

OUSU

reports to council

1st week hilary 2008

Martin McCluskey

President

Hello All,

Welcome back to Hilary Term – I hope you had a great Christmas and New Year!

Accommodation

This term, I'm going to be putting a special emphasis on accommodation issues, both for those living in and out. I'm in the process of collecting tenancy and license agreements from colleges to review them for potential unfair clauses and other imbalances. Dom (Rent and Accommodation Officer) is also starting an accommodation committee for members of JCR and MCR committees who are responsible for students living in and out.

For students living out, I'm looking into regulations that the City Council can apply for to regulate landlords. Many cities have adopted this and it's led to a higher quality of housing being offered and landlords being more effectively monitored.

We're also starting to think about Rent and will be holding the first Rent meeting at 5pm ON TUESDAY OF SECOND WEEK. Please come along.

New Vice Chancellor

At University Council in 9th Week, the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor was discussed. I raised the point that the nominating committee contained no student representatives. The Registrar said that this was unfortunately the case and the nominating committee will remain in the same form for this appointment round. Members of the University will be able to make their views on the new VC heard by emailing nomcom@admin.ox.ac.uk. I encourage you all to advertise this and make sure students' views are heard on this important decision.

SRI

After a three-year OUSU campaign, the proposals to adopt an SRI policy for the University were accepted by University Council in 9th Week. The proposals create an SRI Review committee, which will have a student member and also make OUSU Council an official body for referring investments for review. This is a huge success for an OUSU campaign and also a great model of how student representation can work on a very senior level.

NUS Extraordinary Conference

In 9th Week, I attended an NUS Extraordinary Conference in Leicester to discuss the NUS Governance Reforms. The meeting was long, but not without some excitement and saw the governance reform proposals pass. The reforms now go to Annual Conference in April for final approval.

Reach Oxford

I met with Emma from the International Office to discuss the next steps in the Reach Oxford Scholarship scheme. We've had a disappointing number of colleges accept a student for the coming academic year. It would be great if you could talk to your Principals/Wardens/Masters and convince them of the merits of being involved in the scheme. You can get more information, and additional copies of the information pack, by emailing me.

Head of General Office Appointment

I had two meetings with Ben Heath from the University Finance Division to discuss the appointment of our new full time member of staff. The appointment process is progressing well and we should be advertising within the next few weeks.

PPH Meeting

With the PPH Presidents, I met with Dr. Ralph Walker who is chair of the new PPH Supervisory Committee. This committee is charged with supervising the implementation of the PPH Report recommendations that were published last term. Dr. Walker discussed the concerns of the PPHs with the Presidents and promised further meetings as the committee progresses with its work.

Vice Chancellor

I met with the Vice Chancellor on Friday of 0th Week to discuss the draft Strategic Plan, the role of business in the University and internal OUSU issues.

Groupware

I attended another meeting of the Groupware Requirements Panel, and will attend two more meetings next week to hear presentations from representatives of Microsoft, Apple and Google.

Joke of the Week: "What day of the week is Super Tuesday on?" – Louise Randall, Vice President (Welfare)

Rich Hardiman	V-P (Finance)
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With Christmas out of the way we've still got a lot to do, but I'm glad to say that things are progressing (relatively) smoothly. I'm just going to do a general update on individual portfolio areas – if there's anything I miss just let me know.

ZOO

The big news, clearly, is the loss of Wednesdays at Park End. I'll deal with that in a moment. Our other nights continue to grow, ZOO Na Na has just gained a new night manager, who worked alongside Alexia Kapranos last term learning the ropes. ZNN continues to pull in capacity early in the evening week after week, which is great.

The newest ZOO night, Fresh at Risa, was the real success story of last term. From an admittedly wobbly start we've built a night which more than holds its own against the what was previously the most established night in the city. We're hoping this will continue this term, but obviously we still need your support for that.

Right, Park End. It's not a secret that the night performed poorly last term – the refurbishment that had been planned to happen during the summer ended up happening between 2nd and 8th weeks, so that Freshers' introduction to what should have been the best night on offer in Oxford was tainted by the fact that the place looked like a building site. We're disappointed with the fact that Park End (or Lava and Ignite, as it's now known) wanted to end the relationship with ZOO, especially given that we stuck with them through such a huge upheaval, but I think that their attitude to ZOO is indicative of the new management's general attitude to students. As far as I can see the students who go to Park End don't matter to the club except as cash cows. We made attempts throughout the term to put on themed events and get drinks prices cut in order to remain competitive but met either indifference or active resistance at pretty much every turn. ZOO doesn't exist to make the most money of any promoter in Oxford, but to offer cheap, fun, student-friendly nights to every member of this university. Based on what I've seen in the last term these don't seem to be priorities shared by the new management at this venue. While it's a blow to lose the night (more for personal pride than for the sake of OUSU, which wasn't depending on a lot of cash from this direction) I think it's better for us not to compromise on our reason for being in the business than to hang on and squeeze cash out of our members.

By the time you read this we'll have a replacement Wednesday night in place (we're currently looking at OFS) all ready for 2nd week. So watch out for launch night offers, and I look forward to seeing people there.

Other ZOO news: we're looking into starting a Tuesday night at Po Na Na, playing good, non-cheese music from the eighties and early nineties (believe me, there was quite a lot of it). If you know of anyone who might be interested in becoming resident DJ there let me know (finance@ousu.org)

NUS

Lots of people are asking me how much NUS affiliation is going to cost them next year. Short answer is that I won't know until everyone's decided one way or the other on affiliation. The NUS is charging us less this year, so we'll be passing that saving along to Common Rooms, but obviously if lots of people decide not to affiliate the remaining CRs will pay more. If anyone who has read this far knows that their common room has not yet made a decision can I make a plea that you put a motion to your next meeting to discuss it. Ta.

Publications

This year we're staggering the way we produce publications (I've edited or deputy edited the majority of them at one point or another throughout my time at Oxford – trust me, the old system didn't work). We've just sent the latest editions of the Forum, the Disabilities Guide, the Alternative Careers Guide and the Alternative Prospectus to the printers, so that's all good. Not all of them were as on time as they might have been, inevitably, but we're doing ok. Those of you who haven't had Living Out Guides yet please come and see me during or after Council, as these now need to go out to your first years urgently.

That's it, that's all, that's all there is. See you at Risa tonight...

Louise Randall Opportunities)	V-P	(Welfare	and	Equal
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A very Happy New Year to you all! I hope you're all back into this new term feeling rested and ready to go with those resolutions. Here at OUSU towers we all managed to get some time off over Christmas so we're all raring to go. As always, do feel free to ask about anything in this report.

Student Advice Service

Following an OUSU Executive Meeting in 8th Week of Michaelmas Term, the Executive resolved to form a Review Group to examine the work of the Student Advice Service (SAS) and produce a recommendation for a new structure for the SAS. See the council motion in your agendas for more information on this!

We're still undergoing a really valuable period of consultancy with the counselling service, and we hope this is going to lead to an improved service for students.

As part of this whole scale SAS review, we're also undertaking a process of collecting feedback from all those who use our service, which we hope

will help us further improve our work in supporting students as effectively as we can.

So far we have seen over 80 major cases since taking office.

General Welfare

Walk Safe

OUSU are supporting the student safety scheme, Walk Safe, to set up a committee and to recruit more volunteers. Email welfare@ousu.org to get involved, and see below for details of how to contact the service to be walked home.

Walk Safe

9 PM – IAM 07768 371 882
Tuesday – Friday Or
Weeks 1 – 8 01865 279 045

Durex

OUSU are now supplying your common rooms with Durex condoms! These are in addition to the NHS Safex condoms that we are continuing to stock for condom machines. Ask your Welfare Officer about ordering some.

Depression in students

During Michaelmas I attended a conference on the subject of student depression and how best to support students with depression. I have written up much of the material covered, and distributed it to welfare officers. If anyone else is interested in a copy, do email me.

National Nightline Conference

This took place during the vacation on the topic of 'new media'. There was intensive training on the use of 'new media' such as email and instant messaging for supporting students. Many students use email to contact welfare officers, and the Student Advice Service, and I will be incorporating aspects of the training and 'best practice' into subsequent training for welfare officers and new members of the SAS.

Early Intervention

The Oxfordshire Early Intervention Scheme works with young people aged between 15 and 30 who are experiencing their first episode of psychosis. Students are key group for them to be working with, and I have been liaising with them to help start off their work within the university community.

Equal Opportunities

The 'Anti-Racism campaign' have now elected a committee and voted upon a constitution. They have also renamed themselves, to better reflect the work that they wish to focus on. This campaign is now known as REREC, which stands for the Racial, Ethnic, & Religious Equality Campaign. To get in touch email paul.kadetz@green.ox.ac.uk, or get in touch with me.

At the end of last term, LGBTQ Council elected a new committee. This term they're aiming to get their queen women's sexual health and campaign up and running, as well as the LGBTQ mental health awareness campaign. Get in touch with kate.wicks@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk for more information about how you can get involved!

Hannah Roe	V-P (Women)
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Attended- (0th week onwards)

WomCam x2

Enough!

Finals Gender Gap Working Party

NUS Training Day and Open meeting in Parliament on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill

Events

Deborah Cameron speaking on her book ' The Myth of Mars and Venus' - This event was attended by 180 people. Feedback was incredibly positive. When I stood for election, I promised to work towards organising a series of lectures on feminism and gender issues and this has been a very good start.

Upcoming Events -

Weds 2nd Week - Public Speaking Workshop - This was very popular last time - in terms of numbers and written feedback.

During the winter vacation and ongoing -

Academic - I worked on organising Finals Forums.

Speakers - I worked with WomCam to invite a number of speakers

Welfare - Eating Disorders - I worked with the other co-ordinators of Enough to produce a working document on issues facing students affected with eating disorders at the college and university level - we intend for this to be discussed at University level. The OUSU Guide is nearing completion and we have new posters to advertise the group.

Sports - The University will be doing a review of sports this year - several people have now told me of their concerns regarding what they perceive as a lower level of provision of facilities, funding and recognition accorded to women involved in sport. I have been working with different students to compile a questionnaire to further investigate the matter and to provide the sports review panel with further information.

College Women's Officers - I'm currently organising training for Women's Officers. Kat Wall has revamped the Women's Officers handbook and we will update it with information and ideas from the training at the end of the term.

Oversight responsibilities-

WomCam - WomCam has two new Co-Chairs and is starting to become better known within the University, thanks to its recent high profile events.

Promoting Choice Campaign - This Campaign had two events in 1st Week - attending the Open meeting in the House of Commons on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill and going to the film screening of '4 months, 3 weeks and 2 days'.

Ingrid Frater

V-P (Graduates)

Welcome back everyone, and Happy New Year!

University Committees – I've been to EPSC (Educational Policy and Standards Committee) and two University Councils since the last OUSU Council. James and I (though James did most of the work!) have written motions and sent them to CRs on language learning and continuing assessment, so that we have policy on these issues for EPSC. A new committee looking at Graduate Admissions has been formed, of which I am a member. We will be looking at how to improve the process for students, central admin and colleges/departments. My work on a group looking at Teaching and Learning Space in the University is continuing – on Tuesday I gave a presentation on graduate students' needs and wants in terms of teaching and learning space.

International Students' Campaign – the campaign is continuing to grow and work in underway to organise an International Festival later this term. We met with various international societies to gauge interest and to gain ideas, and this was successful. I was also present at a morning event where the University signed a deal for increased funding for students from, and travel to, several South American countries. I am hoping to contact local banks in the near future, to look at banking for international students, and how this can be improved. One of the co-chairs and I spoke at an orientation programme for visiting international students this week.

Mature Students' Campaign – this is something which I am keen to set up this term.

Junior Deans – I have now compiled an up-to-date list of graduate students who work as Junior/Assistant Deans, and, in response to their enthusiasm, will be setting up a meeting with all of them to see how I can support them and to allow them to meet each other.

Graduate training – I have been in contact with the Humanities coordinator for graduate training, and am now looking at how to work on this and how academic careers of graduate students can be improved and enhanced.

Website for applicants – several members of OUSU Exec were involved in a session, starting to look at the University's admission site for undergrads and grads. This will be a big project this term,

following on from www.ox.ac.uk/students

Aldwych – I have attended meetings of Aldwych (the student unions from the Russell Group Universities) at Bristol and UCL. Of particular note are meeting John Denham MP and the Chair of the Russell Group, UCL's Vice Chancellor. Discussions included the future of higher education, involving issues such as fees, teaching contact time, and the globalisation of higher education.

PGCE students – as a former PGCE student myself, I have been very keen to push for more involvement of PGCE students in widening participation, because we have around 180 students working in Oxfordshire comprehensives, many of whom go on to teach in state schools across the country. I feel this resource is currently dreadfully underused. I have brought this up at EPSC, and it is now part of the University's access strategy to work more closely with PGCE students. James and I met my old PGCE tutor, who has taken this project on, and we will be looking at how to train and encourage PGCE students to become ambassadors for Oxford, in encouraging pupils to apply.

SAS – I've had a few bits of casework and am expecting more as the term gets properly underway. We have been working on gaining feedback from SAS users and also on working with the Counselling Service to improve our service.

OSSL projects continue, and we had a full board meeting.

Common Room outreach – I have continued to meet with MCR Presidents and OUSU reps on a one-to-one basis, as new committees have been elected.

James Lamming

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

Welcome back to Hilary Term and a happy new year to you all. The Christmas vacation produced a welcome change of pace, and it is a shock to be back in term so soon. Though the office was quieter, work continued apace to finish up work from last term and prepare for the coming term. Key projects for me this term will be the access open days and bus trip with Cambridge, finalist forums, lobbying colleges on academic discipline and internal governance reviews.

Access

Alternative Prospectus – I negotiated £1000 sponsorship from the Bank of England, in return for an advert within the prospectus. 10,000 copies should be printed by the end of January, of which 4,700 will be sent to every school in the country this year alongside the University's own prospectus.

Target Schools Parliament Reception – This year is Target School's 25th Birthday, and to celebrate this fact, a reception is taking place in Parliament on the 6th February. The event is being kindly hosted by John Grogan MP who established Target Schools when he was OUSU President in 1982-83, and all the MPs and Lords have been invited. I contacted the University about this event, and offered to share this rare opportunity so they can lobby the parliamentarians about the good work being done on Access. This has had the benefit of the University organising much of the event and paying for it, though around 15 students are attending, I have been involved in its planning and will be one of the three speakers on the day so that OUSU and Target Schools maintains a high profile.

Interview Website – Thank you to everyone who sent in profiles. The prospective student section of the website is now the second most popular page, behind the home page. Over the interview period it was averaging 600 hits a day, and received 7,489 times between the 1st November and 10th December. In quieter moments in the future, I hope to smarten up the layout of this section of the website, and will be looking for more content to add in the future.

Comprehensive Campaign – I went to Cambridge to meet my opposite number (their VP Access – note that with the VP Education, CUSU have two people to do my job!) and discuss the

Comprehensive Campaign we are planning on running just before Easter. This will involve a mini-bus load of Oxford and Cambridge students visiting different schools who do not have a history of sending successful students to Oxford and holding mini conferences to encourage their talented students to apply. We also hope that the road trip nature of the event will encourage some media attention. More news to follow next report.

Open Days – I am in the process of finalising dates (though it is likely they will be on either Monday or Tuesday 9th week) for the Black, Minority and Ethnic; Students with Disabilities and Women Open Days. So far, Trinity have agreed to host the BME day and Wadham the SWD day. I will be looking for volunteers from these underrepresented groups already at Oxford to help out with the events so please get in touch if you are interested. More information to follow soon.

Interviews – There is, thankfully, little for me to do during interviews. However, to help those more stressed than I, a mailing list was set up, a guide on best practice in organising interview helpers produced and distributed and a meeting set up so different college team leaders could meet each other. I attempted to organise a 'Meet and Greet' scheme, with college helpers at the Bus and Train station to direct the more lost interviewees to the correct place, and provide a warm welcome to the less navigationally challenged. When the scheme worked, I received a lot of positive feedback. Unfortunately, logistical difficulties prevent me from calling the idea a success, as many t-shirts and maps didn't get passed over successfully, and to reduce hassle, I cancelled it in 10th week. I've also lost all 25 t-shirts despite begging emails to interview helpers. I still believe it is a good idea, and that a friendly welcome at the train or bus station after a long journey would be warmly received by nervous interviewees. It would have been planned further in advance had I had the idea slightly sooner, and I will leave it to my successor to decide whether to attempt the scheme next year. Thank you to everyone who helped out, and if you do have one of the t-shirts, I'd like it back!

Access more generally – I gave a access presentation at a school in Greenwich, ran the afternoon session at the first day of the University's Foundation Year Ambassador Program, am part of the steering group on the Admissions pages of the University website and attended Admissions Executive.

Academic Affairs

Meetings – On top of the usual EPSC, Curators of University Library, University Council (where we have been able to take a more fuller part recently), I am now on Institutional Audit Management Board and attended a meeting about the PPH review.

Casework – I am now up-to-date with all my paper work, helped with some casework over my Christmas vacation (no rest for the wicked, or at least the SAS) and am helping with the development of improved services and procedures in the SAS.

Academic Discipline – With the kind help of a number of JCR Presidents, I have summarised the academic discipline procedures in all undergraduate colleges. A paper has been produced for Senior Tutors' Committee and is being consulted on with JCR Presidents. Our hope is to increase the clarity of these procedures, and ensure that every student, whatever their college, is treated in a comparable way. On a related issue, there is a consultation paper on First Public Exam retakes being discussed in colleges. This is a fairly good paper, giving almost every student who fails the chance to retake, but is not yet perfect and I will be working with JCR Presidents and Academic Affairs Reps to make it so.

OUSU

Turkey Costume – Following my Council mandate, I made a turkey costume and wore it to Park End. It was not fowl [sic] but brilliant, even if I do say so myself. There are tagged photos on my facebook profile.

'No Platform' – I have spent the start of term trying to find a solution to the ongoing arguments surrounding 'no platform' issues that risk triggering a costly and pointless referendum. The motion in today's Council will explain more.

Targets for the Term

For the record, the key projects I hope to finish this term are:

- Open Days with SWD, BME and Women students.
- Comprehensive Campaign Bus Tour with CUSU.
- Pass academic discipline paper in Senior Tutors Committee.
- Finalist forums for arts and science students.
- Encourage Divisional Boards to follow MPLS example of Divisional JCCs.

Claire Addison

V-P (Charities and Community)

Hi everyone and welcome back to Oxford.

Here's a brief rundown of what I've been working on over the vacation and the first week of term.

ALTERNATIVE CAREERS FAIR AND GUIDE

This has taken up most of my time recently. The Fair will take place on Saturday 26 January from 11am-3pm in Exam Schools. I've been arranging speakers for our six seminar events and writing the accompanying Alternative Careers Guide. We've commissioned some great articles this year. I spent most of 0th week working on this. Many many thanks to Rich for being an absolute star with all his help. In return I won't tell people what you google.

COMMUNITY/VOLUNTEERING

I've been speaking with the Oxford Carers Service, a local primary school and the British Heart Foundation in the last week about volunteering opportunities for students. I'm also working with Will Horowitz from CSV about setting up a Student Volunteering Executive, which is being advertised this week.

CHARITIES/RAG

The RAG pants have arrived and been distributed amongst college reps - at last! We're starting to plan RAG week which will take place in 6th week. We've already got the return of 'Mr and Miss Oxford' planned and an amazing line up for our comedy show. We have RAG raids (street collections) planned for Engineers Without Borders and The Antony Nolan Trust.

ENVIRONMENT & ETHICS

The happiest committee in Oxford is back to saving the world. More updates soon...

PART TIME OFFICERS

Adam McIvor

Common Room Support Officer

I'm Adam McIvor, the new Common Room Support Officer. My job is to communicate with common rooms via OUSU reps and those who hold the second/third vote in Council. It's also my intention to explore and expand new ways for OUSU to connect with JCRs, MCRs and other constituent organisations (more below).

Over the vacation I have been working on a guide for OUSU reps which, once published, will be a valuable resource for current and future reps. Also, at the start of this term I've been updating the OUSU Reps email mailing list. Please email me at commonrooms@ousu.org if you think you (or your OUSU rep) should be on this list. It would be helpful if you could also include the name of the previous rep so that I can remove them from the list.

This year I will be holding, together with other members of Exec (particularly Martin and Ingrid), fortnightly OUSU Reps Meetings. OUSU Reps, please come to these as they will be an important forum for us to get to know each other, discuss items coming to Council, raise any questions or concerns, and make suggestions.

Finally, at the beginning of last term the sabbatical team visited JCR and MCR meetings, and this has proven to be an excellent way for OUSU to engage with common rooms. With an enthusiastic and full Exec team, we are in a better position than ever to continue this. Members of exec agreed, at the end of last term, on a commitment to visit JCR/MCR meetings over the next two terms. Our aim is to visit at least one meeting a term in every JCR and MCR. If you haven't already, please email commonrooms@ousu.org to let me know when your meetings take place, and if you have any preference over when you would like us to come please include that.

I always welcome any comments, suggestions, rants etc. to commonrooms@ousu.org. Adam.

Joy Wong	Academic Affairs Officer
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Nice to meet you all. This is Joy Wong from St. Hilda,s College, the OUSU Academic Affairs Officer for the coming year. It is my privilege to be elected. I am very excited about serving in OUSU and having the opportunity to improve academic affairs in Oxford.

Academic affairs have always been a prime focus for both the senior authority and the students at Oxford. As the undergraduate representative to the university in this respect and the liaison person of JCR academic reps, I would like to focus on a few aspects in the coming year. They include:

- 1) providing greater support for JCR Academic Reps,
- 2) expanding the LearnSmart scheme run by the Oxford Learning Institute,
- 3) improve the information on academic affairs on the OUSU website, and
- 4) investigating and hopefully start tackling the problem of „finals gap%“.

At the moment, I have arranged meetings with JCR Academic Reps and the Learning Development Adviser of the Oxford Learning Institute. I have also started adding information on study skills onto the website. James, Hannah, Kate and I have formed a team to investigate and tackle „finals gap%“. Together, we have started planning finals forum which will take place towards the end of this term.

Herman Tam Affairs Officer	Graduate	Academic
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Welcome back to Oxford and hope you had a wonderful holiday. My name is Herman Tam and I am your new Graduate Academic Affairs Officer (one of the three graduate part-time execs). Working together with other related execs, I hope to facilitate university academic administrations and emphasize graduates students' priorities.

Some work I started before the break.

Graduate Admissions Committee – Ingrid and I are sitting on this committee aimed to develop a more coherent and integrated admissions process. The current priority is to successfully implement the digitized graduate admissions project reducing paperwork, and increasing admissions efficiency and accessibility of applications to the colleges and university. More updates are expected from the next meeting.

Wish you all a happy new year in 2008!

Sian Renwick,	Graduate Women's Officer
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I decided to stand for Graduate Women's Officer as a result of my involvement with WomCam. While I have enjoyed meeting so many passionate and committed women, it became clear to me that the concerns of graduate women often differ from those of undergraduates.

As the role is a new one, my first task this term will be to create and administer a survey asking graduate women to identify the issues which affect them, and which they would like to see addressed. Once this is done, I will have a better idea of what areas my efforts should be concentrated on. I am also liaising with the VP (Women), VP (Graduates) and the other graduate members of the part-time exec to co-ordinate our work.

Sarah Hutchinson

Graduate Welfare Officer

Sarah Hi, I'm Sarah and the new Graduate Welfare officer. I'm in my first year of a DPhil in Social Policy at St Cross College, having finished an MPhil at Wolfson College last year. I was previously a grad part-time exec officer in 2006, and am also the new female welfare officer at St Cross.

So far this year, I have mostly been talking to Ingrid and Louise to find out about my role and what I can get involved with. I'm keen to meet with other MCR/GCR welfare officers, to let them know how I am and find out how I can help them, and am looking forward to working with Louise on welfare campaigns. I'm also looking forward to working with Ingrid and the other grad officers to ensure that graduates are aware of the support OUSU can provide, and to find ways to increase Post Graduate Assembly involvement and attendance.

Katherine Wall

Women's Officer

Hello, my name is Katherine Wall, and I am the new OUSU Women's Officer. I will be working with the VP Women, Women's Campaign and the OUSU Exec over the next three terms to ensure that we are doing all we can to deal with the many challenges which face women at Oxford, in the local community and beyond.

Working on co-ordinating Women's Officers across the University, to gain accurate knowledge of the challenges facing female students at Oxford. This involves creating an updated Women's Officer Handbook with detailed information of how to effectively run campaigns, best practice to support women at the college level, and how to work with other organisations, be they other colleges, OUSU, or groups in the local community.

To enhance communication between women's officers and to bring students together, to share ideas and to offer support and constructive ideas as to how to proceed, a new initiative of women's officer meetings will commence this term. Hope to hold two meetings every term with the primary aim of identifying the key issues in Oxford at present regarding women's equality, welfare, and aspirations, and to consolidate current work being done across the university.

Women's representation in Oxford at the JCR, MCR, OUSU and tutor levels is of concern. The lack of women in student politics is currently noticeable. In the hope of rectifying this situation a series of training events are going to be run this term, to enhance key skills and confidence of female students, to encourage increased levels of participation. To provide inspiration as well as these vital skills, hopefully an event will be run in 6th Week with a range of speakers discussing their experience in student politics, and provide an arena for discussion and information to be passed on.

The Finals Gap is another vital concern, and a research project has been started to attempt to find possible explanations for this problem of women doing less well than their male counterparts in a range of subjects, with the hope of devising possible solutions. Hopefully by working intimately with the Working Party on the Finals Gap, communicating concerns to tutors and discussing possible remedies, a set of proposals will be ready to go forward by the end of this term.

By working closely with Women's Campaign to gain momentum with a lively term card, and campaigns informed by the information provided by the Women's Officers, the hope is that practical changes will be made in a framework of ongoing research concerning issues which need longer-term work to provide the relevant evidence, necessary to highlight the importance of change.

As part of the ongoing work with the Pro-Choice Campaign a series of events have been planned for this term, to encourage continued knowledge and awareness around unwanted pregnancy, the options and the right a woman has to choose. Last Sunday the group went to see 4months, 3 weeks and 2 days and on Wednesday a group of Oxford Students are attending a rally at the House of Commons to mark our outrage against the proposed amendments to limit choice concerning abortion. Hopefully, by working with Pro-Choice Oxford, combined community efforts will keep the issue in the limelight. Also, regarding the welfare side of unwanted pregnancy, as something quite distinct from the campaigning agenda, it is vital that the relevant contacts are provided to all students – the Family Planning Clinic, the University Counselling Service and so forth, to ensure there is access to non-directive information and support for any student in need of it.

Hannah Smith Officer	Equal	Opportunities
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I'm Hannah Smith, I'm a second year history and politics student at Wadham. I'm Equal Opportunities Part Time Exec. Officer. At the moment I'm particularly working on Holocaust Memorial Day, which is on the 27th January. We're hoping to organise an OUSU event, as well as helping to co-ordinate other events going on in Oxford on that day and encouraging JCRs to hold their own events.

Joseph Ammoun	Community Outreach and Charities Officer
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Dear Council

My name is Joseph Ammoun, and I am the newly elected Community Outreach and Charities Officer for OUSU. I am in my 2nd year at St Edmund Hall, reading Modern History and Politics.

Although we have all worked hard to get to Oxford, we are extremely privileged to have had the advantages of a potentially free and full education, and to have lived in a Country were we can take political and social stability for granted. Even in our own City of Oxford, there are many who struggle to get through life, and many who could benefit from our help. While we are at University we have a fabulous opportunity to spend some of our time, money and energy working for the benefit of others, and the chance to actively take responsibility for those without our advantages. My priorities as Community Outreach and Charities officer are to move that movement forward in Oxford University, and help assist and encourage others to do so as well.

This year I will:-

Look into advertising current (and creating new) flexible opportunities for volunteer work in Oxford, ensuring that College JCR/MCRs receive information about volunteering opportunities. I will actively making contact with Charities and Community organisations, to identify where we as Students can best help the Community we live in.

I will seek stronger links with the homeless in Oxford through local Homeless shelters and other organisations that work with them. In particular, I will organise a student Outreach Volunteer project – seeking to encourage extended human contact with, and respect for, the homeless.

I will encourage CR Charity/Rag Reps to set up College based programmes to raise money for Charity and to volunteer internationally and locally.

I will communicate with CRs on examples of best practise in other Colleges.

I will work to increase awareness of Charities working under the threat of suppressive Regimes, and attempting to alleviate the suffering of those living under those regimes. I will work to gain Moral and Practical support for those charities and their actions from the University, Colleges, Local and National Politicians and JCRs.

I will begin work on putting in place a University wide charitable response system for International emergencies.

I will make myself available to those with ideas, comments etc whenever possible. I am particularly interested in working with individuals or constituencies on Council who are keen to make headway on these projects and issues.

**Dominic Weinberg
Officer**

Rent and Accommodation

Hi, I'm Dom Weinberg, a second-year at Balliol, the new Rent and Accommodation Officer. The biggest expenditure for almost all students is their rent and whether living in or out there are many issues that this can bring. College bursars have been working together for years to decide college accommodation prices and it's about time the common rooms started acting together as well. Private landlords can act unscrupulously, targeting students who often have limited options in Oxford's crowded housing market.

There are a huge amount of things that could conceivably be tackled in my role, but in order to find out which issues are the most central to student concern, I will be meeting with common room presidents and those involved with housing in the next couple of weeks. I'm aiming to set up a couple of committees with more specific tasks, and in the meantime I'll be further looking through some of the swathes of information OUSU has concerning rent and accommodation and trying to get my head round it!

**Becci Burton
Officer**

Health and Welfare

Hi, I'm Becci and I'm a second year lawyer. I'm from St Hilda's and I'm on the JCR committee as Buttery Manager. This year I shall be assisting Louise with her position, and helping with any issues arising from the welfare committee meetings (the first of which is in 2nd week). Also I am on the Rules Committee.

Daniel Lowe

Environment and Ethics Officer

The Environment and Ethics committee has gone under a reshuffle this term with a change in structure from four co chairs to a president, secretary, press and publications officer and four campaign officers taking on the leads of recycling, energy, ethics and biodiversity.

Last term we aided in the setting up of a new Sudan Divestment Oxford Group, and a committee for the FashionablyFAIR fashion show this year.

We are leading a switch it off campaign to promote energy consumption reduction, spearheading the publicity with inspirational beer mats, which have been sponsored by KPMG. This term we will be writing an updated version of the OUSU environment hand book. We will also be leading campaigns to tackle excess packaging.