

## Reports to Council

*1st Week Council Trinity 2014*

Tom Rutland

President

Hi Council,

Welcome back for Trinity Term - and what better way to spend a summer evening than at OUSU Council.

### **OUSU Strategy, Staffing and Finances**

When I ran to be OUSU President, I promised to hire someone to communicate the work of OUSU's officers and campaigns. Other student unions have whole teams dedicated to this, and I have hired a Digital Communications Officer who started working for us during the vacation. This should help us to solve the gap between general student satisfaction (36%) and the satisfaction of those who interact with us (92%) - the work we do is clearly valued, but it doesn't reach enough people.

The funding increase we won last term has allowed us to proceed with the recruitment of a new Student Advice Service Manager and an Academic Representation Officer, who will both be appointed before the end of the academic year.

I have also appointed an interim chief executive, Antony Blackshaw, to the organization, who is working part-time with us whilst we recruit a permanent replacement for our old chief executive. This should be complete by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> week.

### **NUS National Conference 2014**

I attended NUS National Conference with 6 other delegates from OUSU, including the President-elect. You can read more about this in the report that is attached to the agenda.

### **Miscellaneous**

**Governance** (how OUSU runs itself) reform continues apace; I've spent hours in meetings with various members of Council committees translating recommendations from the Electoral Review Group into new draft Election Regulations. The target of eliminating all of our **old** governing documents (the Rules and Standing Orders) should be met by the time I leave office, at which point our governance will become far more accessible and understandable.

I am compiling the **Annual Impact Report** which serves to inform our members and other interested parties (such as the university) about what OUSU and its membership have achieved in the past year.

Planning for **handover** to the new sabbatical team has begun and we're hoping to set up the best handover and induction programme yet.

I have been continuing to meet with Common Room Presidents to advise and help on **rent negotiations** that are continuing in colleges.

### **OUSU is 40!**

It's now 40 years since a rebellion against the university banning reviews of lectures sparked the creation of OUSU - and we're celebrating in style. Join us at Itchy Feet on Wednesday of 1<sup>st</sup> Week

(tonight if you're reading this at Council) and look out for more details about our end of term party to celebrate 40 years of Oxford's student union.

As ever, if you need anything, get in touch with me: [president@ousu.org](mailto:president@ousu.org)

Have a great term  
Tom

<b>Garlen Lo</b>	<b>VP (Graduates)</b>
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### **Grad funding**

Met with the University's Graduate Admissions and Funding department to discuss how OUSU can influence the University to invest in graduate funding. This should be my main project for Trinity.

### **Graduate rent**

Negotiated with the University's Graduate Accommodation department the rent rise for 2014-15. After two proposals from the University and two proposals from me, the percentage increase fell from 2.6% to 2.5% resulting in a student saving of £24,270. For the rooms that were affected by the negotiations, the average saving per room was £7 per month. One type of couples room made a saving of £24 per month.

### **Division Reps**

Set postgraduate division reps a challenge of getting just one department to add photos and email addresses of course reps on the department website before the end of their term of office in 7<sup>th</sup> week Trinity. So far Physics is the only one to have achieved (achieved by OUSU's Graduate Academic Affairs Officer Jena Meinecke who also happened to be the Physics department rep - <https://www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/study-here/postgraduates/your-representatives>) In particular, the Humanities and MPLS reps are working hard in communicating this message with department reps.

### **International Students' Campaign (ISC)**

Wrote and sent the first ever OUSU International Festival 2014 Report to the University's International Strategy department, the International Advisory and Immigration department, and the Vice Chancellor. The VC was thanked for his continued financial support of the annual event. The report will be used as a guide for the incoming VP Grads.

### **Mature Students' Campaign (MSC)**

The MSC Chair and I have drafted a timetable and outlined plans to organise the first ever Mature Students' Orientation Day for 2014-15. Have been in emailed correspondence with the University to support this.

### **Postgraduate Strategy Summit**

Identified and discussed key issues to be tackled in regards to the student experience of Oxford graduates. Event lasted 2 and half hours and was attended by 13 people.

### **MCRs**

Done a spring clean of MCR email lists for presidents, notices, and social secretaries. First time in a number of years this has been done, judging by the number of emails on the list!

### **OUSU website**

Have added a Graduate FAQ sections under my profile when you click on my photo from the OUSU homepage. External links rather than written answers are provided for most questions. This will be an ongoing project for Trinity.

### **MCR Presidents' Introduction to OUSU Handbook**

Have begun drafting the first ever MCR-OUSU handbook. Aim to finish by end of Trinity.

*The final term of the year is here, and with lots achieved so far, there's still so much more to do! Here are some of the things I've been working on over the vac. You can see what my plans for this term are on my latest blog on the OUSU website ☺*

### **Alcohol Awareness Workshop**

OUSU's Student Advice Service and myself are partnering with the Lifeline Project to run an alcohol awareness event on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> week at 1pm, which will include a mock group session!

Later this term there will be a speaker event, and regular drop-ins at the OUSU building, with experts from Lifeline- watch this space for details ☺

### **Wellbeing Week**

Coinciding with National Mental Health Awareness Week, OUSU and Mind Your Head are once again running Wellbeing Week in 3<sup>rd</sup> week, Trinity Term. I've been busy planning lots of things, so look out for posters coming soon!

### **Mental Health Charter**

Along with Cate, our Student Advice Service Co-Coordinator, and Georgie from Student Minds, I have been writing a mental health charter, which we hope soon to circulate around colleges, and persuade them to adopt!

**I've also been keeping myself busy with much, much more, including:**

- Attending the Sabbatical Officer consent workshop
- Recruiting a new Student Advice Service Manager
- Meeting with students who want to start a new campaign on body image- their first meeting is at OUSU at 1pm on Tuesday of 2<sup>nd</sup> week
- Discussing campaigns on internet safety with the Thames Valley Partnership
- Visiting the University of Plymouth Student Union, and chatting about all things welfare there!
- Meeting welfare officers from Worcester and Nuffield
- Attending University committees- Race, Religion and Belief Advisory Group; Equality & Diversity Panel- particularly talking about the Race Summit and the commitments the University has made following this
- Talking to the Disability Advisor at the Careers Service about running disability training for Common Room Reps
- Meeting the chief Executive of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator

**What do you want me to focus on this term? Email [welfare@ousu.org](mailto:welfare@ousu.org) or tweet @OUSU\_WEO!**

Hello Council ☺

I hope you've had a great vac and collections went well - here's to a great Trinity Term! Here are the main things I've been working on over the vac...

### **OUSU and The Hub Education Conference**

Is happening! Very soon in fact! Here's some more info:

The inaugural **Oxford Education Conference** is taking place in Pembroke College, Oxford on the 10th

May 2014. Specialists from all over the UK will be gathering to discuss educational inequality - one of the most significant issues of today's society. Supported by OUSU and the Oxford Hub, the **Oxford Education Conference** has been organised by a student committee and will bring issues of gender, BME, socio-economic background, and further education to the foreground. We will be hearing from former Minister of Education Andrew Adonis, Teach First/BBC Tough Young Teacher's Charles Wallendahl, and experts from government, social investment groups, and academics.

The **Oxford Education Conference** will offer delegates the opportunity to hear from pioneering experts in Education and will hope to offer some possible solutions to the issues we face today.

For more information (and to purchase your ticket), check out [www.oxeduconf.com](http://www.oxeduconf.com), [www.facebook.com/oxeduconf](http://www.facebook.com/oxeduconf), [www.twitter.com/oxeduconf](http://www.twitter.com/oxeduconf) and join the conversation with the handle #oxeduconf14

### **Student Led Teaching Awards (SLTA)**

Nominations have been rolling in, and as you read this will have closed - at noon today in fact! We've received over 300 nominations so far (I will fill you in tonight on exact numbers). I'm holding a selection committee for the shortlist and winners this Friday. I've also been busy scouting out the venue, organizing prizes, organising speakers etc. for the night.

### **Suspended Status and Access to Facilities**

Charlotte and I wrote a paper regarding student status and access to facilities in colleges, which has been taken to the Standing Committee of the Senior Tutors Committee (SCSTC) - we don't sit on the committee - it's basically a group of about six Senior Tutors. We are awaiting feedback from the SCSTC so that we can hopefully take the paper to Senior Tutors Committee this term.

If you have any questions for me about this report or anything else, you're always welcome to get in touch with me at [access@ousu.org](mailto:access@ousu.org). Also you can add me on twitter (@OUSU\_AcAff) and I'll make sure to keep tweeting about access and academic affairs issues and events and that you might be interested in :D.

Rachel

<b>Dan Tomlinson</b>
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<b>VP (Charities &amp; Community)</b>
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Welcome back Council, I missed you.

It's been a while since we last met; I've managed to fit in 25 days of work and a fair amount of holiday. I've been working on the areas that I usually split my Council report up into but I've found the time over the Vac to have some useful meetings which I wanted to bring to the front of the report:

1. I met with the City Council and the University's Crime Prevention and Reduction Adviser to discuss writing a 'Student Safety Plan', hopefully this will be a project my successor (and Council) can work on.
2. I met with Brookes Union to discuss the Safety Bus (see the motion).
3. I met with the Proctors and we are planning on working together to reduce food waste at post-exam trashings, the current plan is putting Food Bank collection boxes at the back of Exam Schools.

### Environment and Ethics

I represented the view of OUSU Council expressed in 1<sup>st</sup> week Council last term that the University should divest from fossil fuels in the meeting of the University's Socially Responsible Investment Review Committee (SRIRC). SRIRC has now released a statement in response to our representation and

is consulting ALL STUDENTS, STAFF AND ALUMNI on this issue. For details drop me an email on [charities@ousu.org](mailto:charities@ousu.org).

I met with the University twice to discuss Fair-trade, again reflecting the view of Council. We have now started working on draft policy and it will hopefully go to the University's Sustainability Steering Group by the end of the academic year. Though, this might be handed over to my successor.

#### Raise and Give (RAG)

After the biggest term EVER for RAG things are looking a lot quieter this term. Though we are still growing and I'm working with two students on planning a 'Raids Tour' to take place in 10<sup>th</sup> week - sending a bunch of students to cities across the country to raise money during the day, go out and have fun in the evening then enjoy free accommodation before getting up again the next day and doing it all again in another city.

#### Living Wage

The University's Personnel Committee sent us this note after their meeting in which they discussed the Living Wage: "There are, as you know, other committees which will need to consider the issue of possible accreditation, and we shall prepare the further information that they will need and pass it to them with a strong positive message from Personnel Committee."

This is great news, but there are still 3 more committees to go before we know what they decide. Still, this has never happened before and I want to thank everyone who came to the action beforehand for helping out, it was a great success.

#### Community

I responded to the City Council's consultation on Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's), most student houses are HMO's. The Council is planning on introducing some sort of landlord accreditation scheme and I responded very much in favour of such a scheme, I'll get in touch with them after the consultation has been reviewed to see how students can get involved with shaping this.

I attended a meeting at the County Council where they discussed their transport strategy for 2020 and beyond, including a monorail...

<b>Sarah Pine</b>	<b>VP (Women)</b>
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Hello Council!

#### **Sexual Violence**

I've been working the Fiona from the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre to put together training around this issue for students. I've specifically advertised it to women's officers and other student leaders, but this is open to everyone. It's happening three times in 2nd week, so please email me if you want to come! It's gonna be really great.

Local Elections - I've been working with the End Violence Against Women Coalition to distribute information about local candidates' responsibilities for preventing gendered violence.

A student has previously got in touch to highlight how they were placed next to their abuser in an exam, so I have been in communication with the Head of Exams to think through a system in which the chances of this are mitigated.

Counselling support - I've opened up communication with the counselling service around group support for survivors of sexual violence. This is something that students have asked me about in the past, yet the local rape crisis services don't align with Oxford terms, so another source of provision would be ideal.

#### **Consent**

I've been communicating with more students who want to introduce these in their common rooms. I've

also been speaking with someone at Cambridge who will be introducing them for their fresher's week there!

I've updated the workshops according to the edits that the coordinator from Rape Crisis South London suggested, to better reflect the gendered dynamics of sexual violence.

### **Leadership Development and Networking**

I've been working with WomCamCom to provide some Getting Things Done training. This is about campaigning and personal effectiveness. These skills are great for all students, but we're reaching out specifically through WomCam to inspire a cohort of students who are engaged in women's and gendered issues.

Women's Garden Party - I've been working with lots of women's societies in Oxford to put together this year's women's societies garden party. This is going to be linked to further opportunities for leadership development as well as providing a space for networking. Eden, the graduate women's officer, has also been particularly involved in this.

### **It Happens Here**

We've been managing a lot of press requests recently, and have been trying to raise the profile of the issues we've been discussing.

### **Harassment**

I prepared and delivered a session with the Women's Campaign to empower students to deconstruct their own college harassment policies and change them themselves.

Lobbied the local police force with students to improve the training they give to officers who have to respond to harassment and stalking cases.

I've been in communication with the university around their harassment policy, particularly after recent high profile cases demonstrating the shortcomings of the current system. OUSU has been trying to open up conversation on this a lot over the past five years, so I'm hoping the university will take this opportunity to improve their provision.

### **Body image campaign**

Some students have approached me and Charlotte about setting up a group that campaigns on issues of body image. This is not an exclusively women's issue, but it is very gendered. We're putting together a core group and some campaign goals.

**Partners and Spouses guide** - Finished the partners and spouses guide with Wadham MCR students. We're putting it up on the OUSU website soon!

## **PART TME OFFICERS**

<b>Sophie Terrett</b>	<b>Rent and Accommodation Officer</b>
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Hello, Council! The Oxford Tenants' Union has been going from strength to strength, with our focus mainly being on community support, with some exciting petitions in the pipeline. I have continued to work with Eden on issues relating to housing for couples and families, and have provisionally updated the Living Out Guide. I am looking forward to working with Charlotte this term regarding the timing of the release of property lists, and I continue to support students in their enquiries regarding accommodation.

<b>Dan Templeton</b>	<b>LBGTQ Officer</b>
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Over the vac I have started putting together a pack to welcome new college LBGTQ Reps into their role and provide advice as well as gathering resources from various LBGTQ organisations that I hope to

make available to those who require them. I have also started research into LGBTQ provision in PPH's and have started to put together some publicity in order to further promote the meetings and work of the campaign. In addition to this, I have been helping the LGBTQ Society in rolling out the new policy for trans students in Oxford as well as looking into the issue of changing the legal gender on degree certificates and other documents following graduation. Finally, I have been working with the OUSU President to complete registration for the NUS LGBT Conference taking place from 9th-11th May in Nottingham and making transport arrangements.

**Xavier Cohen**

**Environment and Ethics Officer**

My work over the vac has been focused on what is looking to be the main E&E event of the term - a family-friendly rally under the name of 'Fossil Free Future!'. It's being organised by our E&E campaign and the Oxford Fossil Free Campaign. The event is set to take place in mid-May, and we're hoping that it will be a public display of anger and opposition to the current energy status quo, and a demonstration of our popular will to encourage local politicians and leaders (including those from colleges and the university) to take climate issues as seriously as they need to be taken. We're hoping that both students and local people will come together and march as part of the event, and hopefully there will also be some brief talks from local activists and experts during the rally. Alongside this, I've also been helping to organise the first public meeting of a new arms divestment campaign that should be happening in second week.

**Emily Silcock**

**Community Outreach and Charities Officer**

Hi Council,

Hope you had a lovely holiday. The On Your Doorstep homelessness campaign has been doing loads of stuff since I last wrote a report - there's a bit of a summary of it in our motion, so I won't repeat it here.

Would really like to emphasis though: we're trying to get a collection tin in every college, mostly at plodges, so that students have someone where they can put their spare change rather than giving it to people who are begging, if they wish to do so.

Colleges still without one are: Corpus Christi, Harris Manchester, Keble, Kellogg, Linacre, Magdalen, Merton, Nuffield, Oriel, All Souls, Queen's, St. Anthony's, St. Catherine's, St Edmund Hall, St Hilda's and Trinity. If you're at one of those and you could help us out, then please drop an email to [homeless@ousu.org](mailto:homeless@ousu.org) - it's dead easy to sort.

Thanks!  
Emily

**Eden Tanner**

**Grad Women's Officer**

Over the vacation, I have attended a number of training sessions around sexual violence and harassment in order to better serve my constituents.

In conjunction with Sarah Pine, I held another Consent Workshop Information Session during 8<sup>th</sup> Week of HT, and have met with additional interested parties who could not attend the previous two sessions.

This week, I will be co-facilitating Consent Workshops with Lucy Delaney for the Sabbatical Officers and the Part Time Executive.

I have decided to take a different direction with the Couples and Family Accommodation database to get around reluctance from College administration. A call out has been sent around MCRs and on the

all student mail out, and surveys have been distributed to every person who has contacted me. In this process, I have come into contact with a large number of graduate women and their families. This led to the desire to re-open the conversation around how OUSU supports student parents - especially graduate women who are trying to continue their studies with their families here in Oxford. I am currently planning a Student Parent Picnic and Summit to be held on May 4<sup>th</sup> from 12pm in the University Parks.

I, along with Sarah, have been helping to organise the Oxford Women Garden Party, which fosters collaborative efforts between Women Societies in Oxford who experience underrepresentation, and provide an atmosphere for networking and the development of professional relationships across disciplines. This is scheduled for the 31<sup>st</sup> of May.

In the next two weeks, I will be facilitating Consent Workshops for the St John's MCR committee, and passing on a selection of committee members to be trained by Sarah Pine. I will also be appearing at the Oxford Education Conference on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May to speak on the role of STEM education in addressing academic inequality.

**James Elliot**

**Disabled Students Officer**

In the last two weeks I have continued meetings of the Disabled Students Campaign, where we have developed a plan for events next term. We are hoping to hold a series of intersectionality discussions, ideally linked with the other OUSU liberation campaigns, and a panel discussion on disabled people and the cuts, and what we as students can do to combat that.

We are also working on raising the profile of the Campaign among disabled students, and as such we have a publicity strategy and website plan for next term to make more people aware of the campaign which I will be working on with a friend who is an ex-professional graphic designer and marketing expert. This will take up much of my time in the next two weeks.

**Jamie Wells**

**Health and Welfare Officer**

We've just had the last meeting of the Wellbeing Week planning meeting and there are loads of great events planned for 3rd week, including raising awareness of mental health in Oxford, several workshops and lots of different events which all students can get involved in. Looking ahead, this term I'll be continuing to participate in the Welfare Rep forums, including providing information about the new C-card scheme, planning and delivering freshers week training and working with Charlotte to do some of the work to start organising the Safe Zone project in Oxford.

**Alba Kapoor**

**Black and Minority Ethnic Students and Anti-Racism Officer**

I hope to continue this term in working with the Campaign to Close Campsfield, and hope to pass a motion in OUSU council in support of the Campaign. At the start of this term I am meeting with the organisers of the Oxford-based Campsfield group in order to discuss further about organising an event particularly surrounding the issues of the racist policies of detention and how to get Oxford students more involved. I plan to continue to work with CRAE in carrying on the momentum particularly in the aftermath of the Race Summit that happened in March.

**Aparna Mummadi**

**Graduate International Students Officer**

Hello! Hope everyone has had a good Easter break & good luck to those with exams this week. Last semester I was told about a health watch survey that revealed a lower proportion of international students at Oxford were aware of health services and this could act as a barrier to accessing health care facilities. To increase awareness of the multiple and often confusing services on offer I have designed and created a leaflet detailing all the various health services available to students to Oxford. This has been sent to the publisher at OUSU and is awaiting approval by the OUSU Students Advice Service. Hopefully once approved this can be printed and given to students upon arrival in Oxford. I shall keep you updated on the progress. Thank you.

In the vacation I attended the selection panel for the Oxford Reach Scholarship (a unique and amazing feat by OUSU and your JCRs!). For the coming term I plan to follow up on the common rooms' actions to my letter last term in which I encouraged every common room to have an international student representative, and will eventually talk to JCR presidents individually for this purpose. I also plan to work on the idea I had about an international guide that is sent to freshers before their arrival in Oxford and the section on academic support in cooperation with Garlen. I would also like to finally start working with CRAE.