



ST HILDA'S COLLEGE

Strategy 2024 – 2029



MISSION

St Hilda's College is committed to fostering intellectual and personal achievement in an environment where every voice is heard. Under the guidance of world-class academics and researchers, we foster pioneering, independent thinkers who will go on to shape the future.

VISION

We envision a collegiate community united by a commitment to excellence and equality, offering transformative learning experiences. Central to this vision is our deep commitment to fostering and supporting a research environment that drives academic discovery and enriches learning. We strive to provide access to the best teaching, informed by the latest world-class research, for students with potential, regardless of their background. By creating a global, supportive, and mutually beneficial community of students, academics, and alumnae, we aim to inspire academic growth, critical thinking, and personal and professional development, ensuring our research and education are at the forefront of positive societal impact.

VALUES

Our values of Excellence and Equality lie at the heart of everything we do.



FOSTERING EXCELLENCE

St Hilda's College has seen radical changes since its inception in 1893. Previous strategic periods saw the introduction and development of major construction projects and building acquisitions, which enabled us to provide College accommodation for all undergraduate students, and deliver new and enhanced social and teaching spaces. We underpinned these efforts with a significant fundraising programme, the 125th Anniversary Campaign.

As we enter a new strategic period, our ambition as a pioneering College endures. We have plans to expand our graduate provision and our visiting students programme, further enrich the student experience with mentoring programmes, and enhance our research culture with knowledge exchange and public engagement initiatives. The next five years will see us secure St Hilda's as a leading institution for generations to come.

We will focus our collective efforts on what will give our students and academics 'the edge' in their work, securing our position as an institution of excellence. This work can be grouped into three broad categories: Academic Excellence, Exceptional People, and Engagement and Partnerships.

Maintaining this edge will also require a host of additional enabling and supporting strategies, from strengthening finances to improving accessibility. Naturally, the threat of climate change and our responsibility to mitigate it as far as is possible should remain a key focus of our activities, as we shape our strategy and work towards net zero.

This document provides an overview of the work we are doing, underpinned by rigorous implementation plans. I am excited as we move forward into a new period of growth and change, and I encourage you to engage with members of the College to see the full impact of this effort.

Professor Dame Sarah Springman, **Principal at St Hilda's College**

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The pursuit of academic excellence is our primary focus. We aim to attract the most promising undergraduate and graduate students, regardless of their background, and to provide an academic experience through which they can reach their full potential. An inclusive College, with diverse perspectives, enriches the learning experience for all students. We will continue to support and enable world-class teaching and research, further enhancing the College's reputation and contributions to the collegiate University. We will ensure the creation of an inspiring and challenging educational environment in which all College members can thrive and gain an edge in their future endeavours.

We plan to achieve these aims by:

- Expanding our recruitment activities and targeting high-achieving underrepresented groups to boost the number, quality, and diversity of undergraduate applications across all academic subjects.
- Striving to increase the accommodation options and funding available for graduate students to grow and strengthen the College's graduate community.
- Maintaining the College's breadth of subject offering, and being innovative in our employment support for both early career and established academics.

EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE

Delivering Academic Excellence requires us to take a people-centred approach, attracting talented and dedicated staff who bring the right expertise and experience.

We will ensure that the needs and well-being of students, staff, and academics are prioritised, so that we live and work in a harmonious, welcoming and productive community. We will continue to develop our recruitment and staff development practices for St Hilda's College to be a diverse, desirable and thriving place of work and study that attracts the best candidates, and enables people to fulfil their potential and deliver their best.

We plan to achieve these aims by:

- Supporting our undergraduates with effective academic, financial, welfare, and well-being resources.
- Ensuring graduate students can benefit fully from college associations and community connections, with enhanced mentoring and career advice.
- Providing affordable and accessible accommodation for at least 50% of full-time graduate students by 2026-2027.
- Offering associations to experts and researchers, such as Early Career and Non-Tutorial Fellowships, and supporting junior teaching staff.
- Prioritising support for Fellows' research and career ambitions.
- Recruiting, developing, and retaining top staff through inclusive recruitment, a supportive work environment, welfare provision, professional development, and workplace benefits.
- Embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in all areas, respecting the rights and dignity of all staff and students, improving accessibility of buildings and grounds, and upholding Freedom of Speech and Prevent legislation within a framework of robust civility.

ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Our position within the University, the local Oxford community, and the wider world should not be taken for granted. We must remain relevant and actively contribute to the various communities we are connected to.

We must leverage our constituent membership of the University of Oxford to build networks and connections that help disseminate knowledge and bring wider benefits to local communities and beyond: A true marriage of “Town and Gown.”


We plan to achieve these aims by:

- Developing new partnerships and programmes to enhance students’ academic, personal and professional skills and support successful lives and careers beyond Oxford.
- Delivering a communications strategy that will enhance the College’s academic reputation and attract students, research partners, collaborators and funders.
- Building on the reputation and networks formed through our world-class music facilities in the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building (JdP), and developing the potential to further multi-disciplinary academic collaboration with music and the performing arts.
- Raising our profile among local communities by encouraging participation in public events, promoting our conferencing facilities, and continuing initiatives for knowledge exchange and engagement.

SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES

There is an ever-growing need to incorporate sustainable principles into all College activities to ensure the longevity of the world-class education we provide and to enhance our reputation as a responsible, forward-thinking institution.

Specifically, we must address our financial sustainability by securing a stable financial position, our environmental sustainability as we aim for net zero carbon emissions and net biodiversity gain by 2035, and our governance by adopting best practices in alignment with the Charity Governance Code.



We plan to achieve these aims by:

- Delivering a financial plan that will begin to generate sustainable net operational surpluses from the 2027-2028 academic year.
- Taking a strategic approach to our alumnae engagement activities, and launching a comprehensive fundraising campaign aligned with the College’s and University’s strategic vision.
- Undertaking a comprehensive governance review and ensuring processes are established to monitor and comply with changing regulations and practice.
- Striving for environmental sustainability by launching an ambitious strategy backed by efforts to secure funding from donations, grants, and partnerships, and work with supply chains to reduce emissions economically.

EXTRAORDINARY BY DESIGN.



At St Hilda's, we pride ourselves on nurturing extraordinary individuals, each contributing to the world in unique and impactful ways. Whether they gain public recognition or work tirelessly behind the scenes, our members embody a spirit of innovation and dedication. We envision a College where achievement is celebrated, inspiring current students through the remarkable legacies of their predecessors. From pioneering researchers to unsung heroes, St Hilda's should foster an environment where ambition thrives, and every individual's potential is realised.

This culture of recognition and inspiration will ensure that our community continues to grow. More than this, we would like our former students to be able to give back, creating a circular economy of success. Whether through financial contributions or offering expertise and mentorship, we will foster an environment where alumnae can engage with current students to ensure that the cycle of achievement and inspiration perpetuates.





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