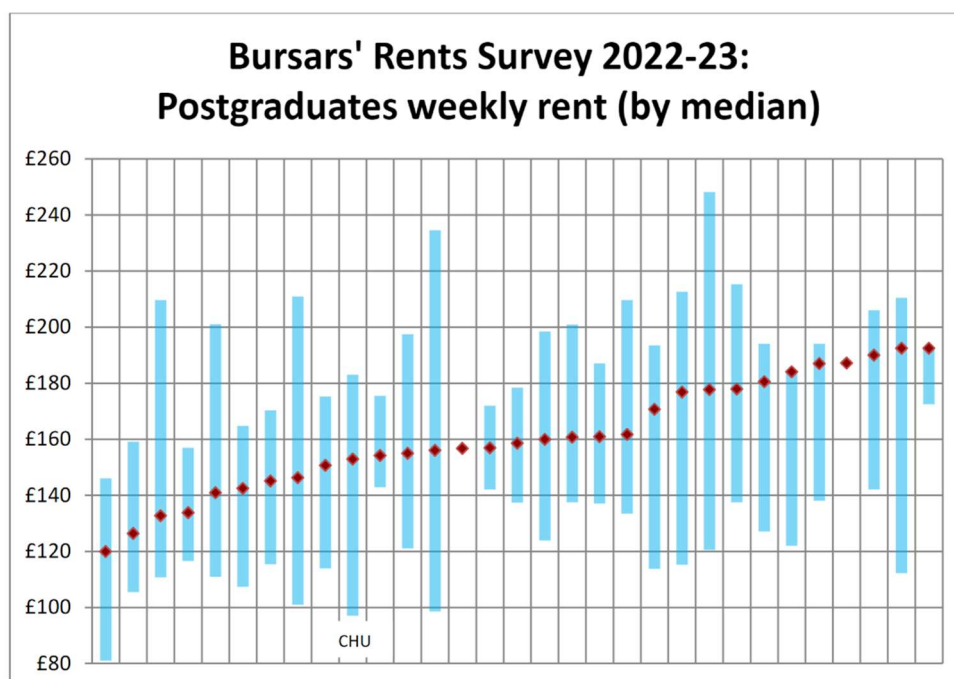


Rent Overview

To the MCR body - we aim to be open and transparent regarding any increases in rent and bills which may affect those of you living in college accommodation. We have therefore asked the postgraduate office to distribute this briefing with the ballot information so you are kept informed of the reasons why the rent is being increased, and the support that is available to you should you require it.

Rent

The median rent for all postgraduate in the University of Cambridge is £159 per week. Churchill sits just below this median, at £153 per week. The graph below reflects the range of rent charged by colleges and they are ordered by the median. Other college names have been redacted. We believe that the rent at Churchill, sitting below the median and with nearby access to facilities, represents a reasonable value for money in the current climate.



The prices set for the 2023-2024 academic year reflect the increase in costs because of inflation. Whilst previous increases have been set at RPI + 1%, this year the MCR executive were consulted by the finance committee to increase the rent by 7% (to the nearest whole pound). This proposal was adopted by the College council. To provide context, RPI was 10.5% for the year 2022.

Utilities

Gas prices have also increased by 80%, further putting pressure on the college, and this is reflected in the increase in rent. Whilst electricity costs incurred by the college are expected to increase by 500% this year, Churchill, unlike some other colleges, can mitigate most of this impact on students by shouldering the majority of this themselves. Electricity costs will, however, be increased by 100% compared to the previous year.

Support

College Council have agreed to establish a fund equivalent to 1 percentage point of the 7-percentage point increase to provide a non-means tested bursary to those who college, in conjunction with the MCR committee, identify are most in need of support to cover this increase. We believe that targeting this support to those who need it the most is more effective than applying this universally and keeping the costs for everyone just slightly lower. An example is that Kieran and Reece, both as UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) funded students, had an increase in funding of around 10% this year whilst many of those on alternative funding sources did not. We would therefore expect this fund to support those who have not had similar increases due to inflation. The exact details of this are under discussion, but it is expected that we can roll this out at the start of the next academic year. There will be a questionnaire sent out by the postgraduate office to get an insight into the funding situation of MCR members and highlight any potential problems with funding arrangements. **Please do fill this in when you get a chance – this information will be used to help you!**

Additional support is available both from the University of Cambridge and Churchill College. The University and the College both maintain support funds to help when there are unforeseen circumstances which are causing you financial hardship. **To be clear – we believe that this elevated level of inflation is an unforeseen circumstance and clear eligibility criteria for application for such funds.**


Further details can be found here:

<https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/student-hub/health-welfare-support/financial-support/funding-for-financial-adversity/>

On behalf of the MCR Committee,



Reece McCoy
MCR President



Shany Richaud
MCR Secretary – Vice President



Kieran Heal
MCR Treasurer – Vice President