

Arcady Hall 2026 Annual report for the Synod Yearbook

Arcady Hall (formerly Bishop Julius Hall) provides fully catered accommodation for 156 first year students enrolled at the University of Canterbury (UC) and supports them to transition from home and school to independent living and university study. The Arcady 'brand' is now well-established within the UC student accommodation market, as reflected in strong student demand for Hall places. Integral to this brand is our continuing commitment to the values of vision of the Hall's founder, Bishop Churchill Julius. The Hall's mission is to foster an inclusive, caring community that celebrates diversity, values academic success, and supports residents to flourish and to form meaningful and lasting relationships.

Our Residential Life programme offered a wide range of activities for residents throughout the year – life skills workshops, social events, academic tutorials, themed dinners, and community volunteering opportunities – designed to support residents' wellbeing to help them to make new friends – and even to find future flatmates. Alumni engagement also remained key focus for the Hall in 2025 as we continued to build the Bishop Julius/Arcady alumni whānau. To this end, we awarded two, Arcady alumni scholarships in 2025 and hosted three alumni events, including a celebration to acknowledge Bishop Churchill Julius Day.

Ensuring our facilities are well-maintained and 'fit for purpose' is an ongoing challenge, given that most of our buildings are now over fifty years old. Last year, the Arcady Board of Trustees prioritised three capital investment projects for implementation over the 2025–26 summer break: upgrading the Hall's CCTV cameras and centralised, external door locking systems, refurbishing the Cranmer student accommodation building, and creating six, new 'floor group' common rooms for residents in the Mabel Hendrie and Cranmer buildings. Completion of this work has improved Hall security and enhanced the quality of the Arcady residential experience.

In February, this year we welcomed a new cohort of residents to Arcady. Our focus for the coming months will be on providing a comfortable 'home away from home' for them and planning to celebrate the Hall's 110th anniversary with our alumni in 2027. Looking ahead, emerging issues for the Hall include rising cost pressures, and an increasingly competitive operating environment due to the growing supply of (new build) UC student accommodation and changing student expectations. Within this context, the Arcady Board of Trustees is currently considering longer-term, strategic investment options to ensure that Arcady Hall continues to be an affordable and attractive destination for future students.

I would like to thank all Hall staff and Board members for their work and support for the Hall and residents over the past year. As Arcady resident feedback surveys consistently confirm, one of the best things about the Hall is its people.

Professor Sonia Mazey, Principal Arcady Hall