

## Reports to Council

*1<sup>st</sup> week michaelmas term 2011*

### SABBATICAL OFFICERS

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**Martha Mackenzie**

**President**

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Hi Council,

Welcome back and welcome to our new members, I hope you all had an excellent holiday. Suffice to say a lot has happened over the past three months. I am going to try and give you an overview of what I've been up to as well as some of my plans for the term.

#### **Housing**

As some of you may be aware we launched quite a substantial housing campaign over the summer in response to the City Council's Development Plan Document. As well as responding to the document through a scoping paper we also: ran a student consultation evening, attended by Cllr. Colin Cooke and Adrian Roache from the planning department; collated student responses via email and sent them into the consultation; and; met regularly with members of the council and the planning department. As it stands we have had a commitment to re-write the Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) section of the document and consider the student input; a promise to build student consultation into future planning documents and; agreement that a separate student housing document, taking into account environmental health concerns, will be pursued.

Separate to this Jim, VP (Graduates) and I, along with Rob Noble, CR President of Linacre and Ruben Kubaik a former Linacre CR committee member started looking at some of the problems surrounding the central University Graduate Accommodation, in particular the rather draconian changes to the lease and a proposal to establish a 'Head Residents' scheme. This campaign is very much on going.

#### **Careers Guide**

Last year the team had signed up to a careers guide project with an external provider. When we came into office we found that the project was no longer financially viable and had made many of our allies in the University very upset.

In this context we pulled out of the existing deal and have now teamed up with the Careers Service to produce a joint guide internally, which will be responsive to student demands. To build this new guide we will be: running focus groups, sending round an all-student survey and looking to work with the OxHub to increase the inclusion of third sector/ social enterprise pathways.

#### **Clubs and Societies**

Along with Jacob, Clubs and Societies Officer I am working on a proposal to remove the responsibility for clubs and societies from the Proctors' Office and transfer it to OUSU. As this progresses I will keep you fully updated, things are currently looking positive.

I will also be working with Jacob to increase the training and support we offer to clubs and societies and thinking about how we can build clubs and societies into the new website (coming soon!).

## **White Paper**

Thanks to those of you who responded to the White Paper response. We really appreciated your comments and were able to include most of them into the final draft. The response was submitted on September 20<sup>th</sup> but we have brought it here for discussion, and eventually a vote in 3<sup>rd</sup> week council, so that all of you have a chance to think about whether this response should be used to inform our contribution to the wider debate as the White Paper morphs into a bill.

## **Freshers' Week**

I wanted to use this opportunity to thank everyone who was involved with the planning and running of Freshers' Week and the Fair. On the whole the week went very well and apart from a small delay in entry on the first day there were no problems with the Fair. I was able to show the Vice-Chancellor and Keith Zimmerman, Director of Student Administration and Services around the Fair, both of whom were very impressed by all the societies they encountered. As a sabb team we visited 38 common rooms; thanks again to all those Presidents and OUSU Reps who welcomed us in.

## **1-2-1 Meetings:**

Over the past three months I met with around 50 students. This included 19 JCR Presidents, 11 MCR Presidents, several OUSU Reps, society heads and ordinary members with concerns.

## **Committees:**

In my representative role I attended three University Councils and one General Purposes Committee. Issues such as the student number cap, the response to the White Paper and the student role in Development were discussed. If you have any questions on what I spoke on then do ask me now or get in touch by email.

## **Training**

I have been organising my training sessions for this term. At the moment the schedule is as follows:

NUS Activist Training: 2<sup>nd</sup> Week

Negotiation/ lobbying training for JCR Presidents: 3<sup>rd</sup> Week.

MCR Presidents Day: 4<sup>th</sup> Week.

Teach First Leavers Session: 4<sup>th</sup> Week.

Deutsche Bank Leadership Skills: 5<sup>th</sup> Week.

As a whole we are also working on diversifying the training that we offer and trying to make it accessible to a broader range of students.

## **National Demo**

Over the summer there has been a lot of traffic on the student union sabbs maillist about a national demonstration against the continued changes to Higher Education policy and I just wanted to let you know. This demo is led by the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts and has recently received tacit support from the NUS NEC. It will be taking place on November 9<sup>th</sup> at 12pm and the route starts at the University of London Union (ULU).

If you have any questions or want to pursue some of these points outside of OUSU Council feel free to drop me an email: [president@ousu.org](mailto:president@ousu.org)

Have a lovely week,  
Martha

Report to Council - 1<sup>st</sup> Week MT 2011 - Yuan Yang, Vice-President (Women)  
[women@ousu.org](mailto:women@ousu.org) / [childcare@ousu.org](mailto:childcare@ousu.org) / [support@ousu.org](mailto:support@ousu.org) / 07875535948

Hello all,

We may have had the coldest summer since 1993, but the energy levels at the new OUSU offices have been high nonetheless. Here's what I'm planning to do over the next year, and what I've been getting up to so far - aside from confidential Student Advice Service work:

### 2011-12: This Year in Numbers

#### 1 in 7

...is the number of women who experience serious sexual assault or attempted rape<sup>1</sup> while at university in the UK (the NUS has not yet done a study on male victims of assault).

Sexual violence and relationship abuse is the **first priority area** I will be campaigning on. This comes in three stages: prevention (including awareness raising), response (including Student Advice Service support for victims), and improving University policy on harassment.

Over the summer, I have:

- **Won a Zero Tolerance policy** for student club nights.  
Being groped in your Freshers' Week is not acceptable, yet often taken to be the norm by first years. With Dan (VP C&C), I have worked with Varsity Events, the company who run student club nights in Oxford, to make sure bouncers have a zero tolerance approach to physical and sexual assault. We are now looking at how to communicate and implement the policy we have agreed.
- **Trained over 18 facilitators, and facilitated, Sexual Consent Workshops** in 3 CRs (Queens MCR, Wadham JCR, Corpus JCR).  
Sexual education at schools is either non-existent, or awkward and poor at teaching the fundamentals of understanding sexual consent. These workshops were piloted to see how we can better generate an understanding of consent in our newly-formed communities.

We are still processing the heaps of impact assessment surveys (anyone up for some data entry?), but some early feedback has been:

*"It was a chance to discuss and listen to people's opinions that I probably wouldn't usually be comfortable talking about."*

*"I find it an important issue, which was well-addressed and enjoyable"*

*"I am really reassured and surprised that the college cares enough about this issue to host a workshop. Thank you. I feel safer here now."*

Hertford College, Corpus JCR, and Christ Church JCR are considering holding mid-term workshops; if you are interested, contact me!

- **Consulted** the right people and **trained** myself.  
Sexual violence and inter-personal violence are complex areas, and I have been meeting with experts

<sup>1</sup> National Union of Students, Hidden Marks Report

from the City Council and Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre, as well as undertaking Oxfordshire County Council's training on Domestic/Relationship Abuse.

1 in 4

...is the five-year rolling average for the number of JCR Presidents who are women<sup>2</sup>. (The MCR average is slightly higher, but I don't have stats yet.)

£5,000

...is the gender pay gap between men and women on median earnings, 6 months after leaving Oxford<sup>3</sup>.

For these reasons, **women in leadership and in careers** is my second priority area for campaigning this year. So far I have:

- **Started up an Inclusive Leadership** project with MCR Presidents and other interested parties. We meet every other Wednesday morning, from 8.30-9.30am, at Combibos, Gloucester Green, for an informal breakfast and for brainstorming on an action plan for making Common Room Committee Executives more diverse. Membership is open - you are more than welcome to join us for a discussion.

We are currently looking at two avenues for working through: **university-wide workshops and awareness-raising events**, and **common-room specific initiatives**. On the latter front, we're putting together an "Engaging Common Rooms" pack with tips for CR executives for how to get greater turnout in meetings and elections from under-represented groups in the Common Room.

£100,000,000

...is the amount the Medical Sciences Division will lose in its funding cycle beginning in 2015 if it fails to show what it is doing to progress towards greater gender equality in its leadership.

9%

...is the proportion of professors at Oxford who are women.

**Women in academia**, particularly **women in STEM** (science, technology, engineering and medicine), are my third priority campaigning area. This means that I:

- **Support STEM departments** in making an **Athena-SWAN** application. The Athena-SWAN charter is a national body that audits science departments' gender equality action plans, focussing on flexible working/childcare, transparency of promotion and application procedures, and inclusivity in working atmosphere. My aim is to get a **graduate voice** on the Athena-SWAN steering committees, and **student engagement** - departments must ask whether they are serving students' needs as well as staff needs.

I am working with Eric Liu, the MedSci divisional rep, to focus on the Department of Physiology, Anatomy, and Genetics (DPAG), Oncology, and Biochemistry. In MPLS, I am focussing on Chemistry, and Engineering (the last department not to have signed up to the scheme!). If you are from any of these departments - or any other MPLS/MedSci - and want to get involved, contact me.

- **Support Student Parents** (of all genders). I am in the process of organising our first student parents' social of term. We have heard reports of student parents being refused access to library facilities without any recourse to decent alternatives - in a place where access to books is crucial, this is a serious issue. If you have had experience of being denied access to facilities, let me know - I am investigating the issue with the Bodleian Libraries.

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<sup>2</sup> OUSU Gender Equality Report, data from 2006-2010 inclusive.

<sup>3</sup> Available via the Careers Service website, search for "Destinations of leavers"

<http://public.tableausoftware.com/views/DLHE/Occupationsbycollege?:embed=yes&:toolbar=yes&:tabs=yes>

Finally, if you're interested in getting involved with any of these initiatives, do not hesitate to get in contact.

If you're interested in running for VP (Women), Women's Campaign Officer, or Graduate Women's Officer in the upcoming 6<sup>th</sup> Week elections - I will be more than happy to talk to you!

Yours,  
Yuan

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Jim O'Connell

VP (Graduates)

Hello Council. This Report covers what I have been doing since taking office at the start of July. There has been some policy and campaigning work, a lot of meeting people and organising for the year ahead, common room support, and a bit of doing stuff that needs to be done. And casework - plenty of that too.

### **Organising**

My first priority on coming into office was to meet as many MCR Presidents, members of Grad Exec, and Divisional Board Representatives as possible. This was mainly a listening exercise, where I asked what those people thought were the main challenges facing Graduates in Oxford.

A few issues kept recurring. In order to discuss these in a bit of depth, and to identify concrete targets to pursue in Michaelmas, I have brought together MCR Presidents, Div Board Reps and OUSU Exec members in two Graduate Strategy Meetings to identify priorities for the term. These have set targets on issues of Funding, Accommodation, Supervision/Teaching, Gender Equality, Career Development. After MCR Prescom and Divcom have had a chance to discuss and input into these issues, they will be brought to Council.

The other stream of work that has involved a lot of organising is supporting the work of Grad AcAff Officer Francesco Fermani and Divcom. Divcom aims to build representation across all the University's departments and faculties, in a formalised and joined-up way - much as we now have good representation in all colleges and MCR/JCR Prescom to assist that. So, I have been persuading the Divisional Heads to support this work (largely successfully), and focusing on making sure representatives are being elected this term in Social Sciences.

### **Policy and Campaigning**

The world - and in particular the UK government - does not stop throwing up various strands of garbage for OUSU sabs to deal with over the summer. This summer, we got a White Paper that apparently wasn't aware graduate study was a thing, a bunch of new immigration proposals intent on crippling Oxford's ability to attract the best students and academics, and proposals for the Research Excellence Framework that hid some very dumb ideas under a pile of jargon and paper.

On all these issues, the response we gave was both robust and straightforward. Martha and Hannah led on the White Paper, so I'll leave it to them to cover that excepting to say that, as far as grads are concerned, we bemoaned the White Paper's refusal to engage with grad issues and highlighted the social justice and competitiveness implications for the Government's refusal to do anything about grad funding. On immigration, we fed in student and post-doc testimony to the University's response to the Government consultation. The University is following this up with a full-scale lobbying effort. On the REF, the University took a lot of our points on board - particularly on provision for maternity leave and the importance of doctoral study to research environments.

Following up on the PGT Review continues, as does preparation for a PGR Supervision Review.

Finally, I have begun to raise the issues that have been discussed at the Grad Strat meetings with the University. Notable progress so far has been on fundraising for student support, where we have key allies in the University and are creating a climate where each key player in the University has at least been asked to pay lip service to money for student support - so a good start.

### **Common Room Support**

I have worked with Martha to put together the Common Room information pack, worked to revive and update the MCR College Comparison database, and visited lots of Common Rooms already this year. Aside from this, I have provided individual support to MCRs on issues such as charity law, writing constitutions, dealing with domestic bursars on accommodation issues, and so on.

I have begun planning a set of trainings for MCR Common Room officers focused on leadership, negotiation and working within the collegiate and University structure. These will run over the course of Michaelmas Term (and Hilary/Trinity for Rent training), and I am grateful to Martha and Sol Pomerantz for working with me on this, and the OLI for their training the trainers session.

### **Stuff that needs to be done**

This includes the international students' orientations, which were great, and being Returning Officer over the summer.

If Council does not elect a Returning Officer NOW, I will inflict misery on all of you in creative ways. Having a sab as RO means less of everything gets done. It is a very bad idea. If I have to continue being RO I will disqualify every candidate and appoint Jonny Medland OUSU overlord in perpetuity (and I've figured out how to do this under the rules). You have been warned.

Rant aside, ROing has gone ok.

### **Stuff that will be done**

I'm assisting with the PhD Movie phenomenon, which will be fantastic - coming to Oxford on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

This term, as well as following up on the Graduate Strategy objectives, I'll also be working with Ingrid Lunt to provide 'managing your supervision' workshops for PGR students.

### **Casework**

There's lots of it. It's one of the most rewarding albeit stressful and often crazy parts of the job. A lot of the issues that casework throws up form the basis of our future lobbying efforts - for example, Hannah's motion on clarifying the role of the Senior Tutor. Watch this space for more of the same.

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**Sebastian Baird**

**VP (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)**

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Hi Council.

I've been in the job for nearly four months now, and I feel like I'm getting the hang of it. Here's an overview of some of the most central things I have been doing. It isn't exhaustive, so if you have any questions, or feel like I should be doing something different, get in touch at [welfare@ousu.org](mailto:welfare@ousu.org).

\* Student Advice Service. I have taken up my role as head of the Student Advice Service. The four Sabbaticals and two student advisors have dealt with more than forty cases since handover, and have handled more than fifty information requests. We have seen the arrival of an excellent new Student Advisor, Jennifer Allen. I am overseeing the consolidation and formalisation of the Service's knowledge and memory in a series of information sheets that will effectively become a Student Advice Service Handbook. I have also overseen the design of a new batch of publicity for the service, and am in the process of organising a mass mailout to common room officers and college officials.

\* Disability Awareness Week: I have been actively supporting the SWD Campaign in their efforts to organise DAW - I have booked the Oxford alumnus and quadriplegic sailor Hilary Lister as a speaker, and have organised the first round of publicity for the week. I have also begun sourcing sponsorship to cover the costs of the week.

- \* Asperger's Syndrome Buddy Scheme: have organised the AS Buddy Scheme for the third year in a row. This involved re-writing the guidance document for the buddies (it would have been logistically difficult to organise a training session for them) and recruiting four buddies for incoming undergraduates who chose to be paired with one.
- \* Training: I have undergone a number of different training sessions: NUS sabbatical training, team management training, team profile training, Interpersonal Abuse and Violence Training, Train the Trainers Training, Negotiation Training. That is a lot of training.
- \* Training: I have also delivered a training session for Welfare Officers, Presidents and Freshers' Week Reps on Freshers' Week, covering inclusivity, night safety, support and expectations. Keep your eyes peeled for further training opportunities inc. equality & diversity, student support, Junior Deans' Training.
- \* Common Room Support: I am setting up meetings with all willing CR Welfare Officers, that will be taking place in the next few weeks.
- \* Community: I have been meeting various community organisations, to discover whether or not there is any common ground between us and them. These include: Terrence Higgins Trust, Disability Officer at City Council, Oxfordshire MIND, NHS GUM. I will hopefully be getting them involved in some of OUSU's activities, particularly on sexual health and mental health.
- \* University officials: I have met with a number of university officials relevant to my portfolio, including Elsa Bell (SHW), Peter Quinn (DAS), Alan Percy (Counserv), Leyla Okhai and Trudy Coe (EDU), the Proctors and Assessor.
- \* Mental Health Campaign: I have met with a number of students, members of the Counselling Service and the national organisation Mental Wealth about the possibility of setting up a student-led mental health awareness campaign. The prognosis is good - keep your eyes peeled for more news over the coming term.
- \* Freshers' Week: enacting role as OUSU ambassador in CR visits and on the Freshers' Fair stand, introducing new students to what OUSU does and how they can get involved.

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Hannah Cusworth

VP (Access & Academic Affairs)

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Hiya Council.

Hope you all had lovely summers and the start of term has got off to a flying start. Since I took office in 11<sup>th</sup> Week of last term this is what I've been up to:

**In the world of Academic Affairs:**

A big part of why I ran was so I could work with students to address some of the concerns that were thrown up by the Teaching Review that I did in 2010 with one of my predecessors; one of the biggest issues was feedback and there was a certain amount of dissatisfaction in the Humanities.

Over the summer I've been part of a Working Group on Feedback that looked at how to respond to students dissatisfaction with the feedback they've been getting. The result of this is a paper that I'm going to take to the Chair of Senior Tutors Committee and will be hopefully working with JCRs on.

Mapping representation structures has also been a focus our mine this summer. Jim (VP Grads) and I are working to get the details of departmental representation so that we can strengthen the structures and better support the reps. This work will be on-going this term.

I've met with every Head of Division (Humanities, Social Sciences, MPLS and Medical Sciences) to discuss academic strategy in their Divisions; Jim and I will be working particularly closely with Shearer West, the new

head of Humanities, over the coming year. Alongside Heads of Division I've also been meeting the Pro Vice Chancellor for Education and Senior Tutors who are big names in the world of Academic Affairs. And I've met the new PVC Planning and Resources several times, with much of our conversations focusing on resources for undergraduate teaching, how resources are distributed across different Divisions and the impact of the new increase in tuition fees. I think we're probably going to be talking about it a lot more over this year.

I've also taken part in the tutor training run by the Oxford Learning Institute, while the training is high quality, it's very brief and relatively shallow. Training for tutors, especially graduate students, is on mine and Jim's agenda for next term; other things include Teaching Awards and Student Charters.

### **In the world of Access:**

Earlier in the summer I began a pilot research project that focused on find out what school students thought about academic achievement, Oxford and its application process and the changes to tuition fees. I spoke to about 120 students and their teachers. The report will be working its way around the committee system this term, I'm hoping it'll act a catalyst for the university to do some research on the effectiveness of the new student support package Oxford has put in place.

In July/August I was a UNIQ mentor so I could get a better understanding of Oxford's flagship Widening Access programme and what current applicants thinking about Oxford.

A\*s are coming back round again as a topic for discussion and since the decisions are now taken at the Divisional/Departmental level I'll be meeting with all the Undergraduate Div Board reps before their first meeting to discuss the issue, among others.

I also now sit on the Access Working Group, alongside the Working Group to develop a guidance note for colleges who want to undertake access work.

The Target Schools stall at Freshers' Fair signed up hundreds of volunteers to the database, which is really exciting.

The Access Fair has a date! 3<sup>rd</sup> February! Harriet Green, Access and Admissions Officer will be leading on this but we're working together with the Undergraduate Admissions Office to get it all set up.

### **Common Room Support:**

Common Room support is a big part of what I think my job is about. My plan is to meet all the reps, both access and academic affairs to let them know they can contact me any time and to work out how I can support them in their role. Between now and the next meeting of council I hope to get a training session for both sets of reps done. I've also had quite a few reps get in touch with me about students in their college who were asking for advice, which is great. I'm always support to help reps with the advice work they do in college so let them know they can always get in touch ([access@ousu.org](mailto:access@ousu.org))

### **As a member of the Student Advice Service:**

The student advice service has been, at times, manically busy over the vac, mostly with exam queries. But, there have also been quite a high number of cases dealing with suspension/intermission/self rustication and one or two really long running cases that have been handed over to me.

The palaver that was navigating the exam appeals system has led me to lobby the university to clarify the procedures so that they are more transparent and there is no difference in access to procedures based on college. The motion I've put before council goes into more depth on this. I've also started to work with JCRs on introducing suspension policies that are detailed enough for the gravity of the situation. This will be an on-going project of mine this year so get in touch if you're interested in looking at the procedures at your college.

Any questions or comments just get in touch at [access@ousu.org](mailto:access@ousu.org)

Dear Council,

Spending the summer in Oxford meant that I avoided the Birmingham riots, witnessed the tourist insurrection and like the rest of you endured a miserable British summer! Perhaps most significantly I have also made progress on a number of projects that I will outline below. If you'd like any more information on anything within this report please email me at [charities@ousu.org](mailto:charities@ousu.org) or see me after Council

### Community

My first few weeks in office revolved around the City Council Development Plan document and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). We will closely monitor the content and tone of future drafts of this document but the city council have assured us that they will make changes to the original draft based on the arguments made by OUSU and countless number of students who sent emails and/or attended meetings on this topic.

As well as reacting to issues I've tried to be proactive in leading OUSU towards a more effective community strategy. Much of this strategy is outlined in a paper I've written entitled 'Oxford United'. I'm aiming to bring a final version of this paper later in term but in the meantime I'll briefly describe some of the issues I've been able to make progress on. If you'd like to read the draft of the document please let me know and I'll send you a copy

- A Partnership Group focusing on student issues in the city will meet for the first time in the coming weeks, bringing together representatives from both Universities, the City Council, the police and Oxford Hub to work together to develop strategies for the city moving forward
- Over the summer I've continued to attend a number of Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) and Residents' Associations. Significantly, OUSU will also have representation in the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership which looks at the 'bigger picture' of crime and crime prevention in the city
- I've worked with City Councillors to plan a City Centre Forum for mid-November, offering an opportunity for students to speak directly to councillors and other community groups
- Plans have been made to launch a Student Community Warden Scheme in the New Year. I'll be bringing a paper on this project to 3<sup>rd</sup> week council
- To accompany these schemes I've drafted some 'Welcome To...' guides for Jericho and East Oxford. If you'd like to see a copy or contribute please let me know

I'll also mention that I attended the launch of the new Oxford Hub building on Turl Street. If you haven't been there yet you should definitely check it out!

### Charity

Over the summer Jess Lee stood down as RAG President and Jess Tomkinson has since been elected in her stead. I'd like to thank Jess Lee for her hard work and leadership during her time in office and for her continued dedication over the summer months

As well as helping to support RAG during this transition I:

- Attended the RAG Conference in Durham along with 5 delegates from RAG Executive, where we got great ideas and advice for the year to come
- Built relationships with some of the charities we're supporting especially Oxford Homeless Pathways and corresponded with innumerable charities wishing to work with Oxford Students
- Explored opportunities for Oxford Students to fundraise with local community groups. Watch this space...

### Environment and Ethics

The Environment and Ethics Committee have been great so I've only had to step in when needed. Over the summer I:

- Conducted a number of College assessments as part of the Recycling with Honours Campaign

- Met members of Environmental Panel, the Sustainability Steering Group and the Socially Responsible Investment Review Committee (SRIRC) to discuss the coming year and the ways in which students can feed into these discussions
- Attended a number of community environment meetings including the local Environment Champions, a partnership group aiming to promote and facilitate recycling in the city
- Have developed a proposal for a citywide end of year recycling scheme to redistribute reusable goods from landfill into the hands of local charities. If you'd like to read the proposal please let me know

### Living Wage

I have also functioned in a supportive capacity for the Living Wage Campaign by:

- Regularly waiting outside of the Bodleian Library and SSL early in the morning to speak to cleaners about the campaign
- Corresponding with library representatives about issues of low pay
- Aiding in developing a sustainable strategy for the campaign while supporting short term projects

## PART TIME OFFICERS

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**Jacob Diggle**

**Clubs & Societies Support Officer**

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Hello Council! Welcome and welcome back.

It doesn't seem long since I last wrote one of these but so much has happened over the summer. This has been a truly exceptional year for clubs and societies and there is still so many more exciting things to come.

Briefly, I have been:

- Working with OxHub and the Sports Fed to create a very exciting community project, using football to bring disadvantaged Oxford youth into contact with university students. This will involve regular matches, coaching and a big tournament in which the best local team will play the Blues in a truly awesome location.
- Planning a series of weekly workshops for clubs on all areas of activity, including: publicity, chairing, account keeping, club administration, web design, welfare, and sponsorship.
- Compiling a national survey of student union provision for clubs
- Working with Dan Stone, VP Charities and Communities, on how clubs and socs can help improve community engagement
- Organizing a series of termly 're-fresher fairs' - mini-freshers fairs to expose visiting students and grad students on different timetables to all the clubs that Oxford has to offer.
- Recruiting sports clubs to get involved in school access visits.
- I've now completed a series of how-to guides on various areas of society activity - including registering with the proctors, applying for grants and attracting sponsorship
- Helping with the set-up and registration of a further eight clubs over the holidays.
- Working with the Proctors' Office to improve the information collection on societies and thus communication
- Re-establishing a great relationship with the Sports Federation; now holding joint events, regular information sharing meetings and joint projects, such as the OxHub facilitated football challenge.
- Promoting regular slots on Oxide radio for societies to showcase their activities
- Helping with the planning for Freshers Fair
- Planning this term's Clubs Council for 5th Week and
- Negotiating with the central University to hopefully achieve a massive shift in clubs provision - more on this very exciting project to follow.

Much more on these to follow. As ever, if you have any questions, want more information or want to set up a society - do not hesitate to get in touch.

All the very best

Jacob

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**Sarah Santhosham**

**Community Outreach & Charities Officer**

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Dear Council,

Welcome back to another term! I hope you've all had a good vac and are looking forward to taking part in exciting community outreach work and charitable activity this term. Over the summer I've been busy planning interesting events, organising a big charitable event, overseeing Living Wage plans for the year ahead and making contact with external groups; I hope to see many of you at some of these over the term. Here is a brief description of some of the work I've been up to, though do get in touch if you'd like a more detailed account or would like to get involved with anything:

**OxHub Series Event:**

As a follow up to the workshops I put together last term on community organising and given the level of interest, I thought it would be interesting to have a proper discussion on community organising as a means of effecting change relative to other methods. I've therefore organised a panel discussion as part of the OxHub Series on the different ways of making change happen with three fascinating speakers. It's going to be held on Wednesday of 2<sup>nd</sup> week at 7.30 in the new OxHub building (16-17 Turl Street). Hope to see lots of you there!

**RAG:**

Over the summer I've continued to manage the new partnership between RAG and Student Adventures and we're looking forward to a good year ahead. The planning for 'Choose a Challenge' (a fair for charities which offer challenging fundraising trips) has also been going really well and the event will take place on Saturday of 2<sup>nd</sup> week in OxHub at 1-5pm. Please publicise this to anyone you think will be interested.

**Living Wage:**

It's been a busy summer for the Living Wage Campaign and during the break we've done a lot of information gathering in preparation for our activities this term. The activities we've undertaken include sending FOI requests to all the colleges, tracking and speaking to cleaners and planning our weekly meetings and freshers' activities. I've been leading a team of really committed students and we have some great ideas for this term. If you'd like to get involved with the central campaign, we meet every Tuesday at 5pm in OUSU. We can also help if you'd like advice on how to run a campaign within your college. I've also been engaging with the groups who came to the community action we organised last term and will report more on this at 3<sup>rd</sup> week Council. Please direct all Living Wage related queries to [livingwage@ousu.org](mailto:livingwage@ousu.org)

As ever, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions. I can be contacted at [communityandcharity@ousu.org](mailto:communityandcharity@ousu.org)

Sarah

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**Alastair Marsh**

**Environments & Ethics Officer**

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Hi fellow students,

Main activities during the close season:

1. Writing a handover pack for my role. I didn't get one, so I'm making sure there's a good provision for my successor.

2. Organising a Pamoja for Environment & Ethics reps, since feedback from this last year has told me they want more informal opportunities to meetup, get to know each other and have a chat.

The new Mayor of Oxford, Elise Benjamin, is a Green Party councillor, so I hope to meet her at some point this term and hopefully this will yield improvements in the near future in recycling services for students, amongst other things.

Welcome back,

Alastair

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**Francesco Fermani**

**Grad Academic Affairs Officer**

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Dear Fellow Students,

during the summer and in the first lights of Michaelmas Term the following highlights took place as graduate academic affairs are concerned:

- **Post-Graduate Taught Courses Review:** the output of OUSU investigation lead by my predecessor Jonny Medland, has been presented to the Medic and Social Science Divisions. There is a plan to follow up the reactions of the Course Directors on our suggestions as well as bringing the discussion in MPLS and Humanities Divisions. So far, there hasn't been a noticeable response from Course Directors even if the report had been circulated by Jonny at the end of Trinity Term.
- **Senior Committee of Divisional Representatives (Senior DivCom):** the team of Division Representatives together with the OUSU Sabbatical Officers have reinforced the connection with MCR PresCom and outlined a provisional protocol of communication and collaboration so to invigorate PG representation to its maxima structural capabilities. Through MCRs and soon directly in collaboration with the Director of Graduate Studies, we have launched a campaign to promote PG involvement in representation with the aim of creating a capillary representative structure in Courses/Sub-Departments/Departments and connecting the pieces already in place.
- A committee of MCR representatives have assessed the services offered by the Career Service and noted that they provide unsatisfactory support for academic careers. There is a plan for an academic job hunting workshop in week 6/7 run by the Career Service: we strongly encourage attendance to assess whether this new scheme is effective or not so that we will be able to provide feedback to the organizers and advise them for future events. Career Service will be asked to manage a central database for academic jobs: we see their duty as asking every member of staff to collaborate in the maintenance of this database by forwarding to this central system any advertisement they become aware of from other Institutions.

Kind Regards,

Francesco

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**David Bowe**

**Graduate Welfare Officer**

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Welcome (back) everyone.

Over summer I've been taking part in discussions of OUSUs graduate strategy, comprising welfare, the supervision review, visas and settlement, and a wide range of topics.

I believe that the only viable approach to graduate welfare is a holistic one as every aspect of the graduate experience has significant ramifications on the welfare of students, both on taught masters and research programmes, so I look forward to working further with Exec and the new Sab team to keep the broad picture of graduate welfare in the foreground.

If you have any questions or suggestions, or if you're interested for running for this position in elections this term, please to email me at [gradwelfare@ousu.org](mailto:gradwelfare@ousu.org).

Dai

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**Katie Colliver**

**LGBTQ Officer**

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Hi Council!

Hope everyone had glorious summers! As I write, I have collections in the morning so I'll keep it quite short..

- Over the summer, the It Gets Better video has been painstakingly edited and is finally complete. It will soon be arriving on the LGBTQsoc and perhaps OUSU website for your perusal.
- Work has begun on updating the LGBTQ handbook. Around half the articles are in and I will be setting a working group up to begin the editing process sometime this week.
- LGBTQ campaign meetings will be recommencing in 1st week (I'm hoping for Thursday evening). There's a lot of interest this year, judging from the sign-up sheet at the Freshers' Fair, and I've also contacted members of the SWD campaign and African Society to discuss the potential for collaborative projects.
- A group from OUSU and the Terrence Higgins Trust met on Monday of 0th week to discuss plans for World Aids Day (1st December). We'll be working towards hosting a panel debate on the future of AIDS prevention and treatment as well as organising fundraising on the day.

That's all for now!

Katie xx

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**Andrew Dunne**

**Students with Disabilities Officer**

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Over the Summer the SWD Campaign has continued, with the aid of the VP Welfare and Peter Quinn, (Head of the Disability Advisory Service) to plan for Disability Awareness Week, (DAW), which is occurring in 6th Week of MT. Most of the events for the week have now been booked and posters advertising DAW will be being distributed shortly. Of particular mention is our booking of the Abnormally Funny People, a group of well-reviewed and popular disabled comedians who will be performing Tuesday evening of 6th Week. We have also achieved a significant number of sign-ups for the SWD Campaign at the Fresher's Fair and hope that the SWD Campaign will this year be a fully functioning and active campaign. Anyone who wishes to get involved in either (or both!) the SWD Campaign or DAW is welcome to email me at: [swdofficer@ousu.org](mailto:swdofficer@ousu.org).

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**Laura Hancox**

**Health & Welfare Officer**

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Hi Council,

This term I've been working on two things:

- World AIDS day: Preliminary meetings have been held to plan both a university-wide speaker event and individual college events for World AIDS Day this December. Although ideas are in their early stages, we've got a good team involved and I'm looking forward to seeing it all take shape over the coming week or so. More details on that next time
- Freshers' week training: Myself and Seb planned and carried out a training session for common room officers in 0th week which covered the major challenges that might be faced in freshers' week and how to tackle them, mainly through facilitated discussion between those present. In a similar vein, we are

currently in the process of planning Student Support training for early this term, mainly for untrained welfare officers and peer supporters but also for any other common room officers that wish to learn more about issues affecting their common rooms and basic listening skills.

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**Harriet Green**

**Access & Admissions Officer**

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Hi Council!

Please put this in your diaries: Oxford Access Fair, 3rd February 2012, Exam Schools (HOORAY!)

I think everyone's got the gist of the fair now. During term I will put together something of an Access Fair info card so everyone can keep up-to-date with developments. - Do grab me if you'd like a chat about where we're at now, though!

Apart from working towards the fair, which has involved its fair share of meetings and logistical mounds(!), I've been working on a couple of things over the summer:-

The Oxford Alumni Intern Database (OAID). We had a really successful meeting with the Alumni and Careers Offices and this should be, fingers crossed, up and ready for use for students within the next couple of weeks. It's going to be a global thing - any student across the university will have the opportunity to connect with an alumni willing to offer accommodation to them during vacs. There are 170,000 alumni who can be mail-shot asking to sign up; this can provide not just a service but the potential for opportunity to students. OUSU will have a key role in making students aware of its presence and potential, and I hope people can take it back to their common rooms with a view to spreading the word, too!

Hackney Pirates is a volunteer-based education project which works with children in the Hackney and Dalston area, and was set up by an alumna after she finished with Teach First. Over the summer they ran a series of summer workshops with the kids assisted by local artists and business people who helped make the kids' work reality. So, for example, they spent a week writing and rehearsing a play which was then made into a film by a local production company. This term, the group are running after school sessions for the kids, providing safe and neutral environments for them to complete homework. A salient aim for the organisers is to have one-to-one tutoring for each child: a big ask, but one that they hope is possible. Having volunteered with Pirates, I'd like to help them by seeking out volunteers in the form of students here. I'll be looking to contact access reps and presidents with a view to asking them to chat to their common rooms about getting involved, and volunteering for innovative access and outreach projects in general. HPs is, of course, just one of hundreds of initiatives students could get involved with. This term I hope to work towards making it easier for students to find out and get involved, and anything that happens this side of Xmas will be consolidated by the information-sharing the Access Fair will provide.

There are several other things in the pipeline which I will update you on at 3rd week council, once term's more into the swing of things, etc.

I'm currently organising an Active Mentoring visit to Catz. If anyone would like to have a chat about doing a similar, student-led and organised visit in their college, please don't hesitate to give me a shout.

Harriet