall
- At least 40% of annual operating budget spent on teaching and research

CULTURE

- A collaborative and creative approach to culture, involving students, academics, staff and alumni in all elements of college life
- A strong sense of shared space ownership across the college:
 - staff common room provided
 - increased use of the Wolfson Hall for concerts and other cultural events
- Annual college dinners to be held for events such as Thanksgiving, Chinese New Year, Diwali
- A dedicated Culture Fund for students covering arts, music, sciences and performances, encouraging diverse cultural activities
- Regular events with a focus on sustainability and environmentalism hosted at the college

ESTATES

- St Edmund Hall recognised as the greenest and most environmentally sustainable college in Oxford including:
 - a zero-energy establishment
 - self-generated energy from a combination of rooftop solar panels, geothermal heat, air and/or water-sourced heat pumps and biodigesters
 - greatly reduced energy use through improved heating systems and insulation
 - eliminated use of single-use plastics
 - increased visible greenness in all college sites, e.g. green walls, rooftop gardens etc.
- New accommodation on existing college-owned land, providing a range of high-quality, affordable college-owned accommodation for all undergraduate and visiting students and all first-year graduate students
- All existing student rooms and accommodation of a good to excellent standard with 70% of rooms en-suite
- Under-utilised space opened up and repurposed for use in teaching, cultural activities and administration