



JCR Meeting 2.1 - 30-01-2022

Attendance: AW (President), IC (FCO), KM (VP), EW (Social Chair), JS (PGM President), JG (Senior Welfare), EM (JCR Chair), JW (Sports & Socs), LH (PR Officer), TB (Facilities), CL (Outreach Chair), ZH (Librarian), LM (Male Welfare), TA (Female Welfare), MB (Stool), ML (JRO, Outreach Comm), AF (JRO), MF (JRO), PA (EM Rep), CH (LGBTQ+ Rep), JN (Local Students' Rep), ES (Assistant Int. Rep), DM (Communities Chair, WCS Rep), DB (SwD Rep), Mka (Assistant LGBTQ+ Rep), LJ (Trans and NB Rep), ME (Assistant SwD Rep), BT (Trustee), NT (Trustee), KBr (Trustee), JWa (PGM VP), JC (PGM Treasurer), RD (PGM Comm), FR (PGM Comm), BA (Finance Comm), JG (Finance Comm), SR (Finance Comm), MA (Social Comm), JF (Social Comm), HR (Social Comm), SU (Feast Manager), KH (Social Comm, Welfare Campaigns), HC (Social Comm), JC (Social Comm), IF (Formals Manager), RP (Social Comm), IM (Social Comm), SB (Social Comm), GM (Environment Rep), EL (Environment Comm, Welfare Campaigns), SY (Environment Comm), SR (Environment Comm), JR (Environment Comm), AA (Environment Comm), MS (Outreach Comm, Welfare Campaigns), BS (Outreach Comm), JH (Outreach Comm), SL (Outreach Comm, International Comm), JV (SU Comm), AD (SU Comm), WS (SU Comm), NM (International Comm), YW (International Comm), IE (International Comm), SJ (International Comm), AC (Campaigns Manager), CW (Welfare Campaigns), JR (Head Frep), SC (Year Abroad and Placement Rep), MP (Bar Liaison), CR (Webmaster), SM (Bailey Wardrobe Manager)

Apologies: DS (Music Rep), KB (Fashion Show President), SB (Finance Comm), EB (Outreach Comm), YN (Outreach Comm)

Absent:

Location: Bailey Dining Hall



Agenda:

Exec Reports

Other Reports

Correspondence

Motions

AV Purchase Motion

Elections

Assistant EM Rep (II)

Assistant WCS Rep (II)

Vice President (I)

Candidates: CL, HR, RON

Finance and Compliance Officer (I)

Candidates: FD, TA, RON

President of the Society (I)

Candidates: BT, KM, RON

Minutes Pass

Minuted by KBr



Exec Reports

President: AW

- I took some much needed time off over Christmas and have been back at work since the start of the year.
- Spent a lot of time in meetings about Uni Covid rules, including sitting on the main Uni Covid Planning Group as a student rep, and pushed for them to loosen restrictions with a lot of success!
- Attended a lot of meetings, such as College Advisory Board, PGMComm, SocialComm, MusicComm, Bar Management Comm, and Wider Student Experience Comm.
- Starting work on setting up a college EDI committee to give minority reps an avenue to represent student's concerns about college matters to the staff.
- Very soon will be onboarding the two new trustees we've taken on.
- Beginning to work on a review of Trustee governance, including plans to overhaul the way we review and amend our policy documents and how students are represented on the Board.
- Hosted a meeting of Independent JCR's Committee, mostly discussing the new Memorandum of Understanding with the University that we should hopefully sign this term, revamping the JCR's relationship with them.
- Did an Instagram takeover!
- Continued to chair JCR PresComm, where we've been discussing topics including Post-Offer Visit Days and the upcoming graduations.
- Got very angry at the University's plans for Post-Offer Visit Days and am planning to follow this up with a push to reassess the college allocation and recruitment system.
- Continued to work on improving training and personal support for common room sabbatical officers, speaking with the SU's CEO and Jeremy, the PVC, to start conversations about how the SU and Uni can support us better - I'm hopeful this will go somewhere really productive.
- Worked with SocialComm to run Refreshers Week, including organising a 2nd year photo myself, planning a Newcastle night, and then standing in the cold for a long time in Newcastle.
- Advised college on formals and convinced them to let the JCR entirely run the Pride Formal ourselves - hopefully the start of more JCR leadership on formals.
- Helped Abbie, Euan and GovComm put together this meeting and do some promo for the elections!
- Wrote some fun weekly emails with some even more fun songs in them.

FCO: IC

- I slept through Christmas to recharge after spending 5 months in Durham.
- I've been working with Sports and Societies on doing reclaims and refining budgets so that they can perform better and be more accessible.
- I attended a meeting with College to set out our new layout and order new furniture for the house 12 JCR and conference room. College have agreed to contribute 5.5k to this so it's a big net gain for us.



- Worked with our Music Rep to Dylan, to book artists and organise tech at our revival of “Cuth’s Live”. This was a huge success and packed out the Bailey bar so keep an eye out for our next events.
- Began work on a few projects related to class issues in Durham and sourcing a new tech inventory for our Green Machine. Not much to report on this now but I’ll update everyone in the future.

Vice-President: KM

- I have been organising the final collection of stash and currently organising a stash sale so that we don't have to send any of it to landfill and so that people can have a chance to get their hands on some vintage stash
- I have been setting up the current stash order with Redbird, my contact was really sick so that is the reason for the delay so sorry about that but it is open now until midnight 31st
- Another stash point, I am setting up a similar deal with Player Layer that three other JCR's have with them to have sports teams and non-sports teams kit up there and that would be available all year round, currently going back and forth with them about the design and then once we have a preview link for the site I'll circulate it around to see who's keen before getting it live
- And one more stash point, been looking into getting an alternative stash with select items like hoodies, t-shirts, sweatshirts and tote bags with a different design - our jcr logo with the tiger embroidered on one side and then a graphic sort of design on the back. Also organising other stash items that people have requested like water bottles and things so lot's of stash updates and stay tuned
- I have been working with committees to set out what needs to be done this term, setting up ideas and minuting the meetings
- Have found a new passion in graphic design so I've been helping with graphics for social comm refreshers week events, feast, and outreach comm
- As always been talking and working with AW on a bunch of things from the upcoming formals, the post-offer holder days.

Social Chair- EW

- Worked with social committee and Alfie to organise a Refreshers Week. Was a really successful week.
- Working on planning Feast and organising ticket release, which will be on Wednesday. Very excited for this, and have been really enjoying working with Sangeeta to bring the theme of disco inferno alive.
- Lots and lots of meetings, including some interesting ones about changes to how we do tickets for events.

PGM President- JS

- Worked with MCR PresComm to look at strategies for the year and inter-collegiate events



- Worked with college and the SCR to arrange academic events for the term as well as the Murder mystery formal
- Attended various university committee meetings, such as the review of student support services

Senior Welfare Officer - JG

- Doing drop ins, sexual health supplies and sanitary supplies
- Started providing sanitary supplies in the Cuths toilet library
- Cat, our LGBTQ rep has started doing drop ins!
- Organising other minority reps to get training to start doing drop ins, including taking part in the SU's welfare refreshers training next week and started to make our own resources for a Cuth's welfare 'train the trainer' style of training
- Looking into improving our sexual health supplies, mainly the pregnancy tests and condoms
- Abbie has been leading the campaigns team running a money management campaign for the beginning of this term – check out our social medias for that!
- Prepping materials and events for SHAG (sexual health and guidance) week – keep an eye out for that campaign coming up soon
- Speaking with Collingwood welfare to start doing welfare drop in swaps with one of their officers every two weeks
- Organised welfare cover for Feast
- Thalia has recently posted about another menstrual cup drop for the term which has been super popular – still a few left if you'd like to order one!
- Attended a student support advisory group meeting where we got more information about how the university is revising and working to improve student support across the whole uni (departments, colleges, sports) particularly thorough making it easier to reach out and get the support most applicable for you
- Looking into doing period care packages – keep an eye out for these
- Speaking with college about the Good Night Out Campaign training for bar staff
- Looking into getting more supplies for the welfare room in terms of fidgets/pillows/stress balls
- Met with our new college chaplain who is lovely - she is there as an option for everyone in Cuths for a chat, she has an office on the Bailey where she holds drop ins.

S&S Chair- JW

- I organised Refreshers' fair for those who didn't get a chance to sign up to sports and socs last year
- General sports and socs housekeeping within Cuth's
- Worked with AF (Team Cuths Manager) to get Team Cuths up and running - she's been doing a fantastic job and has been promoting our successes, really increasing engagement
- Liason with Team Durham

PR Officer- LH

TW: mention of sexual misconduct

- SU rep meeting
 - spoke about taking action towards incidents of spiking



- o discussed the universities NDA agreements and policy towards sexual misconduct cases. There will be a motion in assembly submitted by the SU rep comm about pressuring the university to stop using NDAs for cases of sexual misconduct and violence. Please reach out and talk to me if you have any opinions about this as it is a big change. I will be circulating the motion being submitted to assembly in the freshers' groups.
- o Other topics that have been discussed are the freedom of speech bill, sensible drug policies and PG Access and Participation, all of which will be discussed at the NUS.
- Been updating and creating emails. If you still don't have access to your societies email, please let me know!

Facilities Manager- TB

- I got both gyms opened by working with Tannyth to get bar staff to supervise the gyms. This seems to be working well and at least Bailey usage is increasing.
- I sorted tech for the pub quiz and liaised with Dylan and Jack to make sure the karaoke and Cuth's live had the tech they needed.
- Worked with Issy to plan extra lighting, photos and karaoke for the pride formal next week.

Outreach Chair- CL

- Trip to Calais planning underway
- Cuth's take me out 19th Feb
- Student volunteer week
 - Fancy dress litter pick
 - Social
- Hot drinks for the homeless
- 24 hour musical

Librarian- ZH

- Kept book orders open (on a rolling system) so people can request books throughout the year
- Book Club taken over smoothly by Catherine (Assistant Librarian)
- Sorting through more donations
- Working on the new furniture order
- Stock managers have been doing through stock takes of all the books in Cuth's

JCR Chair- EM

- Chaired GovComm over Christmas and then before this meeting: focusing on big strategy before the elections this term.
- Edited the standing orders to reflect the huge welfare and exec restructures: please let me know if you spot any mistakes!
- GovComm have been fantastic, big Kudos to them.



- Ordered pizza!

Other Reports

Communities Committee: DM

- The entire committee have been in talks over an EDI committee
- Have been looking towards holding more involvement with welfare campaigns, this actualised in the last Welfare Campaigns meeting in which WCS rep and LGBTQ+ rep sat on talks about shag week

Students with Disabilities Rep

- Main thing is the study buddy pairings have been done
- Over the Christmas break social media and email inboxes have been kept up to date
- Social media campaign to look out for in the coming weeks (keep your eyes on the newsletter)

LGBTQ+ Rep

- Cat has joined CAB (college advisory board)
- Talks with Tammi have been organised to talk over what Cuth's can do to increase representation
- Socials have been planned and outline of dates have been posted on social media
- Pride formal has been organised for Wednesday 2nd of February with help from Issy
- Brainstorming about plans for Pride celebrations for next term are well underway

WCS Rep

- Along with Cat joined the CAB (college advisory board)
- Over Xmas worked with Welfare on Cuth's Carers at Xmas and, Classless Cuth's at Xmas
- Restarted the Cuth's Working Class Society, attending the Refreshers Fair along with exec for the society to be announced
- Social media page for the Rep and the society is up and running (working_class_cuths) with premade posts (thanks to Canva) scheduled to be posted soon
- Elected as Epiphany Term's chair
- Sat on the latest JCR exec meeting as Chair of Communities Committee
- And hopefully electing a new Assistant Working Class Rep as of Meeting 2.1
- Going on the Welfare training course, so eventually drop-ins can be held

Student Trustees: KB/NT

- Full board meeting took place in early December. We discussed:
 - Appointing new external trustees.
 - Finalised and passed a new BCP plan.
 - Redistributing tasks between the trustees and the exec, e.g. writing policies.
 - Reexamining our approach to trustee communications.
 - Bar profits going to the JCR.



- Helped with various legal stuff, POVDs, Feast contracts etc.
- Continuing to re-examine our approach to policies, and working on a JCR Strategy to be in its final draft stages by the end of this term.
- Examined the new proposed SLA with the uni.
- Onboarded two new external trustees, so we're back up to a full board.
- Our next full board meeting will be mid-March, we're all contactable if you want to find out more about what the role involves before it's elected next term.



Motions

AV Purchase Motion

This JCR Notes:

- That college wants to purchase a new AV system, including a projector, projector screen, speakers system, and microphone setup, for the Dining Hall.
- The cost of the system is around £38,000.

This JCR Believes:

- The JCR should donate £2000 to the project in the spirit of collaboration and because we will probably use the system quite a lot.

This JCR Resolves:

- To transfer £2000 to college for the purchase of new AV equipment for the Dining Hall.

Proposer: AW

Secunder: IC

Discussion

MF: Does the JCR have any input on what is being purchased and details on the spec?

AW: Not cause we have to go through uni procurement. Various quotes, they chose the best one. They also ch - One 50k! Something about chairs being 7k. 1080p not 4k but projectors are expensive. Does have a system so that if you have hearing disabilities you can still use it

MF: How big are the screens?

AW: Calculated in units of EM and KM - One KM tall and two EM long. Proceeds to measure the *huge* projector in curtain lengths. Not too big, not too small. Just about right.

MF: The screen size seems tiny for the room. We've had no input - surely we should go to them with it.

AW: But they're giving us 36k!

AW: I've had so many meetings and asked so many questions - they just get what they get - pick the best from 5 quotes. The original was 8k just for installation, taking 3 members of staff 3 days. They would really love it - we should do it more because Tammy would love us.

MF: Don't you want more student input - repeating again.



AW: Do you know how much money 38k is? The uni takes in 3 million. For them its not that much..
In the scheme of things we're just doing a kind little gesture.

What's it intended to be used for?

AW: Hosting talks for visit days and open days, academic events, JCR meetings, welcome talk.
Maybe we could do film screenings - but also more academic talks in college. Good space for this
stuff. Bi-weekly lecture series as well. Bringing us up to spec compared to other colleges.

No amendments

No opposition

Passed on a general aye



Elections

Assistant EM Rep (II)

NH's Hust:

- 1st Year Law
- Interested in the work Communities Committee has been doing
- Representation of ethnic minorities as really important
- Diversity and inclusion should be a key priority, especially in Cuths
- Noticed an absence of access to events and support
- Eager to get more things running

PA: Any project you have in mind?

NH: Instagram. Increasing representation in what people are interested in, getting guest speakers from other areas of the student body and the university. Offering a platform for them. Coffee mornings even every couple of weeks as somewhere to talk and a safe space.

Note on pizza

EM: "I went for the one [pizza] with the highest food quality rating"

Assistant WCS Rep (II)

SM + BW:

SM's Hust:

- Haven't really gotten involved with the JCR and is eager too
- Easy to get caught up in Durham - the prestigiousness as something that needs working on
- Would like to support people on both an emotional and social level
- How hard it can be to find people who you can relate too.
- Really keen to help work with Dan and making WCS experience as good as it can be

BW's Hust:

- Ran for this position before, but fell short to "my better half"
- If you can't beat them, become their subordinate
- Need for direct support for current and incoming students
- Durham as by not means a cheap place to be
- Our voices and concerns can be projected louder as a collective - keen to work with 93% Club and other societies.
- Lots of experience in this area - Citizen Advice Bureau volunteer
- How as a community we can make further progression simpler and more inclusive



- Bring advisory nature and experience into the role

AB: “That was aggressive, I’m having heart palpitations”

Vice-President (I)

Candidates: CL, HR, RON

CL Hust:

Hello!! I’m China, a 2nd year English student and I am running to be your vice president. For those who weren't privy to my 12 days of outreach related meltdowns last term, I am currently your very put together outreach chair.

I would love to be vice president next year primarily because I have seen through this role what a difference you can make being so involved in the heart of cuths. Despite now being a bit of a jcr diehard, I actually knew very little about it, and this year have very quickly had to learn a lot about its inner workings. The biggest thing I have fast come to understand about Cuth’s though, is the sense of community and belonging that it provides. The JCR brings together such an array of people, and as VP I would love to be a part of continuing that.

As Outreach Chair, I have had a fantastic 1st term collaborating with the exec and the rest of my committee to put on both volunteering and fundraising events, raising over £1000 over 12 days. This has been an extremely valuable insight into how best to achieve productive communication as part of a team as well as putting on some fantastic events. It is important that VP operates in more than just a secretarial capacity, and this experience would aid in my active participation on, and collaboration between committees. This ideal for me, as if nothing else, I love talking and working with people. As well as giving me perspective on the reality of being on the exec, my position this year would provide beneficial continuity going forward.

With the exec restructure lightening some of the day to day VP duties going forward, my main mission in the role would be to aid in keeping up cuth’s friendly reputation, and doubling down on our approachability as well as accessibility within the jcr. With all the love in the world, I am aware that at times the JCR might be seen as a lot of political navel gazing. However, at its heart, it is about using the resources we are lucky enough to have for the benefit of our community- something that I am particularly passionate about. In line with this, I want to help foster a culture that continues this year’s strong uptake in roles, by



emphasising the importance of enthusiasm and dedication, rather than pure experience. After all, our JCR is made up of us, the people within it, not just the standing orders that define it.

In terms of minutes, I would keep the format mostly the same, as I think it works well, with the brief bullet point summaries making them more accessible and easier to identify. However, I would like to collaborate with the chair to begin providing very brief recaps of the previous JCR meeting, to act as reminders at the start of the next. I believe a quick read, over the pre meeting pint would help to keep everyone in the loop, easily and efficiently.

As one of the first points of contact with Cuth's life, the handbook should be engaging, accessible and informative. To achieve this, I would reduce the amount of block text, and keep to clear, concise bullet points where possible. As well as this, I want to include more diagrams to communicate information, for instance how to propose a JCR motion, as well as maps, and information about our sites. Additionally, I think introducing some of the student-facing staff, like the receptionists and porters, would be a good way to alleviate anxiety for freshers on arrival.

Despite its strong history, the JCR is an ever evolving body at heart, run by students, for students. I believe VP is fundamentally about listening and responding to new challenges and ideas alongside and in support of the president, and the rest of the exec. I would be honoured to be given the chance to do this for us, and for Cuth's. Thank you for listening!

HR Hust:

Hi everyone, for those of you who don't know me - my name's Harry, I'm a second-year liberal arts student, and I would really like to be the next vice-president, your next vice-president at Cuth's.

This year I've done a lot with Cuth's, and it's done a lot for me. Last year undoubtedly, on the whole, was pretty awful in terms of a "normal" uni student experience and I don't need to rattle on about that. But it has provided me with a very useful frame of reference for what life at Durham would be like without any of the JCR trimmings. Having gotten halfway through this year now has made me realise how sorely the last one was missing events, sports and socs, and even JCR meetings; all of these and the wider community of support facilitated by everything the JCR can do when operating at full steam.

Frepping this September introduced me to all of the different roles, committees, and most importantly people that shape what actually gets done to help improve student life here. I found that I was soon on my first committee - social comm - as music officer, and got to have a hand in organising and running events like Michaelmas ball, Oktoberfest and soon Feast by working with other students both in preparation and on the ground.



I sit on the exec of three societies and have dipped my toes in many others around Cuth's; I've seen the different personalities they attract and the personal, and collective fulfilment that the JCR facilitates as the grounding for all of this.

It is the vice-president's job to keep this shit and a whole plethora of other elements of the JCR, running smoothly; they are the thread between every committee, the president, and the rest of the exec; they help ensure the details match the vision, and that Cuth's as a whole doesn't come out of sync. And it is equally vital to this process that they communicate this to everyone else through minutes. I know that it may seem I haven't done much around here besides talk crap jokes into a microphone but firstly, that's wrong; and second, I know that I have the skills and the perspective to really serve us all as Cuth's students, regardless of the roles I've taken on before. And I do have a couple of ideas which I think show this.

For the handbook, I will keep it brief as is the new and much kinder tradition, I will take input from other exec members, and I will make it look good. More uniquely, I want to create an abridged digital version to go along with the normal one, and the Freshers FAQ on cuths.com, that can work better as a sharable resource for freshers to refer to on their phone when they are confused by this huge, tiny city and its odd ways.

For minutes, yes transparency and accessibility are important and I will take these aspects seriously by making sure they are uploaded quickly and in clear form; but in terms of innovation, I think we could improve on minutes' utility by making action points distinct; thus enabling committee members to have a clear idea of what needs doing, and giving chairs an easy way to see what's getting left behind.

I truly believe being a good VP is about approach and skill, and I think I've got it right in both categories; I want to support the president, exec and committees to create a well-oiled, ever-changing and fun Cuth's. Thank you all for listening, and for enduring the next few days of campaigning when you'll also be able to read my manifesto; I really do hope you'll consider voting for me, this isn't all a trick, I promise.

Questions:

DB: Largely time consuming - How do you manage your time? KM seems stressed all the time.

CL: Just going to give KM a second to recover. Massive learning curve for time management. Have really managed to figure out how to balance work, the JCR role etc.

HR: Realised I did not do enough work in the first term. All about keeping your responsibilities distinct, compartmentalised and keeping on track of each committee. Important to remember all of your objectives and prioritise what is important.



MF: VP needs to be passionate and knowledgeable of Cuths traditions. Can you demonstrate this?

HR: Key part of this is creating new traditions. Yes we should keep stuff from 20 years ago but should make new stuff too. This shit needs to keep going for a while.

CL: Agree, this shit does need to keep going for a while! Would say the best memory from this year has to be helping MB create the physical embodiment of a tool.

JS: We have an integrated JCR. How would you see you functioning in that role to keep both in mind?

CL: Something I'm definitely aware of. Outreach as experience of appealing to all of the JCR. Not a post grad, but about making sure that their ideas and issues are heard, and consulting SCR and Pres.

HR: Continuing to consider the priorities of postgrads, hear their concerns and make sure they are working into the JCRs work.

MS: How are you going to make the JCR approachable and accessible for people not involved in the JCR but want to be?

JR: Step 1 - The freshers handbook which is the remit of VP. Need to explain how the JCR is literally everyone that pays the levy, what you can do and what you get out of it. Stressing the role of sports and socs, getting people engaged in this, making this more front facing.

CL: Agree with that. Also stressing that the JCR is like an ecosystem - it's about facilities for different groups, their interests and making sure they all work together. Being really friendly and trying to be as normal as possible - sometimes seems like a group of "governance freaks". Emphasising how there is a role for everyone.

AW: We've changed the role of the VP since the last meeting, now not doing stash or some governance things, freeing up time for other projects and people. What do you see as a good project for a VP that you want to take on?

CL: Exciting opportunity - collaboration and communication important. More collaboration between committees as sitting on all of them. Putting on things bigger than themselves

HR: VP often shown as the jobs Pres can't do but someone else to. About knowing the strengths of different groups, "pairing everything up". Bringing together a collective image of Cuths - a unified vision in some events.

MF: What do you see in the future relationship between the new green machine com, facilities com and the rest of the exec?

HR: Green machine in an interesting spot, building a technical and financial relationship with other colleges. Within the JCR and college itself, the green machine and facilities will be ever more important to events, as a large scope of interaction with college.

CL: Must admit, green machine committee wasn't up there in my manifesto



MF: It should be.

CL: Knows how valuable the work of TB and facilities committee is. The projector and new facilities investment as valuable, and something specifically we can work on and strengthen.

MB: Can I please ask one more question! That wasn't particularly relevant to the VP.

MF: Green comm is extremely relevant! They sit on all the committees!

MB: What do you think makes Cuths special and how would you make sure this continues to be the case for next year's freshers?

CL: I've been called special a lot in my life. Seriously though, I think we're a very friendly and welcoming college, and a wonderful community despite our size. How we conduct ourselves with other members and colleges, something I would really want to build upon.

HR: I agree that we're also as special as CL. But regardless, I think a lot of it comes from how driven we are, we are an independent JCR, we have a lot of choice over how we operate. In that sense more than a lot of other colleges, and structurally how we can follow the interests of all of us as students.

AB proceeds to almost knock CL out.

AB: Everybody shut up! [Proceeds to struggle to spell www.cuths.com]

EM: "Certified governance freak 7 days a week"

MB: "Just for the record, I don't hate MF. I love you!"

MB: "Next a table tennis set...I don't know whether that's vegan?"

Raffle!



Finance and Compliance Officer (I)

Candidates: FD, TA, RON

Proposer (CH)

- Known FD since first term, and seen how patient and reliable he is over the past 2 years.
- Finds creative solutions, willing to lend a hand even if not in his job description.
- Helping those who are volunteering their time to focus on what is important.
- Cool, calm and collective in everything he does.
- Pushing the Participation Fund, Gender Expression fund, smaller funds are better supported and less students have to worry about their finances.
- Buying new kit, subsidising events and ensuring best access.
- Has managed the budgets of 6 different teams, something he's really good at.
- The role would see him working with a lot of different teams, helping make sure it's less scary and daunting for incoming freshers.
- Great time management skills, great with numbers, works to complete all tasks with no fuss.
- Eager to streamline current schemes, suggest new ideas and make college the best place it can be.

FD's Hust:

Hope you're all doing ok. First I'll introduce myself, so Hello, I'm Fergus I'm in my third, final year of a maths degree and am running to be your FCO for next year. The reason I first considered this role was - as I'm sure you'll understand - a love of cuths and a desire to try my best to make it as fun, accessible as possible and ensure students in cuths have the greatest experience they can. It may seem slightly surprising that I'm applying when I haven't had a huge role in the JCR up to now, but it's certainly been something I've been interested and engaged in and have lots of vision for into the future. Anyway I love cuths and have benefited massively from the support the JCR gives to societies and to the upkeep of the various sites like Brookes bar which was close to my heart living at fonteyn first year.

In terms of other skills/experience, I have been treasurer of the football club this past year which has given me the understanding of how the cuths finances work from a sport/society side of things, where obviously you doing all the standard things of collecting money for subs, chasing people up or discussing if they're in a unique position related to that, we did rainbow laces this year, so keeping track of those payments at the same. So yeah a lot of organising, keeping records and speaking to people. In other general experience, I organised and completed the 3 peaks challenge with my mates back home, we got 2 and a half grand for macmillan cancer support. So there I was setting up transport, food, first aid procurement if you will, and then also the fundraising side of communicating with businesses hosting cake sales etc. and then actually walking.

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Obviously the big questions surrounding this role at the moment are its function within the context of the JCR as a whole, and determining where the FCO can spend time to benefit the college the most. This is something that when you're in the role you can develop a better understanding, the role will always be flexible in picking up the things that need to be done around college. But then there are tasks taken on by other exec members, well we could call tasks either "labour" tasks or "creative" tasks. And in a lot of cases labour tasks of just performing admin logistics etc can be done by anyone, so if the FCO is doing them it relieves weight from the non-sabbatical exec and they can focus on their specific role more...and also their degrees.

Since the role was created in like 2019 I know Rishi the first year ended up doing lots of general jobs around the college and tidying up the finances etc., obviously maddys year was slightly different, and isaac isn't even half way through his time. And this is just a reminder of how new the role is, we still have lots of tasks that don't get done as much as they should or things that need sorting. For example the website is somewhat out of date, some links go to 404 not found pages, the freps in the pictures are the ones from my freshers year here. These are the kind of things that may seem like non-urgent and unimportant and hence thats why it gets pushed to the bottom of the pile. but I think especially for fishers coming in seeing faces on the website of people you recognise is important, it means you are somewhat familiar with the older years and feel like they are joining an active student community - which you are! This kind of thing is exactly that which the FCO can do - you know, a lot of making sure things are right.

In terms of flexible work though, that is really something that suits me well, finding and picking up tasks - I think because whenever I'm working I have a chronic fear that I'm not doing enough so I end up going beyond to make sure. I mean at home I work in a restaurant and make sure I've got something to do even when all the guests are happy; be that lending a hand with others, or doing any other assortment of tasks that maybe don't get done as often as they should. So yeah I readily take on tasks to complete and do them efficiently to a high standard. There is a surprising amount of time management involved as well on busy days. Of course a restaurant is a team working environment so I've got lots of experience there, as well as taking leading roles where I organise a group of staff when there is a catering event on. I don't know if any of you have worked in similar roles, but a lot of the time it really is essential to give people tasks and things to do as well as taking on the work yourself, otherwise even though you're working your socks off, you need to be more efficient.

So for things i want to do in the role, obviously a major thing is continuing to improve the inclusivity of the college, which is really fundamental to the purpose of the JCR to give equal opportunity to all of its members and give everyone the full college experience, as long as that's what they want. So that is using reserves to further contribute towards keeping prices for balls etc low. Especially with inflation like it is at the moment the prices of these events



will be costing more and that extra cost won't be reflected in larger student loans and it won't always be reflected in how much you are earning if you have a paid job. If we were to put prices of these things up, we would be exactly making them less accessible so certainly for the mean time I think the reserves can support that. Inflation isn't cuths JCRs fault, but with the reserves, we are in a place to mitigate the effect for the accessibility of our members. The events and balls held are such a cool part of the experience being here and I'm so grateful for that and want to make sure nothing is holding people back from attending them.

So yeah wealth inclusivity can be increased through the participation fund for those that qualify for the durham grant, but then there are also other funds that could also do with higher budgets, like there's the gender expression fund which i think allocates like £40 to people accessing it but this isn't necessarily that much and given it doesn't cost the JCR very much money i think it's another thing that more funding could definitely go to.

Another important part of the college experience is all the smaller scale one-off events that are held, and I'd really like to push for and fund more of them. They're great for seeing people who you don't necessarily see too often through sports and societies and a fun way to meet new people. My first year when Brookes fridays was a thing, i promise you all, it meant that every friday we get together and do a quiz, have a music thing, other celebrations like the chinese new year and things like that, all of which obviously didn't run last year but haven't really returned, especially at brookes bar. So I'd love to work closely with the president and socialcom the bars to make sure these kinds of events do happen and that brookes aren't left out which is ideal given as FCO i'd be living there anyway.

Other things I want to do in the role are that I want to make reclaims faster, so people aren't out of pocket for long periods, which is something that doesn't even cost us money. I know alfie and isaac currently have plans to work improve the JCR room so depending how far that gets I'd like to make those spaces nicer, into spaces that cuths people will want to use. There are also small things like making sure there are easy to access and understand summaries of expenditure, I think there was one on the instagram from a few months ago, but I'd make sure this was up to date and in a place that is obvious to find. If someone wants to access that information they wont necarcarrily know to look back through the Cuths JCR instagram account, a more obvious place might be somewhere on the website which would enable more clearer records which aren't limited by the constraints of instagram.

There's lots more things i want to do some of which are in my manifesto but to summarise; vote for greater inclusivity, lots of smaller college events, a more efficient JCR, affordable balls and for someone who is friendly, adaptable, hard working, wil get things done and someone who has a genuine love of cuths and its community



I know for sure that I'll work great alongside either of the Presidents to be through a shared experience of having gone through a maths degree or a shared enjoyment of pub quizzes and ale. Thank you for your time

Proposer (GM)

- First met TA in freshers week as she was my frep - come to know her and how much of a compassionate person she is
- Her love to cuths stands out, as International Rep last year, Female welfare officer and frapped both years
- Love for cuths and commitment to college as extremely important as the role is centrally student involved
- Being approachable and well known also really important
- She is currently treasurer of film festival in Durham and dealt with college funds too
- In the future wants to pursue commercial law, and hence I believe she would be committed to charitable aims and legal requirements
- One of the stand out points of her manifesto to me is one to one help for students with budgeting really important
- Offering advice, drop ins and support on grant access as highlights of her ideas
- Strengthening bond between Sports and Societies and FCO, attending meetings once a term to ensure maximum accessibility to everything college offers.
- Extremely confident she will carry her ideas out and has proven herself to be proactive over the past year.
- One clear example of this being the success of the menstrual cup scheme, as something she proposed in running for Female Welfare Officer. Evident that the same will be the case for the plans she has for FCO.

TA's Hust:

Hi everyone! I'm Thalia, a third year history student and I would love to be your next FCO. This position is one that I think I am well suited for both in terms of my individual skills as well as my personal interests. But, importantly, being FCO will enable me to make some impactful changes to students' experience in Cuth's. A big part of this role is practical and involves a lot of accounting and administration, but it also allows for the FCO to have influence beyond this. I would be excited to take on both of these aspects of the job.

Our college, and the JCR specifically, has been the main influence that has shaped my time in Durham as a student. I have grown into myself whilst in Cuth's; I've met my closest friends here and formed some of my core uni memories. I have also learnt a lot from holding positions as a part of the JCR. Cuth's has made a very real impact in my life and I would love to give back to our community by being a proactive FCO.



One of the main things I will do is create a clear, open line of communication between myself and all JCR students. I think that a lot of people don't really know what the FCO does and assume that the FCO only does financial work behind the scenes. I will enable students to be able to talk to the FCO so that things can get done even more efficiently in the JCR.

I will make myself approachable by being active on Cuth's social media and by requesting to include an 'FCO section' in the president's weekly email. Making the FCO and their work more public means that not only will more people be aware of them, but students are also more likely to reach out to someone who seems open to communication.

I will ensure that students have a place to communicate with me by holding drop ins at least once a term, and explicitly offering meetings and communication over email as well. I have extensive experience of holding drop ins, as I currently hold them for four hours a week as the Female Welfare Officer. My experience will ensure that I will make this a secure space for students to speak openly about any finance and compliance concerns they may have. I think this will also be an attentive space for students who are not directly involved with the JCR to approach me, expanding the reach of FCO.

I will also be more involved in committees as well as sports and societies. Beyond the training I will be delivering to sports and societies treasurers, I will also make handbooks for them with practical information as well as information on how they can be financially inclusive. I think that the JCR can seem really confusing for some sports and societies treasurers, and I would like to minimise this feeling. I will also want to attend committee meetings at least once a term so that I can make myself open to discussion with the committee members and become more involved so that I can help with their goals and projects. I know that when I was a member of the Communities Committee, I would have really appreciated guidance and communication from the FCO.

Another key idea and the main thing I want to implement as FCO is to encourage the wider body of the JCR to take a strong stance on understanding students' financial difficulties in a broader way. The incredible Welfare Campaigns Team has recently been running a successful campaign on money management, a campaign which I feel is really necessary for Cuth's. But, I would like to see this campaign go beyond welfare and for the JCR to tackle this issue more broadly. This is something which, as FCO, I will be able to directly encourage.

Creating an open line of communication between myself and students will mean that I can offer help to students based on their needs. I will make myself available to help students who are struggling to access and or apply for grants they need. I understand that a significant number of students do not have external support in making these types of applications. For example, I have personally seen friends struggle to collect their parents' financial records needed for an application with no help from their family. The knowledge that comes from the experience of being FCO means that I will be able to aid these students and make the road to accessing the financial help they need much smoother.

I also want to improve the options for financial aid that students have. First, I will work with the Working Class Representative to set up a fund for working class Cuth's students. After this, I want to work with the Communities Committee to discuss further funds. Specifically, I



am keen to work with the Students with Disabilities Representative to set up a fund for disabled students. Broadening the type of financial support Cuth's students can receive will relieve a lot of the stress and anxiety that comes with financial difficulty.

Importantly, I want to ensure that as FCO I encourage others in the JCR to take a similar stance in understanding diverse financial positions. This will make it a wider and thus more impactful shift. By working with the Communities Committee, I will include information in training and handbooks on how sports and societies can be more financially inclusive. This guidance on inclusivity will be continuous on my end and I will offer my support to all sports and societies looking for ways to improve.

I also want to improve the way reclaims are done. It is critical for the claims to be sorted through quickly and efficiently, which I am confident I can do. But I also want to help students who cannot afford large amounts of money to be missing from their account, even for the short time that the reclaim is being processed. I know that sometimes I don't have £400 in my bank account that I can spare to buy condoms, and I wish I was aware of another way to do it. I will look into alternate arrangements for Cuth's students and will make sure that anyone who may have to reclaim from the JCR is aware of them.

Beyond these larger changes, I will also ensure that the accounting and administration of the JCR remains well operated. I have a personal interest in both the financial operations and the charity law compliance aspects of the JCR. I will later pursue a career in commercial law, for which I have to have a high level of understanding business and compliance law. This means that as FCO I will be particularly interested in the legal aspects of JCR operations. My genuine personal interest in this role will enable me to fulfil my role confidently and eagerly.

I will ensure the JCR financial records are kept in a clear and accurate manner as well as overseeing all of the expenditure. I have critical experience in doing this. I managed a budget of £500 as the acting International Representative last year, and I currently manage a budget of £1500 with the Welfare Committee. I am also currently accounting for an even larger budget as the treasurer of the Durham Student Film Festival 2022. I have found accounting in these roles interesting, and have pushed myself to expand my experiences and develop these skills further. This means I have the necessary overall organisational skills and financial literacy needed to be FCO.

As acting International Representative, I revived and chaired the International Committee. I will be confident when chairing the Financial Committee and will be able to use my experience to delegate work to the members. I am attentive and encouraging, and will create a positive environment when engaging the Committee members.

My experience of working with the Communities Committee, the International Committee and the Welfare Committee has been incredibly positive. I have learnt how to work within a team, which at times, especially in welfare, can be within a particularly stressful environment. I will use the communication and team working skills I have learnt to form a supportive working relationship with the President and help them whenever necessary.



These are my key ideas, and the skills and experience that I think make me so well suited to this role. My manifesto includes some more detail, things like my frepping experience and my idea to strengthen relations with alumni. So please have a look at that when deciding on your vote! But overall, I am genuinely invested in this role! I really feel like I would enjoy my time as FCO and I would be so excited to implement my ideas and get things done! Thank you so much for listening and please vote for me!

Questions:

DB: Statistics show 15% of Durham students are disabled and financial support available can have a drastic impact on choosing to apply. How would you try to increase DSAs and access for those with disabilities?

TA: As mentioned, eager to set up a disability fund. Believe this would really make a difference - has seen through personal experience how hard it can be to get support where needed.

FD: Working with disability rep of course. Making sure that all parts of Cuths are accessible, ensuring that if something needs funding projects can be targeted.

AW: As part of the role, the FCO is expected to write financial reports and bookkeep for the JCR. However besides handover they don't get very much financial training. How would you work to ensure better handover and understanding of these tasks?

FD: Ensuring there are clear records and evidence from previous years. Making sure people are knowledgeable of what they are getting in for. Maintaining a good line of communication, documentation of the current work and the vision for the future.

TA: There have only been 3 FCOs so far, which can be seen as a good thing in the sense that you can reach out to everyone. Creating a presentation or handbook we could do together, as well as potentially external training - it's a big role and important stuff, so could be super valuable.

JS: Over the past few years we've seen a big step forward in terms of financial accessibility. What do you see is the next move in continuing this?

TA: Understanding financial difficulties is key, making sure everything actually is accessible for all. Approaching students on an individual level and opening up discussions about finances.

FD: An important part is about raising awareness about what we already have available. But then making sure these provisions are suitable and actually doing what is best and needed. Working with various reps on and working out how best to get information across to people. Make sure those who need it can get it.

MB: How would you manage the long term goals of the JCR and the interests of the current members?



FD: Ensuring facilities are up to scratch. Also we do have large reserves, which can seem ineffective just sitting in an account. Having a strong plan on what the long term goals for this money is.

TA: For long term goals, keeping good communication. Long term goals are an issue of current members too, don't think the current and long term goals are all that far apart, about being the middleman and ensuring both get done.

TB: With the new Exec restructure, there is an increased emphasis on the work between FCO and Facilities. How can you see these two roles collaborating in the next year?

TA: Well I think what we've done so far is great - we all love the popcorn machine! A lot of committees are not aware of the finances they have available and the options facilities can offer. So improving relations between committees, finance and the President to maximise future investments and tech.

FD: Making sure to keep close ties and speak with them regularly. Seeing the things that matter most to them, prioritising what benefits the students, what funding they could make use of. Where the most financially viable option is with things such as renting out tech.

AW: One of the big debates with FCO being a relatively new role is the more confused leadership relations between President, VP and FCO, and more sabbaticals potentially leading to greater dominance. What do you see the relationship of the FCO to the P, VP, committees and wider university structures?

FD: Of course the VP is a super important role, as insight into the student experience from someone still completing their degree and utilising college in a certain way. Even if you are a full time member of staff, you can still get the vibe of the student body.

TA: A really good way to tackle this is speaking with previous P and VP and identify the key issues. One potential problem is that it's still quite experimental - it would be good to change the standing orders and relationship by consulting past experience. [Reference made to KM being stressed again]

KM: By the way I do maths!

All about creating a supportive network between all three, work is being spread evenly and no one gets too stressed.

JR: A lot of people in Sports and Socs are left confused or lack experiences with finances or the wider JCR. How do you plan on empowering treasures whilst still holding them accountable?

TA: Making handbooks, including practical stuff as well as financial accessibility. Letting them know they can talk to me, ask questions and come for help when they need it.

FD: At first I was quite confused, little handover. But once you've been properly filled in it's not too bad. Making sure that treasurer training is early enough in term to get a start on. Involved already with lots of sports, clear line of communication and would want to keep this up.



President of the Society (I)

Candidates: BT, KM, RON

Proposer: [HH]

- First met BT in first year, can confirm he wore the same t-shirt and jeans
- Has been stuck in from the very start, you all know how involved he has been
- Am here to tell you about him as a person
- He is dedicated and passionate, he was an incredible frep team leader, a genuine friend
- Felt supported by him even in the tiring and rock bottom moments
- Managed situations with level head and perseverance
- Will make the JCR accessible to all, and making the value of Cuths clear to all
- Kindness begets Kindness - who better than the kindest person I know
- Doesn't want to lead Cuths to be better at the top, but better for everyone
- If we want Cuths to be for everybody, we need BT next year.

BT's Hust:

Hi everyone, thanks for being here - normally people aren't that interested in listening to me ramble on about the JCR, so it's great that you're all... stuck here. I'm Ben Thomas, my pronouns are he/him, and I'm a history finalist running to be *your* President of the Society. It's no secret that I am *slightly* obsessed with Cuth's. It's a place of real and amazing opportunities that I've taken huge advantage of in my time here, but we can always do better. I have a clear, three-point vision for the direction of the JCR, which is what I want to talk to you about today.

Now, what matters more is where the JCR should be heading rather than everything I've done in the past, *but* it wouldn't be a presidential hust without a quick rundown of everything I've done in my time here.

I'm the Vice-Chair of Trustees which means that I deal with the governance of the charity, maintaining our charitable aims by managing the trustee board who oversee the operations of the JCR, and deal with the legal and financial stuff behind the scenes to support and advise the President. In this, I've taken the lead on writing a three-year long-term strategy for the JCR, so I have a clear direction for where we need to be going. Last year I was on the exec as JCR Chair where I chaired my own committee, and worked with almost every other committee in the JCR, and with JCR members to help them implement changes they wanted to see, from outreach, facilities, and budgets, to elections, the library, and sports & socs, I've done it all. I've also been a JRO and a Volunteer Librarian.

Despite holding all these JCR positions, my favourite thing has always been getting stuck into the day-to-day stuff in Cuth's, so I've been both a frep and a frep team leader, and I've held *five* sports and socs exec positions, including CRACAS, Climbing, and Ripped Off, and



I've also been involved in Running and Pool - so I have experience in organising events, socials and publicity, including with the SCR and with college.

But I've also been proactive outside these roles too, writing motions, for instance on election accessibility, making climbing cheaper and more accessible, as well as hosting the founders' day social, helping to get the library open and loads more. So as you can see, I know the JCR absolutely inside-out, I've spent a lot of time working all over the JCR with different presidents, and have a proven reputation for making change and getting stuff done. I know how important the JCR is to your experience, so even though everybody gets different things out of the JCR, I will make sure we're on top form to provide what is important to *you*.

However, all of this is almost a prerequisite for running for President - so why me?

Being President is about balancing everything that you want to do in the role, big and small. I want to be approachable, but I can also bring a level of dedication and professionalism to make sure that you get the most out of your time here. I'm forward-thinking and pragmatic: I've spent a lot of time coming up with, and implementing solutions when I've seen a problem. I want to be held accountable to you, I'm not afraid to be wrong, admit it and change my mind. I want to keep myself integrated into the Cuth's community, a friend, present, rather than just existing 'from above'. From everything I've done in my time here, I hope it's obvious that I live and breathe Cuth's - and I want everyone else to be able to feel that way too.

I have a clear, three-point vision for Cuth's which I'm really excited about.

Firstly, standing up for Cuth's in the wider community

With a new Principal, college are currently undergoing some restructures for how they operate, and I want to take real advantage of that to ensure that we have a greater say in college, that they take a more active approach to listening to students' concerns and communicate more clearly with us. For instance, I want to see greater student representation on bar management committee, such as elected liaison officers for both Brooks and Bailey. Brooks Bar is never going to be the Bailey, but it can have its own character - fun tidbit that it used to be a bustling gin bar, so it has potential, and I want to work to make sure that Brooks is not left behind.

The uni would fall apart if it didn't have us. So I want to make sure that they listen to us about things that affect you like uni expansion and accommodation fees, and push for JCRs to be prioritised in the uni structure of decision-making. We've always had a strong presence in central uni, I want to keep it that way. This includes working with the new SU Rep in Cuth's to forge a new, more constructive relationship with the SU while acknowledging and pushing its need for reform.



And related to this, I want to have clear housing information earlier in the year so you can sign informed and equipped with support. Space is obviously really important, so I want to expand our study space, especially during exam season, and make sure that the new Brooks building (if it's ever completed) is being used to its full extent to promote Parsons. And I'll also push for well-maintained green spaces in college too.

Finally, I want to make sure that we're getting the most out of alumni with career information and networking, as well as more alumni engagement and events with the JCR.

The second point, is a more inclusive, ground-up, and friendly JCR

Cuth's is for students, by students. I want to empower and support volunteers to make bottom-up change, to do what they want to do and pursue their own projects, rather than just doing what their predecessor did or what a President wants to do. By better defining the relationship between the Pres and FCO so that they can work more efficiently together, volunteers can get on with doing what they do best.

I want to improve and have greater oversight over handovers for JCR positions, and some big sports and socs, to make sure we have a running start at the beginning of the year. As well as have more training, including unconscious bias and anti-racism.

I want to overhaul how we explain the JCR to people so it's easier to understand and more accessible. Having clear and accurate information is really important for transparency - the front page of the website still has events I put on there two years ago. And I want to see a kinder JCR - we're nearly all volunteers and people give up their free time to run it, we need to appreciate them more to keep people getting involved.

I want to have more active forums for discussion on topics that concern you to be transparent and open about decisions we make, and why, have regular informal drop-ins, and try to just be a visible presence in Cuth's so I'm as approachable as possible. I want to have regular meetings with volunteers, and prioritise things like committee dinners and socials. I also want to prioritise providing opportunities for PGM and international students to get involved with the JCR, which has traditionally been a weak point in our operations.

I helped get Communities Committee set up in its current form last year, and it's been a success on the whole, but I want to make sure that they're not seen as a separate enclosed committee, but one which is in active dialogue with the whole of the JCR on things which affect them.

And financial mitigation is obviously a really important way that we make the opportunities in Cuth's more inclusive - the way you access this stuff is often really important in how



accessible it is, so I want to consider things such as targeted JCR levy reductions, and generally making things autonomous instead. This is also an untapped area in terms of alumni who could create development opportunities for sports and socs as well.

The third and final point, the Cuth's Experience

I want to see more regular and subsidised events. Perhaps very controversial, but I loved Brooks Fridays, let's bring them back! Also viewing parties, open mics, themed nights, silent discos, music and cider festivals - and supporting events run by Outreach and Welfare

Campaigns. I also want greater control over formals, as well as Ents run by committees, or sports and socs even, as well.

I'm a massive Cuth's and history nerd, so I'm really interested in our traditions. The thing is, traditions and inside jokes in Cuth's can be really isolating and exclusive if not everyone is on them: luckily the solution to this is easy; make sure everyone's in on them!

For freshers' week, having been a frep and Team Leader I know where we can improve both our events, and the overall frepping experience - I'd like to see some slightly more specific training for freps to empower them in dealing with situations.

Sports and socs are my passion. I want to make sure that they're all getting the most value for money and support from the JCR, and are treated as fairly as possible. I want to go and take part in sports and socs that I'm not already involved in, not only to give them publicity, but also to make myself visible to them - which is always going to be a more effective way of building a relationship, than trying to get them to come to me. And I want a huge give it a go week in the first week of term, planned out in advance to avoid too much clashing.

So, to wrap up. In all honesty, I've barely even started to get at all the things I'd do as President, so please have a read of my manifesto and email or message me on Facebook if you have any further questions. But...

This is a really exciting time for Cuth's, getting back to normal, but we can always do more. We need a President who doesn't just care about Cuth's, but who will be an effective, level-headed and kind President. And I can do all that. I have the drive, the experience, and the ideas to elevate Cuth's to even greater heights and promote opportunities, and, our sense of community. I want to work hard for you, to make sure the JCR is for everyone. Thanks everyone.

Proposer: [SS]

- First met during Cuths Day last year - tasked with cleaning up the marquee



- Tough fortnight frepping, intense year as VP - she clearly cares and puts her all into everything she does
- Commits 100% into her job and encourages everyone else to do the same
- Her sincerity could never be faked and believes everything she endorses
- A natural leader, refined through her involvement in Cuths, walking the perfect line between maintaining traditions and paving a new future
- She has a vision, has the skills and the passion driving her to succeed
- Ultimately she wants what's best for Cuths, and that's why she's the best for the job.

KM's Hust:

Hey I'm Kirstin, I'm a 3rd year maths student and I'm running to be President of the Society. I am your current Vice President so you may have seen me frantically taking minutes in JCR meetings or when you collect your stash, persuading people to buy a solidaritee, at a life drawing class, or you may have even seen my passion for graphic design on the jcr instagram and facebook.

Some people may think if I ran to be vice-president I must've always wanted to be president, but that's far from the truth. If you told fresher me that in my third year I'd be husting to work full time for the JCR I would have laughed in your face. Obviously as I'm standing here it should be evident I love Cuth's but that is not just why I am running for president.

I first came to cuth's at the post offer visit days, I embarrassingly did not apply to Cuth's and I was so unsure of firming Durham with it's reputation but coming to visit changed my mind - there were so many people who had given up their time to show off their community and they all just loved Cuth's. It was the exact same in freshers week with freps who willingly stood outside the clubs in the freezing rain at 2am and then got up the next day at the crack of dawn - all because they loved cuth's. I remember thinking like yeah the events are alright but I was convinced I would never do all that work and frep for free, let alone ever hold a position

One of my freps tried to encourage me to go to the first jcr meeting but I was too hungover and didn't understand why I'd give up an evening to sit there quietly in cuth's bar because I can barely shut up for 2 minutes. However I did go to the second one having been convinced to run for ficomm but I spent the entire meeting not having a clue what people were on about and frankly it seemed lame, just people with too much time on their hands, making a fuss about nothing. I hated jcr meetings in my first year, I rarely went because I was just lost in them. I did start to understand the love of cuth's outside of the jcr-y jcr though, getting involved in femsoc and the panto did make me start to appreciate the societies and I was understanding the budgeting of sports and socs. Governance was just not my thing - but that has very much changed.



Thankfully I was encouraged to run for student trustee, it was not sold to me as something that would be fun or easy but something that I would be able to impact and change. This is what has got me standing here today - there was a lot that needed to be done to improve the board of trustees who have a huge responsibility for the JCR as a charity. When I joined the board it was a group of men who spoke over anyone who wasn't a man and didn't listen to their opinions unless a man repeated what they had just said. Thankfully that changed, I got new trustees on the board as nominations chair and tried to balance out the board. It was working on the board, learning about the function of the JCR as a charity and then seeing the impact and benefit as a member that I realised I did understand the JCR and I could make a difference because I had, I had changed something.

So I ran for Vice-President, and this has been the most rewarding role and one I am incredibly grateful for. I've done a lot - I've restructured the exec to make the division of work fairer and focused, restructured welfare to improve the provision for students, I've contributed to every committee and been actively involved in every aspect of the jcr and have helped to improve it - stash is sustainable, frep jumpers are free, the publicity of events is consistent in the design, bringing back cuth's traditions like panto and so much more as I have spent so much of my time doing things for the jcr this year.

I wouldn't have it any other way as in this role I've learnt an incredible amount; how to chair a meeting, how to lobby college and the university, how to write a good motion (finally), how to throw an insane ball, how to run freshers week, how to get things done. As Vice-President I've shown how reliable, pragmatic and passionate I am as well as a fiend for canva and because of all of this it is why I am running for President and why I'd be good at it.

So, enough about me - what am I going to do for you?

My manifesto has 3 main priorities and here are my ideas on how I would tackle them

Priority fun

The JCR should be fun - we're all students and we're at uni we're here to enjoy ourselves but that can't happen if we're all taking the jcr so seriously all the time.

One aspect of life at cuth's is severely lacking in fun and that's formals. There's huge potential for formals and I think it would make a huge difference to students to make them fun and exciting rather than intimidating and uncomfortable. I remember my first formal in freshers week and I was so nervous - I had never been in an environment like that before and I felt intimidated quite frankly and I know I'm not alone in that. Formals aren't a JCR event but there's no reason they can't be - that's why I want at least one JCR ran formal a term. We are incredibly lucky at cuth's to have the relationship with college that we do and it's something that I've worked to maintain this year and it's only because of this great relationship that this would be possible. We can have fun takes on the dress code, encourage people to be themselves, work with the formals manager and social comm to help come up with the theme



and carry it through with fun, on theme note cards, lighting that fits the theme and even just generally less harsh lighting for all formals. Let's have ents post formal - silent discos, karaoke, live music, there's endless possibilities but these will make them feel like more of an event than just a meal in college. I want to work with the bar to get specialty themed drinks and cocktails, let's get a wider and better range of wine options too. One formal I would like to make huge is the sports and socs formal: our biggest and best formal of the year to celebrate the achievements of the jcr.

We've brought back events like oktoberfest but let's do more. For some members the only way they ever interact with the JCR is events so let's do more with Cuth's got talent and we can make it an outreach fundraiser, a cuth's christmas celebration, endless options. i've helped with every event we've put on this year and so I want to empower and support members of social comm and anyone in the JCR to just put on event they want

There's huge demand for events for graduates who missed out in the last few years but I think we should aim to continue to bring people back into cuth's with an in college grad ball filled with the cuth's classics, bringing back recent grads every other year at least, it would make a huge difference to increasing communication and engagement with recent alumni

A JCR that works for you

We are a JCR for undergrads and postgrads - it is one JCR. This is forgotten but easily fixed; it's a matter of clear communication and just fundamentally remembering that postgrads are not a separate entity. As president I'd be more present in postgrad and international freshers' week, ensuring the PGM President and International rep felt supported by myself and the Head Frep, actively include postgrads in the events especially for those who live out, as well as publicising clear information on how the levy works for masters and phd students so no one overpays. A priority would be to meet with the PGM President before meetings to ensure we are united on issues, and I'd like to encourage the attendance of undergrads at postgrad events

We've already established that jcr governance was not always for me and it's not for everyone and that's ok!! The JCR is here to support students in whatever they want to do and achieve but jcr meeting aren't the easiest or most accessible format to make a change in if you don't know how. This is why as President I'd like to have the sports and socs welcome talk in summer when the new execs are elected, work with the incoming and outgoing communities committee to create a leaflet keep our sports and socs as inclusive as possible and have a drinks in the garden after so everyone has a chance to meet each other and to open up that line of communication immediately. I'd also like to have a termly sports and socs forum, not compulsory but a kind of town hall where members can come and basically say whatever they need for their sport and society and that way if people want things changed but don't know how they can go to the people who do and get the support needed



As vice-president I've supported officers wherever I can and I'd continue to do the same as president. I'd try to meet twice a term with every officer for just a quick casual check in to ensure they are managing their workload and achieving what they want to in their role. I'd like to support officers by getting them relevant trainings like chair training to ensure committee meetings are as efficient and productive as possible, unconscious bias training, and anti-racism training which was an idea we've been trying to implement since I was a trustee. I would really like to push for first aid training for relevant officers, sports and society presidents as well as team leaders for freshers week.

We will at last have a brand new jcr and building at brooks and I think this is the perfect opportunity to establish parsons as a huge presence in cuth's - i want the new jcr at brooks to be the main JCR as majority of first years are there so let's make it a space people actually want to be in and one that people actually go to.

Big College and Uni Plans

This year we have restructured welfare to make it work better for students but it should not be up to students to provide student support. The university should be providing sufficient support for students but they don't, which is why as President it would be a priority of mine to work with the other common room Presidents to lobby the university to increase the provision of student support services, strongly pushing for an increase in the provision of counselling services and hours.

I can't stress enough how important the post offer holder visit days were in getting me to actually come to cuth's and be here today which is why I'd push for the university to reverse their plans for allocations. Not knowing your college until two weeks before you arrive is horrific for incoming students and for us as a common room there is no way we can hold post offer holding days without breaching our charitable aims. Obviously this is not something that would be possible in time for first years coming in 2022 which is why I would have a huge publicity strategy, working closely with the dedicated publicity officer to consistently post any information that pre-freshers need so that even if they aren't sure if they are coming to cuth's yet they know exactly what would be instore for them if they do

I've worked to make cuth's more sustainable this year with stash but I would not stop here as President. The amount of food waste from the dining hall is immense and this has been a project in the pipeline for years now but as President I'd work to ensure we reduce our food waste through cheaper leftover meals for livers out or establish a scheme to deliver the meals to a shelter a durham - there are many ways we can go about this.

There's some incredibly successful alumni of cuth's but we do not utilize their connection to cuth's nor their wealth of knowledge enough as a JCR and so I would like to establish a mentorship scheme between cuth's students and the alumni association and scr, as well as



increase our outreach projects in the local community with more collaboration with local schools for a mentorship between them with cuth's students and alumni

Finally, I want to renovate the wendy house. There is still no space for art and there are still other facilities we are lacking as a jcr even with the new brooks building and facilities restructure so as President I would like to spend a good chunk of our reserves, which we need to spend, and renovate the wendy house to provide the jcr with the spaces and facilities we need.

Those are just some of my ideas but please do come talk to me or message me on facebook if you want to hear more. I hope I have demonstrated my thorough understanding of cuth's as a charitable organisation and our community and that you will consider voting for me as President of the Society. Thank you

Questions:

LH: SU related topics have been a consistent topic of discussion with the President, often taking hours of research and time to dedicate to them. How do you plan to help the SU rep on making these tough decisions and keeping up to date on these themes?

BT: Making sure to acclimatise to SU politics in handover, as well as consulting students on the prioritised problems faced by those currently in college and know about it. Maintaining dialogues so that you can make ensured decisions

KM: Has sat on SU com and aware of current issues. Getting the opinions of other people in college, achieved through the SU rep. Getting rid of ex-officio also helping this. SU issues face all students, even if you don't realise it, so would definitely carve out the time to liaise with them as well as inform themselves.

DB: How do you intend to engage with liver out fresh?

KM: The initial thing is making a very clear timetable circulated to livers out. Informing of what events are being put on. Sentiment for the freps to help walk students home, even if they are in Gilesgate! Potential Livers Out rep, difficulties with access, being out of touch.

BT: Publicity is really important - our online reach is key, and we can use this to maximise all routes of communication. Also about encouraging people to get involved and take up positions. Putting on events people feel they can come to, and that these are accessible too. Planning things out well in advance.

S: How do you plan on improving the handbook, ensuring it is easy to understand and accessible?

BT: Keeping the information concise, drip feeding information and letting people slowly get used to it. You don't have to know everything to get involved - it doesn't matter if you're fully clued up, there's an element of learning on the job.



KM: Never read the handbook as a fresher. Would like to keep it in the current format and all that information somewhere. New and drastic publicity strategy, getting stuff out early on, no more than 3 swipes on an instagram post.

JG: How do you see your working relationship with the welfare team - especially during freshers - and then the whole team over the year?

KM: New training for welfare officers and Minority Reps as playing a major part - ensuring that one of these is on each team. Having an open and honest dialogue with Senior Welfare and the whole team over summer, making sure both priorities are considered. Having the Welfare Committee up and running for the whole year as invaluable, more voices on how best to spend our money and providing for students.

BT: Will admit haven't had loads to do with welfare, but a solid plan from the get go as key. One thing I would like to see is specific drug and alcohol first aid training, especially useful over generic alcohol talk in terms of freshers week. Active dialogue, recognising I won't know as much as other people on certain topics. Offering my knowledge where applicable but knowing won't always work best.

TB: The potential issue of cliqueness - how would you seek to avoid this and ensure a good team rapport that is inclusive to all JCR members?

BT: The question of whether there is is pointless. Rather it is about making yourself as approachable and visible - people can talk to you and get involved no matter what.

KM: Fine line definitely. If the Exec doesn't get on then it wouldn't be productive. You need to have respect for people, but in terms of combatting the perception of a clique, doing things like this where members everyone is split apart, everyone is accessible and can learn new things.

AW: Have come to realise over this year that a lot of the limitations we experience are from the wider university. What do you see the divide of the job between president of Cuths and pushing down issues across the university to be, where do you draw the line?

KM: This line is hard to distinguish. We function incredibly well, in a place where the only limits are the ones we face with the university. Would still prioritise Cuths, relying on all the members of the Exec however to look specifically at this, as ultimately you are the representative of the college on the university level. The best use of my paid time is across both - about finding the balance that works for you and your exec. As an independent common room, we have more leeway, but the representative role is still key.

BT: Don't think it's that much of a divide necessarily. All of the issues, whether they be from the uni or from college, do equally affect students in Cuths and are intersected. If you can empower an exec in their own roles, not all of your time has to be spent on just running things. This then gives you time for the representational and wider uni issues too.

JS: As an integrated JCR, what is one thing that we currently don't do for postgraduate students and how could we rectify this?



BT: Making sure they're integrated in all of our events, definitely getting both involved in each other. Breaking down this post-grad division, we are combined so embrace this. Not ascribing people to one category - we're all Cuths.

KM: Currently don't really encourage undergraduates to go to postgrad events, even though there is somewhat of an expectation vice versa. With postgrad roles required to go to undergrad ones, promote this the other way around.

AW: You've got to love Cuths for this job to keep you going - What is your favourite thing about Cuths?

KM: I've got to be honest, Feast. It's really unique that we do a ball within college, get to showcase Cuths as ours.

BT: Sports and Socs. Little microcosms of what Cuths is entirely - opportunity to get involved, run your own societies, socials. They're like your own mini Cuths. Where our communities are, where people engage, stand out to me.