

## INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS LIVING OUTSIDE OF COLLEGE ACCOMMODATION

### *including those in Girton-owned couple/family accommodation*

The University requires that all postgraduates live within 10 miles of the centre of Cambridge in order to fulfil the residency requirements of a degree. If for some reason you cannot do this, then you need to apply for permission to live “outside the precincts” via your [Camsis self-service](#) as soon as possible after 1 October – the application can take some time to go through the system. Once you’re here, please keep your personal details, particularly your term-time address and mobile phone numbers, up to date in your Camsis self-service portal (accessible with your Raven password after 1 October).

Your University card will be available to pick up at the Swirles Court Porters’ Lodge after the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September. However, before making the trip to Swirles, check with the Postgraduate Administration office to make sure that it is there. It should already contain access to all doors (you may need to ask the Porters at Swirles Court to add Swirles access separately) as well as be set up with UPay which is the College’s catering system – you will receive an automated email from UPay asking you to download their app.

All matriculated Girton postgraduates who either live in external Girton housing or in privately-owned accommodation are welcome to access any of the College facilities. This includes the MCR (Postgraduate room at Swirles court), the Library, Chapel, pool and gym facilities at Main Site.

If you live out, you may still receive post at the Main Site – you’ll find alphabetical pigeonholes (i.e. surnames A-M, etc.) in the post room (behind the Main Porters’ Lodge, accessible with your University card).

The College has a [Partner Card scheme](#) for live-in partners of Girton Postgraduates allowing partners and dependent children to move around the College without the student and also to purchase food at the discounted rates in the Servery and the Social Hub.

If you have children, they are welcome, accompanied by yourselves or your partner (if they have a Partner Card), at the Main Site, Swirles and in the Gardens. They must be supervised carefully at all times and please keep children under 5 to the ground floor for safety reasons. Our gardens are particularly special but do, again, keep your children supervised as there are many types of plants, some poisonous if eaten! There is a baby change unit near the Dining Hall in the disabled WC near the Old Kitchens entrance. Further units are in the pool changing room and the Library.

If you are on a **Student Visa**, you will need to make arrangements to have your immigration documents scanned as soon as you arrive in Cambridge and definitely before you begin study. Please email [postgraduate.office@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:postgraduate.office@girton.cam.ac.uk) to make an appointment to do this. You will be sent detailed information about the visa, Share Code, entry document requirements closer to the beginning of your first term.

### **Meals**

You are always welcome to use the Main Site dining options – the Servery or the Social Hub / bar – as if you lived in College accommodation. Using your University card, you will receive the subsidised rate and any food bought on site will be charged to your College bill. You may also bring your family in to eat occasionally but not to Formal Halls. You are allowed adult guests at Formals but not children.

Girton has reciprocal arrangements with both Robinson and Downing Colleges which means you can use your Cam card at their serveries and be charged student prices. Check with your continuing postgrad colleagues about this as the arrangements may take some time into Michaelmas before they’re available.

### [Sports Facilities at the Main Site](#)

Girton College has a pool that is available free of charge for all College members. You do need to swim with at least one other person and children are welcome as long as they are under your strict supervision and are competent swimmers. There is a weight gym which requires an induction before first use (please sign up online for one or speak to the Main Site Porters). There is a squash court, erg room (rowing machines), and small cardio room – the latter 3

O:\GraduateAdministrator\\_New Graduates Information\Living Out info\Info for PGs living out 2025.docx

do not require inductions and your University card should give you access. For the weight gym and pool access, please speak to the Porters at the Main Site.

### **Utilities (water, gas, electricity, broadband)**

For those in College-owned family/couple properties: Utilities will appear on your College bill if you are in most of our family housing. The prices of heating and electricity have gone up significantly so we recommend that you're careful with how much heating you use as the bill you receive may come as a shock. Most of the College-owned properties also have broadband contracts and the charge for this would be part of your residence charge.

If you're living privately (not College owned), first check the utilities with your landlord. You will most likely need to obtain your own broadband provider and obtain an energy provider. Water is also a chargeable utility in the UK so you will receive water bills.

A very useful, multi-purpose, go-to website in the UK is [Money Saving Expert](#). You can look up the best and reliable deals for almost anything – mobiles, savings accounts, travel insurance, broadband, energy, etc.

### **Council Tax**

Another chargeable item related to living in a property in the UK is Council Tax, a charge that varies according to the size of the property and to the status of the adults residing there. Discounts and/or exemptions can be claimed for all full-time students, and for non-employed spouses of overseas students where the visa restricts eligibility for employment and benefits and for working adults on low incomes. For those in non-College owned property, if you are requested to provide one, you may ask for a Council tax letter from College by emailing [postgraduate.office@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:postgraduate.office@girton.cam.ac.uk).

There are instances where Council tax would be payable by you, directly to either the [South Cambs District Council](#) (if living around Girton) or Cambridge Council and should be organised soon after moving in. Bills will be sent from the Council to your property address and you need to deal with them – the College does not get involved – please don't leave it, as the charges will build up and the Council is not forgiving about late responses.

Information about Council tax discounts available can be found [here](#). We suggest that you inform the South Cambridgeshire Council (around Girton) of you and your partner's status (what visa they have / if they are working) before arranging payment. Their email address is [revenues@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:revenues@scambs.gov.uk) or you can call 01954 713000.

### **Mobile phones**

It's quite easy to get a UK mobile number while you're in the UK. Free SIMS are available at most shops. If and when you do, please make sure to enter the number into your Camsis self-service. [Giffgaff](#) is a good and cheap mobile provider and coverage is fairly good (O2 network). There's no need to obtain an expensive mobile contract in the UK. You can also look into getting an e-sim before you leave your country for data only whilst here.

There are increasing numbers of mobile phone thefts in London so we recommend you be hyper-vigilant with your phone wherever you are.

Only IF you wish to watch any **BBC** television either live or on demand (iPlayer) on any device, you should buy a [TV Licence to legally do this](#). It's about £15 per month. You do not need a licence to listen to BBC Sounds.

### **University Childcare Office**

The University has a [Childcare office](#) to assist students who have children with them in Cambridge. You may contact them with any questions about childcare or other issues. There is also a central [childcare Bursary Scheme for overseas students](#).

### **GP Surgeries (Doctors' Offices)**

Please register as soon as you can with the closest surgery to your accommodation. Girton uses the Huntingdon Road Surgery which is down Huntingdon Road towards town. Please see the Nurses' document and Health and Wellbeing Centre pages sent separately for more health info. You may access the [Wellbeing Centre](#) even though you live out of College.

## Bus Travel in Cambridge

The [Ubus](#) is the University bus and alternates running throughout the day either from Swirles Court (in Eddington) or from Girton Corner (nearer the traffic lights on Huntingdon Road near Main Site). Swirles Court, the main College PG accommodation, and the stores, Sainsbury's and Argos are in Eddington. The bus goes through the centre of Cambridge, past the Judge Business School, Engineering Dept and then to the Cambridge train station and ends at Addenbrooke's Hospital so is very useful. You can download the Whippet bus [myTrip app](#).

Stagecoach Bus number 5 runs from Girton Corner down Huntingdon Road into the centre of Cambridge ending at the Drummer Street Bus depot (near John Lewis department store). In order to get a student fare on buses in Cambridge, you show your university card and ask the driver for a single fare or a Student dayrider which allows you to travel all day on Stagecoach buses. Also available, the Stagecoach Bus 6 runs from the Drummer Street Bus depot up Huntingdon Road and turns onto Girton Road where you can get off at the first stop and walk into the Main Site of the College. The [Stagecoach Bus app is downloadable here](#). It is a different company to the Ubus (Whippet).

## Train Travel

If you plan to travel around the UK while here, it's cost-effective to get a [railcard](#). There are a number to choose from and most give you 30% off your travel. You can get one online or at the Cambridge station. If you need the College to verify that you're a student, either bring your form in or send it via email and we'll sign it for you. [Trainline](#) is a great app to download for buying train tickets.

## Cycling

Cycling is one of the most popular ways of travelling around Cambridge. Keep an eye out for used bicycles as they can be expensive to buy and bike theft in Cambridge is quite high so make sure you also have a good lock. Also, make sure to have a front and back light for the bicycle and it's helpful to also wear a helmet particularly if you're not accustomed to riding on the left.

[Cycle Streets](#) is an online journey planner which you can also use to plan a cycle journey around Cambridge. The University of Cambridge website contains information on [cycle safety](#), as well as tips for security and preventing theft.

There are a number of bicycle repair options in Cambridge – one runs a stall in the central Cambridge market.

All students must register their bicycles to keep them on College property. The form can be found [here](#). Please note that e-scooters are not permitted on College property.

We hope that this information is useful.

Wendy Klein  
Postgraduate Administrator

2025

*We welcome feedback on this document with any suggestions of additional information that would help those not living in College accommodation.*