

St. Aidan's College Senior Common Room

Resident's Handbook 2016-2017



President's Welcome

St Aidan's College is a unique environment for postgraduate study. Of the colleges that admit both undergraduates and postgraduates, it has the largest postgraduate body – a diverse mix of students from all subjects, nationalities, and backgrounds. Uniquely at Durham, all non-undergraduate members of St Aidan's – from Masters students to senior academics – are represented by a single organisation: the Senior Common Room (SCR).

The SCR is here to help you to get the most out of the collegiate experience. Our events are a chance to meet fellow students beyond your course, our facilities are your facilities for use throughout the year, and our Executive committee are your student representatives.

As a postgraduate student in college accommodation you are already a member of the SCR. We encourage you to get involved in the life of the college in any way you can, whether by joining one of the numerous societies on offer, getting involved with running the SCR, or simply engaging in the kaleidoscope of events – whether you prefer the relaxed and small scale or the high-vis – that take place in college throughout the year.

We've put together this handbook as a useful reference point for our students who live in college accommodation. We hope that you will enjoy your time at St. Aidan's and, like so many students before you, that you will come to think of college as your home.

With warm wishes for the year,

Padraig Alton
SCR President 2015-2016
& the SCR Executive committee

Your college and you

Every student at Durham belongs to a College, a small academic community within the wider University. Though St. Aidan's houses around 500 students, it is a warm and connected community which provides you with a multitude of facilities, a chance to get involved with many different societies, and a social hub.

Situated at the top of Windmill Hill, St. Aidan's boasts stunning views of Durham. It is ideally placed for the Science Site, SGIA and the Business School, with easy routes to the rest of the town. One of its most unique features is its large postgraduate body, who, together with our academics, college staff and members of regional communities, form the Senior Common Room. The SCR works with the Junior Common Room (JCR – the equivalent undergraduate organisation) to make St. Aidan's a supportive friendly and creative environment where all can flourish.

What has the SCR ever done for us?

We're confident that by the end of the year you'll be able to think of many ways in which you have benefited from your SCR membership! The SCR represents you in the wider context of the University, providing student feedback to college or speaking up for your interests at the Students' Union. We hold a multitude of events catering for all tastes, whether you prefer large-scale social occasions, a quiet games night or quiz, or witty and informed research talks. Crucially though, you get much more out of the experience, the more you engage: we hold termly meetings of all SCR

members which are your chance to have your say on how the SCR is run. At the first, in mid-October, the Executive committee for the year is elected. Most SCR student members are only here for one year, so don't feel shy about standing for a role on the committee! It is your chance to have a direct say in our community and just one more opportunity for personal development offered by belonging to a College like St. Aidan's.

More information

To keep you in the loop we have a variety of ways in which to contact you. You should of course regularly check your university email, but the SCR is also active online in many different ways:

Our email address: st-aidans.scr@durham.ac.uk
Our website: community.dur.ac.uk/st-aidans.scr/
Our Facebook page: [facebook.com/sascr](https://www.facebook.com/sascr)
Our Twitter handle: @StAidansSCR

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the SCR is responsible for organising events, maintaining SCR facilities, and shaping the postgraduate experience at St. Aidan's. All our members are eligible to stand for election in the October general meeting, at which the 2015-2016 committee hands over to the new students. Could you be part of the next Exec? The Exec comprises ten members as follows:

The President

The Chair

The Treasurer

The Secretary

The Social Secretary

The Web Officer

The Welfare Officer

Postgraduate Representatives (x3)

For more information about these roles, please refer to our **website's** information page (community.dur.ac.uk/st-aidans.scr/contact.php). A full description is available in the SCR's **constitution**. To find out about the current members of the committee, see the '**Exec Committee**' page, also on the website.

It is also possible to get involved with the SCR via our **Social** and **Welfare** committees. These are appointed by the Social Secretary and the Welfare Officer and are responsible for organising social events and SCR welfare provision. We're always looking for volunteers, so do get in touch if interested.

College Staff

The college officers

Susan Frenk, Principal

Paula Dawson, Bursar

Stefan Klidzia, Vice-Principal & Senior Tutor

The college officers run the College as a team, although each has special responsibility for different aspects of College life.

The college student support team

Sukanya Miles-Watson, Assistant Senior Tutor

Tracey Hopwood, Senior Student Support Officer

Emma Wilson, College Office Coordinator

Led by Stefan, the team provides information and support on all aspects of University life. Contact the team via sa.studentsupport@durham.ac.uk

Team Leaders

Wendy Gibson, Finance Officer – a key figure if your finances go awry.

Janet Dawson, Head of Reception – and her team of patient and expert Reception staff - who you will meet during Induction Week.

Diane Walker, Food and Beverage Supervisor. Runs the front of house catering smoothly, including special dietary needs, and has a key role in Team Bar. Diane's team of servery staff is unequalled and you will soon get to know them all.

Jason Carty, Head Chef - his team serve delicious food daily to around 500 people... and still work magic for Formals and Balls.

Mike Wallbank, Operations Manager (Facilities and Events) and *Lesley Peak*, Operations Manager (Housekeeping) – both have broad portfolios. You will get to know Mike as he guides Events organisers through the complexities of Health & Safety, and Lesley as she coordinates room arrangements for term time and vacation periods.

Nicola Dodds and Susan Girdlestone – their team of professional, friendly cleaning staff strive to keep the College gleaming - please remember to tidy your room when cleaning is scheduled. You will be rewarded by some of the driest humour this side of the Scottish Border.

The porters

With *John Hutchinson*, Assistant Operations Manager at the helm, the porters are the Guardians of the Plodge by night and complete all manner of activities during the day. Reigning champions of staff-student darts and pool

Sabbatical Officers

Alex Tarrant-Anderson, JCR President – heads up the JCR Executive Committee which represents undergraduate students.

Liam Forsyth, Bar Steward – leader of Team Bar, in charge of the college's student-run bar.

College Facilities

All facilities in College are available to postgraduate members whether you live in or out of College. Some are administered by the JCR, but as an SCR Member, any issues arising with the facilities ought to be raised with the SCR Exec who will endeavour to iron out any problems. *All the facilities mentioned below are identified on the College Map.*

SCR lounge

A space for postgraduate students to relax overlooking the college grounds. There are sofas, a TV and projector, and a variety of kitchen facilities. Tea and coffee is provided, and all-hours access is by combination lock (the code changes at the start of each term and will be emailed out to you). Receptions before formal dinners are hosted here along with small scale events throughout term.

Dining Hall

The largest single space in college, this is where all meals are served.

Monday to Friday meal times are:

Breakfast: 8am – 10am

Lunch: 11:45am – 1:45pm

Dinner: 5:30pm – 7:15pm

Weekend meals (breakfast and lunch are combined) are:

Brunch: 11:30am – 1:30pm

Dinner: 5:30pm – 7:15pm

Porters' Lodge/Reception

Your first point of call for all inquiries, room bookings, maintenance issues etc. Also handles mail: letters can be found in the nearby 'pigeonholes', while parcels will be held at reception.

Pigeonholes

Any mail you receive will be in placed in the pigeonholes by the Library – make sure to check it often! The pigeonholes are arranged alphabetically, and there is also a special SCR section. It is worth checking both the normal and SCR pigeonholes, as letters are occasionally misfiled. There is also a register of delivered parcels, which is kept on the table beneath the pigeonholes. Any parcels that have been sent to you can be collected from Reception.

JCR lounge and Bailey Room

The JCR-run facilities are made available to postgraduate students as well as undergraduates, though we ask that you respect them as you would our own facilities. There are pool tables, darts boards, table tennis tables, television, video games and ... the famous toasties from the Shop!

College Bar

Our student-run College bar is extremely popular, with many postgraduates getting involved as bar staff. Recently refurbished, the bar is often open for televised sports matches and hosts a number of themed bar-nights throughout the year. Its general opening hours are 7:30pm – 11pm on weekdays (from 7pm on Fridays) and on the weekends it is open from 1pm – 5:30pm, then 6pm – midnight on Saturday and 6pm – 11pm on Sunday. The bar's license covers all the public spaces in college, though please note that the license requires that **any alcohol you consume in those spaces must be bought from the bar.**

College Shop

The shop, which is also student-run, can be found in the JCR lounge. It sells all the necessities of college life, but is most appreciated for its 'toasties' (toasted sandwiches) and summer ice-cream supply. As with the bar, postgraduates can apply to work in the shop, which in term-time is open from 1:30pm – 3:30pm and 8pm – midnight.

The Library

The Library stocks a wide range of books covering all subject areas which can be borrowed by all members of College. It also offers a quiet study area with wireless internet (available throughout college) and several desktops. As with the Bar and Shop, Postgraduates can apply for the paid student librarian positions.

Gym

The Gym is situated on A Straight (below the Porter's Lodge). Anyone can join after payment of a very reasonable membership fee (£40) **and completion of an induction**. The gym is open from 7am until 10pm daily. For all inquiries, contact the JCR Sports Captain (sports@st-aidans.com).

Music Room

Aidan's is one of the more musical Colleges, across types of music. The music room is soundproofed and equipped with a drum kit and amps to make practice easy without compromising friendships. Please respect the guidelines for use, to avoid 'entertaining' the staff in the offices above....!

Interfaith Prayer Room

Situated next to the library, the Interfaith Room provides an oasis for private prayer, meditation, and reflection. It is booked for the mid-morning and afternoon Muslim prayers throughout the year and can be booked for group or individual use by enquiring at reception. One of the college pianos is located here.

Computing facilities

The College has several computers for general use housed in the library and in the corridor by reception. These are connected to the University Network offering a full range of academic software. Wireless internet is also available throughout. It is recommended that you browse the Computing and Information Services website (www.dur.ac.uk/cis) to look over technical requirements to make things easier when you arrive. Printing is also available in college, but photocopying must be done at the Main Library.

Computer quarantine

When you first connect your computer it will be placed into quarantine. To pass quarantine you will need to enter a CIS username and password (you will receive this as part of the university registration process) and download a program to scan your computer. If you do not have appropriate anti-virus software, you'll be notified and will then need to obtain some in order to use the university network. Further details are available at www.dur.ac.uk/cis/esol/registration/ (page accessible e.g. by library computers).

Laundry Facilities

St Aidan's has two dedicated 24/7 laundry rooms. One is situated between E and F house, whilst the other can be found at the end of B Curve. The washer/dryer machines are operated with an electronic key-fob that you will be given on arrival. You will need to replenish the credit on the key-fob, which can be done using a top-up machine in the laundry room at the end of B Curve. Washing

machines have an automatic supply of washing powder, however, there is one machine in the B Curve laundry with which you can use your own detergent. There are also laundry facilities available in the Business School.

Lindisfarne Centre

Often used by conferences over the summer, the Lindisfarne Centre is a versatile and self-contained venue with its own catering facilities, toilets and bar. It is used by college for special occasions, performances, talks, training sessions and careers fairs. The SCR often uses it as a venue for formal dinners and research talks.

Accommodation Blocks

Accommodation at St. Aidan's is split into four main areas:

- 1) The corridors in the main college building (made up of the 'curves' and the 'straights').
- 2) 'The Houses'.
- 3) Elizabeth Pease (EP) House.
- 4) Business school accommodation.

The corridors house undergraduate students, the Houses contain a mix of undergraduate and postgraduate students, and EP House and the Business school are postgraduate only accommodation.

In all cases you will have access to a communal kitchen, and in the case of EP House and the Business School there are also lounges on each floor.