

Ellie Brain – JCR President Speech

Hello everyone! As you can see I am not Ellie and she is genuinely gutted she can't be here today. Unfortunately because the hustings date was released so close to today, Ellie had already booked these dates to leave Cambridge. However, I'm really passionate about the vision Ellie has for Fitz JCR, and will be reading her hustings speech on her behalf.

Hello Everyone! My name is Ellie, and it is with a heavy heart that I cannot be here tonight. Due to the date of hustings only being released over the past few days, I had already booked train tickets that are out of my budget to alter. My good friend Emily has therefore kindly offered to read my speech.

I want to outline why I believe I would make a really good President for the JCR, due to **both my experience, and my ideas**. Furthermore, as one of the most pro-active members on the JCR this year, I fully believe I am capable of transforming your views, ideas and wishes into real, grounded action.

Firstly, I am confident I have the experience to undertake this role. As Co-JCR Women's Officer, I have successfully campaigned for free sanitary products to be placed in all college bathrooms, re-started a disbanded Fitz Fem Soc, ran an International Women's Day Charity Formal which raised over £200 for Cambridge Rape Crisis, delivered consent workshops, and I am currently in discussions with college about how to celebrate 40 years since the admission of Women into Fitzwilliam. I have also set my successor up well, by already successfully campaigning for funding for **free self-defence workshops**, and a **new menstrual cup scheme**. Through my target and access work, I've taken part in Fitz and CUSU Shadowing schemes, represented the college as a Deleogat, and taken part in Target and Access work around where I live in Newcastle.

Outside Fitzwilliam College, I am the coordinator for the Cambridgeshire Country Period Poverty Campaign, I am on the Executive committee of the CUSU Women's Campaign, and I am the Women's Officer for Cambridge Universities Labour Club. In these roles I am committed to making sure menstrual products are freely available in all public facilities in Cambridgeshire, and through running this successful campaign I have liaised with the public, organised large-scale events, and have gained **significant experience working with CUSU**.

But enough about experience, let's move onto real policies. Ultimately, I'd like to see a **really** pro-active JCR this year. One that speaks on behalf of the students, **not**

on behalf of the College elite. If elected as your representative, I promise I would prioritise your ideas, views, and campaigns when attending meetings with college officials, and be transparent with you all on any outcomes.

My manifesto is as follows:

1. I want welfare reforms in Fitz. Many people go through circumstances during term time which mean that they cannot keep up with the strenuous workload that Cambridge University expects, yet intermitting is an unsuitable option. Students in such a position receive **very limited help** from college and there should be a scheme to aid these students. Furthering my commitment to the Women's Campaign, I want the College's sexual assault disciplinary procedure to be **reviewed, tightened, and reformed** so there are no loopholes. I also want to carry on Zoe's work in making it easier for students to make a complaint, and offering more information on how to do so. I'd like to see a scheme to be adopted by Fitz, similar to Trinity, to offer free STI testing in the bar once a fortnight, with **a free drink if you take part in the test**. And finally, after popular demand I would look into bringing in BT Sport for the TV room.
2. I wish to see more social action carried out by the next JCR, with particular reference to Cut the Rent campaign, and the Living Wage Campaign. Firstly, **our rents are far too high** given we are not in the centre of Cambridge, and most blocks are of poor quality, particularly the external houses. I wish to get Fitz far more involved in CUSU's Cut the Rent campaign than it has in previous years. I am also committed to ensuring Fitz pays the Living Wage to all of its staff, a wage which is **currently outsourced and which part-time workers do not receive**. As a college which prides itself in being historically progressive, both of these campaigns need to be pushed by the next JCR. However, I would not just stop here. I'd like to work with our Ethical Affairs and Green JCR Officer to make some real environmental change for Fitz, including a **thorough review of Fitzwilliam College's emissions**, and ensuring **all college accommodation has a recycling bin**.
3. I want to see more transparency within the JCR. I would allow for **all Fitz students** to attend JCR meetings if they wished, and ensure that minutes of every meeting are sent to all students. I would also like the entire student body to be consulted more often in relation to JCR Voting at CUSU meetings. Finally, I'd like to be a JCR President who fully represents the students, and is willing to speak out against college if it is in the interest of the students.
4. I would like a Food and Beverages Officer on the JCR. This may sound like a silly point, but **without a representative** there are difficulties in communicating student wishes with catering staff. **Why** are vegans too often presented with a

plain block of tofu at formals which costs £12? **Why** did the price of Fitz beer rise by 10% over the summer without students being informed? **Where** has the butterscotch sauce gone from brunch waffles? These are all real issues that a JCR Officer could easily address.

5. This upcoming year marks **150 years** since Fitz was established, and 40 years since Women were admitted into college. This is a year for **celebration, reflection, and history**. I would like to see Fitz go back to its roots as a college which was **proud** to be progressive, founded in defiance to the elitism of Cambridge University. I also think a true celebration is in order given such an anniversary. I would campaign to college for funding for **a large free JCR Garden Party** (Similar to Medward's Summer Garden Party) for all students to enjoy.

I strongly believe in these policies, and I am confident I could put all of these in place. I also believe a JCR President should not prioritise their own personal aims over the wishes of the JCR Committee, or the entire student body. I am therefore very willing to change any of these ideas if the student body wished, and would not use this position to push any sort of personal agenda. All students must have a President they can trust, one which will listen, and one which will promise to campaign for them, and I promise to be this kind of President. Let's make this JCR the best one yet. Feel free to message me on Facebook, or find me in the cafe if you have any questions, I urge you to **not refrain, and vote for Brain**. Thank you for your consideration.