

BEN WARD – TARGET AND ACCESS

Hey! I'm Ben, a 2nd year student studying Education with Psychology who is your current Class Act Officer! Being an estranged care-leaver from a state school in rural West Wales, I know how much of a struggle it can be to apply to Cambridge, and harder still to immerse yourself into its crazy world. When you come from a marginalised group or underprivileged area, it is fact that you are at a disadvantage to many privileged students when competing for a place in Cambridge. Since studying here and being Class Act Officer on the HUS and LGBT officer on HomFemSoc, I have seen and experienced how these inequalities continue throughout the time spent in Cambridge, and it is something that I would love to help other current and prospective students combat.

WHAT DO I WANT TO DO?

Continue the great work and legacy of our previous Target and Access Officer by:

- Working in conjunction with other officers on the HUS to make sure that marginalised groups and those from places worlds away from Cambridge are welcome, comfortable and listened to once they have made it here.
- Arranging a variety of social events that cater for diverse student interests.
- Be the best representation for Homertonians by communicating with and listen to marginalised students on how best Homerton can facilitate a better and more equal Cambridge experience and liaising this with the college and Cambridge SU.
- Taking forward a scheme where current students visit local disadvantaged schools from home, and provide students there help with applying to Oxbridge by providing feedback on personal statements and giving them an insight and heads up into what life here is really like.
- Having a focus on implementing events and places of support for prospective students who are care leavers by liaising with social services from various county councils across the UK.

WHY ME?

I believe that my resilience and determination necessary to enforce equality and comfort among students from various backgrounds has been empowered greatly from my upbringing within foster care, which has allowed me to be able to empathise and understand the perspectives students from diverse backgrounds. Going to a school without the funding, facilities or programs that children from higher class backgrounds have the privilege of experiencing is one obstacle that many students must overcome. But even more so, children raised in foster care commonly lack the family stability (emotional and financial) and the encouragement to even apply to universities such as Cambridge - something I would very much like to change.