

The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis has made many of us reflect on the racism which is a day to day reality for many members of our community. Understandably, many are feeling vulnerable or angry or both in the aftermath of events in the US and much nearer to home, and I have received a number of messages of concern from members of our community. I would like to state on behalf of the JCR, MCR, Staff and Fellows that as a college we do not tolerate racism of any kind.

Words are important but not if they contribute to misunderstanding and mistrust or are empty promises that do not lead to change. What matters is how determinedly and consistently we commit ourselves to addressing these issues properly.

Regent's long history, rooted in the support of disenfranchised communities, influences our long-held aim to be a genuinely inclusive college environment. We now renew our commitment to encouraging diversity and to nurturing a welcoming, open and inclusive community where difference is treated with respect and injustice and racism are condemned.

We have taken the following actions:

- Along with other Oxford College Heads, I signed a [letter of concern](#) published in *The Guardian* on Friday 5 June.
- We have set up support from individuals with significant experience in this area for students who wish to discuss experiences of racism and responses to recent events.
- The JCR has issued a statement making clear its rejection of racism and has formed a student consultative group to discuss issues of equality and inclusion in the JCR more broadly.

We have made the following commitments:

- We will ensure we draw on the expertise of colleagues with practical and academic experience in areas of injustice, equality, diversity and inclusivity; we are fortunate to have such expertise in our small community.
- The College's Equality Committee will be strengthened by the addition of Professor Anthony Reddie, who is a leading theorist and practitioner in the development of racism awareness training in Britain and a specialist in Black liberation theology. Prof Reddie will help Regent's to maintain a focus on racial justice issues throughout our College life, including in College policy and processes.
- We will intentionally explore further ways to promote dialogue between staff and students on issues of racial injustice. The JCR and MCR will both report to the Equality Committee on their suggestions to make the College a more inclusive community in the light of the Black Lives Matter.
- We will offer BAME and first-generation students mentorship conversations with academic staff to support them as they adapt to University life.
- We will expand staff training in implicit bias and racial awareness.

While we are faced with big challenges, I want to assure you of our commitment to go beyond words and to work together to address these issues of systemic injustices. As the letter to *The Guardian* states: 'We recognise and regret that, for black members of our community, the unfolding crisis together with the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on their communities has caused them particular anxiety, anger and pain. We stand with them during these difficult moments with hope that, through the global mobilisation of many against these injustices, through education, discussion, and peaceful protest, we may work together towards a world free of systemic racism and discrimination.'

Dr Robert Ellis
Principal, Regent's Park College