



# The Churchillian: The Newsletter of the Churchill Hall Association 2011-12



## Warden's Column

**Y**ou will all have read in recent months of the massive changes which the present government is bringing in to the ways universities are funded. Whilst these present considerable challenges to the University of Bristol, we are confident that we can respond positively. Importantly, a core component of the Vice-Chancellor's response has been to assert that Bristol must offer a quality residential experience to students if it is to retain its place as one of the top universities in the country. That commitment is already being turned from words into bricks and mortar, and Churchill is the first hall to benefit from this.

**A Study Bedroom: CDE Block**

When I took over as Warden of Churchill in 2009, I inherited a fun, friendly hall where students had a great time. Yet, it was also a hall where the residential blocks were in desperate need of refurbishment as we moved forward into the new world of student funding which the change in government has heralded. As phase 1 of the refurbishment of Churchill, CDE blocks and The Holmes were completely renovated this summer at a cost of nearly £2 million. The result is that we have nearly 100 first-class bedrooms, and hopefully you can get some sense of the transformation from the photos in this article.



Top: En suite Facilities, The Holmes.  
We now have 14 en suite rooms in  
The Holmes, which means it will be  
both an excellent student residence  
and an attractive location for  
summer conferences.



Bottom: A Refurbished Study  
Bedroom, The Holmes



In the summer of 2012, the intention is to refurbish a further 70 rooms in FGH blocks and begin works on the main building, with a third and final tranche of works on AB, IJ and KL blocks in 2013. Our desire is that, as the physical




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*The New Kitchen for residents of The Holmes: surely one of the most palatial of which any hall of residence can boast!*

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fabric of Churchill is revamped, we can match that by renewing the social fabric of the hall, reaching out to yourselves as former members of Churchill and rebuilding connections. A good start in this rebuilding process would be to welcome as many of you as possible to this year's [Churchill Hall Association reunion dinner](#), which will be held in **The Holmes on Saturday 7 July** as part of the

University's alumni weekend. Other essays in this newsletter tell you a little of the life of the hall today from our JCR president and about our vision for renewing the Churchill Hall Association. Do please get in touch if you want to help or just want to renew connections.

Best wishes

Robert Mayhew, Warden

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## Churchill Life 2010-11: JCR President's Column

Churchill has evolved since opening in 1959 - the Junior Common Room is no longer filled with arm chairs and newspapers, but is now replaced by a table tennis table and a projector. Blocks M-R, dubbed the 'New Blocks', were added in the '80s, along with the Hexagon, a room of the aforementioned shape, that now houses a Queen Anne snooker table. In the summer holidays of 2011, the Holmes – the building in which the D-Day landings were planned – was completely refurbished, turning it in to the most glamorous and spacious student accommodation around.



Churchill houses around 360 undergraduate residents and boasts the largest quad, Junior Common Room (JCR) and dining room, the quietest and leafiest location, and a famously friendly reputation. This Churchill spirit is evident and can be seen all around the Hall from our lively and newly revamped bar, to the noble efforts of our enthusiastic sports teams, entered annually into the Bristol intramural sports leagues.



Aside from sports, the JCR Committee put together a great number of events over the past year: with everything from hypnotist shows to Scottish dancing, formal dinners, club nights, pub quizzes, a flute recital, and of course the end-of-exams garden party. But the highlight of every year is the extravagant annual ball. We decided upon a Valentine's masquerade ball this time around. After a good few months of planning the ground floor of Churchill's main building was finally transformed in to a unrecognisable space. It was an enormous success and just one of the many events that pulls Churchill together to make it the welcoming place to live today, as it always has been.

Rufus Parkes

Churchill Hall JCR President 2010/2011

## Churchill Hall Association – its origins, its future.

The Association was founded shortly after the Hall opened in the 1950s. Originally, membership was virtually automatic. The introductory booklet sent to all men coming to the Hall (and in those days, it was men only) included a form authorising the payment of the first year's caution money to the Association as a membership fee.

The purposes of the Association, according to its original constitution, were:

- To keep past members in touch with one another and the Hall
- To facilitate united action in any matter concerning the welfare of the Hall and its members
- To publish and circulate an annual report and a list of members of the Association with their addresses

Some of the things the Association supported in the past include:

- Assistance with the development of the Bar
- Erecting a pergola in the Holmes Garden
- Assistance with the provision of computing facilities in the Hall
- Commissioning photographic portraits of Wardens
- Producing special commemorative newsletters

In recent years, the activities of, and interest in, the Association have diminished. However, the Convocation Committee has recognised that Hall affiliation is one of the strongest bonds for alumni. Lifelong friendships were made in Hall, and some of the happiest memories date from those years. The existence of Hall Associations has the dual purpose of keeping former residents up-to-date with their Hall and giving current students the opportunity to keep in touch when they move on. Like all other groupings of alumni, its future depends on what volunteers are prepared to offer. Possible objectives might include:

- Assisting present students by offering informal careers advice through online mechanisms such as LinkedIn, or more formally through the Careers Network operated by the Careers Service.
- Fostering engagement between Churchillians and building a network. This can be achieved in various ways from attending the [Churchill Hall Association reunion dinner](#) to contributing to this Newsletter (which, it is hoped, will be an annual publication).

The Association's renaissance can only be effective if there are people willing to play a part. What can you do?

- Get a group together to attend the [Churchill Hall Association reunion dinner](#).
- Let us know about your experiences in Hall and with the Association. Tell us of your memories of some of the "characters" in Hall.
- Are you in touch with people who were resident in Churchill but may now be "lost" to the University? If so, with their permission, pass on their details so that they do not miss out on future newsletters.
- Ask Churchillians you know whether they have listed Churchill as their Hall on the University's database (this can be done online or via the alumni update form received

with each copy of the alumni magazine, Nonesuch). By doing so they will hear about future events.

- Tell us what else you think the Association should be doing and what you can offer.

Winston Churchill said: “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” All that we got from the University and Churchill Hall have helped us to make a living. What we give now and in the future will help make a life, both for us and for others.

We look forward to hearing from you and to meeting you at the [Churchill Hall Association reunion dinner](#) on Saturday 7 July, which will take place in the Devers and Bradley rooms in The Holmes. The dinner coincides with the Bristol Alumni Weekend (6 – 8 July 2012). The weekend is a good opportunity to learn about developments at the University, to revisit ‘old haunts,’ to meet old friends and to make new ones. Save the date now and look out for booking details in the May edition of Nonesuch and the bi-monthly alumni e-newsletter.





## Churchill Hall Alumni Dinner, 2011 and Beyond

July 2 2011 saw the first Churchill Hall Association dinner for a few years, which 26 attended with the Chancellor of the University and the Baroness Hale of Richmond as our guest of honour. As many former residents will know, Winston Churchill was unable to attend the formal opening of the hall in 1959, so it was a great pleasure to welcome a chancellor to the hall fifty years later. The evening saw pre-dinner drinks on the main lawn of the old quad



followed by an excellent three course meal in the SCR. Feedback from the event has been unequivocally positive; the event was so good that the Chancellor is planning to join us again this year. This leads us to hope we can make this year's [Churchill Hall Association reunion dinner Saturday 7 July](#) even bigger and better. Our plan is to hold the event in The Holmes, which should allow Association members the opportunity to walk around the University Botanical Gardens with a pre-dinner drink before a meal in the historic setting of the Devers and Bradley rooms. Booking

details will be sent out shortly via the Alumni Office, and accommodation will be available at Wills Hall. Do come and join us!



## **News: Alumni Gift to Churchill Library**

The Annual Fund of the University's Alumni Office kindly donated £1,000 to allow for strategic investment in the hall's library. The JCR requested that we spend the lion's share on core textbooks to improve the utility of our library space. For those who left the University a while ago, textbooks, especially in the sciences, can be crippling expensive for the average undergraduate, many of them costing well over £50.

So, the JCR compiled a list of core textbooks. We also installed a whiteboard in the library, as science students and mathematicians suggested, which would help them to use the space as effectively as their arts and social science colleagues. Finally, the Warden selected some "classic" texts he deemed good for the intellect with the remaining monies. That he chose to buy Proust, Freud and Marx may leave many wondering about his proclivities...

Even after this generous gift, our library still has many empty shelves. If you are having a clear out and would like to donate some books to the hall, do drop the warden a line at [robert.mayhew@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:robert.mayhew@bristol.ac.uk).

