

Slogan: *Action and engagement.*

I am a mature postgraduate student caught at the intersection among ageism, racism and ableism.

Having studied in Cambridge for my MPhil previously as an able-bodied student, I am back to read for my PhD as a disabled student. I have been back for one year and, during this time, I have experienced what is called a 'sitpoint' - the opposite of a 'standpoint'. I have seen Cambridge from a wheelchair. It is very different from Cambridge as experienced from a bicycle or on foot. Among other difficulties, I have faced huge financial headwinds because of my disability, and still been told that I did not qualify for hardship funding. And yet some of my able-bodied friends got up to £3,500 for cost-of-living reasons. Because my College did not have anywhere to put me when I first arrived, I lost a lot of time shuttling among different forms of accommodation. I hardly made my first-year annual review time limit. I have only ever been to my college MCR once because it is inaccessible. I could barely make my college or the university understand my needs or to believe that they existed to begin with. As it stands, I have no idea where I am living next.

All this has given me a good idea of just how ill-prepared Cambridge and its colleges are for disabled students. In Cambridge, there is a dearth of information, understanding and sensitivity about the realities that face disabled students and their needs. I would like to transfer the skills that I have learnt and use the information that I have gained about the workings of the Colleges and the Collegiate University as a student leader thus far and join forces with my colleagues on the Disabled Students' Campaign and the Student Council to make things better for disabled students. I would like to see the Colleges and the Universities working better with other entities such as the City Council and local charities to expand the spaces that are open to disabled students and increase the resources available to them in the University and the city. I would like to explore ways in which disabled international students, who are not eligible to receive disability allowances in the UK, can find alternative support.

I am currently receiving invaluable experience as the postgraduate student representative for the School of Arts and Humanities (eight faculties and three institutes) on the Student Council. I am the postgraduate student representative, respectively, on the School Council and Postgraduate Education Committee of the School of Arts and Humanities. I am also President of the Cambridge Canadian Club. This useful leadership and lobbying experience - besides similar experience garnered in the workplace and other spheres of life in all five inhabited continents - will enable me to get the most with and for my fellow disabled students if elected.

I very much hope that you are happy to support my bid for election and my work thereafter if I am chosen to lead the campaign.