Our Members know that our buildings play an important role in creating an atmosphere conducive to learning and fostering a strong sense of community. Our plans will ensure that our facilities provide these benefits for many years to come. The central areas of College life – the Hall, kitchen, libraries and function rooms – are absolutely key to the St Catharine’s experience.”

DR PETER WOTHERS, PRESIDENT
Supporting Our Buildings & Spaces Projects

The importance of place cannot be underestimated. Our buildings are the environment in which we live, work, eat and socialise. Lifelong learning takes place and transformative, enduring friendships are made within our walls. Attractive, functional and enjoyable spaces enhance the student experience and encourage alumni to return and remain connected to their College.

OUR AIM

To execute a selective, planned renewal of buildings to support College operations, ensuring Members enjoy a high standard of communal life, while also increasing opportunities for revenue generation.
1. **Revitalisation of St Catharine’s Central Spaces** *(estimated project cost £12 million)*

Our Hall and dining rooms are the core of College activity, where students, Fellows and Members come together to build and strengthen our community. A design competition to remodel these central spaces was launched in February 2019 and saw entries from over 30 architects. We are delighted to announce Gort Scott as the winning architect. The target start date will be Summer 2020, with an anticipated working timeframe of 18 months, and a project build cost estimated at £12 million.

![Proposed Dining Hall, looking West.](image1)

![Artist’s interpretation of original Hall, showing detailing of the panels and arches.](image2)

Inspired by the opportunity to remake the social heart of St Catharine’s, Gort Scott propose a new Hall, resized and reshaped to meet functional needs and reimagined to become a memorable and elevating space for dining. A new light-filled Atrium, in the location of the Old Walnut Tree Court, provides an elegant, light-filled means of connection between the Hall, Chapel and McGrath Centre. In addition, a new access route to the much loved
Sherlock Library will provide improved accessibility for all users and reveal the north wall of the former 17th Century Hall. Vestibule space at each entrance provides enhanced congregating spaces, bringing flexibility of use, for formal or informal occasions.

![Image: Atrium space connecting Chapel Court with all central spaces, allowing the 17th Century architecture to breathe again.](image)

*Chapel Court, looking West at the new Hall.*

The brief for the project was demanding in order to deliver improvements on many fronts, in a scheme that transforms the Hall and associated areas into a space that matches the quality and serviceability of the McGrath Centre. Key features of the revitalisation will include reviewing and reversing the Hall layout, repositioning High Table to the opposite end; creating a staff corridor to afford unobtrusive transit through the Hall to other service areas; a review of contingent hospitality rooms and facilities; a review and improvement of the basement area and the modernisation, to latest standards, of the kitchen and buttery areas of the current footprint of our Hall suite. The solution must prioritise addressing the disabled access and audibility limitations of the current Hall.

In Gort Scott’s design, enlarged and reconfigured catering areas facilitate improved food production lines in an upgraded working environment. Discreet movement and convenient serveries are seamlessly integrated so that the Hall, SCR, Armitage Room, OCR and new 30-person dining room are all fully accessible and fully serviceable: making the most of existing heritage assets. The Sherlock library will be modified and refurbished to accommodate workspaces for study, and to retain the Library as a beautiful, contemplative space for everyday use. A secure, climate-controlled environment suitable for rare book conservation is to be created as part of this development. The plans incorporate the addition of a new private dining room, located on the site of the present Buttery. This elegant new room will be named in memory of Dr Sydney Smith, Fellow of St Catharine’s between 1939 and 1988.
Cross-section of the proposed design, showing the Sherlock Library, Armitage Room, and Senior Combination Room to the left of the Atrium, the new Hall with green roof, and student accommodation and Junior Combination Room.

Our Hall and dining rooms are the core of College activity, where students and Fellows come together to build our community, and our Members gather to reminisce. At the time of construction in the 1960s, these shared spaces helped to transform the College into the flourishing institution that it is today. This extensive redesign will deliver a stylish, streamlined community space for our Members, Fellows and staff: essential to meet the needs of a 21st-century College.

GIFT MATCHING

Christina (2016) and Peter Dawson (1974) have given a substantial lead gift of £4 million, meaning the project to refresh central College spaces is much closer to being realised. Peter and Christina have also established a matched funding challenge, to encourage others to support this vital project. Until December 2021, all gifts received for the remodelling of our central spaces will be matched on a pound-for-pound basis, up to a maximum of £4 million in matched funds from Peter and Christina. Successful completion of this matched funding challenge will result in a total of £12 million for the project.
2. **Extensive renovation of Hobsons** *(estimated project cost £2 million)*

We plan to refurbish all the rooms within this much-loved building. Constructed in the 1930s, it has remained largely untouched since 1960. Hobson's was named after Thomas Hobson and is believed to be on the site of the George Inn which he kept. The land was purchased by the College in the early 1600s.

Hobson arranged the delivery of mail between London and Cambridge up and down the Old North Road, operating a lucrative livery stable as an innkeeper. When his horses were not needed to deliver mail, he rented them to students and academic staff of the University of Cambridge.

Hobson soon discovered that his fastest horses were the most popular, and thus overworked. So as not to exhaust them, he established a strict rotation system, allowing customers to rent only the next horse in line.

This policy, "this one or none" ("take it or leave it"), has come to be known as "Hobson's choice".
3. Increased Accommodation and Social Space at St Chad’s (estimated project cost £5.5 million)

The College needs more accommodation to ensure all undergraduates and first year postgraduates have the opportunity to stay in affordable and accessible college rooms. In the past we have had to rent additional rooms for our fourth years and postgraduates. We will now build on the land we own.

In order to achieve this, we plan to add circa 24 bedrooms, as well as generous communal study and social areas, to the existing and very popular second-year accommodation and green space at St Chad’s. This site provides an opportunity to live semi independently in friendship groups, whilst still maintaining close association with their year group and with the main College site. Feedback from current students and the JCR committee has been sought and their comments are being reflected in the new design of communal spaces for studying and socialising.
Proposal

_Raising funds for Our Central Spaces is a priority for the Master and Fellows in the immediate future._

If you would like to make a gift in support of one of these capital projects, we look forward to awaiting your written instructions.

Cheques can be made out to St Catharine’s College or by bank transfer to:
Barclays Bank, St Andrews Street, Cambridge CB2 3AA
Acc. Name: St Catharine’s Campaign,
Acc. No: 60120553,
Sort Code: 20-17-68

Our Charity name is: The Masters & Fellows of the College or Hall of St. Catharine the Virgin in the University of Cambridge and our charity number is: 1137463.

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Giving from Overseas?


*If you would like any further information about this project, please contact the*  
_Alumni & Development Office_

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**OUR COLLEGE, OUR FUTURE**