

Dear children,

Hello, we're Dawn and Sean, your general college parents. We're both Balliol third years, and we're going to be helping to look after you in Freshers' Week and beyond. You've now got your places at Oxford and will probably be feeling a mixture of excitement and mild trepidation at the thought of coming to university. Don't worry, though, everyone finds their feet and has a good time, and we and lots of other people will be around to make sure you settle in.

Sean does Maths & Philosophy and is on the JCR Committee,¹ enjoys ringing church bells, reading Plato and dropping massive drum and bass sets at bops (college fancy dress discos—cooler than you might think, honest). He maintains a detailed list of hidden libraries around Oxford and is very willing to share them, and he knows Balliol inside-out. Sean will be living in college with you this year (in the tower above the lodge :D) so he'll always be around.

Dawn is a Historian in her final year and remains convinced that there are more than 24 hours in a day. She sings in the chapel choir (and would definitely recommend anyone vaguely musical to join it for the free food and beautiful setting!), is librarian of the Oxford University Mountaineering Club, is addicted to tea and books and would like nothing more than to stay in Oxford forever. Having suffered from "Freshers' Flu" herself—repeatedly—she will always be on hand with Lemsip if you should need it after, or indeed during, the busy time of Freshers' Week. Dawn will be living out in East Oxford this year so will be able to offer a nice spacious place for her children to invade should you want to escape college, and will be able to show you around the lesser-known delights of Cowley Road. :)

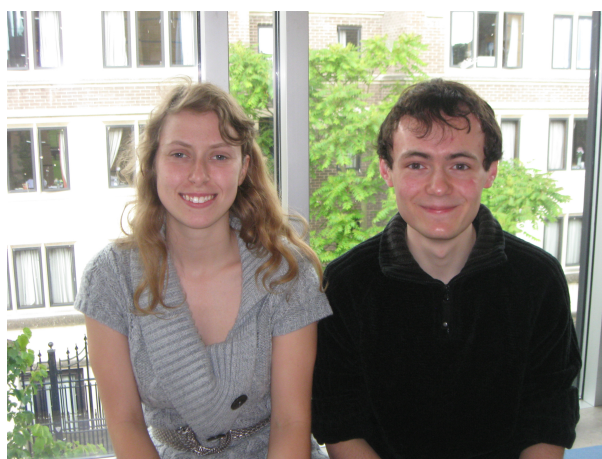
Life at Oxford can be full-on but rarely more so than your first week. As you'll be able to tell from your timetable Balliol's extraordinarily-active JCR Committee has planned a whole range of events to help you meet people, get to know Balliol and explore Oxford. You might be a bit daunted by how much has been planned but please don't worry; it's perfectly alright to take a break if you need to and you only have to go to events that you think you will enjoy. Everyone is different and whether you would rather spend your time sipping tea than downing Balliol Blues,² or prefer dancing the night away to reading in the library, you will almost certainly find an event in Freshers' Week to suit you, and will definitely find friends with the same interests.

We'll try to meet you on the day you move in, and we'll be hosting a dinner for you all towards the end of Freshers' Week. We're really looking forward to meeting you. :) In the mean time do feel free to contact us either by Facebook, text/phone or e-mail.

Take care until you come up to Oxford and enjoy the last few weeks of your holiday!

Love, Sean & Dawn

in real version there are contact details here



P.S.: Parental wisdom—in the midst of your frenzied packing for your first term, don't worry about forgetting anything: there are lots of shops around Balliol and we shall point you in the right direction if you realize you have forgotten your toothbrush.

¹JCR = Junior Common Room. This is just one piece of the Oxford lingo which you'll pick up in your first weeks at Balliol!

²The bar's speciality drink—just don't betray the college by sampling the 'Bloody Trinity', named for our neighbouring, rival college.