Virtual Quad

Weekly wellbeing tips, events and reflections from students and staff of Mansfield College
What do all of these things have in common?
They can all benefit our mental health!
and they are all featured in this week's Virtual Quad!

Next week is Mental Health Awareness Week and the theme this year is 'Nature', The help with this, we have walking challenges, eco-challenges, beautiful photos from Stephen Blundell of the nature around Oxford (including on the cover!) - all to help you connect with nature.

We also have an interview with Mansfield alum, Nazan Osman, about her work with refugees and those seeking sanctuary as well as details on workshops, lectures, debates and events across the College and University!
And you can get involved!
During Refugee Week (8th week) there will be a number of events planned to learn, share and explore how we can support refugees and people seeking sanctuary to be able to live safely within inclusive communities. One event will be a volunteering panel so YOU can learn about how to get involved! Below is a 'preview' of one contributing panellist (and Mansfield alum!):
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]
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 Gift of Hospitality
Including a conversation with Nick Green
(Front of House Manager)

With an exciting 'unveiling' of the newly restored organ to be played by John Oxlade (former Director of Music)
Mansfield Choir is looking for more members

Joining the choir can have great benefits - feel part of a community, release some stress and have fun!

Mansfield choir is open to all and performs at chapel services. It meets twice a week:
Wed 7-9pm: rehearsal & service
Sun afternoons: rehearsal

If you are interested in the choir, contact: joseph.lord@some.ox.ac.uk
Engaging Britain: using evidence and emotion to develop public policy

Julian McCrae, Director of Engage Britain, and Dame Julie Mellor, Chair of the cross-party think tank, Demos, discuss the work of Engage Britain. How can we use emotion and evidence to draw citizens back into genuinely participative “public” policy-making processes and rebuild democratic society?

For more details and to book, click here.
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.

Jia Wan (JCR International Officer) & Mahati Garimella (MCR Equalities Officer)
Poetry Workshops
Saturdays 3-5pm
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 – turn left out of College, left into the Rothermere Institute and Chemistry department carpark and through the metal gate on the left].
Mental Health Awareness Week
10-16 May 2021
#ConnectWithNature
#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek
The Exploring Oxford Challenge will be running in week 3!

At the start of the week, we will be sending you five lovely locations to visit within Oxford. As part the challenge, you may also choose to go to (i) the OxUnboxed Zero waste shop, - drop off your crisp-packet waste in their terra-cycle unit, or (ii) the Farmer's market in Cowley Rd - shopping for your groceries there would be a great way to support sustainable farming!).

Hopefully, this event will encourage you to explore Oxford, get outside and enjoy the good weather Trinity term (hopefully) has to offer! Send pictures of yourself in four out of the five locations by the end of week 3 and you'll receive some sweet treats in your pidge!

You can sign-up in groups of 2 - 6. If you are interested in getting involved, please email: mahati.garimella@mansfield.ox.ac.uk & erica.spencer@mansfield.ox.ac.uk, and we'll send you the locations to visit.

PS: If you don't wish to be randomly assigned in groups, you could mention the names of the people you wish to go along with cc’ing them in the email.
Eco-week in Week 3!

In third week (next week) we will be having a Mansfield Eco-week. Each day there will be a different challenge with a competition running between the JCR, MCR and SCR/Staff to see how many of us can complete the eco-challenges (a link will be sent out at the end of the week for you to record your completed challenges). We'll be sending these challenges out each day with more information but if you want to prepare yourself here are the themes:

Monday: No Waste
Tuesday: Support A Campaign!
Wednesday: Buy Nothing New
Thursday: Eating a Sustainable Diet
Friday: Only Drink Water!

The top performers from each group will receive a special eco-friendly prize!
Hear about Mansfield's Sustainability Strategy!

To start off eco-week, MCR and JCR Environment officers Bobby and Anna-Tina will be hosting a Sustainability Strategy meeting welcome to all students in the JCR and MCR. In this meeting, they will give updates on Mansfield's progress so far - they'd love to hear any thoughts and ideas from students on ways we should move forward.

Virtual Quad
Mansfield's Sustainability Strategy
Monday 10 May 4pm
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.
In 2020, for the first time, Mansfield partnered with the Weidenfeld Hoffmann Trust to offer seven fully funded Kofi Annan Scholarships - these Scholars are valued members of our MCR*.

The Kofi Annan Scholars are pleased to invite members of the Mansfield Community to attend their annual Scholars’ Debate. This year's debate comes in the wake of increased censorship and regulation across social media platforms and we hope to generate fruitful discussion around social media as the new “public sphere” and the implications of Big Tech for democracy.

The motion is:
"This house believes that social media platforms have no right to ban politicians”. We hope to generate a fruitful discussion around social media as the new "public sphere", Big Tech and its implications for democracy.

Register here. We look forward to seeing you there!

Alejandro Biondi Rodrigue
Alumni Mentoring Programme

We are very pleased to announce the Mansfield Alumni Mentoring Programme, a new and exciting mentoring initiative run by the Mansfield College Alumni Association, which will give you the opportunity to connect with Mansfield Alumni working in a career that you are interested in or from the same subject background. You will benefit from skills and professional development through the advice and guidance of your mentor. The programme will run over a three-month period from May to July, with mentoring sessions taking place on a monthly basis.

We currently have mentors available in the following subject/career areas:

- Material Sciences
- Industrial Research
- Patent Law
- Housing
- Finance/consultancy
- Development/charity sector
- Business management
- Technology
- Creative arts
- Studying in the USA

To register for a mentor, or enquire about the programme, please email the Mansfield College Alumni Association, at: MansfieldCollegeAlumniAssociation@outlook.com

Please submit your expression of interest by **12pm Tuesday 11th May**, briefly outlining your current course of study, career interests, hobbies and mentoring goals.
Virtual Quad:  
Multi-faith Chapel - Religious Festivals this Week

We welcome contributions from students and staff about how you have observed or celebrated different festivals - please send them in!

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

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

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.
Thanks to the generosity of Magdalen College, members of Mansfield are able to use up to two Magdalen College punts at any one time. They are now out on the water – so have a go. Details about how to use them can be found on the notice boards outside the MCR and Lodge.

Members of Mansfield must sign their names at the Magdalen Lodge so that we can calculate the total hire charge at the end of the summer. Please look after the punts and comply with the rules so that we can continue to enjoy this arrangement.
Safe Lodge

Safe Lodge is a university wide initiative where students in distress can go the nearest lodge for ‘sanctuary’. Once safe, the student’s home college is informed. This is a joint initiative with the University Security Services and those colleges who have signed up to the scheme. A safe lodge is indicated by a green circle symbol.

- A place where any student can go to feel safe and secure if something goes wrong for them whilst out and about in Oxford.
- A student can enter any Lodge displaying the participating sign and know that from then on they will be safe.

What is expected from a Safe Lodge?

- Friendly welcome
- Use of telephone
- Place of sanctuary
- Support from others if required
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.
With many students back in Oxford this term, why not take advantage of the warmer weather and explore the Thames? The routes are given in the walks in last term’s “Virtual Quad” but in brief, going from the Head of the River pub down to Iffley Lock is a great route, as is heading in the opposite direction, from the Head of the River pub up to Wolvercote. The paths have all dried out now and a lot of the Spring blossom is still out. The attached photos were taken during the last week and show how beautiful it is to be outside and drinking up the scenery.
Virtual Quad: Walking!

Photos from Professor Stephen Blundell: Walks near Mansfield (cont.)
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.
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:
Virtual Quad: OUCS Workshops

A range of workshops from Counselling Services to help you build skills to respond to the demands of life at university.

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](https://counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk). To book send an email to: counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk
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.
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.

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.
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.

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

You can find more options (including Junior Deans, Peer Supporters and specific post-holders) here: mansfield.ox.ac.uk/student-welfare
Support Overview

A quick recap of different welfare support in and around College.

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.
In addition to the University Counselling Services, here are also some support services that deal specifically with bereavement:

**Cruse**
Specialist bereavement experts with experience in all types of loss and can offer support however and whenever the death occurred. [More](#).

**Good Grief**
A sign-posting service by the bereaved for the bereaved. Contact them [here](#).

**What's Your Grief**
A place for sharing, support, resources, & more. [Details](#).

**At a Loss**
A sign-posting service for the bereaved and those supporting the bereaved. [More](#).
Hope has never trickled down, it has always sprung up.
Naomi Klein