

OUSU

reports to council

Termly Council Trinity Term 2011

David Barclay

President

Wonderful Councillors,

This is it, the end of the road. Here's what I've been doing this term.

No Confidence

We did it! After weeks of preparation, lobbying, building turnout and prepping the press we had a resounding 283-5 victory in the No Confidence debate in Congregation. It was a great day and has a number of big implications for the future of Oxford's role in the national HE debate. Thanks to everyone for their help and efforts, this won't be forgotten for a long time!

Common Room Support

The big theme of this term has been rent. We've held several rent breakfasts and briefing sessions, we've got hold of really valuable information and had numerous one-on-one meetings with CR officers looking to build their rent campaigns. Big thanks to Eleanor for all her work on this, and to the CR Presidents working their socks off for their students.

Organisation

This term has seen progress on a number of really important organisational fronts. The Trustee Board work continues to develop, the Bye-laws project is up and running, the building move went fantastically and we're now developing a great handover timetable for the next sabs. We also held a really successful elections event which has seen probably the biggest potential field ever for next term's OUSU elections.

University Engagement

Engaging with the University on common aims has been a theme of this term, as I hope it will be in the future. We are making ourselves increasingly valuable partners in the fields of Development and Careers in particular, but we've also worked with the Proctors on trashing and with the Assessor on the 'Idea of a University' Project which I think has huge potential going forward.

All in all, it has been a great final term in a totally unforgettable year.

Katharine Terrell

VP (Women)

Springboard

- Springboard for Undergraduates, a personal and professional development programme created by the BBC by women for women, took place in 0th week Trinity term. 47 female undergraduate students took part. Responses were very positive: participants said they were more confident in their academic work, have clearer academic and careers goals, are more confident expressing themselves.

Common room/college support

- Tom and I ran two afternoon workshops for common room officers (welfare, women's, LGBTQ etc) on how to support students who experience sexual harassment and assault.
- I organised a morning workshop for college and university staff on supporting students who experience

Reports to termly council trinity term 2011

stalking and harassment, led by the Oxford County Council Domestic & Sexual Abuse Co-ordinator, Liz Jones, and Tom.

- David and I ran a workshop at St Hilda's on effective husting. It was well-attended (thanks to Ugo) and we've had good feedback.
- I've also sent out resource packs for Women's Officers, as well as meeting them and hosting meetings of them at OUSU.

Finals Forums

- The last of the finals forums happened at the beginning of this term. 15 forums were run in a variety of subjects, some women-only and some mixed. Feedback suggests that women value a women-only space with regards to getting information about, and tackling, the gender gap at finals, so the intention is to continue to run both single-sex and mixed sessions.

WomCam

- WomCam has had a great term of extra events apart from our usual weekly meetings. Apart from the things that Nicola and Tania organised (see their separate reports), I also organised a guest talk from an artist about 'Sex, gender and art', which was well-attended and had a slightly different crowd to usual.

Harassment:

- Along with Lisa Stokes-King, have lobbied the university to look into their harassment guidelines, which are currently not at the level they should be and are leaving students in danger. I've been working with Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre, Specially Trained Officers from Thames Valley Police, and the Domestic and Sexual Violence Coordinator to improve students' access to help and support.

Student Parents:

- I visited the new University nursery on Woodstock Road. Plans are going ahead for extra financial support for student parents.
- Student parents have been in touch to find out more about resources and support at the university.

WomCam:

- As well as our usual meetings, I organised a session with a local artist on 'Sex, gender and art'
- co-hosted an event with the Howard League for Penal Reform about women in prison
- I am in the process of last-minute or organising for the Love Your Body Garden Party (to which everyone is welcome, come along Saturday 1-3pm in the University Parks!)

Sustainability:

The Women's Campaign regularly use e-invitations instead of paper ones and use the projector in our meetings instead of printing out information.

Beth Evans

VP (Graduates)

This term, I've spent very many hours representing graduates on the various **committees** in which the VP Graduates sits: University Council, Education Committee, Curators of the University Libraries, Graduate Admissions Committee, Research Committee, Graduate Panel of Conference of Colleges, OUSU Trustee Board, OUSU Executive Committee, Skills Group, Join Sub-Committee (of Education Committee) with Student Members.

The number of cases we've worked on through the **Student Advice Service** has increased this year. We get a high proportion of graduate and international students coming to us with often very intricate cases, so this term – as ever - casework has taken up many working hours.

Reports to termly council trinity term 2011

The **building move** at the start of term went, on the whole, very smoothly thanks to Brona's organisational skills. It's a much improved working environment and a great place for the incoming sabbs to start work.

As a committee member for **NUS LGBT Campaign**, I helped with our national conference in Sheffield this term. It's the biggest democratic gathering of LGBTQ students in Europe – so, a lot of work! I was re-elected to committee and will continue in the role next year.

One of the highlights of the term for me has been the 'No Confidence' motion which passed at Congregation. David worked immensely hard on this and made a fantastic speech in the Sheldonian – lots of respect due to him for pulling it off, and a huge win for OUSU.

Projects and Ongoing Issues for Postgraduates:

PGT Teaching Review – Having carried out the bulk of focus groups in the first weeks of term, the report is now making its way through central University committees, Conference (college) committees, and Divisional Graduate Academic Committees. The report is pretty long, but well worth a read! Again, thanks go to Jonny for ludicrous amounts of work on this. Issues we hope will be taken forward from this work include feedback, course organization and induction as well as representative structures.

Review of Postgraduate Representation – I'm really glad work is taking place on this – thanks to Francesco Fermani, Luigi Prada, Chris Gray, David Townsend and others for their work.

Graduate Mock Exams - These have been piloted this year with the help of Exam Schools. After graduates brought it to our attention that they don't get the opportunity to sit Mock Exams in the way that undergraduates do with collections, there have now been a total of four Mock Exam sessions at the central Exam Schools. We've tried to give students an experience as close as possible to the real exams - they are expected to remain silent, wear sub fusc etc. The last session had a fantastic turnout, with over 120 graduate students turn up to sit their papers. We're very glad Exam Schools are willing to carry this on next year as there is a clear need being met with these sessions.

Visas and Welfare for International Students – I'm really proud of the work we did on visas last term, but work is still ongoing in getting across to students the impact the actual changes will have, as opposed to the those originally proposed. It's vital that international students do not feel unwelcome at Oxford and OUSU is aware from discussions with international students of the impact the government's proposals have had in this respect.

Graduate Funding – remains an issue, and will only become more important. We have great allies within the University on this, but with the withdrawal of government funds from HE and the huge spend on undergraduate access work and bursaries we will have to be increasingly vocal if we are to keep funding for graduates on the agenda and a priority for fundraising initiatives within the University such as 'Oxford Thinking.'

Tom Perry Opportunities)	VP	(Welfare	&	Equal
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Dear Council,

Welcome to my last ever report as Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)! I've thoroughly enjoyed this last year, and while we've faced some challenges, I believe that we (as a team) have taken OUSU forward and left a healthy foundation for next year's team. This job is unique and incredibly fulfilling; if anyone is considering running for any sabbatical position I would highly recommend it.

This term seems to have flown by! Below is a summery of what I've been up to:

- Student Advice Service: We've just completed our busiest year yet, with over 440 students using the service. The past two weeks I have been focused on writing the end of year report, which involving

collecting all the data and updating all the case files. The report has gone to 2 University committees and will be going to Conference of Colleges next year.

- Training: Katharine and I hosted 2 sessions for students on sexual harassment and abuse. This was the first time we hosted such a session and they were well attended and received. I also helped run a training session for staff on stalking.
- Well Being Week: The second Well Being Week was run in second week this term and was very popular. I want to say a big thank you to Laura Hancox, without whom the week couldn't have happened.
- Strategic Planning: As a team we have been working towards a strategic plan for OUSU, which includes re-writing its governance.
- Disability Awareness Week: Planning for next term's Disability Awareness Week has started, which included the first meeting of the SWD campaign of the year. I'm confident that the Campaign can continue to build on this and have a real presence next MT.
- Work continued on 'Say Whatever You Want', but it is proving to be more difficult than originally thought. The project will be passed on to Seb and hopefully we can make more headway next year.
- The Equality and Diversity Unit in the University has a new Head, who I met last week. We discussed Anonymous Incident Reporting and the very exciting It Gets Better project being head up by Katie Colliver.
- Committees continued as normal and it looks like next year will be an exciting one for Seb. Work on Fitness to Study will be completed, the SpLD working group has finally finished its report and a new working group is being set up looking into the experience of Students with Disabilities.
- I've met with close to a dozen welfare officers (and prospective welfare officers) this term. This year's group of officers have been great, and wish all of next year's officers the best of luck!
- This week I've been focusing on the appointment of a second student advisor. We had a healthy number of applicants, which has been shortlisted. Interviews will happen at the end of 8th week with a view for them starting in the summer. This is a necessary step to ensuring the Student Advice Service can continue to provide a high level of support to students.

Alex Bulfin

VP (Access & Academic Affairs)

Any thoughts we may have had that Trinity might be a little less manic than Hilary or Michaelmas have been pretty comprehensively banished in the last eight weeks. The start of term was slightly disrupted as OUSU moved into its new premises in Worcester St, but even during the move the work didn't stop, and below is a selection of what I've been working on this term.

This being our final set of reports to Council, a gushy farewell note is obligatory, and there are a number of people who need thanking for their help and support this year. Part-Time Exec-ers Harriet and Simran and Target School Co-Chairs Becca and Christina have worked tirelessly and with great success, and their patience and independence when I've been absorbed with other work has been phenomenal. It has been a pleasure to work with so many talented common room officers, Target Schools volunteers and students this year and has reaffirmed my faith that we can achieve just as much as any college or university employee. But my greatest thanks is reserved for the OUSU staff, fellow sabbaticals and friends who have kept us all sane throughout the year, helped us through the disasters, made us see our successes and enabled us to achieve so much. It has been the most incredible year and I wish Hannah and the rest of the incoming sabs all the best, and hope they enjoy it as much as we did.

And so to scrutiny...

Representation

Meetings and Working Groups: I've attended more than 30 meetings of University and Conference of Colleges committees, sub-groups and working groups this term, totalling around 100 hours. As well as the usual main committees on planning and resources, education and University Council, there have been a number of interesting smaller groups considering foundation/bridging provision, visiting students, and the nature of the first public examination which have been rewarding and in which we have been able to significantly influence the shape of the proposals coming forward.

Academic Affairs

HE Governance: the fall-out from the changes being proposed to the HE sector has continued and is likely to escalate once more with the imminent publication of the White Paper. This term OUSU's campaigning focused once again on the Government. Together with Oxford's academics we successfully called for an won a vote of no confidence in David Willetts' policies on higher education, and the fascinating debate in the Sheldonian was one of the highlights of the year. The campaign has already started to spread to other universities: make sure you sign up at www.noconfidence.org.uk to stay involved.

Consultations and papers: I have been involved in a number of consultations this term, both internally and nationally. OUSU has made submissions to a number of university working groups (mentioned above) and has followed up on a number of the national consultation papers already submitted on public information. I attended a meeting of the Russell Group to present on engaging student unions in access work.

Access

Volunteer Database: The database has now been up and running for almost a term and all the signs are that it's going to be a fantastic success. Already we are receiving requests for volunteers from across the collegiate University and our success rate for finding volunteers is very high. There are still improvements to be made, more in relation to the human systems run by Target Schools, but in general it appears that this is going to become an important strand of Target Schools and OUSU's work on access in the future.

TS Strategic Review: The review of Target Schools has been completed and is in the process of being converted into a working planning document that can help shape Target Schools' direction for the next three years. My thanks for everyone who has contributed to the process and I hope to be able to circulate the finished document before the meeting of Council.

Access Working Group: Work is on-going on OUSU's access manifesto, partly due to the changing nature of conversations within the University. With a lot of discussion taking place about how access should be done and by whom, this will be an important contribution by OUSU but is requiring some reshaping to ensure that it's ideas are received and can be incorporated into the broader debate. Again, I am hopeful that this will be circulated prior to the meeting of Council.

Student Advice Service

The amount of case work coming through to me this term has seen an increase with lots of students contacting the service with queries regarding examinations and disciplinary procedures. I have also been involved with a number of substantial, long-running cases that have involved a lot of work this term in particular.

I have also been supporting a number of common room officers this term who are representing students in their own colleges, as well as contributing to reviews of college disciplinary procedures.

Daniel Lowe

VP (Charities & Community)

Hey Council,

It is with great pleasure and more than a little sadness that I stand ready for my 50th OUSU council. I think this means I've spent about 5 days straight here, not sure how I feel about that, but definitely better than I do about having spent a month on the Oxford Tube. This is going to be a long one but only about half of it is a report, most of it is thanking all the amazing people I've worked with whilst at OUSU.

RAG and Charity

The last RAG event of the year is this Friday at 8pm in the Catholic Chaplaincy on St Aldates. It's a £15 all you can drink black tie cocktail evening: Summer Twist. Featuring live Jazz and the amazing talents of the ladies from In The Pink, you can also be delighted with fire juggles, get a free Lush Hand Massage and a henna tattoo. What's not to love?

Also, Gen Laurier from Oxford Hub and I are running some charity reps training on Thursday of 8th week. Check emails for the details.

Reports to termly council trinity term 2011

EandE

My last ever Environment Panel and SRIRC are upcoming and it makes me very sad. SRIRC is looking amazingly positive: after 7 years of campaigning and a year and a half of talking I think we're actually going to make a positive change to the university's investment policy. Alastair and I are bringing a paper to EP to get better battery recycling in colleges and the whole committee will finish up the Panel work plan in 8th week.

On the student level, we've almost completely set the termcard for next term and the Buy Right campaign have got their most important meeting with Oxford Ltd yet, where an ethical purchasing policy good finally be given teeth. I've spent a lot of time assessing recycling provision in colleges and Alastair, Natalie and I are very grateful for all the help we've been getting from the reps and the rest of the committee.

Community

See the upcoming motion for the response to housing issues. I was interviewed on the topic by the BBC in Television Centre on Monday at a very early hour, but it really helped collect my thoughts on the topic.

The MOU with Oxford Hub has been finalised and we are negotiating with Brookes about getting the Safety Bus to run for the latter part of Trinity Term next year. Fingers crossed.

General

I'm organising the Aldwych Group to meet in Oxford in the 10th/11th week weekend and its looking to be quite exciting. I'm getting a fair amount of help from Karen with regards to venue, but am mostly stuck on where I can take them to dinner that can seat 80 people, is within walking distance and relatively cheap, and No, I'm not taking them to Jamals.

I'm now leaving OUSU to join the Department for Energy and Climate Change. I wish Dan Stone, my successor every luck and have every confidence in him. If anyone is interested in taking up office after Dan feel free to get in touch with me, even after I leave you can facebook me. The same counts for anyone who's worried about running but not on a slate. I was an independent candidate and its totally possible.

Thank yous

I'll begin with a few choice jourmos: Tom, Alistair, Winston, Tara, James, Ellen, Emma M, Helena S, and Hannah K you always kept me entertained but not as much as some of the ridiculous Cherwell enquiries.

The people who are paid to work with me so can't run away, Ben Smith, Kate Aydin, Jenny Ekelund, Elizabeth Crawford, Patrick Heffernan and Tara Prayag, Mark Mills.

The people of East Oxford for making sure there will always be a need for the VP (Charities and Community)

David, Alex, Tom, Katharine and Beth: thank you for making this office a joy to be in. Brona, Taylor, Imo, Kershia, Sue and Karen: Thank you for being a godsend every day. There would be no OUSU without you.

The amazing people I've worked with in RAG, who work tirelessly but never stop smiling, we have so many memories: Habiba, Fluff, Charlotte F, Rebecca, Caroline, Tom H, Miriam, Jack T, Rachel D, Caroline, Lucie K, Cecilia, Jeremy, Mo, Laura, Rob, Bex, Will, Jess n' Jess, Annis, Ben, Ollie, Fran, Claire H, Charles, Ameer, Raj, Dean, Naomi, Sarah H, Alistair N, Louis and Kim

My first E&E exec: Ian, Mikki, Alex, Niel, Amy and Cat, subsequent replacements: Julia, Mae, Emma, Lucy A, Tiff, Charlotte and Jasmine and especially the current team: Roberta, Alastair, Louise, Patrick, Callum, Callum, Natalie, Beth, Claire, Yue Peng, Lukas, Hanna and Sean who truly understand what it means when someone starts to complain about their domestic bursar, people who deny climate change or a disengaged common room.

All of the other clubs, socs and organisations that have performed for free at my events, the Belles, Out of The Blue, In the Pink, Brookes Fire Jugglers, The Imps, Teddy Hall Alternative Choir, Lush and the plethora of bands who's names I've forgotten but really want to play at my wedding.

My former exec officers Gen and Ben, who exceeded every expectation. My current exec officers Alastair and Sarah who are a beacon of brilliance and all exec officers the world over should strive to be more like them.

The sabs and exec officers I never worked with but were always a pleasure at exec and always seemed to be on the right side of the argument, though not always the election: Rachel C, Rosanna, Elena, Sally, Portia, Jack M, Harriet, Jacob, Ian, Katie C.

Team Safety Bus! My safety bus experience has been what has made my last year in Oxford amazing. Freya, Niamh, Aliiyah, Lucie A, Gareth, Loz, Mike, Gill, Jess, Coombes, Alex, Amy, Matt C, Matt K, Jay, Clutchy, Ace, Maren, Jobby, Hiscock, Popup, Ryan, Liam, Paul, Jessie, Emily and especially Lucas and Kenny who back me up at the East Oxford NAG.

Most importantly, my first OUSU exec, who inspired me to run for this job, a decision I've never regretted. Martin, Claire, Rich, Becci, Ingrid, Louise, James, Sarah H, Kat, Adam, Hannah S, I dedicate my time in OUSU to you.

Almost lastly I'd like to thank every incarnation of Council. 5 years of presidents and OUSU reps have led to some amazing motions and discussions, none of which I consider a waste of time. I will never be able to hear 'and MCRs,' 'Move to Vote,' or 'Name and College,' without quietly laughing to myself and scaring the people around me.

Finally, the people who have put up with my OUSU chat and hit right back with their own. We may have spent more hours together with gin than we have in council: Ian, Jack, Madeline, Joe, Eorann, Christina and Adam I couldn't have done it without you.

With that I remain,
Daniel Lowe
Aula Sancti Edmundi

PART TIME OFFICERS

Harriet Green

Access & Admissions Officer

Hi Council!

This term has been really enjoyable both in terms of OUSU and the Access projects I've been involved in. Obviously the main thing for me has been the Access Fair. I'm so pleased about and grateful to all those who have got involved and/or been supportive. We're still working with the university on finalising dates, etc. but as I've said before, student involvement is and is going to be key. We now have a student focus group, which has, so far, been absolutely fantastic in coming up with ideas, thinking through problems, working on quotes, literature for different target audiences, time plans, mission statements... They'll be working through the summer to ensure the most is made of this opportunity.

I've loved being involved with Oxford My Generation Mentoring Programme (OMMP). An example of students working direct with a London-based educational youth charity, OMMP is a great demonstration of brilliant student ideas and participation. The sheer speed of growth of this project is phenomenal, and I'd urge anyone who wants to get involved to bash it into Google and take a look.

Something I was very proud to be taking over, the Fred Walker Prize essay competition was set up by my predecessor, Nathan Jones. Having now run its first year, the competition will see tutors and students travelling to Bolton in a couple of weeks to present the prize, and to work with the students involved. I think this is a great example of an initiative stemming from one individual, but which will grow year by year in terms of those who benefit.

Catz doesn't have an easy time of it when it comes to regionalisation. We have Northern Ireland, joint with New College, and I spent a lot of time when I was Access Rep, and then with my successor, thinking about the

Reports to termly council trinity term 2011

sorts of things the JCR could do. It's fantastic that we are now in the process of piloting a joint E-mentoring programme, with both colleges on board, to reach some of the students who otherwise would rely on UCAS conferences and open days. I hope that, as it grows and becomes more established, the programme will provide a pilot for other colleges interested in doing similar things.

I can get terribly flustered when public speaking, but that didn't detract from how interesting it was to hear different students' view on Access and the university at the Access Forum with the Union. What really hit home for me was hearing how difficult it is for students to find out what the university itself do, let alone what individual groups and colleges are up to. I hope we can combat this with the Access Fair, and make Access work easier and more accessible!

From before:

Over the vac I was working on setting up a scholarship programme for South African Students from disadvantaged backgrounds. I'll update everyone when everything's a bit more solid, but I hope this will be a great opportunity for us to talk about what kind of scholarship programmes we should be looking to procure, and how we can engage individuals and groups interested in being part of a programme.

Work towards the South African scholarship is going well. As I said before, it'll take a few months to have anything concrete I can bring to Council, but if anyone would like to know anything about it on a face-to-face basis, then please do approach me.

Sitting down with Access Reps and JCR Presidents from different colleges to find out how they're getting on has definitely been a term highlight. It's amazing just how many ideas are out there, and just how much action is already being taken. I hope I can spend a good deal of time in Michaelmas talking to those I haven't already met, and continue to help out wherever I can with contacts, examples and advice.

Over the summer I intend to take a good amount of time to work on two projects I've been having conversations about this term. The first is the 'Access and Advertising' scheme – working with Quad Ad Agency (an adjunct of Oxford Advertising Society) to bring students from local schools into the workshops they run, giving individuals involved an insight into a particular career, as well as student life.

The second is the internship database. The basic idea behind it is to get as many people as possible into internships that they want to do. Concomitant with the work OUSU do regarding campaigning for interns, the database would be a resource of willing alumni who would offer (literally) their spare room for x number of days/weeks. So many people I talk to just don't have family or friends who live in London – or any big city - and that actively negated what they are able to contemplate and indeed do during their vacs. Having spoken to Exec, we thought it best to start off in the capital, perhaps focusing on particular internship groups (political, media, etc.) and then expand if the idea takes off. The database would be headed up by the Careers Service, in conjunction with their 'Careers Connect' service. Getting the Alumni Office on board is my next task. Having spoken to the Development Office, there is enthusiasm for it. Hopefully the AO, in addition to providing the crucial information needed, will give some pointers in terms of college participation, and any data protection issues. I hope to come back for Michaelmas with something to show!

I have consulted Alastair on ways to be more environmentally friendly, and hope to be more conscious and more effective from here on in!" No worries if not, I just recall we're meant to state it.

I think that's everything. I've had a fantastic term, and I think Access has, too; thank you so much to everyone who's made it so.

Harriet

Hello Council.

This has been a very busy and exciting term for Clubs and Societies. It's been jam packed with lots of new start-ups (over 40 new societies), lots of grants distributed (over £5000), and lots of amazing ideas about how OUSU can improve its support going forward.

Here is just a brief summary of some of the things I have been doing this term.

- Held an issue-raising Clubs Council to which all Clubs and Society Presidents were invited in order to raise issues and ideas
- Created a series of fact-sheets covering frequently encountered issues - e.g. setting-up societies, registering with the Proctors, applying for University Clubs Committee Funding, seeking sponsorship etc
- Re-established close links with the Sports Federation
- Compiled a comprehensive database of all Oxford Clubs and Societies (both registered with the proctors and not)
- Helped set up over 40 new societies
- Helped distribute over £5000 in grants for clubs and societies through the University Clubs Committee
- Working with the rest of OUSU, Target schools, and the University to increase the role of clubs and societies in access work - e.g. mini-Freshers' Fairs at access events, clubs going on school visits, including sports and cultural groups in College taster-events etc
- Established very good relationships with both the Proctors' office and the University's Clubs Officer
- Begun planning a nation-wide survey of all Student Unions to determine the nature of their support for Clubs and Societies and seek to implement best practice at OUSU
- Working with visiting student groups to provide mini-Freshers' Fairs in Hilary and Trinity terms for the newly arrived visiting students, ensuring that they get to experience the full range of Oxford activities
- Established links with international societies to help increase co-operation both between societies and with OUSU, especially with the intention of widening electoral participation and involvement with relevant campaigns.
- Linked 6 societies with new sponsors
- Worked with E&E Chair to find the best way to get societies involved in environmental campaigns
- Working with Careers Service and University Secretariat to plan workshops for society committee members in key areas such as charring, minute taking, account management etc
- Started to work with Santander to help make their student society bank accounts more efficient
- Attended the very successful University Congregation No Confidence debate as one of five student representatives
- Worked with Freshers' Fair organizers to ensure that societies get the best deal from this most important event in their Michelmas calendars
- Begun planning a very exciting new web-hub for societies (including contact details, descriptions, video diaries, event calendars and much much more)

In response to a specific questions raised last week by OUSU's E&E Officer I am happy to report that I have been working to make my role (and societies more generally) more environmentally sustainable. By establishing a comprehensive email list of Oxford Clubs and Societies I have saved the Proctors having to contact all 600 in writing - this will save large amounts of paper and emissions associated with postal delivery. I have also been working with the E&E Chair to find ways in which societies can help with environmental campaigns.

The Clubs Council that I ran at the end of 5th Week was attended by a representative group of over 30 societies - ranging from political, to charitable, to sports, to national societies, to cultural groups and many more. I am writing up a full report that will be circulated to all clubs and societies by the end of this week. If you would also like a copy of the full report, please just email me. However, a brief summary is included for

your information:

- Main issues raised included publicity, sponsorship and hand-over
- Lively debate and innovative ideas raised about how to best attract people to events
- Previously no awareness of existing support for clubs and societies (IT Support, Proctors' grants, OUSU's dedicated officer, Careers Service sponsorship advice and training etc)
- Ideas for OUSU's future support including 'OUSU Time Capsule' - where clubs going dormant or fearing mix-ups in hand-over, send their critical documents, bank account details, passwords etc to OUSU to store until someone wants to reinvigorate the society in future or until a new committee is in place
- Demand for a central events service where students can easily see what societies are holding events at any given point
- Workshop training for society committees, similar to that already given to JCR Officers by OUSU, were received very well
- Single-issue Clubs Council dedicated to the issue of sponsorship, with speakers, workshops, and group discussions, was agreed upon as the theme for the next event

As ever, if you want any more information on the items listed above or have any clubs and societies-related issues, please do not hesitate to get in touch. If you have a campaign that you think would benefit from society involvement, if you want to co-host an event with a club, or you simply want to find out how to get in touch with the University Pole Dancing society - do not hesitate to email me at: societies@ousu.org

Chris O'Connor
Officer

Common Room Support

Council,

It's been a long term, and everyone on the Exec has done a huge amount, particularly the Sabs, who we should all thank for their year of fantastic service. Here's a quick recap of some of the things I've done this term, and a plan for next term.

Trinity:

- OUSU/Union Access Forum: unbelievable as it may sound, the Union played host to an insightful discussion on Access, with some great ideas coming out. As we look forward to next term, we should combine the many efforts across the University to meet the unique challenges facing access at Oxford.
- Rent Negotiations: have gone brilliantly well for many colleges, testament to the hard work, talent and commitment of JCR Presidents and Committees. Thanks to David Messling for hosting our Rent Breakfasts at John's. Well done everybody!
- OUSU Reps: another great term for OUSU reps, who continue to serve their colleges and play a huge role in the work that we all do. I hope everyone can make the 8th week social at ChristChurch, it should be a great way to round off an eventful term.

Next Term:

- Freshers: with a new cohort of incoming students, OUSU has both a responsibility and an opportunity. We must ensure, as always, that new students have a great start to their time at Oxford, and it is our chance to engage thousands of new people with the work that we do in Common Rooms, Societies and at a university level.
- Access Fair: Harriet and Alex have done some great preparatory work for this, let's make sure that we have a massive turnout and huge involvement to really make sure the event goes successfully.

That's all from me, I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday, and hope you all have a great summer. See (most of) you in Michaelmas!

Chris

Hi Council,

The last two weeks, term and two terms have been an exciting mix of events with a lot of progress made and good lessons learnt. Particular highlights include an unprecedented broad group of people coming together over the Living Wage and poverty pay in Oxford, meeting really cool community leaders and a successful series of Community Organising workshops I put together. Here's a more in depth version:

Living Wage Campaign:

Last Thursday evening we held out first action in Oxford to encourage Tesco to pay all their staff a Living Wage; this is the first time this has taken place outside of London, so it was a huge achievement for the campaign. It's taken almost all term to organise and although there are too many people to acknowledge here, particular thanks to all those who acted as leaders from the Oxford Living Wage Campaign, Gregory Platten, Angus Ritchie, David Barclay, Stefan Baskerville and everyone from community groups and charities I badgered into bringing groups along. In true community organising style the action was targeted, developed leaders and FUN.

Community Organising Workshops:

The last session went really well and had a good turnout from a wide variety of groups. Thanks very much to David Barclay and Sophie Stephens for running the session! The workshops as a whole have gone really well and I'm particularly grateful to Angus Ritchie and Laurence Mills for helping to shape them. I've got some really good evaluative feedback, so hope that we may be able to run an even better series in the future.

RAG:

I've been in a lot of contact with Student Adventures over the past few weeks for our collaborative 'Choose a Challenge' Fair next term, which includes such exciting ventures as Cycle round Cape Town and London to Paris bike ride, so everything on this front is going well. Also Summer Twist, the cheapest black tie drinks event in Oxford, which Daniel, another member of the RAG exec and I have been planning, will be held this Friday from 8pm in the Catholic Chaplaincy, so hope to see lots of you there. It's just £15! E-mail rag@ousu.org to get a ticket.

Other:

I've been collaborating with OxHub for a really interesting panel discussion I'm planning for next term and on some other ideas where we can gainfully work together. I've been in contact with many community leaders about prospective ways of working together too, so hopefully this will come to fruition next term.

Quick taster of next term's events:

Over the summer here are a few things I'll be working on – do get in touch if you have any suggestions:

Living Wage Roundtable and other exciting Living Wage ideas

Panel discussion with OxHub

RAG 'Choose a Challenge' Fair

Finally, I'd like to thank Daniel Lowe immensely for all his support and hard work since I've been in my position. It has been really great to work together on a number of things and I've definitely learnt a lot and had a lot of fun. Best wishes for the future and I hope everything goes well! Thank you also to the rest of the Sab team and the rest of Exec for making the last two terms an enjoyable experience!

Feel free to get in touch at communityandcharity@ousu.org if you'd like to get involved with anything or have any requests for things I should be working on.

Have a great summer!

Sarah

Dear students,

Change is coming fast: here's a short summary of my most notable activities this term:

- Held "**Campaigners Connected**": a dinner party to foster communication and relationships between students and local city groups working on environmental and ethical issues. Already results are being seen, with upcoming collaborations with Oxford Urban Wildlife and Oxford Fair Trade Coalition.
- Arranging and attending inspections as part of the "**Recycling with Honours**" campaign: gradually assessing every college and PPH's recycling facilities, ranking them and producing an info pack to help colleges improve. Already, we've seen that just the act alone of us doing an assessment with the college's Domestic Bursar and E&E rep is enough to catalyse frank discussion between students and staff, and produce immediate results. In under 24 hours, Jesus had put paper recycling bins in their library!

In addition, myriad smaller things:

- Bringing some more optimism to Environment Panel (one of the university panels)
- Quizzing the Vice-Chancellor on his personal commitment to making Oxford University sustainable.
- Helping organise a speaker event bringing in experts from local community groups on the Ardley Fields incinerator, a disturbing and rapidly developing situation.

Lastly but most importantly, I'd like to praise the continued dedication and work of the OUSU Environment & Ethics group. Normal students, who through belief, optimism, perseverance and intelligence, are making tangible improvements to the life of this University. Keep on going guys :)

- The **Buy Right Oxford** group are negotiating with Oxford University Ltd to ensure no clothing with the OU logo on will have been made by sweatshop labour. They've done very well to secure big concessions from OU Ltd, and are continuing to push for the right results.
- The **Beds for Bees** group are working with college gardeners (in Mansfield especially) to ensure that bees, an animal in decline yet massively important for the UK's biodiversity and economy, have an environment in which to thrive
- The **Recycling with Honours** group, whose activities I have mentioned above.

If you'd like to see more about what they've been up to, check out <http://ee.ousu.org>

Have a great summer, email eande@ousu.org with any queries or suggestions.

Alastair

Dear Council,

Although I may have pledged to make my final Council report last year my last ever Council Report, this time it will actually be the case. I have greatly enjoyed being on Exec as Graduate Academic Affairs Officer and will be stepping down at the end of 10th week to allow my successor (hopefully elected today) to take over as I will be leaving in September after my MSc finishes. Here's what I've been up to this year (I was only elected in 3rd week of Hilary Term after no-one stood before then)

Graduate Teaching Review

After the work that Hannah Cusworth and I did last year on the undergraduate response to the University's Review of its Teaching Model, the main reason I ran was to organise a response along similar lines for Taught Masters students as everyone seemed to think that would be a good idea last year. This report was approved by OUSU Council in 5th week and since then has been discussed at Graduate Committee of Conference of Colleges and Committees in Humanities, Social Sciences and the Maths, Physical & Life Sciences Divisions. It will be reported to the University's Education Committee in 8th Week. The report has so far been really well received (along with the undergraduate report which is being recirculated) and my successor and Jim O'Connell will be working next year to ensure that action is taken on the findings of these reports.

Since last Council I have met with the University official in the Planning & Resource section who is heading up the University number-crunching bit of the Teaching Review and we've agreed that the next phase of the Teaching Review (where teaching deliver is modified) needs to involve a drawing together of our work and the University's. I firmly believe that we have generated a comprehensive evidence base over the last 2 years on the reality of teaching provision on the ground in Oxford, and the University now needs to act on this. A clear finding of the PGT Teaching Review relates to student expectations and given fee hikes the University will be under pressure to act on what we've found. We need to ensure that students are getting top-quality teaching on all courses and I know that next year's team are very well placed to take this work forward. Oh, and the University has also asked that we do an exercise like this for Postgraduate Research students next year to help improve provision for them. Over to the Exec 2011/12...being serious I wholeheartedly endorse this idea, it's a great project to run in early Trinity Term and is really valuable for improving academic provision at Oxford. The two exercises we've run in the last couple of Trinity Terms have been the largest consultations of their type in Oxford for ages and are both a lot of fun to do and really important.

Graduate Fundraising

Since Jim O'Connell was elected last term I've been doing some work with the University Development Office on getting graduates involved in fundraising for student support for graduate students. At the moment this is one of the largest barriers (if not the largest) to graduate entry to Oxford and it's great that the University is recalibrating its fundraising to work on this. I've got a meeting with some people in the Development Office on Friday to help take this forward and have been working with the Social Sciences Division on fundraising as well as with other bits of the University on helping involve graduates. Donors love hearing about the research that graduate students are doing and this provides a really good opportunity in future years for involving graduates in opening up Oxford to more students. This has been a fun thing to work on alongside teaching provision and I'll hand it over to Jim and my successor.

Other Exec Stuff

I've been working with Francesco Fermani and others on improving academic representation at the graduate level which was a major finding of the Graduate Teaching Review. This term I've also been involved with promoting OUSU's elections next term to people thinking of running (please do run! Particularly for part-time Exec positions as they're amazing opportunities and you can gain a lot of great experience while improving life for students here). I've worked with David Barclay and others around the No Confidence vote in David Willetts, and particularly last term on the issue around fees, student support and bursaries. In addition I've been to the usual internal meetings like Exec, Council etc.

Of Sustainability

In common with the rest of Exec I have been asked how I have made things more sustainable (in an environmental sense) this year. My departure from elected office should reduce dramatically the number of long documents being printed for meetings of OUSU Council and University meetings, although I have always sought to ensure that such documents are printed on recycled paper.

Closing Thoughts

Although we're having another set of discussions at the moment about how to involve graduates in academic representation and OUSU, I firmly believe that the bulk of future work around graduate provision should focus around delivery on the basis of what we already know from discussions with graduate students (whether through surveys or qualitative research). I've been of the view since starting to be involved in OUSU in about 2007 that the biggest problem facing OUSU connecting effectively with students is when the organisation is inward-facing rather than working proactively and innovatively with students and the University on improving time here. This is particularly the case for graduates where the issues are so large (e.g we'd need to raise

literally over £1 billion to fully fund each graduate here in perpetuity through endowment). Nevertheless I think we should work far more than we do occasionally on these, tangible issues rather than obsessing over metrics relating to participation. The student union exists to improve the time in Oxford of students through a variety of means and we have enough evidence as to what our priorities with regards to graduate life should be. I have every confidence that Jim, the rest of next year's sabbatical team and people on the Graduate Exec will be excellent at taking these issues forward and I wish them all the best in doing so.

Thanks

Working with OUSU this year has been a bit odd (inevitably after working there full-time) but a lot of fun. Particular thanks go to Beth Evans who has been fantastic to work with on the Graduate Teaching Review and has pulled absurdly long hours throughout the year on her work with NUS LGBT Committee and the broader student movement in addition to OUSU. Being VP (Grads) is not an easy job and Beth has done it very well. Thanks for putting up with my Blairite tendencies, incessant rants about delivery and me scheduling focus groups at 8:30 in the evening. Thanks also to David Barclay for letting me stay involved this year - I hope I've been useful, haven't got in your way and let you get on with your job! This year has been one of the hardest political balancing acts for SU officers in recent years and you've done a great job on the fees issue and holding the balance on political activity. To everyone on Exec but particularly Sarah Santosham, Harriet Green, Jacob Diggle and Colin Jackson - the work that you guys do on the side of your degrees is amazing and has been really inspiring this year. Finally, as always, to OUSU's permanent staff - the place would fall apart in days (hours?) without everything that you do. Your work rates and good humour are real inspirations.

Best of luck to next year's sabbatical team - you're better prepared for a year working full-time at OUSU than any sabb team that I've seen during my time here and I know that you're going to do an amazing job.

Jonny

Deeksha Sharma
Officer

Grad International Students

Objectives at start of term

This term there were two main objectives – to get started on the best practices guide for common rooms with respect to international students and secondly to work for the organisation of a regular careers event for graduate international students where they can know about internship applications, job applications, working in the UK, CV etc. well in time. This event is especially focussed around people on one year courses who often lose out on many opportunities because they remain unaware of them at the right time.

Activities/ Steps taken/ Involvement

- 1) The best practices guide needs to be devoted a significant amount of time. I will be working over it during the summer. It was discussed in the last Prescom in Hilary and also in the Exec after that and got a supportive response. I will be working in close coordination with MCRs and also with David Bowe over this.
- 2) Pursued discussions with careers services for a one stop careers event/drop in session for graduate international students from various Divisions. The event will have experts from the Careers Services in Exam School to advise on internships, jobs, CVs, staying in UK etc. Careers Service are very happy with the idea and the event has been set for late Michaelmas when incoming graduate international students have had time to settle down and get accustomed to pressures of an Oxford graduate's life.

Proposed Tasks to be initiated and followed up in next term

- 1) Co-ordinate with International students Campaign and various National Interest Societies and Clubs to work identify and provide greater events and opportunities for social involvement for international graduates in early Michaelmas.
- 2) Complete and submit the best practices guide.

Deeksha Sharma
Graduate International Students Officer

Happy seventh week!

This term I have regularly attended and Executive Committee meetings and contributed to discussion, attended Council to express particular concerns and participate in pertinent debates relating graduate, welfare and graduate welfare issues and took (a small) part in the No Confidence campaign, which was hugely satisfying. I am currently working with the International Graduates Officer on issues surrounding the provision of facilities to graduate students who remain in Oxford during University and College 'shut-down' periods (i.e. Christmas and parts of the Long Vacation).

I have also just begun working with Beth (VP Grads) and David (President) on rents in University accommodation, having recently been contacted by concerned students, work which I plan to continue with Jim (VP Grads elect) and Martha (President elect) over summer and into the next academic year. I also hope to contribute to continuing work on visa issues with the new sab team.

The summer will be busy, as I will be trying to formalise ad hoc arrangements made with Divisional induction sessions last year to contain a component on graduate welfare. I also hope to extend this to faculty inductions, particularly for MSt students and I'm looking forward to helping run the International Student drop-in sessions prior to the start of next term.

I will also be helping out with the **Love Your Body** even run by WomCam this **Saturday (17th) 1-3pm** in **University Parks**.

This year and this term have seen increases in the number of students contacting me directly about graduate welfare related issues and I hope to continue to raise the profile of the role so that more students take advantage of their officers in OUSU over the coming years.

If anyone has any questions, or is considering **standing in the elections next Michaelmas** please **contact me at gradwelfare@ousu.org** and I will happily fill you in on this very enjoyable, rewarding role.

All the best for the summer,
David

PS- in response to the scrutiny request last Council, 'state one measure that you have adopted this year to make your activities in your role more sustainable', I have not printed a single OUSU related document all year, referring to digital copies and making notes on them on a computer, in my (recycled) paper notebook, or on the printouts handed out at OUSU meetings and Councils.

I have had a fantastic experience as Graduate Women's Officer this year. Starting off with a colourful bang at the start of Hilary Term, I co-ordinated a 'This is what a feminist looks like' poster campaign inspired by the Fawcett Society. The results can be seen here: <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/23988438/feministA2-2.pdf>. On a more regular basis, I was pleased to create a fortnightly feminist reading circle at Wadham which attracted a score of new faces and proved fertile ground for debate. We read extracts from Greer's 'The Female Eunuch', texts on The Philosophy of Sexuality and the post-modern socialist feminist 'Cyborg Manifesto' by Haraway. Alongside this I had the pleasure to run a fortnightly 'Sex and the Cinema' film series with Dr. Maria Donapetry to explore the nebulous territories of fluid gender roles, sexuality, masculinities and femininities, love and of course, sex. Hilary Term came to a close at the NUS Women's Conference in Oxford this year where I accompanied the VP Women and Women's Officer as representatives of the diverse aspects of women's lives at Oxford University.

Trinity term began with a special Women's Campaign speaker session and forum for discussion about Female Genital Cutting (FGC) at Merton College. I invited three speakers from two organisations, the Orchid Project and Daughters of Eve, to present their stories to the fifty people that attended - a great success! At the end of the session we passed a unanimous vote to support these organisations which is now enshrined in WomCam

policy. I hope that WomCam's links with them will continue. The Cherwell wrote a review which can be found here: <http://www.cherwell.org/news/oxford/2011/05/14/ousu-votes-to-help-end-genital-cutting>. Aside from the events I have been running, I have been an integral part of the Women's Campaign Committee, attending weekly discussion sessions and sending out mailouts when necessary. I have learnt so much about feminism this year, the girls have been fantastic and I hope WomCam will always be such a success.

Laura Hancox

Health & Welfare Officer

Hi Council,

This term has included a few very different things, listed below.

1. I have worked with Tom Perry to finalise and carry out well-being week, which was second week of this term and very successful. We ran around 20 events, each of which was well-attended. Each event fulfilled at least one of the week's objectives which were: To better connect students and services when they are dealing with poor mental health, to contribute to reducing the stigma around mental health problems and also to promote a positive attitude to caring for one's mental health, in the same way as students are aware of the need to care for their physical health. There was positive feedback from the events and so I hope this has helped to further establish well-being week as a yearly thing.
2. Again working with Tom Perry, I have helped to plan training which we are providing later this term for the incoming common room committee members that will be organising the next fresher's week. This is to better prepare people for issues that may arise in fresher's week and get people really thinking about what to include in the week to make it inclusive and positive for everyone. As part of this, I will also ensure that my manifesto promise of making sure committee members are aware of international students arriving early is carried out, to allow enough time to make suitable arrangements in individual colleges for that. This training will be provided again, probably in -1st week of Michaelmas for those committee members who could not attend this term.
3. I have had preliminary meetings concerning possible events (both university-wide and college-specific) to happen in conjunction with World Aids Day which will be 1st December, at the end of Michaelmas term. Although in the early stages, this is looking like it could turn out to have many elements to it and be really exciting. The current aims I have for World Aids Day are to; raise awareness of and inform about HIV/AIDS, incorporate an element of safe-sex promotion, raise money for HIV/AIDS charities and make people aware of support structures in place for those with HIV in Oxford.

It has been a really rewarding term, I've enjoyed it a lot!

Laura xxx

Colin Jackson
Officer

International Students

This term, my primary aims were to begin dialogue with international clubs and societies, and to find, plan and implement projects in accordance with the feedback received from that new dialogue with societies. The first of these goals I believe I have achieved to a high standard: I now have close contacts in many of the largest international student societies. I planned and helped host an event jointly with the Asia-Pacific Society with good turnout, and where I gained a great deal of insight into the most common issues facing internationals from the East. Jacob Diggle and I planned for an International Societies Council which unfortunately had no turnout, leading us to the conclusion that with respect to international student societies, it is best to make contact on a one-on-one basis for introductions before attempting a large-scale event of that kind. I have also been involved in an advisory role helping to set up a visiting student society to help visiting students quickly feel at home and allow them to get as much of the Oxford experience in their limited time here as they can.

On the second front, my main focus has been on international storage, for which I will produce a detailed report (perhaps in the form of a best practices guide) by the end of my time in this role. Progress has been

slow on this front, but only as a result of the degree of preparation I am going to before collecting raw data and getting down to setting meetings with college International Students Reps/Officers and writing. I have been speaking with university administrators as to the best way to go about such a report, what metrics are most worth paying attention to, what their take on the current state of international storage is, and so on. A new initiative I will be rolling out in Michaelmas is a short International Students Rep/Officer training or information session, as OUSU runs for many other JCR positions. One of the biggest difficulties surrounding the role on the college level is that it is rarely well-defined, and a centralized training session is likely to help correct that.

Sustainability-friendly project: Most international students ship a great deal more of their things back and forth over the breaks than they would have to if there were adequate international storage provisions: by putting together a best practices guide and hopefully seeing the suggestions implemented, overseas students won't have to fly as many things back and forth, meaning less shipment by plane.

Katie Colliver

LGBTQ Officer

This term has been a busy one for me, both academically and in my role as LGBTQ Officer. It started with attending the NUS LGBT Conference with a number of other delegates from Oxford. We got the opportunity to debate policy and pass motions that will shape the way the NUS works on LGBT issues over the coming years. More exciting for me, however, was witnessing the work that other student unions have been doing; their ideas were inspirational and motivating - I think all of our delegates returned to Oxford with a clearer vision of how we want to work within the LGBTQ community in future.

There have been two big campaigns launched this term; first, the Genderless campaign is working from the bottom up to make life easier for trans people within the university. I was pleased to get their motion, which included clauses rejecting gendered dress codes and gendered language in common room emails, passed by Univ JCR and see it go through a number of other common rooms too. I hope this trend will continue into Michaelmas.

The second campaign was the It Gets Better project. Inspired by videos already online, our aim was to make a film demonstrating to teens that Oxford University has a warm and welcoming LGBTQ community where people are accepted simply for who they are. Not only does this carry a message of hope, but has important implications for access by showing that potential applicants need not fear discrimination here. Weekly meetings were held in OUSU where we discussed the aims and style of the video. Tuesday 6th week was incredibly exciting, as we filmed over 20 people telling their stories at OU LGBTQ soc drinks. We hope to have the footage edited and for the completed film to be ready by the end of the summer so that we can make it available to prospective students.

Finally, in my capacity as OU LGBTQsoc Female Welfare, I have attended drinks events and brunches throughout the term. These are a great opportunity for me to meet new people in the LGBTQ community and get an idea of where I should be focusing my efforts for future projects and campaigns.

All the best,

Katie

Eleanor Brown
Officer

Rent and Accommodation

Hello Council,

This term I've been concentrating on providing support to those who've been conducting rent negotiations with their colleges. To that end, I produced the Rent Negotiation Pack over the vacation, about which I've had some good feedback. I helped David Barclay and Chris O'Connor to put on two 'rent breakfast summits' for CR presidents; I also gave assistance (with the help of the Rent Response Team) to individual presidents who requested it. Negotiations seem to have gone for the most part smoothly, even if the Rent Is Too Damn High Campaign didn't quite gain the traction it could have.

Upcoming projects include a report on the outcomes of this year's negotiations, so expect to be contacted about that at some point if you were involved in them. I'm also working on the Housing Fair, which should take place in Michaelmas. I'm available over the summer to answer any questions or deal with any issues you might have about accommodation, living out etc at rentandacom@ousu.org

Eleanor Brown

Andrew Dunne

SWD Officer

In my capacity as SWD Officer I have continued planning for Disabilities Awareness Week, (DAW) with Tom (VP Welfare) and Tanja (SWD Campaign Chair). In particular the first SWD Campaign meeting took place in 6th Week TT, with another one planned for 8th Week TT. These meetings are primarily being used to plan the DAW, (and provided much useful advice and help in this regard) with the secondary objective of establishing a basis for the SWD Campaign for MT 2011. The planning for the DAW will continue over the Summer in preparation for 6th Week of MT 2011. I will be meeting with Peter Quinn, (head of the Disability Advisory Service, DAS) in the future to co-ordinate the staff and student efforts for the DAW.

With regards to what I have done in position as SWD Officer to help the environment, I would say the answer is limited since it is only this term that a basis for the SWD position was established due to having no one as SWD Officer for a number of months before I commenced in HT. Probably the most I could say is that I have, with the exception of emails, not done anything at all which would create a carbon footprint.