

# Pembroke College

## Alternative Prospectus



# Hello!

This booklet has been put together by Pembroke students and aims to give you an idea of what living and studying here is like from the people who are doing just that.



## What will you find here?

Pembroke and the JP

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College Life

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If you've decided that you want to apply to Cambridge (and even if you're still a little unsure!), it might be worth spending some time thinking about which College you want to apply to. It may seem like a big decision, but it's nothing to worry about. All the Colleges offer excellent teaching and facilities and practically everyone is happy with the College they end up at. We absolutely love Pembroke and we hope this prospectus will give you an insight into our lives here and encourage you to choose us - because, honestly, we're pretty great.



# Pembroke and the JP

Pembroke is widely renowned in Cambridge for being an incredibly friendly College – many people from other Colleges admit that Pembroke is their second favourite! Students come from all backgrounds and become part of a supportive, tight-knit community for our three (or more) years here. We live, eat, study and socialise with each other, quickly becoming close friends with people from a variety of subjects and year groups. Regardless of who you are and where you come from, Pembroke feels like home as soon as you move in.

We're situated right in the centre of town, a 10-minute walk from everything you could want – shops, bars, cafes, restaurants, clubs as well as most of the departments – and yet we somehow manage to avoid the huge crowds of tourists that often clog Cambridge.

Founded on Christmas Eve in 1347, Pembroke is one of the oldest colleges and has buildings that span centuries, from Old Court (which includes a chapel designed by Sir Christopher Wren, who went on to design St. Paul's Cathedral in London!) to Foundress Court (1997), a modern building with student accommodation and facilities such as a gym and a computer room.

Every undergraduate student automatically becomes a member of the student body that we call the Junior Parlour. The JPC (Junior Parlour Committee) is a group of about twenty elected students, who act as representatives of everyone in the JP, presenting their views to College officials, organising events, and promoting welfare (a valuable complement to the College's Tutors and the College nurse). Each of the members of the JPC occupies a position and has certain roles and responsibilities in College.





# Studying



There's no denying that we all have a lot of work to do here, and it can sometimes seem a bit daunting when you arrive in Cambridge for your first term, but at the same time it's an exciting opportunity to learn about the subject you love with world-leading experts. Pembroke is the ideal place to study and will ensure you get the best experience possible while you're here. Lectures, seminars and practicals (for scientists) are organised by the department and given there, not at College.



Pembroke is across the road from the main science lecture sites in town, such as the Downing Site, New Museums Site. The main site for Arts subjects, the Sidgwick Site, is only a ten-minute walk, and the West Cambridge Site is a 15-minute cycle away. This means you don't have to get out of bed too early even for 9am lectures, and you can pop back to College during gaps in your timetable.



The College is responsible for organising your supervisions. These are hour-long sessions with an expert in your subject where you discuss lectures, essays you've written, solutions to problem sheets and various other materials to ensure that you understand what you're being taught.

They usually take place in College and you'll be in small groups, usually of 2-3 people, which means the supervisor can dedicate plenty of time to each person. Depending on your subject, you'll have between one and five supervisions a week.

Pembroke will also assign you a Director of Studies (DoS) when you arrive. Your DoS is usually a Fellow (lecturer) in your subject and is responsible for guiding you through your course. You meet with your DoS twice a term, so you'll get to know each other - and they're only an email away if you have any problems with your work.

If you don't want to do your work in your room, there are many places in College for you to study. Our beautiful library has around 37,000 books and plenty of space for you to use. If it doesn't have the book you're looking for, you can request it and the librarian will try to buy it in for you. In addition to that, each student is entitled to a book grant so you can get your own textbooks if you want to. The library is open 16 hours a day, but if you're a night owl then there's also the computer suite, which is open 24 hours a day and provides a more relaxed environment. There's also Café Pembroke if you fancy working with a cup of tea and a slice of cake. If you want to revise out of college, most of the departments have their own libraries and there are plenty of cafes around. During exams, a few other rooms in College also open up as study spaces so you don't get bored of sitting in the same place all the time! Finally, during summer when the sun comes out, many Pembroke students take to the grounds and sit around the gardens with their books and notes.



"Supervisions are such a great opportunity for me to ask any questions I have after my lectures, and the supervisors at Pembroke always go out of their way to help me."

Vikash, 2nd Year Engineer



# College Life

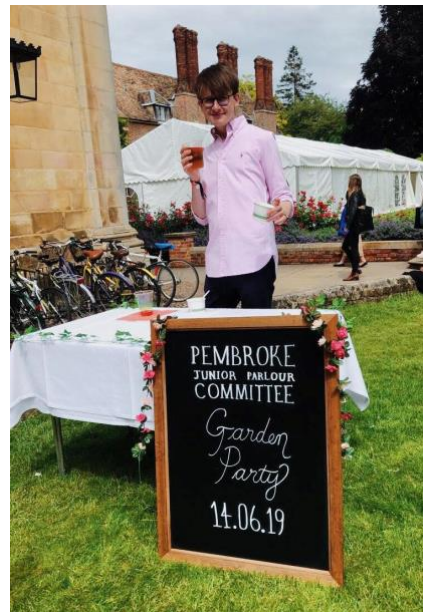
Your College is where you live for the duration of your degree,  
and there's so much more to do here than just work;  
this is where you'll eat, sleep and socialise!

## Social

Our reputation for friendliness is well deserved. From the moment you arrive here, we do everything we can to help you meet people and get involved in College life. You'll be given a College family, with 'parents' from the years above to help guide you through the transition and 'siblings' from your year to make sure you know people from Day One. Many people remain very close friends with their College families throughout their time here. When you reach second year, you can sign up to have kids of your own!

The hub of social life in College is the JP (the Junior Parlour) – a café by day and bar by night. With its squishy sofas and a pool table, the JP offers a perfect place to relax and catch up with friends in the evening. If you're in the mood for a night out, there are always people in the JP heading into town – we're conveniently located a short walk from Cambridge's clubs! The JP is host to various events throughout term, such as pub quizzes and karaoke nights. It's also a fab place for a quieter night in, with an adjacent TV room, complete with games consoles!

"My college family were the first people I met at Pembroke and they provided a most friendly welcome" - Valentin, 1st Year Maths







Pembroke May Ball 2019, “Ember”

The ultimate College party, however, is the bi-termly BOP. This is held in the JP at the start and end of each term and attracts almost all Pembroke students. BOP is a themed fancy-dress party, with recent themes including “Fiesta Beach Party”, “Let’s Get Noughty” and “Acceptable in the 80s”.

Pembroke also hosts a May Ball or June Event during May Week, which happens once exams are over (despite the name – in June). From 9pm until 6am, the Pembroke grounds are turned into a playground of fairground events, food stalls, cocktails, live music, comedy, and loads of other attractions all based around a theme, for example in 2018 it’s “Ember” – and was Cambridge’s most sustainable May Ball! Pembroke’s Balls consistently get excellent reviews and are the highlight of the year’s social events.

“Pembroke May Ball is described as the most atmospheric of all balls, because everyone is so friendly that you might be dancing with your best friend, College parents, supervisor or that person whose name you never remember - and you will still be having the best night of your life!”  
 - Sarah, 3rd Year English



## Food (very important!)

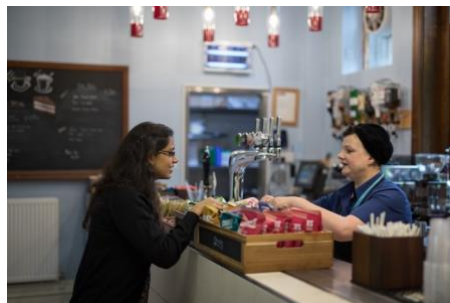
Everyone from other colleges knows that food at Pembroke is amongst the best in Cambridge, and we frequently play host to friends who want to come and try it out.



On a day-to-day basis, most people use a mixture of kitchens, 'trough' and Café Pembroke to feed themselves. College kitchens, more commonly known as Gyp Rooms (no one is really sure why), are basic and are suitable for preparing light snacks and simple meals. Most kitchens have a microwave, hotplates, a fridge and a freezer. Some people, depending on where the accommodation is, also have an oven. Gyps are usually shared between four or five students, making them good social spaces.



Trough, our affectionate name for the College canteen, serves breakfast, lunch and dinner on weekdays and brunch and dinner at the weekend – all in our Harry Potter-esque hall. The menu is published online every day (have a look on the college website for the link!) and there are always multiple options, including vegetarian dishes, pasta and a salad bar.



“With our University cards, we get big discounts on a range of global and local foods in the canteen. A highlight is the legendary brunch served on weekend mornings, which people from Colleges far and wide come to experience” - Georgie, 3rd Year Vet



Our brunch is the stuff of Cambridge legend, with everything you could possibly want on a Saturday or Sunday morning: sausages, bacon, fried egg, scrambled egg, mushrooms, tomatoes and loads more, plus waffles and pancakes with various sauces! To top it all off, everything served in trough is cheap and affordable (we get a student discount!).



If you fancy a simple lunch, drink or snack during the day, Café Pembroke (conveniently located in the JP) serves various food items, such as paninis, pizzas and salads, along with a variety of hot and cold drinks. The staff are super-friendly and learn everyone's names within a couple of weeks of them arriving – they'll soon know your favourite order better than you do!



If you have a special occasion, such as a birthday, or just fancy something special for dinner, Pembroke also has 'formals' every night of the week. These are waiter-served three- or four-course meals cooked by our fantastic chef. They are incredible value for money and a great way to have a nice meal with friends at a fraction of what it would cost you at a restaurant (just remember to wear your gown and bring your own bottle if you want to have some wine with dinner).



**"Pembroke Formal is arguably the best formal in Cambridge, and really good value!"**

- Will, 3rd Year HSPS

## Accommodation

Pembroke provides accommodation for undergraduates during all three or four years of their course. This includes rooms within the College grounds, and rooms in College-owned houses surrounding Pembroke. First years are guaranteed accommodation on the College site in one of the multiple buildings – once your place is confirmed, you receive an email asking your preference of whether you'd like an older or newer-style room. The oldest buildings, Old Court and Red Buildings, have the lowest rent due to their age, but offer gorgeous views of the chapel and library. New Court and Orchard Building have amazing views of the College grounds, with light, spacious rooms.

There are also more than forty rooms for freshers in Foundress Court, our newest building (1997), which offers the most modern rooms and facilities, and has the highest rent to reflect this. However, regardless of where you live, Pembroke has fantastic value accommodation.

In second year, a ballot system is in place to decide the order in which rooms are chosen. You can ballot in groups of up to four so that you end up living with your friends.

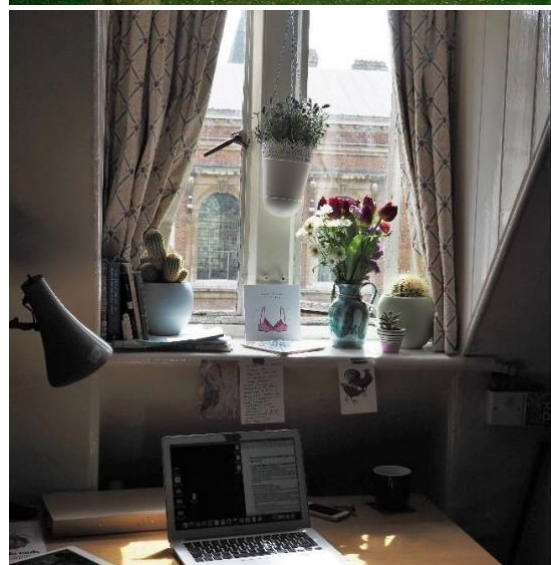
“Rooms in College and College owned houses vary in size from decent to absolutely massive so you're never going to be stuck with a horrible room!” - Seren, 3rd Year Natural Sciences



Second years often live in College-owned houses (called “Hostels”) with between 2 and 33 rooms, but you can still live in College if there’s space. All hostels are no more than a 20-minute walk from college (and most much closer!). People who get the highest exam results at the end of first year are offered the larger “Scholars’ Rooms”, some of which have their own sitting room! In third year, the ballot is reversed so that people who chose last in second year get to choose first.

A block of bathrooms is shared between around eight students, and you rarely have to wait for the showers because everyone runs on different schedules. Pembroke has a few ensuite rooms (if required), but many have wash basins. There are laundry facilities in College and many of the hostels. The College also employs ‘bedders’ – cleaners who can Hoover your room at an agreed time, empty your bins, and clean your bath- room and kitchen – so you don’t have to worry about any of that.

“The bedders are absolute life savers, and are always up for a friendly chat in the mornings.” - Jon, 2nd Year Historian





# Rooms and Facilities



## Porters Lodge

Located at the entrance of the college. The porters are incredibly friendly - they can help you with directions, answer questions (or direct you to someone who can help), and are the go-to people in emergencies, or if you need support or a chat. They also manage all the post and pigeon holes.



## Social Spaces

Apart from the JP and café Pembroke, there are other rooms which can be used by students after booking, such as the New Common Room, Old Cellars or the TV room.



## Gym

In Foundress building there is a small but fully-equipped gym, free for all undergraduate students (though you need to go through an 'induction' first to make sure you use the equipment safely) and open 24 hours a day, every day.

## Music Room

Available for anyone who wants to practice playing their instrument or singing.

## New Cellars

A great performance space – the place to go if you want to see a play, comedy night or poetry event. Yoga and Zumba classes also happen here.



## Computer Room

Open all the time, provides another study space with loads of computers to use, and a printer and photocopier.

# Societies

## Sports

The sports scene at Pembroke is thriving, and you're sure to be able to find something fun to get involved in, whether you're a beginner or a pro. There are teams for rugby, women's and men's football, badminton, mixed netball, men's and women's hockey, cricket, and loads more. There are also popular sporting events scattered through the year, including "The Pembroke Mile", which is a fun run to raise money for charity, and includes a free brunch for participants!

The Pembroke sports pitches are a 10-minute cycle from College, so you'll never have to go far for training or matches.

Rowing is amazingly popular throughout Cambridge, for both undergraduates and graduate students, and Pembroke is no exception. The Pembroke boathouse is also a 10-minute cycle from College. There are usually four men's and four women's boats, meaning that if you're a novice or a pro, or even if you fancy coxing, there's an opportunity for you at the boathouse.

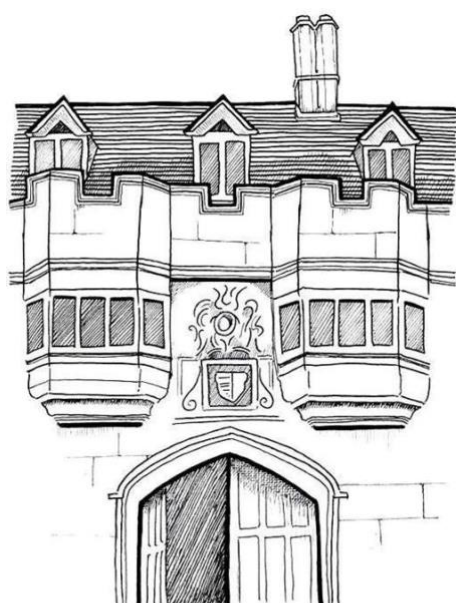
"There are so many different sports clubs at Pembroke and there's loads of opportunities to try something new. I started playing rugby here and now I'm on the university team." - Ciara, 3rd PBS



## Arts



Budding thespians can follow in the footsteps of Eric Idle, Naomi Harris and Tom Hiddleston by joining the Pembroke Players, who regularly stage plays, from Shakespeare to new student writing, as well as hosting stand-up comedy nights, which are called “Smokers”. Every summer, the Players take a Shakespeare play on tour around Japan! Even those students with little (or no!) acting talent can take part in the Pembroke Freshers’ Panto, a fun end to your first term.



# PEMBROKE STREET

Writers can contribute to “Pembroke Street”, our termly College magazine that showcases the talent of our students. College also regularly organises writing masterclasses and holds writing competitions with cash prizes.

We have a Chapel Choir, which performs every Sunday at evensong in the College’s chapel and on international tours in the summer. Alternatively, “The Lovely Choir” or “AcaPembroke” offer a more relaxed environment for singers, regardless of previous experience. There are also plenty of musical groups to get involved in, including Pembroke College Musical Society (PCMS), which organises weekly shows in College.







## Everything Else



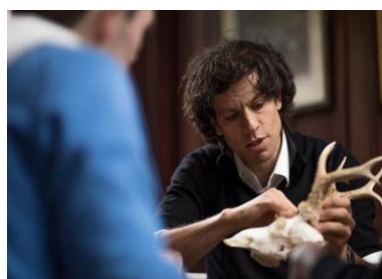
Feeling intellectual? Pembroke's very own "Stokes Society", named after Sir George Gabriel Stokes, former Master of the College, is one of the largest student-run science societies in Cambridge and hosts weekly talks on a range of interesting topics.

There are loads of other societies, including Pembroke Collage Society, where people from all years get together for some "chilled vibes" and a Pie Society where you can learn how to make - and eat - delicious pies!

Plus, there are loads of volunteering opportunities. Pembroke hosts charity events and many students volunteer their time to a variety of good causes, such as Pembroke House, a charity Pembroke student set up in London over 100 years ago.



You can also get involved in chapel life (the chapel is open to all faiths), and there are dozens of other discussion and interest groups, societies and committees around College (too many to name them all here!) Alternatively, you can stand for election to the JPC, or help the Access Team as 'Pembassador' at open days and other events.



And if you find you're interested in something for which there isn't already a group, then the College also encourages students to set up their own societies which the JPC can help with funding for. If you're interested in getting involved in something at a university level then there are too many to name here - you can see the full list of Cambridge societies at [www.societies.cam.ac.uk](http://www.societies.cam.ac.uk)

# Welfare in College

Upon arrival at Pembroke, students are assigned a Tutor whom they meet with twice a term. Tutors are the go-to figures for any non-academic problems you might have, but there is also Pembroke's College Nurse who has regular visiting hours for any health concerns, or just for a chat. We also have a College Counsellor, the University Counselling Service, and a dedicated Student Welfare Team, made up of undergraduates from all years. Each member has a unique role:

**The Welfare Officer** is always available to chat to. They can give advice on anything, from work difficulties to illness and sexual health. They can also deal with College officials on your behalf, and organise welfare events like picnics, dog therapy, chilled study sessions and massages! [jp-welfare@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-welfare@pem.cam.ac.uk)

**The Women's Officer** is available to chat to female and non-binary students about women-specific issues. They provide support, organise events regarding gender and equality, and represents women's views within the College and university-wide. [jp-womens@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-womens@pem.cam.ac.uk)

**The Men's Officer** is available to speak to anyone about issues specific to men and non-binary students, and is a champion of men's health awareness. [jp-mens@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-mens@pem.cam.ac.uk)

**The LGBTQ+ Officer** looks after all things related to sexuality and gender. If you have any worries or questions about your sexuality and/or gender, they can help. They also run all sorts of LGBTQ+ social events in College. [jp-lgbt@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-lgbt@pem.cam.ac.uk)

**The International Officer** looks out for the welfare of international students, and helps people adjust to living in the UK. [jp-international@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-international@pem.cam.ac.uk)

**The Ethnic Minorities Officer** looks out for the welfare of ethnic minorities in College, and deals with any and all related issues. [jp-ethmin@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-ethmin@pem.cam.ac.uk)

**The Disabled Students Officer** provides support for those with any kind of health problem, physical or mental impairment, or learning difficulty. They can help you with talking to your Tutor and supervisors about getting the support you need, learning to handle your condition(s) in a new environment, and applying for Disabled Students' Allowance. [jp-disabilities@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-disabilities@pem.cam.ac.uk)

# Meet some of the JPC!



The JPC are Pembroke's elected undergraduate student body.

President – Milly

Vice President – Tash

Welfare Officer – Steph

Men's and Non-Binary Welfare – Caleb

Women's and Non-Binary Welfare – Victoria

Ethnic Minorities Officer – Maya

LGBTQ+ Officer – Daisy

Disabled Students Officer – Sophie J

International Students Officer – Tele

Entertainments Officers – Akshar and Caspar

Women's Officer – Tilly

Charities Officer – Laetitia

Sports Officer – Jamie R

Food Officer – Sophie L

Accommodation Officer – Brendan

JP and Bar Officer – Amanda

IT Officer – Jamie H

Treasurer – Lily

Access Officers – Nicole and Elise

Green Officer – Eliza



Go to our website to learn more!

[www.pemjp.soc.srcf.net](http://www.pemjp.soc.srcf.net)



# Finance

## Living Costs

As mentioned above, Pembroke offers cheap accommodation in Cambridge. Plus, you only pay rent for nine or ten weeks a term. You don't have to pay rent throughout the holidays when you're not here, which really saves you money. Electricity and Wi-Fi are also included in your rent.

Other costs, such as the Kitchen Facilities Charge (KFC for short - this is charged by most Colleges and means the prices of food in "trough" are lower than they would otherwise be) or printing charges are added onto College bills each term.

It's important to budget carefully for everything you'll need - things such as laundry, nights out, and essentials from the supermarket like tea and coffee. You may also need to spend money on course-related costs, such as buying a lab coat, but this will vary depending on the subject and there are often bursaries or grants available.

There are lots of things about Cambridge that'll help save some money during your time here. For example, unlike in larger cities, everything in Cambridge is accessible by foot or bike so you don't need to spend money on transport. Being at Pembroke makes this even easier - the central location means you'll rarely need to go further than a 10-minute cycle! Also, because of the abundance of libraries, there is rarely any need to buy a textbook for your course.

"Almost everyone in Cambridge has a bike and cycles everywhere, and Pembroke is basically right in the centre, so I haven't ever had to get a bus."

- Maia, 1st Year English



## Loans and Grants

Undergraduate tuition fees at Cambridge for EU and International students can be found on the University website.

Government loans cover this for all UK students and may also cover a certain amount of your living costs, depending on household income. More information about the money you're entitled to can be found on the Student Finance website. You won't have to pay back any of these loans until after you graduate, and until you're earning over the repayment threshold.

In addition, Pembroke and the University of Cambridge both offer very generous grants, dependent on your household income. Funding is also available for extra-curricular activities such as language studies or course-related travel, and Pembroke offers monetary prizes for all sorts of competitions or academic achievements. For information on finance, visit <https://www.pem.cam.ac.uk/study-here/undergraduate/costs-and-financial-support>

“There are loads of grants and bursaries available at Pembroke to help cover the cost of living, and there are also some available centrally from the university, so money is rarely an issue here.”

- Adam, 3rd Year Medic



# Applying



The application process can seem a bit confusing at first. You can find out more information on the university website and in the prospectus, but here's a short outline:

**UCAS form** - it is important to remember that the deadline is 15th October, so start early to have plenty of time for writing your personal statement.

**SAQ** - don't be surprised that soon after you send off your UCAS form you'll be asked to fill out another one - the Supplementary Application Questionnaire. This is much shorter and won't take much time, but will require you to provide some more information.

*Tip: the photo you submit for the SAQ will be used on your University Card if you get in - so choose one that you like!*



**Written Assessment** - this part of the process is often changing, so look on the university website for the most up to date information. You may need to take an assessment before the interview (make sure you've checked deadlines and are registered if so!), or at the interview, depending on your course. Sometimes you may also be asked to submit one of your school essays.



**Interview** - it is much less stressful than it might seem! The interviewers are all really nice and not trying to 'trick' you - they're usually the supervisors for the given subject so the interview will resemble a supervision. Remember that it's not about getting the 'right' answer (as often there isn't just one!) but rather showing how you think and approach new scenarios.



# More Information

If you're applying from outside of the EU\*, English is not your first language, or you have some unusual circumstances, the details of applications may be a bit different. You may be asked to provide a transcript, have an earlier deadline, or pass an IELTS test - so please check the university website.

If you have questions that aren't answered in this booklet, you can email [jp-access@pem.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jp-access@pem.cam.ac.uk). Our current student Access Officers will get back to you as soon as they can.

Further information about Pembroke can be found on the official College website: [www.pem.cam.ac.uk](http://www.pem.cam.ac.uk) (where you can also find the official Pembroke prospectus), as well as the website of the Junior Parlour Committee: [www.pemjp.soc.srcf.net/freshers](http://www.pemjp.soc.srcf.net/freshers).

More information about applying, studying, and life in Cambridge can also be found on the official Cambridge University website: [www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk).

CUSU (Cambridge University Students' Union) have their own alternative prospectus on all the Colleges and courses, available online at [www.applytocambridge.com](http://www.applytocambridge.com) and more information (for example about societies) at [www.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk).



# Pembroke Dictionary

Pembroke (and Cambridge in general) has some strange terms that you may come across, so we've translated some of them for you here.

**ADC** - Amateur Dramatics Club (can refer to both the society and their theatre)

**Ballot** - the system by which rooms are allocated after first year

**Bedder** - lovely person who empties your bin and hovers your room

**Blue** - a sporting achievement awarded to someone who has competed against Oxford in a sport at university level

**Boatie** - someone who rows

**Bop** - twice-termly College fancy dress party

**Bumps** - an inter-collegiate rowing competition

**Cantab** - anyone who is a student at, or graduate of, the University of Cambridge

**Cuppers** - inter-collegiate competitions in various sports

**CUSU** - Cambridge University Students' Union

**DoS** - Director of Studies

**Easter term** - third term

**Ents** - entertainments

**Fellow** - an academic at a College

**Gyp** - College kitchen, mainly used for preparing light snacks

**Hostel** - a house owned by College and occupied by students. A number of Pembroke students choose to move out of College and into a hostel in their second or third year.

**JP** - Junior Parlour, the social hub of College for undergraduates

**Lent term** - second term

**Matriculation** - the process by which you become a member of the university

**May Week** - an amazing and quite surreal week of sunshine, garden parties, balls and fun to celebrate the end of exams and the end of the academic year. Bizarrely, it occurs in June.

**Michaelmas term** - first term

**Plodge** - Porters' Lodge

**Squash** - an event at which societies recruit new members

**Thesp** - someone involved in theatre

**Tripes** - the Cambridge exams you need to take to get a degree

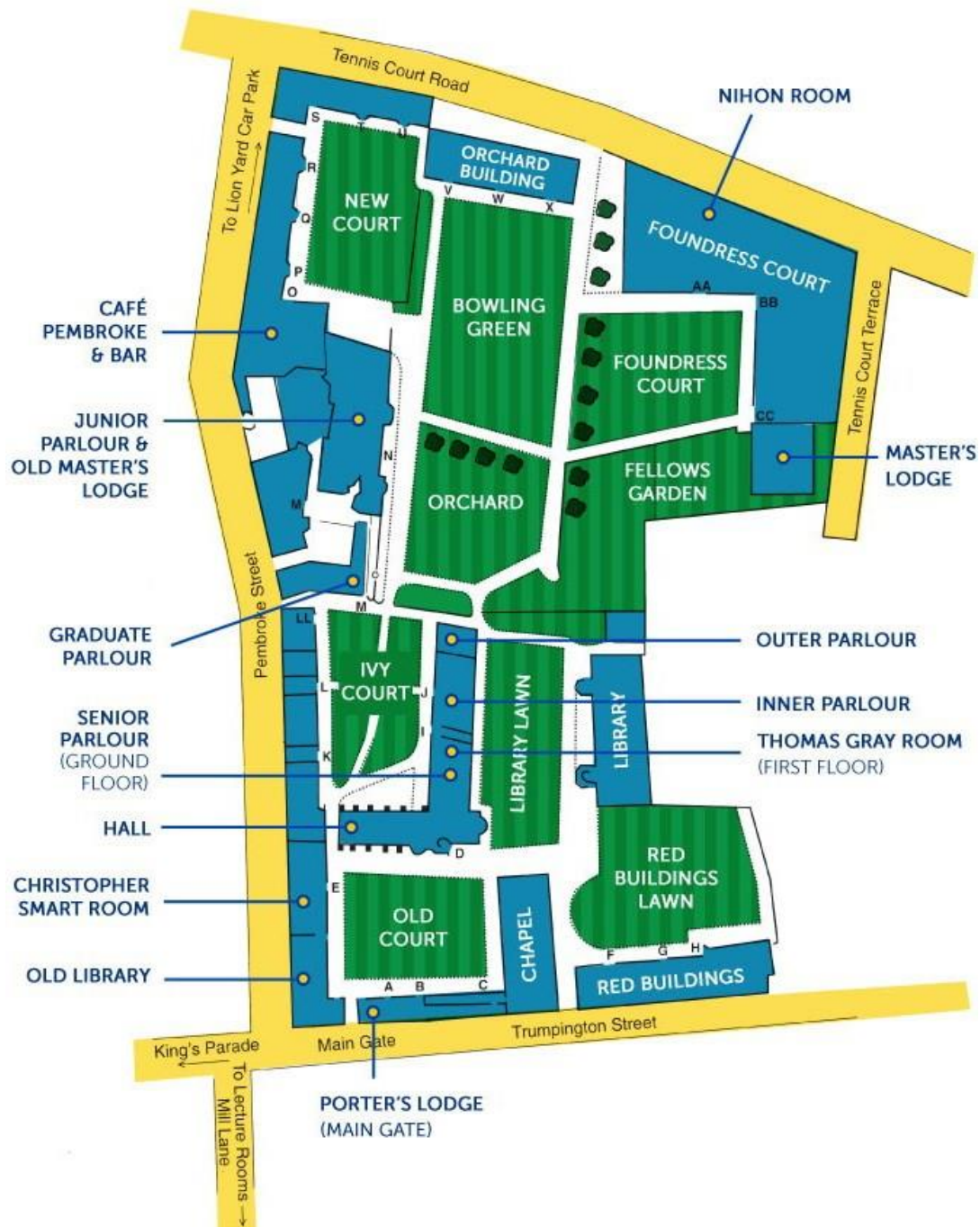
**Trough** - the College canteen

**Tutor** - a senior member of College assigned to each undergraduate to look after their pastoral care

**UL** - the University Library

**Valencian** - member of Pembroke College

# Map of the College





## Contact

### Address

Pembroke College  
Trumpington Street  
Cambridge  
CB2 1RF

### Twitter

@PemCamOutreach

### Instagram

@pemcamoutreach

### Admissions Office

01223 338154  
adm@pem.cam.ac.uk

### JPC Access Email

jp-access@pem.cam.ac.uk

### JPC Instagram

@pembroke.jpc

