



WADHAM  
COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

# DONOR REPORT

2023

How your support  
is changing lives

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The Donor List will be included in the Gazette 2023

## Centuries of generosity 3

In the four centuries since its foundation, Wadham College has experienced many turbulent and challenging times. The fact that we continue to thrive as an institution is testament to our strong identity and our adaptability. Innovation, excellence, and openness are three qualities that make Wadham ‘Wadham’, but they are also the very qualities that allow us to confront and adapt to the challenges we face. There is no doubt that we have entered another difficult period – the two years since I took over as Warden have seen the tail-end of the pandemic, intensifying conflicts across the globe, and the increasingly present impact of climate change. All of these continue to have profound effects on our College community.

One of the things I appreciate most about my role is that, against this sobering backdrop, it is inspirational to witness the wealth of learning, creativity and research that comprises the daily fabric of life at Wadham. As AI and misinformation become more sophisticated and widespread, the tutorial system – the unique, intellectual backbone of the Oxford teaching model – will become more important than ever. We need to educate graduates with the intellectual skills, resourcefulness and rigour required across the academic disciplines to develop innovative solutions to our most pressing challenges. It is an expensive educational model but one whose dividends surpass the financial costs in many critical ways. I take great comfort from my meetings with resourceful and curious students and from conversations with Fellows who are advancing new thinking and pioneering research outcomes; Wadham continues to nurture the fresh ideas and imaginative solutions required in troubled times.

It also remains a privilege to meet alumni both in the UK and abroad, and so many of you emphasise the significance of the Wadham tutorial experience.

Your warmth and generosity, as this booklet so clearly shows, enable us to continue to provide a beautiful, inspiring environment in which to educate and be educated. Your support at all levels is critical in equipping the next generation of bright, young minds from all backgrounds with the values, skills and intellect to take on and help find solutions to the unprecedented challenges ahead. Despite cautious management of our relatively modest endowment, we simply could not deliver this education without your generosity. Every donation makes a difference, and I am grateful for the trust you place in the College with your gift.

On behalf of all our Fellows and students here, I want to express my most sincere thanks for the role you play in supporting Wadham’s people.

**Robert Hannigan**  
Warden

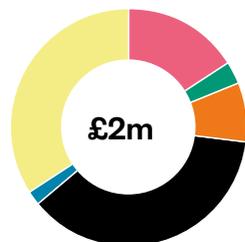


# Your support in numbers 2022–23

- 20% of alumni made a gift
- £689k raised for 'greatest need' for the Wadham Priorities Fund
- £1.4m donated from 7 legacies
- 416 alumni have pledged a gift in their wills as members of the 1610 Society
- 1,764 individuals gave a gift to Wadham
- 1,302 individuals gave a recurring gift to the College

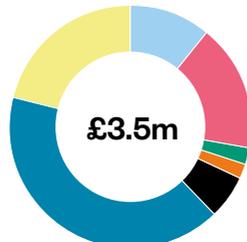
## Financial Year 2022–23

New funds raised, 2022–23



£41.6k  
£165.6k  
£55k  
£315.4k  
£689k  
£9.6k  
£755.6k

Distribution of cash received, 2022–23



£1.4m  
£73k  
£67k  
£598k  
£723k  
£396k  
£222k

- Student Support
- Graduate Scholarships
- Buildings and Facilities
- Access and Outreach
- Wadham Priorities Fund
- Academic Posts
- Other

## Final Campaign Total (2012–2023)

# £51.3m



# Thanks to you

It is a privilege to report on yet another year of generous support from alumni and friends of the College. The impact of your kindness manifests itself in myriad ways, from the extensive support for thousands of Access pupils to the hardship and on-course grants for our students, to our graduate scholarships and the inspirational new buildings in the Back Quad. We are building on centuries of generosity, and we are grateful to every one of you for giving back to Wadham at a time when so many are facing personal challenges too.

As our ambitious Access to Excellence campaign concluded last year with the official opening of the Back Quad buildings, we were delighted that the funds raised surpassed the £50m mark. This past year, 1,764 alumni and friends donated to the College, representing a participation rate of 20% – one of the highest across Oxford. Philanthropic contributions totalled more than £3.5m (cash received) and new gifts and pledges came to over £2m. The Wadham Priorities Fund received a generous £689k this year in unrestricted donations, and this vital income stream continues to support areas of greatest need – year on year. The March 2023 Giving Day was a community success, with 354 of you giving £156k. The 1610 Society, established to recognise donors who leave a bequest to the College in their will, continues to thrive and Wadham was fortunate to receive £1.4m in legacies this past year.

On the following pages, we reflect on how your exceptional generosity continues to support all aspects of College life and activity – from applications through to graduate scholarships. We invite you to look at the different phases

of access support; from primary school support to the growing summer school offering – to which, thanks to the generosity of an individual donor, we were able to add a Climate Change Summer School to the more established Classics Summer School and Modern Languages Summer School.

We also look at the profound and lasting impact that legacies can have on the College as they help us to secure key aspects of the institution for future generations. We see how one Fellow has endowed an annual Master's scholarship in perpetuity, along with hardship support for students, and we talk to Diana Darke about her reasons for joining the thriving 1610 Society.

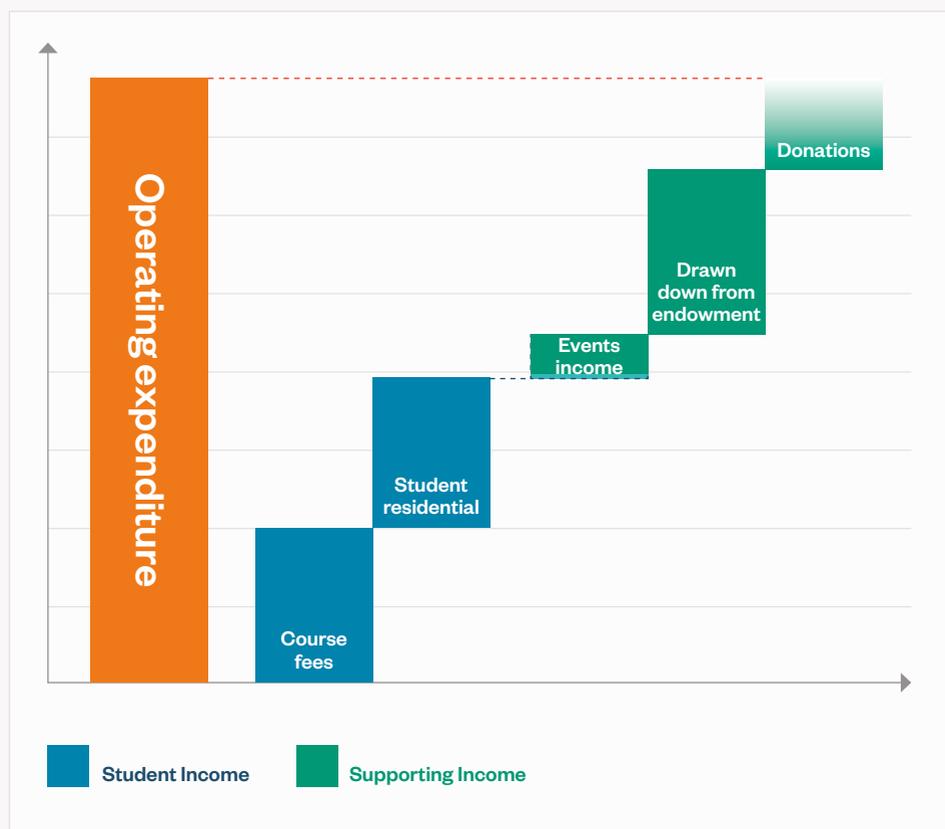
This report comes with all our warmest thanks for the role you all play in supporting the College and its people.

**Julie Christiane Hage**  
Fellow and Development Director



# Why do we need to fundraise each year?

The income the College receives from student tuition fees covers little more than half of the costs needed to deliver an Oxford degree. This leaves Wadham with a significant structural financial deficit each year. We have a relatively modest endowment and must ensure that we preserve it for future generations by drawing down sustainable amounts each year.



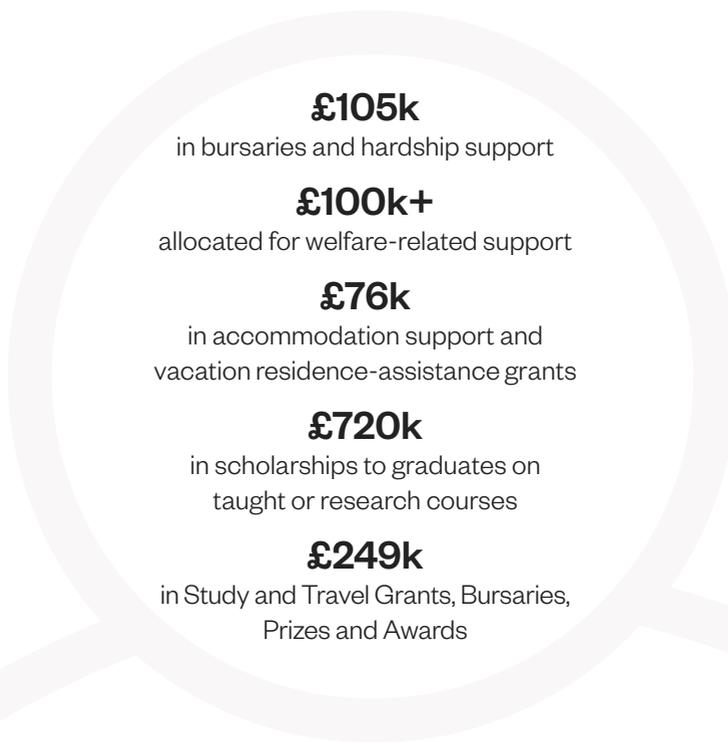
# Your support – making a genuine difference

The tutorial system is in an educational league of its own – the intellectual rigour and training, the close academic support and the confidence these develop, benefit students' academic lives and career prospects significantly. Understandably, the cost of this style of education, in addition to the subsidised accommodation costs for each Wadham undergraduate student, exceeds course fees and charges, leaving the College with a significant structural financial deficit each year.

The cost of living crisis continues to put additional financial pressures on both our students and the College. Alumni will appreciate the intense, academic demands of an Oxford education and that students who need to find part-time work to support themselves financially are at an academic disadvantage. As a community we try to ensure that we can support any student facing financial

hardship. We are also investing funds to make our beautiful, historic buildings more energy efficient, which is costly but will make environmental and financial sense in the long-term. For this reason we are incredibly grateful to our community of alumni and friends

around the world who support us annually with gifts small, medium and large. Without your generosity we simply could not educate the best and brightest students using the same tutorial model, and in the same inspiring and stimulating environment, that were available to you during your time at Wadham.



# Widening Access

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The achievements of Wadham's widening access and participation programme have their roots in our Access team and others in College who are involved – but without its network of partners and alumni support, it could not succeed.

Wadham has the most link areas and the most extensive widening access programme of any Oxford college. It is intrinsic to our ethos of ensuring that the brightest students, whatever their background, can achieve the best education available. Having the most academically gifted students apply to Wadham naturally benefits the College (and even for those who don't come to Wadham, raising their aspirations is something we can be proud of having influenced early in their journey).

For many students from under-represented backgrounds in our 11 local authority link areas, Wadham's work with their teachers and schools is their first point of contact with Oxford. Our programme establishes those connections early and aims to sustain that contact and support throughout their secondary school and college journeys. For those who make it to Wadham and Oxford, support continues through their undergraduate degrees, creating a lifecycle approach that delivers transformative results.

Throughout each stage of this journey, we work in partnership with University departments and colleges, schools, charities and corporate partners to give these pupils the tools they need to make informed decisions about their futures. The pages ahead highlight some of these partnerships.

When we evaluate and review our programmes, it is clear the variety and strength of our partnerships enhance our work and ultimately provide students from less advantaged and underrepresented backgrounds with a richer experience to help equip and empower them on their academic journey. Alumni support makes all of this possible.



Year 6 pupils from the Building Bridges programme explore how we can replace precious metals with more abundant ones, alongside issues of mining and deforestation, in the Locke Access Centre.



‘It has been fantastic to work with our talented colleagues at Wadham to bring this project to life and to see the impact on the teachers and young people involved’

Saskia O’Sullivan, Project Lead for Building Bridges



## Making an early impression

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Wadham’s Access programme is built on sustained contact with school pupils – from primary through to their secondary and college journeys.

Perhaps it’s the Harry Potter style Hall that leaves the biggest impression on primary students who visit Wadham from our link regions – but for our Access mission, it is about getting young pupils to think about university as a place where learning is stimulating, exciting and most importantly, where they could thrive.

Aspiration visits for primary schools in our catchment area are less common than those for secondary and sixth form students and their teachers, but it is always inspiring to see pupils working competitively in teams, faced with a science challenge, or handling hissing cockroaches at the Natural History Museum down the road.

The excitement is palpable. Earlier this year, Wadham partnered in the Building Bridges programme, which supports primary school pupils’ transition to secondary school by boosting their academic motivation and engagement. Working with an array of University

departments, colleges and external partners, we welcomed nearly 600 pupils from primary schools in Gloucester to Wadham in July for a series of ‘Green Planet’ themed interactive lessons. These focused on pressing climate and energy issues, as well as food and medicines.

Saskia O’Sullivan, project lead from the Department of Chemistry, said, “It has been fantastic to work with our talented colleagues at Wadham to bring this project to life and to see the impact on the teachers and young people involved.”



Year 6 pupils and a teacher from the Building Bridges programme participate in a workshop that considers how climate change affects plant growth, Locke Access Centre, Wadham College.

**Building Bridges is a multi-year programme made possible by the Royal Society of Chemistry and a £150k gift from two Engineering alumni**

‘I have loved being involved in the Wadham Project. Sitting these students down and telling them that top universities want more people like them to apply, and seeing their confidence build from that moment onwards through the academic taster and other sessions, has been extremely rewarding.’

**Dr Sally McGrath, Biddenham International School and Sports College**



## Engaging pre-16 pupils The Wadham Project

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Most of Wadham’s widening access engagement and support is with GCSE and A-level students.

Our many partnerships are central to the success and impact of this work, all of which aim to create opportunities and raise aspirations for talented students from under-represented groups.

The Wadham Project raises the educational aspirations and attainment of pre-16 pupils in Bedford, Central Bedfordshire and Luton, engaging between 180-350

Year 10 and 11 students each year. Participants get academic taster sessions in university level arts and humanities, and STEM subjects; a STEM-careers focused day; a visit to the University; guidance around A-level choices and post-GCSE options; and sixth-form support including Open Day accommodation and personal statement mentoring.

Our Access team works closely with teachers in the boroughs to help design and deliver the programme, helping to maximise the impact. The project has greatly improved relationships with schools in the areas and led to benefits beyond the Wadham Project participants.

Dr Sally McGrath, from Biddenham International School and Sports College, is one of the teachers whose students have participated in the Wadham Project. She says, “I have loved being involved in the Wadham Project. Sitting these students down and telling them that top universities want more people like them to apply, and seeing their confidence build from that moment onwards through the academic taster and other sessions, has been extremely rewarding. They have loved getting together with students from other schools in the area and being exposed to subjects and teaching styles they wouldn’t normally have the chance to explore.”

**The Wadham Project supports 20 schools and costs c. £100k/annum to deliver. We are very grateful to the Connolly Foundation and alumnus Paul Beresford-Hill CBE (1972, BEd Educational Studies) for their ongoing support.**



# A Wadham taster for Y12 students

## Summer School

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Our five-day residential summer school programme remains a popular highlight in the calendar.

Dozens of Year 12 pupils from across the country compete to participate in one of three courses – Classics, Modern Languages and, new this year thanks to a generous donor, Climate Change. They are free to participants, with accommodation and meals provided by Wadham.

Students participate in seminars led by academic specialists across the disciplines, attend field trips, get support in how to make successful applications to highly selective universities, and get a fun taste of

student life over the five days. Tutors, members of the Academic Office and Student Ambassadors were all involved in making it a valuable experience.

The impact of the summer schools can be seen in the numbers: in the past two years, around two-thirds of those who attended a summer school course applied to Oxford – of those, around a half were offered a place.

Patrick Hill-Aspinall participated in the 2021-22 Modern Languages summer school and is now at Wadham. He says: "The summer school was what made me realise both how much I wanted to study at Oxford as well that doing so really was a tangible opportunity. It gave me a practical understanding of

what studying Modern Languages at university really entailed and, combined with the advice I received for personal statements, aptitude tests and interviews, I felt I left with the understanding, support and knowledge needed to apply to Oxford. It was an essential step in my journey to reading Modern Languages and Linguistics at Wadham, and I'm grateful to all those who have made it possible. I am looking forward to helping out with the summer school in the coming years."

**"We are grateful to John Howie (Botany, 1990), whose gift of £150k will fund the Climate Change summer school for 5 years."**



Year	Subject	Applied to Oxford	Applied to Wadham
2022	Classics	13 of 16 attendees	9 of 16 attendees
	Modern Languages	8 of 16 attendees	4 of 16 attendees
2023	Classics	14 of 17 attendees	none
	Modern Languages	13 of 16 attendees	7 of 16 attendees
	Climate Change	10 of 16 attendees	2 of 16 attendees

Photos: (top) a Modern Languages tutorial in the Back Quad and (bottom) Dr Joe Bull leads a discussion as part of the Climate Change sessions.



## Building career horizons

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Our ‘Think like a Lawyer’ and ‘Access to Banking’ programmes provide bespoke opportunities for talented pupils from our catchment areas.

It is thanks to the vision of two alumni that we’ve been able to run Wadham’s ‘Think like a Lawyer’ and ‘Access to Banking’ two-year programmes – funded by Linklaters and Barclays – which are providing unique opportunities for dozens of under-represented Year 12 students from Wadham’s link regions. What could be more affirming for a sixth form pupil considering a career in law or banking than to participate in Wadham’s ‘Think like a Lawyer’ or ‘Access to Banking’ programme? The 20 students considering law have an academic programme of eight sessions to develop skills and knowledge relevant to studying Law at Oxford; 20 hours of one-to-one A-level tutoring; visits to Wadham,

the Law faculty and Linklaters LLP London office, including career sessions; personal statement mentoring and university application support; a tutorial with Wadham law tutors, and a free laptop. The 20 students accepted on the two-year ‘Access to Banking’ programme enjoy a similar range of opportunities to hone their academic and career skills, as well as an Easter residential at Wadham and three interactive sessions with Barclays Investment Banking colleagues, including a ‘day in the life’ at Barclays’ Canary Wharf offices.

The programmes recruit high-achieving students from under-represented socio-economic backgrounds in our link regions, creating a diverse cohort compared with the relevant benchmarks in Oxford, the UK workforce and the large, London-based law and banking firms. Participants’ feedback confirms the experience to be inspirational, giving them the tools to pursue careers in these subjects.

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‘The residential has been the deciding factor – looking online Oxford didn’t seem real. But coming here, seeing the modules, the styles of teaching, the careers advice, the student support, I’m definitely going to apply.’

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# Undergraduate support

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Students, the College and alumni alike continue to face challenges caused by the soaring costs of basic commodities. Despite these pressures, our alumni remain remarkably generous in their support for our undergraduate students.

Though we still see the legacy of COVID-19, it is the subsequent cost-of-living crisis that is currently having more impact on our students and the College. Some DPhil students are working to complete research that was delayed during the pandemic, often with scholarships and grants that were time-limited.

Undergraduates on Maintenance Loans are seeing that the size of their loan has not increased to match rising living costs, and they face a widening gap between funding and spending needs. Many are taking on part-time work and getting support from family, where possible. When these are insufficient, many are seeking financial assistance from the College and the University.

For another year, undergraduate fees for UK students have remained at just over £9,000, which against rising costs is worth barely two-thirds of what it was when that fee was set nearly a decade ago.

Yet, over that period we have increased our welfare support for students, improved student facilities, and we continue to subsidise the cost of accommodation, catering and most other aspects of a student's experience while at Oxford. The way the College manages this has remained the same: we draw down on our relatively modest endowment and

we earn money from conferences and events. We are pleased to report that this year we saw a strong rebound in conference revenue, and this has helped towards offsetting rising costs in many areas.

We are increasingly reliant on the generosity of you, our community of donors, alumni and friends, whose support this past year was incredible. In our September 2022 telephone campaign, 250 alumni pledged £296k over a four-year period, with many of you renewing or upgrading your current support.

In May we ran our fourth Giving Day and again our community of alumni and friends displayed their tremendous generosity, with 354 people giving a total of £156k. In addition to donations, several alumni notable in their fields came to Wadham to speak to students about their college days and to share information about their careers. We are grateful to Simon Milner (History & Economics, 1985), Lucy Lake (Human Sciences, 1991 – pictured opposite with student coordinator, Yasmin Poole [MSt Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies, 2022]), Emma Graham-Harrison (Oriental Studies, 1992) and Laura Janes (Classics, 1996).



‘Wadham is making a progressive and significant investment, which demonstrates the importance the College places on student wellbeing.’

Sarah O’Brien, Student Welfare Lead

## Helping hands

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Student welfare and academic excellence go hand in hand, which is why Wadham puts an emphasis on supporting student wellbeing.

During the College’s last two telephone campaigns, a regular comment by many students to alumni was that the welfare support offered by the College was greatly appreciated and felt comparatively much more robust than that provided by other colleges. For a generation of students profoundly impacted by the pandemic, this fact was appreciated by many alumni, who felt that such provision embodied the community ideals that Wadham has long stood for.

Sarah O’Brien (pictured, opposite) started her role

as Student Welfare Lead at Wadham in 2022-23 and is proud of the level of support offered through her office, the Chaplain’s office, and services offered by the SU and MCR – in large part thanks to the generous support of alumni. “By creating this role, Wadham is making a progressive and significant investment, which demonstrates the importance the College places on student wellbeing.”

She says that demand is high. Mental health issues dominate, with the slow identification of a range of disabilities. There are significant gaps in provision for welfare support in the wider community and private counselling is not an option for most students. She says it is therefore very important that colleges are able to create a supportive environment.

The College’s network of welfare support is extensive – the SU has two welfare and women’s rooms allocated

to them; the SU and MCR each have Student Welfare Officers; Junior Deans are given training to support them in their roles; and there are the roles provided by Sarah, the Welfare Advisors, and the College Nurse.

“We shouldn’t underestimate the importance of this provision,” says Sarah. “This network enables us to act quickly – to respond and follow up when issues arise. There are many positive stories that result with this level of care in place, and that makes my work – our work – rewarding.”

“**In 2022-23, the College allocated over £100k in welfare-related support, and a £20k donation from a generous alumnus helped offset those costs.**”



# Graduate students

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Graduate degrees are an increasingly important means to advancing career opportunities across many professions. We aim to reduce the financial barriers that inhibit gifted students from undertaking a graduate degree by securing scholarship provisions across the disciplines.

You've completed a very successful undergraduate degree and you would like to embark on a graduate one next. You have the academic depth, appetite and stamina, and believe that a graduate degree would open career doors in the profession you are aspiring towards. For home students who've racked up tens of thousands of pounds in student loans to pay for their undergraduate years, a master's or doctoral degree will be prohibitively expensive if financial support from one's family isn't an option; and tuition fees and living expenses for exceptional international graduate students from lower-income countries can make or break an offer to study at Oxford.

Attracting the very brightest graduate students is a strategic priority for Wadham, to ensure that it can remain at the creative and intellectual cutting edge of academia, producing world-leading research and ideas that shape and improve society across the

disciplines. But to do so, in such a globally competitive field, we need to have a range of scholarships available to encourage the best to make Wadham their home.

This autumn we welcomed 112 new graduate students – up 15% on last year's intake. Of these, 14.3% receive full or partial funding from Wadham and are from a dozen different countries. Your support in enabling us to offer more scholarships means that Wadham can better compete in an increasingly global market for the best graduate students.

If you are interested in supporting a graduate scholarship – many of which can qualify for match funding from different University of Oxford faculties, we would love to hear from you.



“The Beit Trust provides opportunity for outstanding graduate students from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi to study in Oxford.

The objective is to help these talented individuals become leaders in their field when they return, so they can make significant contributions to their communities and countries. The Trust’s partnership with Wadham ensures a warm welcome and a home for the scholars, enabling them to get the most from their academic year in Oxford.”

**Sir Andrew Pocock, Secretary to the Beit Trustees**

## A home away from home

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### Supporting outstanding students from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi.

Douglas Kabamba Mushingi, a health policy and health economics expert from Zambia, enrolled in the Master in Public Policy (MPP) graduate degree at the Blavatnik School.

He’s a recipient of a Beit-Blavatnik-Wadham Scholarship, which provides financial assistance to graduate students with the greatest potential to become leaders, decision-makers and opinion-formers in their home countries.

Douglas is very happy about having the opportunity to study at Oxford – and much more: he has joined the MPP football team, and Wadham’s; he’s joined the MPP rowing team and has his sights set on Wadham’s too; a very good chess player, he is now part of the Chess Club; and he is looking to join the Oxford Union.

But it’s the MPP that is his key focus. As someone who has worked as an economist in health policy, health financing and health economic evaluations in Zambia and other African countries, he sees this as a unique opportunity to advance his skills in policy analysis, and learn how to move from simply providing policy analysis to

negotiating the next steps: getting it implemented into national health strategies.

“I see the MPP as an opportunity to learn more about negotiation – the politics of policy making. This is an area I have some experience in, such as getting a policy passed only to see it not implemented – it can then be delayed for three to five years but nothing happens as it sits with the lawyers and politicians. That leaves you feeling very frustrated and powerless. The skills and experience I gain through the MPP degree will help me in hastening that implementation, by understanding the processes involved in implementing policies at a national level.”

### Attracting and supporting international talent

As a College, we work hard to develop partnerships with individuals and institutions that can help us to open new possibilities for graduate students from around the

world – particularly from lower-income countries.

Wadham currently has 26 graduate students from a dozen different countries receiving scholarships from the College. As a donor, looking to fund a scholarship, either through lifetime giving or with a legacy, you can often

double your money through matching funding initiatives from Oxford faculties. This means that a modest gift can turn into a major source of financial aid. We are grateful not only to our donors but to the University’s benefactors too who have enabled our gifts – and our students – to go so much further.

# 26 A Permanent Legacy at Wadham

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A generous bequest to Wadham will benefit generations of graduate students and endow welfare support and hardship grants. Gifts to endow core areas of our academic mission ensure that Wadham continues to thrive as an institution.

The sudden passing of Professor Richard Sharpe in March 2020 was a great shock to all his friends and colleagues, and a tragic loss to the academic community. Richard, who was Professor of Diplomatic at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Wadham College, was a much-admired scholar of medieval history and a prominent figure across the University – respected for his deep learning, wide-ranging and meticulous scholarship, and his profound intellectual influence on peers and students.

When the College learned of his intention to leave a significant bequest, we were very grateful and, through the generosity of his family, a Benefaction Fund has been set up to endow a graduate scholarship to undertake a Master's course in Medieval History or Medieval Studies. Additionally, the endowment can offer support to an on-course DPhil student in Medieval History, and wider provision for much-needed welfare support for students from all backgrounds.

This legacy will stand as a memorial to a distinguished scholar and colleague in Oxford.

Jane Garnett, Fellow and Tutor in Modern History, said: "Richard was devoted both

to medieval history and to the community of Wadham. When he took on the role of Senior Tutor he was dedicated to the welfare of students. This legacy therefore stands as a perfect mark of his generosity in life – a permanent embodiment of his love for the College, which will continue to remember him with affection."

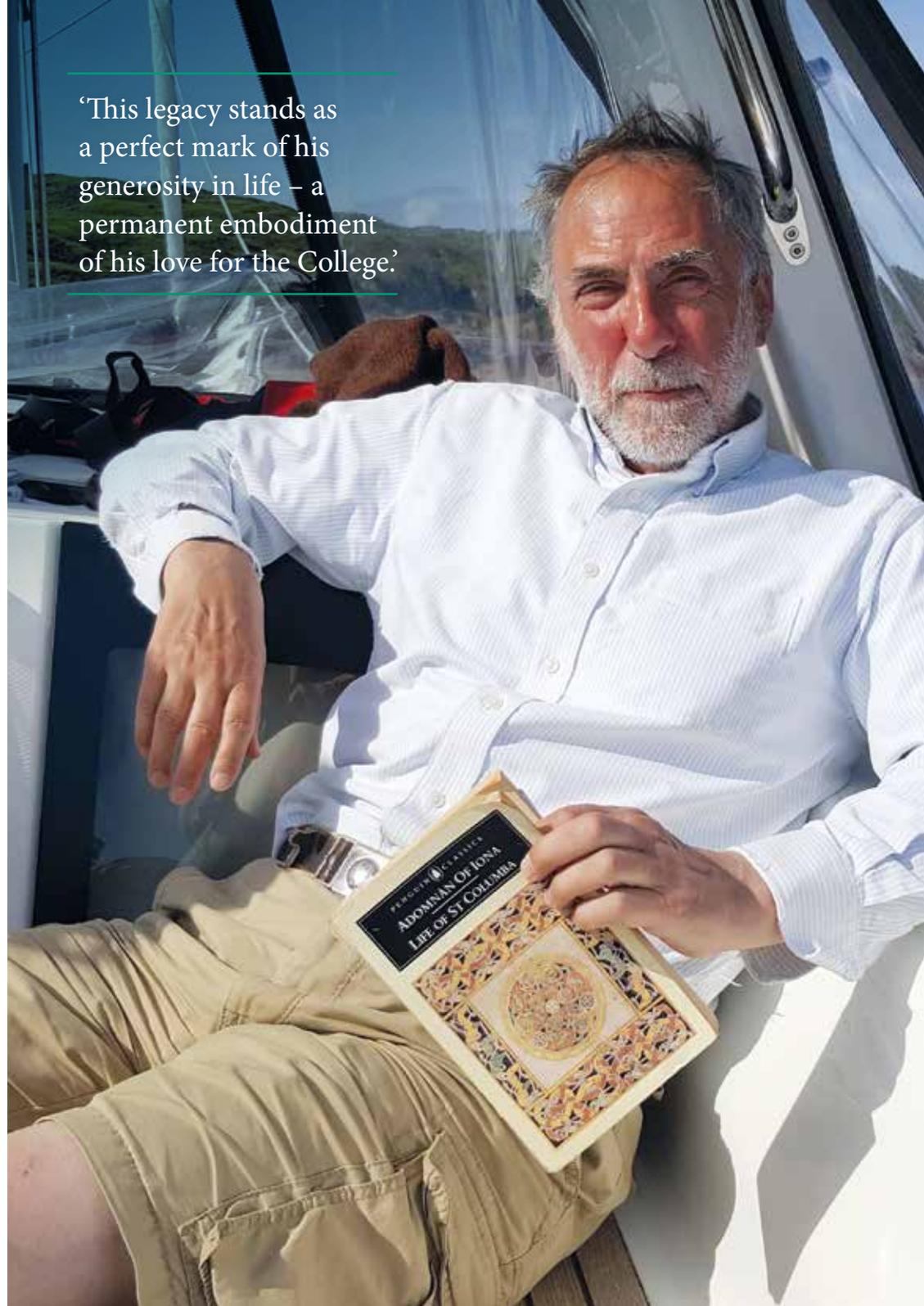
Donations and bequests to endow Fellowships, scholarships and student support play an extremely important role in our institutional development as they allow us to safeguard particular areas of study against all uncertainties. The generosity of Professor Sharpe and his family will ensure that future generations of medieval historians will find their intellectual home at Wadham, and allow the College to thrive as a centre of academic excellence in this field.

We are always delighted to speak with alumni and friends of the College who may be interested in endowing our academic heritage. If you would like to find out more about how your gift can guarantee a specific aspect of our academic tradition, please do get in touch with Julie Hage or Barnaby Norman in the Development Office.

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“This legacy stands as a perfect mark of his generosity in life – a permanent embodiment of his love for the College.”

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# Legacies and education

## 28 – ‘game-changers’

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Alumni bequests form a key part of support for Wadham and its academic mission. Diana Darke (Arabic Studies, 1974) explains why she decided to leave a legacy to the College and the happy circumstances – marrying a fellow alumnus – that reunited her with the College.

**You were part of the first class of women to study at Wadham. Can you say a bit about your journey to Wadham?**

I was very lucky that my matriculation coincided with the first year of five men's colleges accepting women. Of those, I chose Wadham above the others because it was the only one that described itself as 'liberal and forward-looking'. The thought of being confined within an all-female environment filled me with horror. I was perhaps always a bit of a rebel, and was the first person from my school to get into Oxford via the '4th term' route instead of the usual '7th' term entry. As soon as I got my place, I left school and took my A-levels independently whilst working in a local restaurant. It meant I was able to keep a car whilst an undergraduate and afford a lot of foreign travel. Being one of the first 20 women in College was not as much fun as it sounds and, to be honest, I was far happier once I moved out and switched from German & Philosophy to Arabic, the best decision of my life. Wadham facilitated the switch.

**Did Wadham play any part in how your career has unfolded? Has it opened any doors or created any connections over the decades?**

Once I switched to Arabic, I actually had very little to do with Wadham, since all classes and tutorials were centralised at the Oriental Institute and I was no longer living in College. My career, first in government, then in the commercial world, then as a writer, took me abroad, living and working in the Middle East, and I was out of contact with Wadham for nearly 40 years. What brought me back was a fellow Wadhamite and Arabist, John McHugo, whom I met by chance at a Wadham event in the House of Lords, celebrating Michael Foot's 75th Matriculation. We married in 2008. We had first known each other when I was 19 and he signed books out to me at the Oriental Institute where he worked as a penniless postgraduate to fund his research. Since then, as he puts it, 'the world had revolved many times on its axis for both of us'.



Diana Darke (right) and friend, Anne Candelas after Finals



John McHugo (Oriental Studies, 1970) and Diana at a Benefactors' Garden Party

**You have pledged a legacy as a 1610 Society member. What motivates you to support the College? Is there any of its work specifically that resonates with you?**

The reason I decided to pledge a legacy to Wadham is because I feel I want to support the College's efforts to widen access to students from all backgrounds. Education is such a game-changer. Your life really can be transformed if you get the chance to study a subject to a very high level, and that chance should be made readily accessible to all.

**A bequest is a special way of giving back – what inspired you to give back in this way?**

Rediscovering Wadham through John after such a long interval made me appreciate it far more than I ever had done whilst a student. I now feel immensely privileged to belong to such a community and want to do what I can to ensure its future for others to benefit from.

**An Oxford education is a unique opportunity – why you feel this is worth supporting?**

In today's world so many things are changing so fast. It's hard to stay grounded sometimes and I feel that certain exceptional institutions like Oxford University in general and Wadham in particular play a big and important role – often under-recognised maybe – in ensuring the continuity and stability we all need. As I've got older, I've come to appreciate the value of research, partly through my own work but also in scientific fields. It's made me immensely proud that Oxford performed so exceptionally well during the pandemic in creating vaccines ahead of the rest of the world.

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**'I now feel immensely privileged to belong to such a community and want to do what I can to ensure its future for others to benefit from.'**

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# 30 'If you seek my legacy, look around you'

This year Wadham marked the 300th anniversary of the death of Sir Christopher Wren, Wadham's most celebrated alumnus. His epitaph, above, resonates with the *raison d'être* of the 1610 Society.

Organised under the auspices of Wadham's 1610 Society, the Wren 300 Symposium in June commemorated Wren as a living legacy – as somebody who provokes thought and continues to inspire, not only as an architect but as a polymath.

Taking place at the exact point where more than 300 years earlier Wren arrived at Wadham, and a stone's throw from his Sheldonian Theatre, the conference explored the range of Wren's intellectual activity. Jane Garnett (Fellow and Tutor in History) moderated the opening session and explained that the university at which Wren arrived at as a student in 1649 was a place where undergraduates covered a very broad curriculum, encompassing the sciences and the humanities, and Wren's diverse passions were fostered in this environment.

The morning session focused on 'Wren at Wadham' with talks by Mathew Walker (Ancient and Modern History, 2000) and Katherine Blundell OBE (Professor of Astrophysics, University of Oxford) exploring elements of the young polymath in his early years. The afternoon session explored Wren's prodigious legacy and his influence on architecture and urban design across the world, with talks by Diana Darke

(Arabic, 1974) and Eric Parry RA. Rory Coonan (English Language and Literature, 1973, Hon Fellow RIBA) moderated the second session and also was the driving, creative force behind the symposium.

The event was also a reflection on what it means to leave a legacy, and Colin Drummond (Classics, 1969, President of the 1610 Society) summed up the final session with a thoughtful intervention on the important role we all play as custodians of the legacy of Wadham College.

To read more about the symposium, visit: <https://www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/news/wren-300-symposium>



# Join the 1610 Society

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Everyone who informs College of the intention to leave a legacy to Wadham is invited to join the 1610 Society, which now has well over 400 members.

Benefits of membership include invitations to annual events such as the Benefactors' Garden Party and the 1610 Society Dinner. This year, the 1610 Society Dinner was preceded by a College update from the Warden and academic sessions with Fellow and Professor in Climate Change, Joe Bull and Tutor for Access, Dr Hugh Munro. We also hold bespoke annual events for 1610 Society members (see opposite page).

Colin Drummond (President of the 1610 Society) inspired prospective members at the Wren event: "Wadham stands for excellence in teaching and research, and making this available to the best students from whatever background – who, in turn, contribute to and become part of, that excellence. However financial constraints and the UK's HE funding model mean that what we stand for is under threat. At the heart of this is the tutorial model, the value and importance of which we can all appreciate. Wadham relies on annual giving – particularly legacies – to preserve what it stands for. The 1610 Society is for those who include a legacy to the College in their wills and for significant lifetime donors; its members are key to the future of the College."

We will hold our next 1610 Society Dinner on 6 September 2024 and look forward to welcoming members back to College then.



▲ 1610 Society Committee Member, Claudia Pendred, with other members of the Society at the annual 1610 Society event, September 2023.



▲ This past September, 1610 Society members were given a welcome and College update from the Warden, Robert Hanigan, and academic sessions with Fellow and Professor in Climate Change, Joe Bull (pictured) and Tutor for Access, Dr Hugh Munro. These were followed by a lively Q&A session.

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