



reports to 3rd week council michaelmas 2004

Nicky Ellis
Opportunities)

V-P (Welfare & Equal

The majority of these last two weeks have been taken up by casework, enquiries and attempting to resolve the publications backlog. I have talked to various people in the university about the situation with the student advice service, and intend to raise this further in the University committee for Student Health and Welfare. There has been some sympathy with the current situation and our need to widen involvement in the student advice service; I will be talking to the senior proctor in the near future about the lack of legal advice available to students, a matter which arises not infrequently- he has so far been understanding and constructive about this vacuum.

I have finally begun tackling the website. Sadly my first efforts made rather a mess, but that was soon sorted out, and I,m doing a lot better now- I intend once I have done a general tidy up to post information about what I am doing on the website as well, both to be more accountable and so that people will be able to see more easily what they might get involved in.

Apologies to any freshers who have expressed an interest in my portfolios via ousulive and not been contacted; there was a long delay while the company responsible inputted the new data. I will be in touch soon and make good that lost time.

The highlight of my fortnight was perhaps the visit from two condom salesmen early one morning, a particularly surreal experience. A parcel duly arrived in the post containing numerous condom demonstrators, condom illustrated mouse mats and an array of other paraphernalia which I wouldn,t dare mention here. Apparently the majority of condoms break because people put them on incorrectly, hence the demonstrators; I have a glorious vision of welfare reps across the university holding demonstrations in their JCR,s to try and counter this; I,m reliably informed that they also make excellent elastic band holders.

My thanks this week go to all those members of the part-time executive who stepped in after our emergency exec meeting to organise and enact the delivery of the survival guides, and to those sabs who have spent the past couple of days helping with this in addition to their own work. Thanks also to the rag reps and all the other different people who stepped in at short notice and helped out. The last stage of the operation is currently underway; if by Monday any freshers are without there,s, email me (welfare@ousu.org).

Rebecca Wilkinson

V-P (Women)

WOM CAM

Given that some people have cited confusion about Blakeist rhetoric in the "Reforming OUSU" document, I have invited Jo Read - President of Cambridge Women's Union - to come and speak to Wom Cam before the end of term, about the proposed changes to OUSU's structures. This will be widely advertised and I hope all interested women will attend.

In the last two weeks we have also had a night in LUSH (which helped me with my Christmas shopping), I have met up with various self-defence instructors [more below] and have designed, bought and sold 'wear it pink' t-shirts to raise money for Breast Cancer Awareness.

I have also set up a new women's list - which will work similar to Pres-list and Reps-list, and will be available to all interested women. Please inform me if you would like to be added.

ED

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ED

I have spent a lot of the last two weeks looking into how better OUSU can support and help those going through or recovering from eating disorders. I have been researching various options and got in touch with several bodies including: the EDA, the counselling service and the Warneford. I have also spoken to CUSU and Brookes about what they offer.

I held a meeting last Tuesday and am hosting another one this Monday, as an information exchanging session for all interested parties. We envisage then moving forward with informal support meetings once a week held in various colleges.

If you want any more information about this please contact me on women@ousu.org or come to the Monday meeting at 8.30pm in the OUSU meetings room.

Thank you to Laura Penny for all her help in this.

NIGHTBUS

I now have sketchy figures on the Bus. Donations are covering all extra cost (diesel, phone bill, cleaning etc..) leaving the insurance and hire costs to be paid by the two student unions [roughly a 3rd of which is covered by sponsorship].

This is pretty much in line with the estimated costs we had originally, perhaps a little better than predicted.

We have had a few glitches, but the scheme seems to be smoothing itself out to the new two SU system.

3 crashes in the last week [!] have highlighted the benefits of hiring buses – as we never had to suspend the service and we never ran less than two buses at any point last week. This is in contrast to previous years when the service would have to be entirely suspended until the bus was fixed.

I would like to emphatically thank all those who have volunteered to drive and navigated.

PRO-CHOICE

At the start of last week I held a Promoting-Choice meeting to discuss whether any action should be taken regarding the LIFE demonstration advertised in the Oxford Mail. We decided that it was not worth counter demonstrating, as this was a small protest up the Banbury Road rather than a march through town and the likelihood was that we would simply draw more attention to their protest.

VISITING COLLEGES

I have gone to St Anthony's to speak to their women's group and on Friday I am having lunch at Balliol's women's lunch.

I would like to thank colleges for inviting me, and look forward to going to St Johns MCR next week.

SELF-DEFENCE

We have an intro talk to self-defence next Wednesday. And the following Tuesday we have the first of regular "reality" self-defence classes which I hope will continue through Hilary and Trinity term. The classes will be run by an instructor who already holds classes at St Hilda's and Brookes and has come highly recommended.

The classes will be women only, and I encourage all interested women to email me for more information.

NUS WOMEN'S EVENT

Last Friday I went to Birmingham for an NUS Women's Event. Jo Read (CUSU's Women's Officer) and I were the only full-time women's officer there. While the day had its interesting moments, I feel sure that the meeting of Sabbatical Women's Officers that is being proposed will have more practical use.

OSSL

In the last two weeks I have become a director of OSSL. This has mainly manifested itself in Bex standing on the door of Park End and manning the queue at Filth.

I think this year OUSU has a real opportunity to develop and expand on its commercial side, which is something I whole heartily support. However, this will all be for nothing if it is at the expense of the health and sanity of all the Executive members who chose to take an interest in this expansion.

As ever I would like to thank Gareth Lloyd for his soothing qualities and Dan Finley for his

expense of the health and sanity of all the Executive members who chose to take an interest in this expansion.

As ever I would like to thank Gareth Lloyd for his soothing qualities and Dan Finley for his workaholic tendencies. You are both an inspiration.

RESOURCE ROOM

Monday night saw a mammoth clearout of the Room formerly known as “SHOP”. It is now the Clubs and Socs resources Room. Taking its theme from the minimalist movement, it will shortly be kitted out with new technology once the budgets have been approved.

I would like to thank the entire full-time executive for their help and Krizia for her dedication to the cause.

SUCCESS STORY OF THE WEEK

On Wednesday, Chris Allan and I revived a dead OUSU van. This procedure took quite a while longer than envisaged, a few more dead pheasants than I ever personally needed to see and an interesting visit to a stud farm. Nonetheless, the OUSU van is now up and running with a new battery. Note to anyone who uses it in future DO NOT LEAVE THE MIDDLE LIGHT ON or Bex will be very cross. Dope!

Siobhan McAndrew

V-P (Graduates)

I have been visiting MCRs to advertise OUSU services, and attending many university committees - the highlight being Educational & Policy Standards Committee, which is where it's all at. I have been keeping in touch with MCR Presidents and continuing casework, most often advising people how to pursue complaints. I am consulting on how to revamp international students' and mature students' campaigns - namely find people previously involved to review whether the committee structure functions best to provide for these specific needs. I am currently writing a report a report on Fourth Year Fees at the moment to bring to graduate focus groups today (Thursday 3rd week) and Monday 4th week hence the brevity of this report. I will give a more detailed report tomorrow at Council - possibly by proxy, since I will be attending a memorial service which may overlap with the first part of the meeting.

Linsey Cole

V-P (Access & Academic Affairs)

Academic Affairs

Since last council, I've spent much of my time in University meetings. The Emergency motion for today's council about the National Student Survey is the result of at least four meetings which have had this on the agenda - I'm not going to say too much now, as I am prone to ranting about this one, so I'll save that for Council. BUT - I think its important for OUSU to take a strong position on this - the inconvenience it will cause to students must be minimised and OUSU needs to look after the interests of its members. In terms of Open to Change, the issue was on the agenda at the libraries curators committee - I'm working with ac-aff officers to establish where the real pressure points in the system are, but if anyone has any particular concerns about where they think library provision needs particular attention, PLEASE email me on access@ousu.org I also have lots more postcards, so if your common room still hasn't received any, or you need more, let me know.

There were also problems with the Telnet Server, which meant OLIS was out of action at the beginning of 2nd week - this problem has been resolved, but again, any issues, keep me informed.

The issue of standardisation in collection practice was also discussed on both Undergraduate Panel and EPSC - Academic Affairs Committee will be bringing a motion to the next council about this.

Again, any input about what you expect to get from a collection and examples of how things work across colleges would be much appreciated. Stint reform is also high on the agenda again, with proposals from the English faculty at Senior Tutors' Committee on Tuesday 4th week - I've been liaising with the JCC on this. There are still a couple of Divisional Board vacancies - undergrad reps for Medical Sciences and grads for Social Sciences and Life and Environmental Sciences - again, if you're interested please get in touch.

And the OUSU Writing Workshop will be recommencing for this year on Sunday of 4th week - 8pm - 10pm in the OUSU Offices. Beginning THIS SUNDAY the Workshop will be available for drop-in sessions every Sunday and Thursday from 8pm-10pm in OUSU - please advertise this to your common rooms. The OUSU Writing Workshop provides trained peer tutors available, free of charge, to assist with any essay problem you might come up against. The tutors can answer your

drop-in sessions every Sunday and Thursday from 8pm-10pm in OUSU – please advertise this to your common rooms. The OUSU Writing Workshop provides trained peer tutors available, free of charge, to assist with any essay problem you might come up against. The tutors can answer your questions, help you redraft essays and advise you on planning, style and structure. They are best able to help when you bring along the question you are tackling, your notes and/or a draft essay, but they can help at any stage in an informal and non-judgemental way. Thanks to Ian Lyons at Teddy Hall for his work on this and to all the other tutors for giving up their time – this is such a valuable service that I'm glad to see OUSU providing.

I've been building relations with common room officers, dealing with lots of enquiries about the Publications backlog which have made getting on with things more difficult than normal. Now the Survival Guide is on its way into the pidges of all Freshers (literally, as we speak...) and thanks to all the part-time exec, RAG reps and all those who came in to help with sticking and distribution.

I've also been busy finishing the JCC and Divisional Board Reps Guides, which will be sent out next week – I've worked to ensure that OUSU's list of JCC reps is as up to date as possible, as the reps are really important lines of communication and vital for ensuring people are kept aware of what is going on.

Access

As mandated in last council, I wrote to the Chair of Admissions Executive about PQA and received a reply earlier this week, stating that the University agreed with OUSU on this issue. I am in the process of drafting the letter to Mr Beloff with John and hope to get this sent off by the end of the week.

All things Target Schools are moving along nicely – we're in the midst of revising the Target Schools Handbook and giving the website www.targetschools.com a big overhaul, so if you want to see your name in print and write an article for either, please get in touch. The meetings are every Wednesday at 5pm in OUSU – the co-chairs are beginning to plan this years events and any input will be happily received.

I'll also be bringing a motion to 5th council about OFFA – the issue of how the Access Regulator will work and what Oxford students think of it is an important one to discuss, so if anyone has any comments on it, please get in touch with me. Take the issue to your common rooms, so we can ensure a fruitful debate in Council.