Virtual Quad

Sanctuary: (/sæŋk.tʃʊə.ri/)
A place of safety, refuge, or rest

Weekly wellbeing tips, events and reflections from students and staff of Mansfield College
From the Principal:

I’m really pleased that this year, Mansfield (together with Somerville) is one of the first two University Colleges of Sanctuary in Oxford. The University of Sanctuary movement is affiliated to the Cities of Sanctuary Movement, and the idea is to enable us to make closer human links, as an institution and as individuals, with refugees and asylum seekers in Oxford; for us to learn from one another; and for College to embed and support student efforts to promote a non-hostile environment for migrants. Part of our bid was an undertaking to have at least one graduate scholarship for a refugee or asylum seeker, and I’m really grateful to Sarah Farrow, our chaplain who secured funding for this from the Council of Lutheran Churches. This is not just a ‘charter mark’ or label; the interview process was long and rigorous; process I was well supported by Sara Cepele, our JCR President, Sarah Farrow, our Chaplain, and Tess McCormick our development director.

The fact that Mansfield is now a College of Sanctuary says a lot to me about the ethos of Mansfield: we are welcoming to ‘outsiders’; our non-conformist tradition means we think outside the box; and our respect for human rights means we value pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness. And we are kind to and curious about people and experiences we may not know about.

Now I’m really excited to participate in the many events that the JCR, MCR and College have arranged for Refugee Week (8th Week). Watch this space … you’ll hear what’s happening from Virtual Quad and the JCR and MCR Facebook pages.
From the JCR:

Mansfield becoming a College of Sanctuary is an incredible achievement. As members of the JCR, we continue to cultivate an environment which is welcoming and inclusive to all. As part of this commitment, we are organising our own Refugee Week. The official theme for 2021’s Refugee Week is ‘We Cannot Walk Alone’. In our interpretation of this theme, we have been working alongside our counterparts in Somerville to organise a fundraiser where we aim to cover 4000km (the rough distance from Damascus, Syria to Calais, France) under the inspired theme ‘Walking Together’. This is to raise money for charities and organisations on a local, national, and international level, who continue to work towards the establishment of a humane migration policy and supporting refugees when they arrive to the UK.

We hope that through these walks students will be able to dedicate time to listen to refugee speakers and their experiences through a variety of mediums such as podcasts/music/poetry etc. Please keep a look out on the JCR page, we hope to post a playlist soon full of songs from artists who come from refugee backgrounds, collate resources on works made by refugees, as well as publishing petitions to encourage political activism in response to institutional and cultural injustices regarding immigration. We also hope to publish a list of events for Refugee Week- so watch this space, there is a lot more to come!

In the meantime, if you would like to get involved locally, there are several organisations where you can volunteer: e.g., Asylum Welcome, Fellow (via OXHub), STAR (student action for refugees), SOLIDARITEE, The Bail Observation Project etc... We will be having a volunteering panel as part of our week of events so please come along if you are interested.
The University of Sanctuary stream was initiated to recognise the good practices of higher education institutions that seek to welcome refugees and asylum-seekers into their communities and help attenuate the financial, cultural, and institutional barriers to their integration in the society. Receiving a Sanctuary status is a recognition of Mansfield’s active contribution towards building the movement for welcome and inclusion in the UK, and creating a community where refugees and asylum-seekers are treated with dignity and are able to freely pursue their right to education.

Let’s together help our college further its aim of embedding a culture of sanctuary into our community. On the next page there are some of the ways through which you can show your support and get in involved.

- Mahati
Participate in the events and fundraisers organised during the upcoming Refugee week (14th - 20th June) organised by the Somerville & Mansfield common rooms.

Donate to City of Sanctuary UK

City of Sanctuary UK is a charity, working towards helping the UK become a welcoming place of sanctuary for refugees and asylum-seekers.

You could also support them through getting involved with the local Oxford City of Sanctuary group.

Support Refugee music!

Hear Me Out is a UK based charity that helps people living in immigration detention centres to learn and create music. Through encouraging them to create music, the organisation aims to support their mental wellbeing, and ensure that their voices and stories reach the wider community.

You can listen to their collection here

You could also support their work through donating or volunteering with them.
The Islamic Society is holding a free iftar pickup service for Muslim students and a sign-up system for taraweeh (night prayers) in the Robert Hooke prayer room throughout the month.
Thank you to Farabi for sharing his experience of Ramadan - we welcome more contributions from students and staff about how you have observed Ramadan or celebrated different festivals - please send them in!

13 April (Tuesday) to 12 May (Wednesday)
RAMADAN (Muslim)

30 April (Friday)
LAG B'OMER (Jewish)

1 May (Saturday)
BELTAINE/MAY EVE (Wiccan/ Pagan)

2 May (Sunday)
PASCHA/EASTER (Christian - Orthodox/ Rastafarian)

4 May (Tuesday)
LAILAT-UL-QADR [Shi'a] THE NIGHT OF POWER

8 May (Saturday)
LAILAT-UL-QADR [Sunni] THE NIGHT OF POWER
Mindfulness

Wednesdays at 6pm

6:00 - 7:45pm BST (Weeks 1 & 2)
6:00 - 7:30pm BST (Weeks 3 - 8)

The course costs £70 per student. The College will also reimburse 50% of the costs (i.e. £35), on successful completion of 6 of the 8 sessions.

Mindfulness is a well-researched and effective means of promoting well-being, and alleviating stress, anxiety and depression.

Visit here for more info, and to book.

“Mindfulness has changed my attitude towards myself and completely altered my relationship with my work. I feel a lot better about everything and a lot more able to manage things” [University of Oxford student Mindfulness course participant]
This term we are holding services on Zoom so that we can come together to worship - if not in person, at least in spirit. We are looking for volunteers to lead prayers, take readings or contribute music to the services.

If you are interested, please contact the chaplain.

And a big 'welcome back' to the Choir this week!

**Mansfield Evening Chapel**

**TONIGHT at 8.15pm**

Together on **Zoom**

ID: 824 5333 9851 / PW: chapel

(recordings will be available on the College YouTube Channel tomorrow)

**The Refugee Experience in the Bible**

Including a conversation on the artwork 'The Flight to Egypt' by He Qi

Virtual Quad: Chapel
Justice Dikgang Moseneke will discuss his extraordinary journey from 15-year-old convict to senior judge. To use his own words, he was his own liberator. Hear how Justice Moseneke achieved this inspirational feat as he describes his path from Robben Island to Deputy Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. (Postponed from last term.). You can sign up for this event here.
Poetry Workshops

Saturdays 3-5pm (starting 1 May)

In the Principal's Garden with Writer in Residence Kate Clanchy

These workshops are open to all college - undergraduate, graduate, staff, cat.

Drop in - you don't have to book, or come every week.

For everyone - you don't have to have any writing experience, or be an English student.

Sociable, cheerful, supportive, sustaining. Please come along!

[The Principal’s Garden is behind the JCR – you can get in by turning left out of College, left into the Rothermere Institute and Chemistry department carpark and through the metal gate on the left].
Table talks
Monday 3 May 2-3pm

Meeting online over a cup of coffee (or tea!), at our 'virtual tables' to explore and engage in discussions around the themes of sanctuary, home and hospitality. A chance to learn from one another as discussions deepen.

This week's topic: What does Sanctuary mean to each of us?
Join us on Zoom
(ID: 813 9319 1447/ PW: TableTalk)
Cause for Pause

Mondays at 8.30pm

A weekly online shared space in which to find some rest and sense of community.

A reflective online space to come together using words, music and silence across traditions.
Maybe you'd like to bring a reading (a few words or maybe a poem or a story) or share a piece of meditative music.

Nothing is expected of attendees - everyone is invited to come together and just 'be' in this shared space. You can join on Zoom using this link.

Take time to stop.
Take time to pause.
Dr César Enrique Giraldo Herrera will be sharing his insights with us about working with Taino Shaman and cross-pollination between South American Indigenous thought and microbiology.

[Herrera, César E. Giraldo. "Microbes and other shamanic beings." (2018). Both Conclusion + Chapter 1]
An open discussion group looking at spirituality from a variety of world views and across the queer community - a time to ‘affirm the richness of individual diversity as well as the common human ties that bind us together.’

Join us for some time to learn, some space for mindful reflection and creativity!

Join us on Zoom

(ID: 839 7764 0741 / PW: 243286)
Dear all,

We’re planning to organise an (online) international poetry night on 7th May (Friday) - you can join in and recite any of your favourite poems in any language (they can also be your own poems). Bring along an English translation if you can; if not, no worries, you could also just talk about your interpretation of the poem, your thoughts on it, etc.

You can sign up for the event [here](#).

Hope you’re as excited as we are to learn about and appreciate poetry from all around the world!

Kind regards,
Jia Wan (JCR International Officer)
Mahati Garimella (MCR Equalities Officer)
Communications Assistant (part-time) at Mansfield College

Closing date for application is 30th April (6pm).
Grade 4: £22,417, pro-rata

We are seeking a proactive and efficient Communications Assistant to provide (mainly digital) communications support, for a 2 day a week role for 12 months within the Development team at Mansfield College, University of Oxford.

Initially we are advertising this role within the Mansfield community only as we would like this to be a career development opportunity for students or alumni of the College.

Applications are particularly welcome from Black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates, who are currently under-represented in administrative posts at Mansfield. Mansfield College and the University of Oxford are equal opportunities employers and all applications will be considered on their merits.

Job Advert

Job Description
Applications must include a CV and Covering letter and completion of an online Equality Monitoring survey which is online here.

Any questions?
All queries and applications should be directed to development@mansfield.ox.ac.uk.
TRINITY TERM PLANNER

From skills workshops to employer events and the last careers fair of this academic year, the Careers Service is running a wide range of events and programmes to help you at any point in your career preparedness.

www.careers.ox.ac.uk/term-planner
A range of workshops from Counselling Services to help you build skills to respond to the demands of life at university.

Exam Anxiety
Thursday 29 April 11.15am-12.45pm

Emerging from Covid
Thursday 6 May 3.15-4.45pm

Managing Panic
Friday 7 May 1.15-2.30pm

Special Anxiety
Tuesday 11 May 6-7.15pm

How to Relax
Wednesday 12 May 5-6.30pm

Managing Sleep and Insomnia
Friday 14 May 11.45am-12.45pm

Workshops are open to all Oxford students. Further information available here. To book send an email to: counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk
During Covid, you may have become more dependent on your devices than ever before: to study, to socialise, and to connect to the outside world. They are powerful tools, but can also be an endless source of distraction, undermining your capacity to focus and resulting in long stretches of unproductive and unrewarding time.

Now, as we emerge from Covid, it may be time to take back control of your digital devices. If so, this workshop can help! You will be supported to: reflect on your current relationship with your digital devices; identify desired changes in the role they play in your life; and get support to make real, practical changes.

This workshop is relevant for all students, but may be especially valuable to Finalists and those in the home straight with theses or other important submissions, who would like to block out as many distractions as possible to improve concentration and enhance academic productivity.

Click here to check available dates/times, and to book:
Wellbeing Walks with the Junior Deans

The event formerly known as the Junior Dean Welfare Tea, has returned in an updated, COVID-safe form. Twice a week a Junior Dea will invite you for a walk. Two time slots will be sent in advance and you can email the junior dean to sign up. As groups of 6 are now allowed to walk together, please don’t forget to mention whether you would like a 1:1 walk or if you’re happy with other people’s company.

This week, Oana, the main site Junior Dean, will be going for walks on Thursday and Friday mornings at 10:30am. Please email her at oana.gurau@mansfield.ox.ac.uk to accompany her.
Hello, Mansfield! My name is Yashua, but even more I look forward to learning your name—not you, abstract Mansfield! I already know your name; but you, Mansfield reader. Many places live through me, but most recently Boston. I’m reading for a DPhil in theology. F.W.J. Schelling in the context of German Hellenism is my object of study, the cause of endless mind-numbing and exhilarating strokes on the keyboard and clicks of the mouse.

(continued on next page)
While the books lean their heads against the wall, I like to lose myself in a runner’s and weight-lifter’s high. The balmy smell of Magnolias against the background of an orange-golden sunset is rare in Oxford, but a yearly must. The chiaroscuro of a lemony-bright sun being coy behind solemnly gray Gothic spires makes up for the time in between.

As your new assistant Junior Dean, I hope you won’t find it awkward if I say hello to you and we have not met before. Perhaps it might serve as an opportunity for me to add you to the vibrant constellation of Mansfield personalities that forms the diaphanous tapestry of my Oxford experience, and you me.
The Department of Experimental Psychology is running three mental health webinars this term:

**Our Mental Wellness: Coping with Trauma**
Thursday 6 May, 10:00am – 10:45am

Most of us will experience a traumatic event at some point in our lives. Following trauma, we may experience unwanted distressing memories and feel a wide range of negative emotions. Our sense of self and the world may also change. This talk will discuss research findings on helpful and unhelpful ways of coping with trauma. Find out more and register via OxTalks.

**Our Mental Wellness: Overcoming Mistrust and Paranoia**
Thursday 20 May, 2:00pm – 2:45pm

**Our Mental Wellness: Bullying and Anxiety**
Thursday 3 June, 10:00am – 10:45am.

Catch up on previous talks in the series via YouTube.
The University of Oxford Sustainability Photographer of the Year competition 2021

Open for entries on 22 April – Earth Day.

Last year's Sustainability Photographer of the Year Awards gave us a glimpse of how you saw the world during lockdown, when the drop in human activity provided more of a place for nature.

The year’s theme is ‘looking forward’. We are thinking about our sustainable future in light of the lessons learned from the pandemic. We also now have a new environmental sustainability strategy for the University and are trying to build back better; all of these give us reasons for optimism. We would like to know what looking forward and sustainability mean to you as an individual, bringing life and focus to issues of global significance from right here in Oxford.

All students and staff of the University are welcome to enter the competition. See here for more information and the entry form. The competition closes on 10 June 2021.
We would like to invite you to participate in an online survey that investigates why some international university students stay in the UK after graduation. The survey will only take 14 minutes to complete and you will have an opportunity to enter a lottery for a £10 voucher at the end (there are several vouchers available). You may only take this survey if you are an international student (i.e. you were not born in the UK) and you are not an exchange student (on programmes such as Erasmus, etc.). Please click here to participate.

The survey is part of academic research undertaken by Filip Němeček, a DPhil student at the University of Oxford, under the supervision of prof. N.D. de Graaf. The findings of this research will be published in scientific outlets such as peer-reviewed academic journals. All your responses will remain strictly confidential. This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Oxford Sociology Department Research Ethics Committee (DREC).

We hope that you will be able to participate in the survey.

Kind regards,
Filip Němeček (Department of Sociology, University of Oxford)
Prof. N.D. de Graaf (Nuffield College, University of Oxford)
Royal Literary Fund Fellow: Jon Stock

provides academic writing support for all students, undergraduate or postgraduate. One to one sessions are for 50 minutes and take place online.

To book a slot, email jon.stock@rlfeducation.org.uk.

Academic Support Tutor: Gail Leckie

offers one to one study skills support for any undergraduate of any subject, to discuss any concerns you have about your academic work broadly construed.

Drop-in Office Hours (online) Teams on Mon: 1-2pm
Drop-in Office Hours (in person) Quad Gazebo on Wed: 10-11am
Email: gail.leckie@mansfield.ox.ac.uk for an appointment outside these times.
A quick recap of different welfare support in and around College.

**Welfare Support.**

**Tutor for Welfare:**  
**Gail Leckie**  
is a first point of contact for any student who would like to talk over any welfare issues (broadly conceived) with a member of staff.  

**Drop-in Office Hours (online) Teams Mon: 1-2pm**  
**Drop-in Office Hours (in person) Quad Gazebo Wed: 10-11am**  
Email: gail.leckie@mansfield.ox.ac.uk  
for an appointment outside these times.

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**Chaplain:**  
**Sarah Farrow**  
offers a listening ear to all members of College from all faiths and philosophies.  
To schedule a time to meet please email: chaplain@mansfield.ox.ac.uk

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You can find more options (including Junior Deans, Peer Supporters and specific post-holders) here: mansfield.ox.ac.uk/student-welfare
University Counselling Service
Appointments will take place online with the option to type out messages in a session as opposed to speaking in case privacy is an issue. More details (and podcasts) on the website.

Daily 8pm-2am Oxford Nightline
An independent listening service run by and for students of Oxford. Contact them here.

Every day, all day TogetherAll
Free online service giving you access to a global welfare community. More.

Student Space
Run by Student Minds, this website offers access to dedicated support services for students as well as information and advice to help you through the challenges of coronavirus. More.
It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.

Irish Proverb