



CLARE HALL STRATEGY PLAN

2026-2036

APPROVED BY GOVERNING BODY
DECEMBER 2025



Context and Brief History

Clare Hall was founded by Clare College in 1966, launched with a generous portion of Clare's endowment, as a graduate college. The concept for the College is inspired by the Princeton Institute of Advanced Study (IAS), but re-imagined as an IAS within the Cambridge collegiate University, an autonomous, egalitarian, self-governing community where scholars at all levels of seniority and experience mix freely.

Its primary membership from the start has been University Teaching Officers, visiting academics and graduate students. To that core have been added various classes of Bye-Fellows, Associates and Emeritus Fellows (Fellow alumni), and Life Members (alumni from all other categories). The College's research interests span broadly sciences and arts/humanities. There have been 9 heads of house – Presidents – to date, evenly split between sciences and arts.



MEMBERSHIP

Its membership has grown significantly.

- From 25 Official and Research Fellows, the current total is around 80, including also Professorial and Emeritus Fellows.
- The student body numbered approximately 100 by 1989, 160 by 2012, and is around 300 nowadays, evenly split between masters and doctoral students.
- The Visiting Fellowship has grown from 12 per year at foundation, to around 40 currently.

Clare Hall has evolved to be an academically distinguished and influential community. Fellows (including Honorary) have won various premier international research prizes, including the Crafoord, Templeton, and Breakthrough prizes, and numerous others. Nine former visiting fellows have gone on to win Nobel prizes. The College has 14 Fellows of UK National Academies and several more amongst former Fellows.



The College's campus, now listed grade II*, was designed by the eminent Anglo-Swedish architect Ralph Erskine as "an open-ended and attractive environment, free from memories of medieval and renaissance monumentality or opulence". It consists of a ribbon of low-rise residential and communal buildings set in beautiful gardens. The estate was highly innovative when it was designed and has been serving its purpose well -- to support an open, egalitarian and productive research community.

Sixty years on, it is time for significant renewal and development of the establishment, fabric and facilities.

VISION, PURPOSE, VALUES

Clare Hall is modelled partly on IAS bodies in other universities, but uniquely adapted to the context of the collegiate University and its activity across research, in the broadest sense.

- We aim to be a pre-eminent environment for career development of young researchers.
- We play a key role supporting research and learning, embedded in one of the world's leading universities.
- We provide benefit widely for the Cambridge academic community and for the public.



STRENGTHS & DISTINCTIVENESS



Clare Hall is one of a few Colleges in Cambridge and Oxford whose student membership consists entirely of graduates – there are no undergraduates in College – emphasising its character as a community dedicated to research. We are an egalitarian College, occupying an estate that is built on a friendly, human scale. There is plenty of interaction between members, with mixed events for Fellows of all categories, students and Life Members, all eating together, and in many cases living together on the campus.

Uniquely amongst Cambridge Colleges, we welcome an extensive community of visiting fellows and scholars for periods of up to a year, housing some with their families, and drawing them into a full programme of seminars and study groups. We run several distinguished lecture series, and rich programmes in music and art. The College provides a wide and inclusive portal into Cambridge University and attracts an extensive range of participants and donors.

HOW WE DELIVER THE VISION

- We elect active and distinctive Fellows, for the long term, with an emphasis on internationally influential research, from diverse subjects, and with a broad range of professional interests.
- We attract and support diverse Research Fellows and graduates, in support of high quality research and postgraduate education.
- The College integrates senior Visiting Fellows (VFs) together with their families, encourages younger visitors and visitors from industry, and maintains programmes with various leading overseas universities.
- We strive to make Clare Hall the destination of choice for a good proportion of its students.
- Students are supported to develop academically, and in leadership and interpersonal skills, to the broad benefit of society, by means of:
 - social, cultural, musical, intellectual, recreational and sporting activities.



HOW WE DELIVER THE VISION



- We promote interaction across disciplines for Fellows and other scholars.
- Clare Hall provides an estate that supports those functions by means of welcoming shared spaces, the common table, residential accommodation, study and meeting space, and sports facilities.
- College funds are applied to enable and develop researchers:
 - supporting up to 25 Research Fellowships for early career young academics to focus on research;
 - providing postgraduate bursaries and funds for hardship, assistance and research, complementing University resources.

GOVERNANCE



Having become a fully independent College in 1984, Clare Hall is a stand-alone charity whose trustees included initially the whole Fellowship, plus student representatives. Since 2024 the body of charity trustees is the Council, comprising a rotating subset of Fellows and students. The full Fellowship continues to meet six times a year, and makes key decisions, especially the appointment of Fellows and College Officers, and membership of committees, including the Council.

FUTURE PLAN

1. Enhance support for members of the College, while broadly maintaining the current size of the fellowship and the student body.

- **Funded Postgraduate Studentships**, complementary to University programmes, to drive recruitment of the strongest students in a competitive world. Studentships are of immense value to talented beneficiaries who may not otherwise be able to access what the College and University have to offer.
- **Funded Research Fellowships**, especially in the Arts and Humanities — needed to support the most promising candidates in the development of their careers, and draw them into the College community, in an era when funding is ever harder to secure.
- **Funded Visiting Fellowships** to help attract the very strongest applicants into our extensive programme, prioritising collaboration with our College Fellows.
- Funds sought, from time to time, for broad **research themes**, led by Fellows, complementing and combining with research across the wider University.
- **New alumni societies** overseas, and links with existing ones strengthened.



2. Restore and develop the Heritage listed Ralph Erskine campus, respecting its original, human-scale warmth, in tune with the intellectual and social life of the College:

- 30 more units of student accommodation, including family and accessible accommodation, sufficient normally to satisfy student demand in all years;
- modern upgrades to the fabric, addressing sustainability, access, safety and acoustics;
- enhancing and extending study space, and communal spaces;
- a visible and accessible, pedestrian access to the College from its East end.

3. Enhance support for College activities, especially:

- building new music performance space;
- renewing athletic equipment, and expanding exercise space;
- establishing a named lecture in physical sciences, to complement the existing public lectures on biological sciences and on human values;
- establishing a daytime College presence on the biomedical campus;
- improving art storage facilities, archiving and access to artworks.





4. Secure the College's long-term future by growing the unrestricted endowment, to ensure resilience of the College's operation. There are several aspects to this:

- generational maintenance and development of estate and endowments;
- growing total income from fees, rental of facilities and accommodation, and interest on endowment, to cover full running costs including depreciation;
- encouraging donations and legacies, and recognising them appropriately, for example with naming opportunities and inclusion of donors in College life.