



IMPACT REPORT

2020 / 2021

2020/21 WAS QUITE A YEAR

The 2020-21 academic year has been another incredibly tough year for students. Students have faced significant personal and collective challenges and Oxford SU has been there, fighting alongside students.

Oxford SU have been at the heart of the University's response to the Coronavirus pandemic, ensuring students' views and concerns are recognised and acted on. Our focus on this work has been broad, from our Fair Outcomes for Student Campaign for exams and assessment, to our work on the Student Experience Group to ensure student opportunities get the attention they deserve. Throughout this challenging time, we have valued our partnership working with staff from across the collegiate University and students, especially student leaders in Common Rooms and Societies.

We continue to be inspired by the unwavering dedication and focus of student leaders to improve the lives of their fellow students. We've been pleased to expand our support for committee representatives and we're committed to working to empower students at all levels by giving them the support and resources they need.

As Sabbatical Officers we have been privileged to be involved in a range of progressive action across the collegiate University. From the University's ambitious Environmental Sustainability Strategy and colleges' collective action on the environmental crises to advancing strong access and outreach programmes for both prospective undergraduate and graduate students.

According to the National Union of Students over half of students (52%) say their mental health is worse than before the pandemic. The Student Mental Health taskforce has enabled vital progress on this topic at Oxford, building on years of campaigning on this issue by Oxford SU.

Events around the world and in Oxford highlight the continued importance of action on race equality to ensure the University can be a welcome and safe space for all. We have been pleased to take a leading role in the Race Equality taskforce including co-chairing the Student Issues working group and we look forward to engaging with the taskforce's future work.

We hope this report provides an insight into the work we do and we're looking forward to handing over to our successor for another year of working to improve student life at Oxford.

Sabbatical Officer Team 2020-21

Nikita Ma, President

Tucker Drew, VP Access and Academic Affairs

Ben Farmer, VP Charities and Community

Lauren Bolz, VP Graduates

Amelia Holt, VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities

Alex Foley, VP Women

A MESSAGE FROM CEO

The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Oxford SU, the University, Colleges and the student community cannot be understated. It has been an incredibly tough time for everyone, and we will not know the full weight of the impact for years to come. However, the pandemic has also shown the true strength of the oxford community, the pulling together and our adaptability to change.

Our concentration in this unprecedented year has been on four areas; ensuring the timely amplification of student's voices, ensuring continued activities and services in alternative forms, the wellbeing and safety of staff and students and the financial sustainability of Oxford SU for the future.

We have ensured financial prudence and use of the furlough scheme to ensure financial sustainability for the future, enabled services and activities to continue online or other forms, continually amplified student's voices through our campaigns and lobbying activities and supported the wellbeing of staff and students through services and additional wellbeing activities.

Oxford SU holds a unique place within the ecosystem of the University of Oxford. Through the COVID-19 Pandemic it showed its strength, adaptability but most importantly its unequivocal role in amplifying the voice of students to the university, community and on national and international platforms.

As we look forward to developing our new strategy which will focus on continuing to amplify students voices through our representative structures, increasing our college engagement and developing our income generation strategy. I know Oxford SU has a bright future, and will take the learnings from what has been such a tough year for all to positively move forward.

I am immensely proud of the staff and Sabbatical Officer team at Oxford SU this year, who, despite so many challenges and obstacles of the COVID-19 Pandemic and never once being in the same room together, still consistently delivered for students at the University of Oxford. This impact report showcases just that.

Kate Dawson
Oxford SU CEO

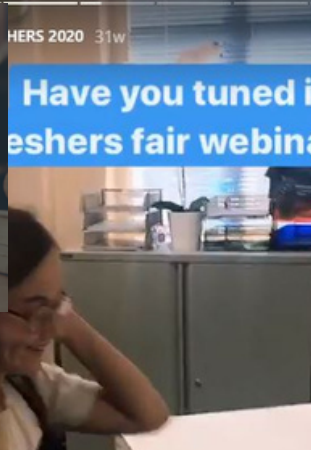


Oxford SU President By-Election

Recommend a friend

Campaigns Elections

VOTING OPEN NOW



#HonourThe Offer



GET TESTED WIN PRIZES

Get tested twice a week every week at Uni test centres and you could win vouchers from local businesses!



OUR MISSION



Oxford SU believes that the University of Oxford must lead the way in creating an environment where current and future students are governed by fairness; where everyone has an equal opportunity to flourish in their pursuit of education. We believe that education is the foundation for the future. The better the education, the better the future for all of us.

Being a student at the University of Oxford brings unique privileges, opportunities and challenges. Oxford SU is committed to empowering its students; we will ensure that their voice is listened to at every level of the University and is a catalyst for positive change. We embrace the entire student experience, from the grandly institutional to the intensely personal. We are entirely devoted to the wants and needs of all students, current and future.



OUR PEOPLE

Six student members, elected in an inter-collegiate annual election represent student views to the University and are accountable to a 24,000+ membership. These are our Sabbatical Officers and they take up office for a year.

To support them in this, the charity employs a small staff team who have specialist roles ranging from finance to student Advisors, comms experts, and student activities facilitators.

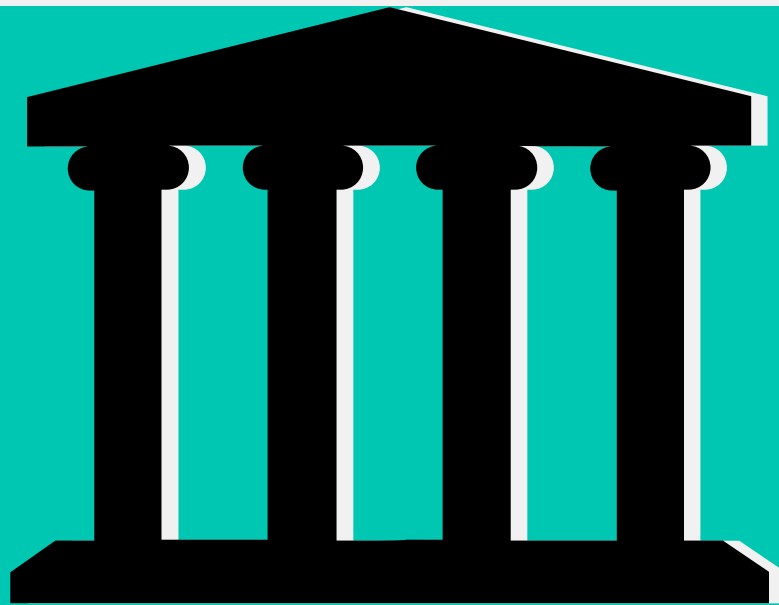
Above each activity sits the two bodies that ensure the SU runs in a sustainable way and is student-led - these are the Oxford SU Trustee Board and the University of Oxford Student Council. In both spaces, Oxford SU Sabbatical Officers are held to account, and hold to account. As a truly student-led democratic membership organisation, an SU is unlike any other charity, and our key funder and partner in this, the University of Oxford, plays a pivotal role in the development and actualisation of the student voice each year.

2021/21 8 BIG WINS

- 1.** Ran a Virtual Fresher's Fair at the height of the pandemic
- 2.** Sabbatical Officers successfully lobbied for the Hilary Term residency requirement to be lifted
- 3.** Biggest turn out ever in the Oxford SU Leadership Elections and five elected officers are women of colour
- 4.** Created 24 new training sessions for common rooms and student groups and trained 1257 students
- 5.** Fair Outcomes for Students; Oxford SU called for the University to recognise the academic challenges students are facing this year due to the pandemic
- 6.** Worked with Oxford University every step of the way in the successful creation and launch of the Sustainability Strategy
- 7.** Lobbied for better support for student mental health resulting in £400,000 extra invested by the University and Colleges in Mental Health at Oxford
- 8.** Became members of the new Universities' Race Equality Task Force and first-ever SU Co-Chair of the Student Dashboard Working Group

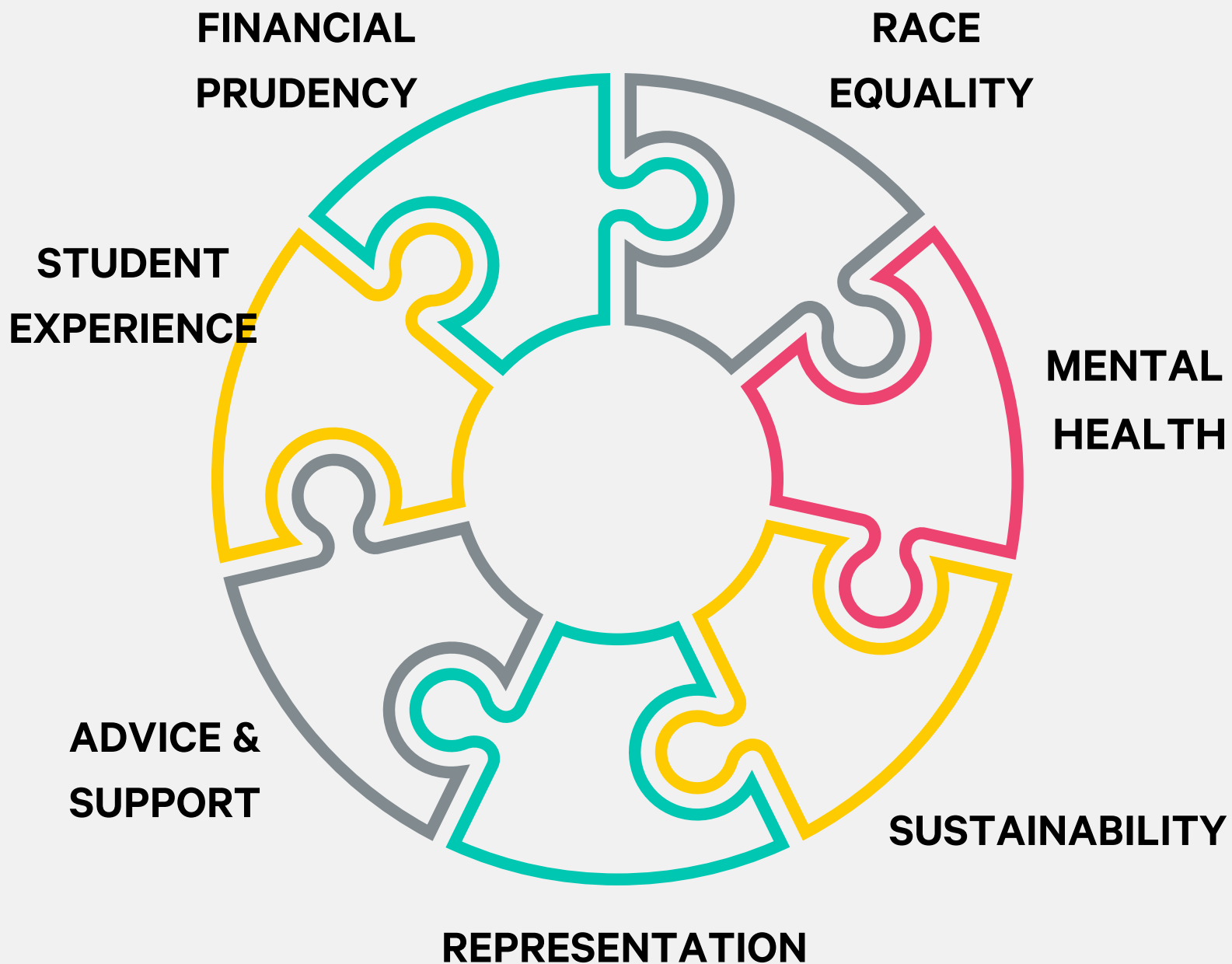
THE COVID CONTEXT

The Impact Report this year sits within the context of a global pandemic. The 2020/21 year for Oxford SU saw the continuation, and escalation, of the measures required to manage the effects of the pandemic in the UK and abroad. In an ever-changing environment, Oxford SU Officers whom this year were inducted entirely remotely, re-focused the usual offering into ones that were led by four principles, or pillars. These were...



- 1:** The wellbeing and safety of staff and students, immediately and in the longer term
- 2:** The ability to provide appropriate and relevant support to students facing hitherto unknown challenges in their lives whilst studying at Oxford, including carrying on activity in alternative forms
- 3:** The ability to ensure the timely amplification of students' voices to the University to inform their decision making
- 4:** Safeguarding the organisation through prudent financial management

2021/21 KEY FOCUSES



FINANCIAL PRUDENCY



As a charitable, membership organisation answerable to our Members, major funder, Charity Commission and Department for Education organising our finances during the global pandemic was imperative. We worked hard to reassure our Trustee Board and student leaders to make a break-even year with the following measures...



Moved Commercial Income to the Finance Department and started monthly commercial meetings to scrutinise income



Appointed an external Director of OSSSL who is an expert in marketing



Monthly re-forecasting dependent on commercial income



Froze recruitment for a short time and utilised Furlough scheme where appropriate



Made regular contact with University and Colleges to enable conversations on funding moving forward



Careful cash management and introduction of cash flow management



Additional measures to ensure commercial client management through COVID-19 (eg. Regular client meetings and updates, data provided to showcase reach)



Additional financial prudence and questioning of spend through internal leadership team meetings

KEEPING THE UNION RUNNING

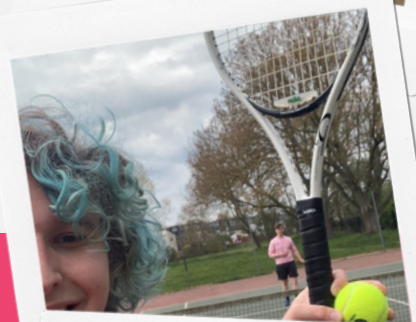
One of our pillars for running a successful student union was to ensure the staff and Officers who worked in our charity were well taken care of during the most turbulent year of our collective lives. Our biggest asset is our team, it was essential we gave them the emotional and physical tools needed to run the imperative SU services to improve the impact on students this year.

Introduced flexible working, access to counselling and wellbeing action plans

- Encouraged down time with quiet hours each day
- Online 'pub' on a Friday and sent wellbeing packs and easter eggs
- Ran an online pottery activity and launched '5 Ways to Wellbeing' campaign
- Purchased home-office equipment where needed & clear RTOSW plan

100% of staff and sabbatical officers thought that the organisation was managing the changes resulting from COVID-19 effectively

94% of team think Oxford SU is giving them the help they need to manage their mental wellbeing effectively (30+ higher than our SU benchmarked peers)



GETTING OUR HOUSE IN ORDER

The 25th May 2020 sparked a much-too-late global movement that rose with a louder voice as BLM protests erupted across the globe. Oxford SU knew its duty to respond meant it had a duty to act and re-adjusted its objectives to focus on becoming an actively anti-racist organisation. We brought in an external consultant who interviewed the whole team and split our plan into four focus areas.

- **Wrote our 24 point EDI action plan**
- **Ran x3 EDI training days held for whole organisation**
- **Reviewed the audit outcomes**
- **Added EDI objectives to all staff development plans**

This year we...



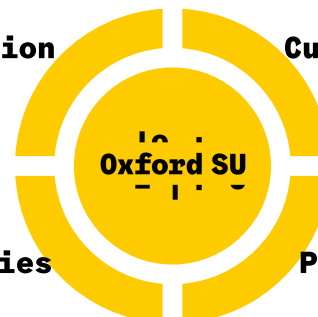
Project / Action	Why	Milestones / KPI	Deadline	Lead	Note
Ensure effective diversity monitoring for all job applications, elections, trustees and volunteers as standard	Analyse and understand diversity of engagement.	Process introduced	June 2021	DCEO/Head of F&OE	A - Owe monitor job app election standard volunteered
De-mystify the Sabbatical Officer roles for BAME students to encourage running for Sabbatical Officer positions	Encouraging diversity within our Sabbatical Officer team.	Increase of BAME candidates within the 2021 Elections	Elections 2021	Sabbatical Officers, Student Engagement Team	G - Sign increase BAA candid learnings future this
Increase the connection with our societies and campaigns that work directly on equality and diversity (ISOC, JSOC, ACS, Campaigns etc.)	Understanding diversity issues directly from lived experience. Students feel affinity to Students' Union prior to running for an elected position.	All campaign roles filled with a focus on intersectional. All met 1-2-1 to understand key issues. Sabas proactively seek to collaborate on work.	May 2021	Sabbatical Officers, Student Engagement	A - Work campaign reached other so More work done moving forward
Continue to grow and engage the BAME Leadership conference with the support of Sabbatical Officers	Encouraging diversity within our Sabbatical Officer team.	Increase in BAME candidates within the 2021 elections	Elections 2021	Sabbatical Officers, Student Engagement Team	G - Com increase attendance an incre BAA candid
Training for all staff on identity and feeling confident reporting/tackling racist incidents	To ensure that we are collectively able to tackle racism within the workplace	100% staff trained	June 2021	Head of F&OE	R - No attack
Within the democracy review, enable the President role to explicitly cover racial equality.	Bringing EDI issues to the forefront of the Sabbatical Officer team.	The democracy review passes through the relevant Governance channels and is implemented	May 2021	Sabbatical Officers/DCEO/VP Women	R - Rep pause Hilary, s up eg
Begin engagement with Investors in Diversity Award. Advance HR (or other) suitable EDI benchmark	Benchmark effectiveness of EDI work against national standard and ensure celebratory	IDI engaged and Benchmark	May 2021		

Representation

Culture

Policies

Progression



RACE EQUALITY TASK FORCE

In 2021, the Vice-Chancellor announced the launch of the RETF. After requesting a seat for a sabbatical officer of colour, both the President, Nikita Ma and Vice President Graduates, Lauren Bolz joined. The goal: to make Oxford inclusive.

So far...

- Established a Student Issues Working Group, first-ever Oxford SU President Co-Chair in a University working group.
- Made space for two students to sit on the SIWG. Oxford SU President collects the views and opinions of students from various channels, such as Student Council, BAME RepCom, and CRAE to ensure that the work in those spaces are truly representative of students
- Established a Student Dashboard Working group to collect data so that they can make informed recommendations to the RETF and University
- 31 recommendations compiled from student feedback
- 2 communication proposals accepted

"The Race Equality Task Force is important as this is the first step in making changes to this institution that will improve the student experience for our BAME members and consequently all members."

"My co-chairship shows that the University is willing to listen to its students in a different way than before, and for that and my membership that have waited too long for this opportunity, it has been my honor to devote myself to this work."

"It is vital that the group that will make changes to improve the student experience for BAME students is also led by a BAME student"

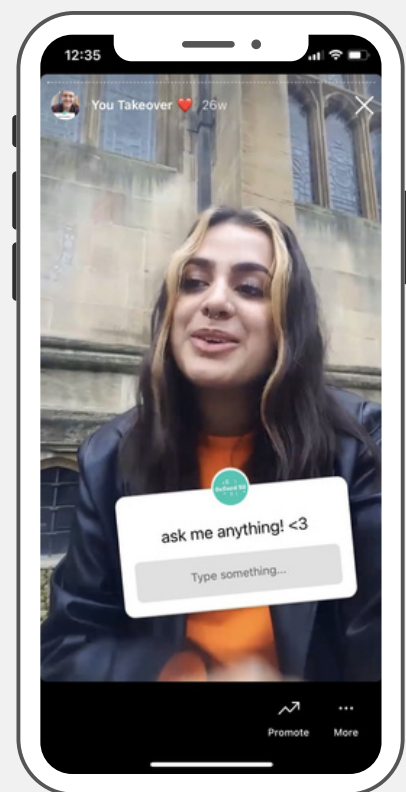
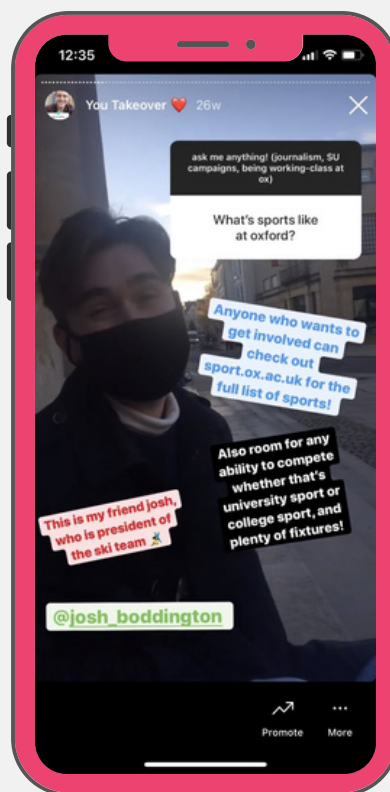
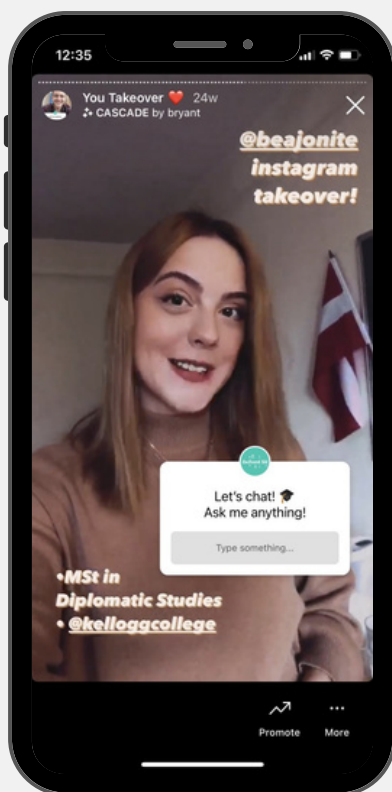
President, Nikita Ma says...



WHERE STUDENTS ARE



During 2020/21 digital connection was ever-more important and what better way to help students connect and find their communities remotely than giving them our platforms. This year, we ran a number of social media takeovers specifically designed to boost wellbeing and assist in students finding their place and connect with Oxford while so many felt isolated from their peers and their university.



This year we...

- Launched a new Instagram takeover program highlighting student leaders. Increased our Instagram followers from 2400 to **4400 in MT 2020**.
- Generated over **5000 likes** on Oxford SU takeover posts
- Helped Academic Affairs Division Communications Team find students for their Instagram Takeover
- Sabbatical Officers did a Freshers week Instagram Takeover on @OxUniStudents gaining **5700+ likes in one week**

FRESHER'S 2020

In a year where every Government announcement meant more questions than answers for universities in the UK, creating a tangible welcome for students was an important aim for Oxford SU. Early on in our planning, knowing a physical event was impossible, we sought to create an innovative, digital experience for students, university stalls and commercial stalls alike and produced the first-ever Oxford SU Virtual Fresher's Fair.



Helped students find their place and build communities



Collaborated with essential partners more than ever before



Showcased the SU, Officers and support services



Offered an agile, safe solution in a strange year

What we achieved



Pre-Event Student Engagement



Pre-registration attendees – 4014
Social media training: 70 students
Virtual fair introduction: 100 students
Virtual fair information for stallholders: 280 students

VIRTUAL FRESHERS 2020

Oxford SU

STUDENT SIGN-UPS: 7987

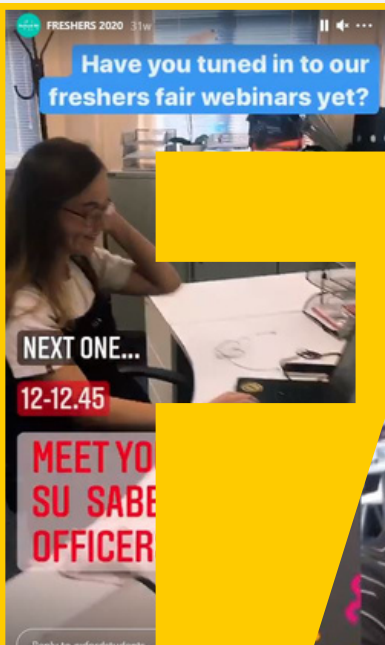
BOOTH VISITS: 290,975

VIRTUAL SWAG BAG DOCS DOWNLOADED: 45,493

STALL VIDEOS VIEWED: 8766

'The whole platform I thought was really impressive and user friendly – it looked up to date and smart'

'The overall look and presentation of the Freshers' Fair online was excellent, which will have played a key role in engaging students.'



FRESHER'S WEBINARS

During our Virtual Fair, for the first time, Oxford SU ran collaborative webinars with the University and Colleges. The aim was simple; to provide students the opportunity to ask questions they needed to ask to feel part of the community they were joining remotely.

We ran 10 webinar sessions including “International Orientation,” “Life as a Postgraduate student” and “How to make a difference: Volunteering, change-making, and fundraising at Oxford



1319
Attendees

**96 questions
asked**



**Students
attended from 41
countries**



COMMON ROOM SUPPORT

In a COVID year, student experience improvements went to the top of our annual objectives. Common Room and College engagement is key to reaching students 'where they are', virtually or otherwise. So, we made huge efforts in engaging reps from Common Rooms in our RepComms and tracking the impact we made to them.

HIGHLIGHTS

Attendees: 364 Michaelmas 553 Hilary 52% increase
Number of rep coms: 18 Michaelmas 23 Hilary 27% increase

GradPresComm

VP Grads took MCR Presidents worries about graduate accommodation to Graduate Admissions Committee and Martin Williams has now committed to making rent prices his priority

Entz RepComm

Environment & Ethics Reps were shown an early version of the University Sustainability policy and gave input on how it should be developed. And asked for events guidance with the SU produced for MT

VPComm

Vice Presidents asked Sabbs to lobby for the Hilary Term residency requirement to be lifted – which they did successfully.

International RepComm

International reps were advised to make a record of what their colleges were charging their students for winter vacation residence, which empowered their own lobbying.

Welfcomm

Officers successfully triggered a full student welfare review, with SU input, at St John's College

BallComm

Co-created with Oxford SU a resource of reasons for in-person college events which they are using to lobby their colleges.

21 Oxford SU 2020/21 Leadership elections candidates were common room reps

REPRESENTATION

The essential democratic function of the student union continued in the pandemic with an online version. Widely attended due to its new flexibility, Oxford SU Student Council is the home of cross-collegiate student voice at the university and our Sabbatical Officers report here during term time.

**9 meetings
to date**



Highlight: Mandate for Officers to lobby on waiving the residency requirement was fulfilled.



595 attendees



7 Motions

**1408 votes
cast**

RAG & TARGET SCHOOLS



Sophie Morris

RAG President 2021

Oxford SU Fundraising Scheme

Raised £3920 to date
1,103 students
participated

47 Students have participated
through RAG 2020/21

Highlight:

Naughty or Nice? event 867 students participated. Raised £2,601.

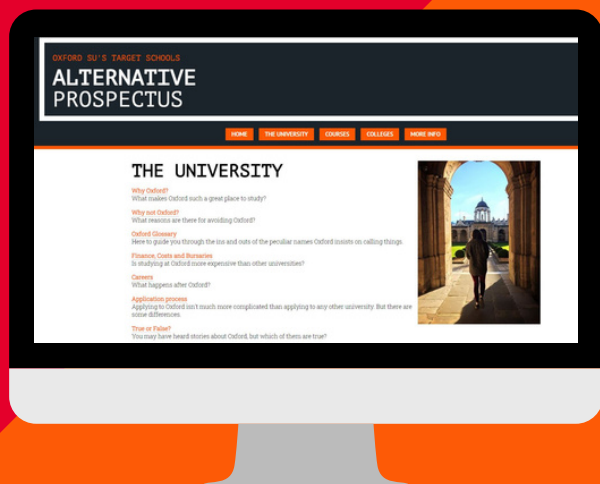
Had an event (Love Oxland) Nominated for the Event Award at the National Societies & Fundraising Awards

5 Oxford 6th-form
shadowing days (so far)

6 planned for rest of term

198 attendees

43 undergrads participated
in access work and
volunteering through Target
Schools 2020/21



Highlight:

Alternative Prospectus website updated.

Reached out to **70 Colleges, 139**

responses, will be completed end of June.



Oxford SU Access Scheme



Harry Twohig

Target Schools President 2021

OXFORD STUDENT & OXIDE RADIO

Ox
Stu

The Oxford Student has continued its wide range of sections and reporting throughout the pandemic and have maintained a high level of reporting throughout tough circumstances. Taking learnings from the digital aspects and creating a higher level of engagement amongst the student body of Oxford is next on the agenda for this student paper!

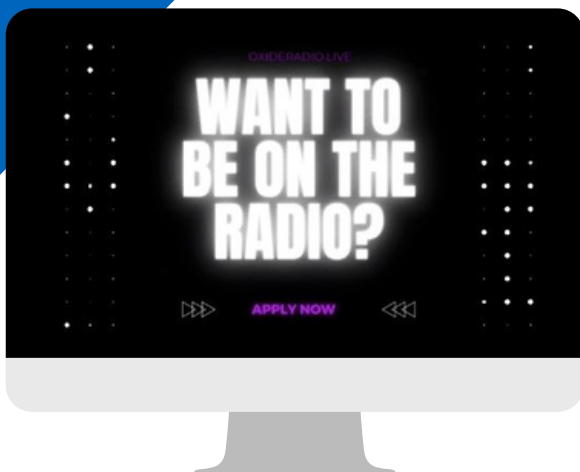
6 student Editors in Chief
8 Editions printed from April - June 2021
60+ students on the editorial team
1M+ website hits

New feature sections continue to flourish such as Identity & Pink



Our resident student-led radio station and podcast provider took an alternative route during the pandemic to access students asking students for ideas and running shows remotely and still continued to successfully recruit their student-led committee.

"Despite Oxford and most of the UK being under a national lockdown, Oxide Radio is determined and optimistic that it will still be running shows this term."



Sonny Jacobs Station Manager



Hi! My name's Sonny, and I'm the Station Manager for Oxide this year. What a grand title, eh? The Station Manager role is rather varied, encompassing everything from chairing committee meetings to deciding which types of microphones to buy for the studio.

Isabella Colletta Secretary

Hi, I'm Izzy and I'm Oxide radio's secretary for this year. My role is to handle the administrative side of the station, organise the weekly broadcasting schedule and assist with recruitment. Oxide has consistently produce some amazing shows and I'm so excited to see what we can achieve this year!



Chelsea Crawford



Programme Controllers
(Arts, News and Entertainment)

Hannah El-Amriti



Hi, my name is Hannan and I'm one of the two music controllers at Oxide! My role involves managing the many music shows we have here at the station and I'm excited to expand our selection further this year! I also co-host a music show with Oxide called 'Mixed Opinions' and outside the station, you can catch me in the lab.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP



Oxford SU Campaigns are representation bodies for students who identify with liberation or sectional characteristics. They elect their committee and their committee runs events and lobbying action alongside the Sabbatical Officers to enact change for students in Oxford. Success stories this year include...



Campaign Elections

3206 votes

74 committee

positions filled

It Happens Here ran an online Intersectionality Panel on the intersections of sexual violence with over 20 people in attendance, with Speakers from 4 UK charities, representing male* survivors, LGBTQ+ survivors, and survivors from ethnic minorities.



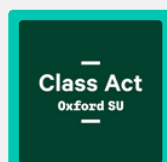
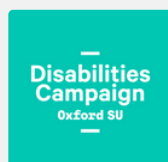
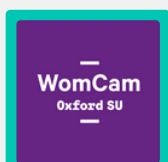
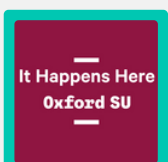
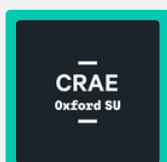
Class Act implemented the Class Act families scheme. They received applications to be part of a Class Act family from 268 current students and offer holders - over 100 more than last year - across the majority of colleges



Disabilities Campaign launched Facebook community groups for various disabilities in which 744 posts have been made this year. The most active are the Anxiety & Depression group and the Eating Disorders group.

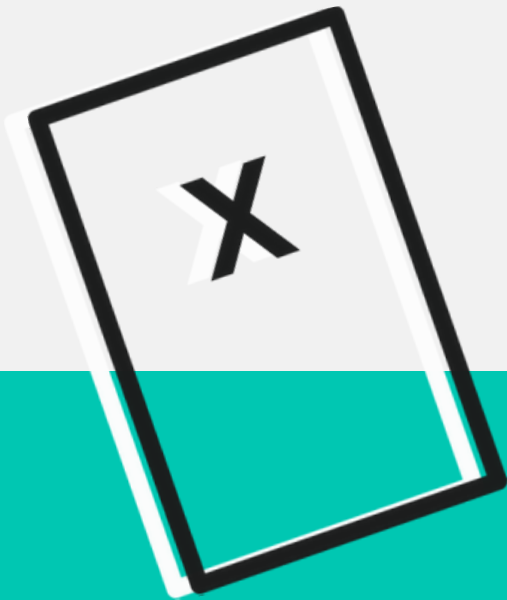


Sofia Co-chair of Oxford Class Act Campaign *'Leading the campaign alongside my inspiring friend Safa Sadozai has been one of my most fulfilling experiences at University'*



LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS

In this record-breaking year, Oxford SU welcomed an increase of 104% votes and 62% voter numbers, 159% increase in candidates and 67% increase for recommend a friend. (By-election results forthcoming.)



2020/21

RECOMMEND A FRIEND 169

CANDIDATES 44

VOTES 36,405

VOTERS 4881

2019/20

RECOMMEND A FRIEND 101

CANDIDATES 17

VOTES 17,779

VOTERS 3020



Safa Sadozai

Vice President
Access &
Academic Affairs-
elect

Manifesto



Aleena Waseem

Vice President
Charities &
Community-elect

Manifesto



Devika

Vice President
Graduates-elect

Manifesto



Keisha Asare

Vice President
Welfare & Equal
Opportunities-
elect

Manifesto



**Oluwakemi
Agunbiade**

Vice President
Women-elect

Manifesto

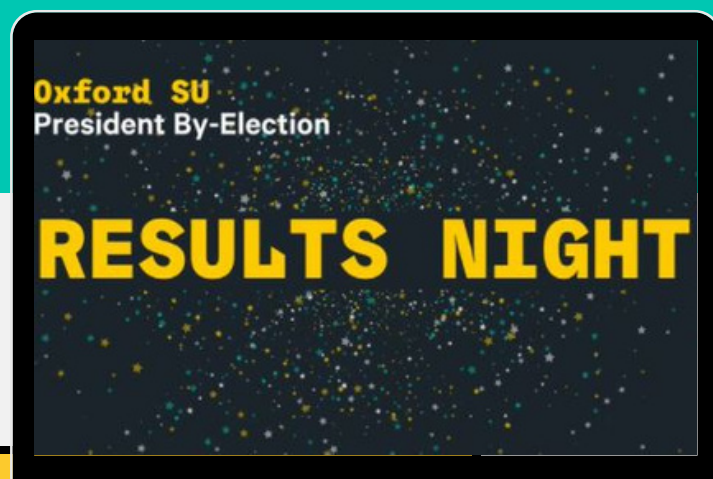
BY-ELECTION



In Trinity Term, we ran a By-Election for the President position following the resignation of the President-Elect. Utilising some good 'lesson learned' from the digital Leadership Elections in Hilary, the event ran smoothly, and results were announced 20th May 2021. (Full details forthcoming in By-Election report from the Returning Officer.)

Record-breaking 15 candidates nominated. 12 ran for election. Anvee Bhutani elected, current Oxford SU Campaign CRAE Co-Chair. 2506 votes cast 146% increase on 2019 by-election (1016)

First-ever all Women of Colour Sabbatical Officer team



2021-22 SABBATICAL OFFICER TEAM-ELECT



Anvee Bhutani
SU President-elect
[Manifesto](#)



Safa Sadozai
Vice President
Access &
Academic Affairs-elect
[Manifesto](#)



Aleena Waseem
Vice President
Charities &
Community-elect
[Manifesto](#)



Devika
Vice President
Graduates-elect
[Manifesto](#)



Keisha Asare
Vice President
Welfare & Equal
Opportunities-elect
[Manifesto](#)



Oluwakemi
Agunbiade
Vice President
Women-elect
[Manifesto](#)



ELECTIONS - BAME LEADERSHIP

A key consideration of all activity in the COVID year at Oxford SU was to reach our minoritised members. This saw the continuation of our BAME Leadership Programme online. We ran this way ahead of the election cycle, to encourage and empower black and minoritised student voices in the University of Oxford and increased candidate support activity.



BAME LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Monday 22nd



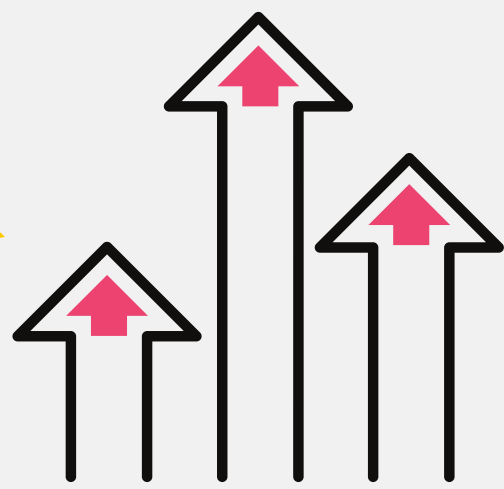
Our goal:

De-mystify Sabbatical Officer roles for BAME students to encourage running for Sabbatical Officer positions

44% BAME CANDIDATES

14 BAME WINNERS (88%)

9 BAME Leadership Conference participants won in the 2021 Leadership Elections



ELECTIONS - CANDIDATE SUPPORT

Drop-off is a key consideration in elections, especially in a pandemic year. Oxford SU increased candidate support provision to reduce the barriers for minoritised groups to successfully be elected and to improve candidate wellbeing during an anxious time.



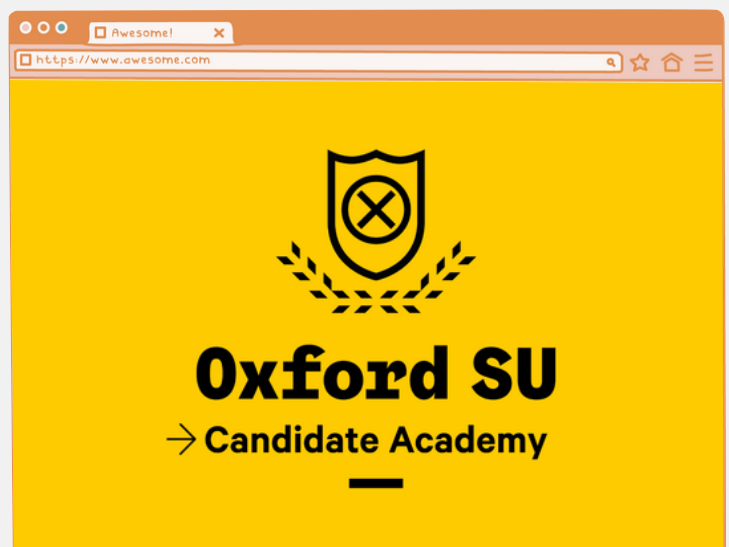
200+ messages between candidates and staff candidate supporters at SU

10 out of 14 candidates specifically fed back how supportive candidate support was

Only 3 candidates dropped out between nominations closing and results.

77 prospective candidates tuned into our Candidate Academy webinars

Webinar subjects included 'A Day in the Life of a Sabb', 'Becoming an Effective Leader', 'Social Media Campaigning' and 'What Do Our Students Want'



COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

Oxford SU Sabbatical Officers sat on over 70+ committees and university meetings in 2020/21 and we successfully recruited and trained all Division Representatives who sit on Divisional Boards and more.

**TRAINED 8
DIVISIONAL REPS**



**Over 21 applications
for the roles**

Course Reps: We invited course reps from every department to attend divisional-based training to help them in the representative roles.



In a student voice survey ran by the VP Grads: 46.5% agreed or strongly agreed that 'Oxford's student representation system gives me the opportunity to influence the aspects of my course or department that I would like to see changed.'

REPRESENTATION SUPPORT

From common room election support to divisional representatives, course rep training and more, Oxford SU has increased activity and re-focused to aid student representation since the pandemic began.



**179 STUDENT
GROUP
ELECTIONS RAN
THROUGH THE SU
WEBSITE**

**994
positions**

**1120
candidates**

**46,419
votes**



Highlight:
OU Drama Society having seen the Common Room elections and asked to run their election through the SU system, and had over 200 students sign up to join the society and over 150 votes.

ADVICE & SUPPORT

Oxford SU's independent Advice service is well-embedded in our service offer for members. During the pandemic, it has been accessed frequently on matters relating to accommodation, learning and teaching, exams and appeals and complaints.

2020/21 so far
+/- changes on last
year

2019/20

Student contacts
1837 +24%

Student contacts
1482

Other contacts 102
+168%

Other contacts 38

Cases 1350 +19%

Cases 1132

Complexity 87% +3%
Repeat 45% +36%

Complexity 24%
Repeat 33%

Coming Soon...

A pilot initiative that syncs Sabb portfolios with support work. Truly bringing the representatives and professional services together for the betterment of students' support needs and outcomes.



LETS TALK 
Welfare Issues
Hosted by **Amelia Holt** - VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities

ADVICE & SUPPORT BIG IMPACT AREAS

ACCOMMODATION

The pandemic exacerbated the issue of renting in Oxford so Oxford SU offered 'Supported Signposting' to students. This signposts to local housing advice services and assisted students through the advice these bodies provided. Oxford SU introduced Tenancy Checking Appointments to go over agreements pre-signing. So far 39 appointments have been held.

APPEALS & COMPLAINTS

Oxford SU advice service has assisted 65 appeal or complaint support requests so far. Since the pandemic, there has been a sharp increase in students seeking support in this area so we have supported in matters such as the mitigating circumstances statements.

STUDENT TO STUDENT HARASSMENT

Oxford SU has a dedicated pathway to the University support service and use our Support Signposting advice model and new Talk It Through appointments as an extra support in these matters. In many cases this year, we have held 'case conferences' with the University to agree the best course of action for students and support them as much as possible.

STUDENT TRAINING

Student training has gone from strength to strength this year with the need for agile and available training in a digital world. Oxford SU took a student-needs approach to its offer, building on the basic package and creating more bespoke modules as students came to us.

**24 NEW TRAINING SESSIONS
CREATED THIS YEAR**

**1257 STUDENTS RECEIVED
TRAINING FROM OXFORD SU**

“One of the best online trainings I have ever completed! Great balance between having enough information but not too long, and really good to have trigger warnings and signposting.”

“The scenarios at the end of the training were more challenging to respond to than similar challenges I’ve seen on other organisations’ safeguarding training modules. The nuances of each scenario were good and made them more realistic, as it meant there was more to consider before choosing the best course of action.”



Oxford SU
Student training

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Almost half of the students at the University are graduates. Vice President Graduates, Lauren Bolz, launched a number of campaigns this year to better represent their needs in committees and provide practical support in a very challenging year.

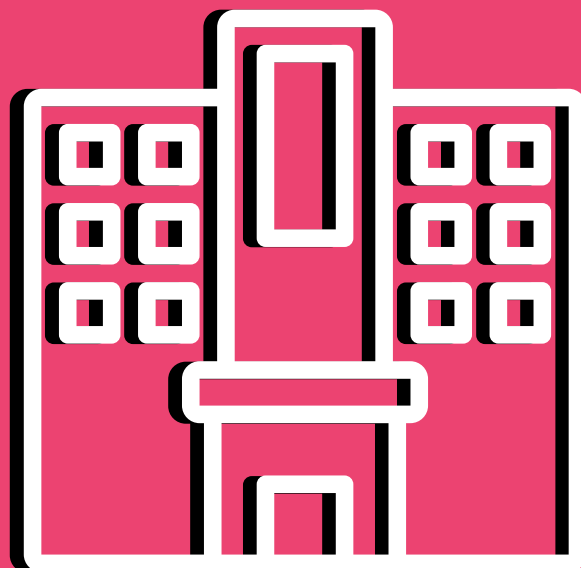
GOAL: ACCOMMODATION IMPROVEMENTS



Worked with StudentPad to change our platform to allow Colleges to list their vacant rooms more easily and guided them through this process.



Advertised the platform to students and worked with the Graduate Admissions Office to integrate this platform into their Accommodation Advisory Service



**VP Graduates, Lauren Bolz
says...**

"I've really enjoyed working with the University this year to improve the provisions and support offered to graduate students at Oxford. My hope is that this focus on graduate students and their student experience will continue to frame conversations and spark changes that will better allow all graduate students to thrive here"



Highlight:
The Accommodation Advisory Service was launched in partnership with the university after an extensive lobbying effort by VP Grads

FAIR OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

During the height of the pandemic, students fed back to Oxford SU Officers in Council and Repcomms that they wanted the University to recognise the academic challenges they were facing.

Working with the University, Vice President Access and Academic Affairs launched a campaign to encourage empathetic listening through the storytelling of student experience to aid in reworking plans for assessment and workload during COVID-19.

AIM:

380 students signed up for the campaign.

Four toolkit newsletters created opened 31,911 times.


Q&A workshops welcomed 113 attendees.



To lobby and empower students across the collegiate university to lobby decision-makers effectively

FAIR OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

Exams & Assessment
in 2021



Outcomes:

- Students will not fail papers due to cohort-wide disruption
- Students can 'self-submit' mitigating circumstances without college or departmental approval
- Students with coursework submissions can detail their disruption to exam boards.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mandated and heavily requested by students, the main objective for Vice President Welfare & Equal Opportunities this year was to assist in the creation of a centralised group that tackled the student mental health crisis at the University long-term.



**NUS research
showed us...**



Over half of students (52%) say their mental health is worse than before the pandemic.

20% of students have sought support for their mental health

Only 29% of those that said their mental health is worse have sought support.

Of those that received support 3 in 5 were satisfied with it.

Over half of students found their caring duties increased during the pandemic.

GETTING TO WORK...

Working with the University, Oxford SU secured the first Mental Health Task Force to tackle the mental health crisis. The priorities were...

1. Targeted preventative support for students who are self-isolating, who are remaining in Oxford over the vacation period and who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.
2. Oversee the mental health implications of any disciplinary measures enacted as a result of COVID-rule breaches.
3. Provide student leaders with up to date and accurate information on the current situation within colleges with regards to coronavirus.
4. Broaden the support available to student welfare representatives.

MENTAL HEALTH WINS



Expanding the Counselling Service to help tackle the student mental health crisis.

Improving the inclusivity and accessibility of the University Counselling service by hiring a counsellor who is specialised in supporting black students.

Supporting over the 2020/21 Christmas Vacation by providing additional counselling availability over the Christmas closure period.

Outcomes:

Oxford SU has worked in partnership with the University and colleges to make the case for additional resources and staff support to meet unprecedented demand from the COVID student mental health crisis.

We are pleased to see the University have committed to a significant investment of over £400,000 to meet demand.



WELLBEING EVENTS

While students continued to struggle, Oxford SU tackled mental health and wellbeing simultaneously with preventative and reactive initiatives where restrictions allowed. This was especially important over the Christmas vacation when so many students couldn't go home or felt more isolated than ever.



“This is our **highlight welfare event of the week**”

says Brasenose student

80+ students attended our wellbeing dog walks

(16 dog walks with 5 students per walk in order to maintain the 6 person rule!)

Plus:

- **Coffee walks: 150 students**
- **Mulled Wine Masterclass**
- **Christmas Hampers sent to 38 students**



SUSTAINABILITY

Right at the start of their term, Vice President Charities and Community's goal has been to help make Oxford and its Colleges more sustainable. This year, after years of hard work and collaboration, the University announced the approval of the Sustainability Strategy. Additionally, each year Oxford SU encourages students to engage in University consultation and pledge to live more sustainably in a Planet Pledge campaign

SIX WAYS TO TACKLE THE CLIMATE CRISIS



"At Oxford SU we're pleased to have worked on the strategy every step of the way, ensuring that student voices are represented and at the heart of the vision."

VP C&C, Ben Farmer says...

"Student campaigners at Oxford play a leading role in tackling the environmental crisis at all levels and the dedication of students has been a crucial part of getting the strategy over the line"

"Oxford SU's Student Council, representative body of all students at the University of Oxford, has voted unanimously to approve and support the Environmental Sustainability Strategy"

350 pledges made this year
and **£600+** worth of prizes
were sent to students
1200 responses secured for
the University Environmental
Sustainability consultation
(increased **35%** on last year!)



SEX EDUCATION

Oxford SU Vice President Women launched a project this year to find out the education our members had received ahead of joining university to better improve support and welfare services and utilise the results to make resources that are essential for personal knowledge.

**Surveyed
students** **1073**

**Next steps: create
an Oxford SU Sex Ed
curriculum for
students**



"Something that struck me was the way that a lack of understanding of sexual health basics undermines attempts to educate students about consent"

**VP Women,
Alex Foley
says...**

LOVE OXFORD

As government guidance still meant restrictions on students returning and forming those ever-important connections with the city of Oxford, we collaborated with the University to do something about it and launched the Love Oxford campaign in Trinity 2021. This will especially be useful for Graduate students who are on campus during the Summer

**Since
launching...**

**79 events have been
added to Love Oxford
from all parts of the
collegiate university**

**LOVE OXFORD HAS
BEEN VIEWED 3680
TIMES (5% OF ALL
OXFORD SU
WEBSITE VIEWS)**



Highlight:
We've helped promote a
training session for the
Educational Media
Services:
'The beginners guide to
running student events for
a virtual Audience'

WHERE WE WANT TO IMPROVE

- More improvements to Sabbatical Officer Induction and leadership development
- Enhance Candidate Academies for annual Leadership Election
- More time invested into training materials and delivery to Common Rooms and Repcomms
- Receive protected characteristics data from the University to enhance our campaigns to empower students from a liberation background
- Increase voter turnout in Leadership Elections and work with the University to help us continue to improve this year on year
- Review Student Council's Officer scrutiny processes
- Training student reps to give basic advice. We are trialling this with student staff at Freshers 2021
- Extend Advice Service Drop-In hours to improve service outreach
- Develop a Policy webpage on the Oxford SU website to give Oxford students a place to find the latest bitesize HE policy updates to empower their lobbying in-College and Departments
- Revive in-person wellbeing events in line with the Wellbeing Menu

WHAT'S NEXT?

As ever, there's always more to do. We look forward to handing over to a new team of Sabbatical Officers for 2021-22, all of whom are women of colour; a first for Oxford SU. We are excited to be welcoming over 1000 new student members as a result of our recent article changes, and to showcase Oxford SU and our services to students.

There are significant challenges for us to tackle across our priority areas of mental health, race equality, sustainability and access. We look forward to furthering our campaigns across these issues to create a better Oxford.

We are committed to building back better, using learnings from the pandemic to develop a bold strategic plan which engages colleges and the University at all levels and consistently showcases our impact.

We know we need to make improvements in the way we integrate with both students and staff across the Oxford ecosystem and we look forward to working with our partners to build a stronger Oxford SU for the future.

Oxford SU Sabbatical Officers 2020/21

CEO SAYS...

It is incredible to see the impact of Oxford SU all in one document and knowing that despite the challenging year and everything COVID threw at the organisation it stood strong, learning, adapting and delivering for our student members.

As we look forward to developing our new strategy which will focus on continuing to amplify students voices through our representative structures, increasing our college engagement and developing our income generation strategy. I know Oxford SU has a bright future and will take the learnings from what has been such a tough year for all to positively move forward.



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