

## Reports to Termly Council

7<sup>th</sup> Week Termly Council Trinity Term 2013

**David J. Townsend**

**President**

Here's a run-down of the major projects I've been working on this term; I've omitted the smaller ongoing stuff, details of which are in previous fortnightly reports. For more information ask a question in OUSU Council or e-mail me at [president@ousu.org](mailto:president@ousu.org).

### OUSU Website

As mentioned orally at the last meeting, a new OUSU website is now live at [www.ousu.org](http://www.ousu.org). This is a trimmed-down version of the full website which will be launched over the summer, but it contains all the necessary information at present (if you think there's anything missing, just e-mail me). I said when I ran for election that we'd get rid of that old OUSU website before I left office, and we bloody well did! Number of mourners at its funeral: zero.

### Securing Multi-Year, Un-Earmarked OUSU Funding

After the phenomenal success achieved in conjunction with many members of OUSU Council last term of getting a £100 000 increase in the University's block grant to OUSU for 2013-2014, this term I have been working to agree with the University a way to avoid having to go through this rigmarole every single year. We've endorsed a mechanism (subject to sign-off later this week) for OUSU to agree multi-year objectives with the University and receive multi-year funding accordingly, ideally with phased increases kicking in as we meet the milestones along the way to those objectives. We've also managed to secure that this funding should be un-earmarked, that is, it should be given in order to enable OUSU to deliver the objective (reaching appropriate milestones along the way) but should not specify the means which should be used to achieve that objective. This will allow OUSU's elected officers, OUSU Council, common room presidents and ultimately students at large to determine how best to achieve those objectives, and will remove the economically inefficient incentive to waste money on outdated and inefficient means for fear of losing it because it was earmarked for that means alone. In short, fiscal responsibility and good budgetary management are now embedded in the OUSU-University relationship, and anyone who's been involved in OUSU as long as I have will say that's a huge step forward.

### OUSU Annual Report

Together with the Vice-Presidents and Chairs of Campaigns, I've been putting together OUSU's Annual Report for students, the University, the Colleges, the City - and any other interested persons! It should be ready in some form by the time of this meeting, although you may have to wait a couple more days after that for the launch of the colourful, graphic-design version. It'll be much shorter than previous ones, don't worry, and is shaped around the major things we do directly for students, and the objective figures that prove our successes this year. Have a read of it when it comes your way.

Hooroo,

DJT

**Chris Gray**

**VP (Graduates)**

### Highlights

It's been a long but fun (and I hope productive) year. Thanks to everyone whose helped out in a thousand different ways and good luck to next year's team!

Over the last 2 weeks I have reviewed Wycliffe Hall for a day, constructed a University policy on paid work by graduates, signed off on the final decisions about the new Financial Guarantee, have held the Division Rep elections, and have begun planning handover.

### University Policy on Paid Work

As the financial guarantee is now being relaxed the University needs a policy on graduate work. As things currently stand it is likely that the agreed policy will closely reflect our proposal - that only 'guidelines' should be introduced for the information of students, rather than any regulations that restrict behavior once within the University. Some other institutions (inc. Cambridge) have such a restrictive policy but I have argued that it is up to students to manage their timetables and that the University should only concern itself with academic commitments and performance.

### Financial Guarantee

The new Financial Guarantee has essentially been agreed by the University. There has been a slight change since the initial agreement - students will no longer be asked to give any information about where funds are coming from beyond first year fees. For all other costs (inc. 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year fees and living costs) students will just have to sign to say that they are aware of these costs and have planned to cover them.

### Student Living Cost Index

The tender for this has been drafted with the team at Exam Schools and the planned date for completion is the end of August. The charity Brightside, recommended by the NUS, is advising the University and the independent consultant hired to produce the index will be using student input.

### Division Rep Elections

These were held in 6<sup>th</sup> week and turn out was not great. The changes were proposed by our student div reps and I think it was the right way to go. It is still more students voting directly for their reps but obviously we need to seriously rethink our approach next year. The speed at which we made these changes prevented us publicizing the elections adequately so that will be something we need to review next year.

As always this is report records the news and highlights from my work. If anyone has any questions about any of this or my other work then please do ask them in Council or email me ([graduates@ousu.org](mailto:graduates@ousu.org)). Equally if anyone has an issue they would like me to work on drop me a line.

<b>Katie Colliver</b>	<b>VP (Welfare &amp; Equal Opportunities)</b>
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Dear Council,

This is my last report. Coming to the end of the year, I can say I have had great fun and learnt a lot in this role, and I hope that I have done some good along the way. If you would like to hear more about it, or are thinking of going for it yourself one day, then I am always happy to have a chat. Drop me a line at [welfare@ousu.org](mailto:welfare@ousu.org)

**Here's the run-down of what I have done this term...**

### Student Advice Service

- I have just written up the Student Advice Service's Annual Report (available on the website), and we have seen another busy year with 438 students on our books. This has been achieved despite some long-term staff absence and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the rest of the team for pulling together so well on this.
- I have written up and passed the new set of policies and procedures to guide the Service's work and consistency in the future.

- I have created a Student Advice Service Handbook to tell you all you need to know about the Service. This will soon be up on the website and will be available in hardcopy next year.

### Training

- With the help of the liberation campaigns and OUSU's part-time officers I have designed and delivered new Equality and Diversity Training, which is now available to request for whole common room committee groups.
- Delivered Student Support
- I have organised two booked-out Freshers Week Training sessions for 8<sup>th</sup> week, aimed at covering FAQs, welfare and entz tips for both JCRs and MCRs.

### Peer Mentoring Scheme

- I have recruited volunteer peer mentors who will be trained up at the end of term so that any incoming disabled students who would like some informal support will have someone to talk to.

### Disability Awareness Week

- Planning for next year has already started as we seek to make the week bigger and more embedded in the University community.

### Race Equality

- I am writing up a brief overview of the 100 Voices Campaign which documents BME students' experiences at Oxford and makes recommendations about how we could improve.
- I am working with CRAE and the University to keep momentum on organising a Race Summit in the new academic year, to bring together University stakeholders to find a way forward.

Have a great Summer, it has been a privilege working with you all.

All the best,

Katie

<b>David Messling</b>	<b>VP (Access &amp; Academic Affairs)</b>
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Dear Council,

With the end of the year imminent, this report focuses on an overview of 2012/13, rather than the last fortnight - I hope this will be of greater interest and use to Council! In a slightly cheesy way, I've listed my manifesto points below, with an overview of what's been achieved and what's still to do.

I ran with a pledge to expand the use of **Academic Feedback Sessions (AFS)**, a key tool to enabling students to improve their education. More colleges have taken these up recently, and more are looking to - we're almost at 50% coverage. More to do, but I am currently refreshing the training following up from a useful JCR sessions focused on AFS, which I hope will keep AFS expanding!

**Sharing of Feedback** was also an aim - this has proved tricky between colleges, but am pleased to have had JCRs agreeing to pass to OUSU the parts of Academic Feedback reports relating to departments, giving great evidence for us to pass on to department reps.

The pursuit of better student representation in departments and faculties has been a year long goal. We're not yet at the **Academic Representation Network** I was after, but have had a major success with the University agreeing a set of principles for every department to follow, including students on all academic committees and department/faculty boards. We've got better at collecting data on student reps, but lots more to do!

**Exam Guidance** and clear **Academic Discipline** guidelines has been, and still is, an issue for students. I've updated both the OUSU JCR Academic Affairs Guide and the Advice for Students in Exams recently, with some Katie Colliver spearheading some great work on clear procedure. We keep raising the issues of

exam guidance and marking criteria in University and departments are increasingly taking steps to address it.

**Student Finance** is still a big issue for both access to Oxford and academic success once you're here! As promised, in Michaelmas I defended the Fee Waiver and Bursary arrangements as they stood, and in the past term have prepared the evidence and case for a change in the student funding package next year.

**Target Schools** is increasingly aware of JCR and University activity, although coordination remains a challenge. The new website, new shadowing scheme and the first Roadshow have been set in motion and will hopefully run smoothly!

One manifesto promise was an online **Access Hub**, which is now live, giving students the chance to see at a glance the exciting range of access initiatives across the University. Another was an online **Alternative Prospectus** - this has been somewhat dependent on the OUSU website, but the new edition of the AP beginning this summer will be set up to have an online presence, and be an embedded part of the OUSU website.

Thank you all for your support over the year and for giving me the fantastic opportunity and privilege to work for such a body of talented, passionate and committed students! All the best for the future!

David

**Sarah Santhosham**

**VP (Charities & Community)**

Hi Council,

This is my 24<sup>th</sup> and final report to OUSU Council. It has been a pleasure to be involved with OUSU over the last three years as a campaign chair, an exec member and a sabb, and I wish my successor, Daniel Tomlinson, every success for the year ahead. I would like to thank my part time exec officers this year, Michael, James, Oli and Beth, and my campaign chairs, Jack, James, Flo and Daniel for all their hard work and dedication to their roles. I would also like to thank the other sabbs, the OUSU permanent staff and everyone else I worked with this year.

Here is my report on this term's activities, and if you'd like any more information feel free to send me an email at [charities@ousu.org](mailto:charities@ousu.org).

#### Charity/RAG

- RAG has come a long way this year, not just in it's fundraising (£91,725.25 for the last tax year!). This term I've been working with the new committee to ensure a smooth transition, while maintaining the quality of our events. I've worked to reshape the committee, ensuring a more business approach to RAG's activities while engaging more with our charities.
- I have been working to secure corporate sponsorship for RAG for next year and the initial rounds have been very successful - we hope to have a decision by the end of this term.
- Over the last two weeks, RAG ran two very successful fundraisers, Summer Twist and a stall at Summer Vllls, raising approximately £2,500 and I have been meeting the event sub teams for next term to start off their planning.
- I have been overseeing the RAG Ball committee and there has been a lot of progress, especially with a commitment to ensure the Ball is as sustainable as possible by working with the E&E Sustain-a-ball campaign.

#### Community

- Last week I chaired a meeting of the Oxford Student Community Partnership Group, a group that brings together 23 stakeholders across the city. We discussed and developed an action plan for the transition of students this summer.
- I have recruited and interviewed a new set of Community Wardens to take over at the end of this term, to act as student ambassadors in the local community.
- I have been working with the Oxford Hub to launch "One Hour A Week", a new campaign to promote the myriad volunteering opportunities across the City to incoming students.

## Environment & Ethics

- *Environment & Ethics* magazine has now launched! This is a new publication looking at everyday issues from an environmental and ethical viewpoint, which I created and edited this term - they should be in your Common Room, but there is also an online version (see the weekly OUSU email). I'm recruiting a new team to create and run the magazine for next term.
- I am developing a bid to secure money from the NUS and HEFCE to fund a Sustainability Officer at OUSU to work on "green" issues next year.
- I have worked with the City Council, Brookes and the British Heart Foundation to implement an end of year recycling scheme - boxes and bags should be delivered to participating Colleges soon, and it is hoped this will have a significant impact on reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill at the end of the year, while also fundraising for medical research here.

## Living Wage

- There has been significant progress with the Living Wage this year, with the University agreeing to pay all of its directly employed staff a Living Wage, to be reviewed annually. This term, I have had fruitful discussions with the University about rolling this out for contracted staff across departments, and there have been commitments made towards making this a reality.

## Other

- This term, I have done a lot of work with OUSU's campaign chairs to bring them together as a group, train them, and find avenues for collaboration. There has been positive feedback from this and I hope such work will continue in the future.

**Suzanne Holsomback**

**VP (Women)**

Dear All,

It was been a full year and it has been a true honour representing you. I thank you for this opportunity and for your support in the projects I have continued, started, or expanded. I have grown so much, both personally and professionally. Thank you.

What's next for me? After handover, I'll return to the post-graduate world to finish my MPhil, so please say "hi" if you see me in the SSL!

## What I've done about Sexual Health...

- Talked to colleges and common rooms about getting sexual consent discussions embedded in the college's Freshers' Week and running throughout the year.
- Sent a proposal for sexual consent discussions for Freshers' Week to the Senior Tutors' & Student Health and Welfare Committee.
- Ran Sexual Consent discussions at the Oxford Cherwell Valley College with It Happens Here members and volunteers from the Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre (OSARCC).
- Ran sexual consent facilitator training for over 50 individuals, getting people ready for Freshers' Week 2013.
- Spoke to Harassment Advisors about sexual violence, how to support survivors, and signposting.
- Launched It Happens Here Campaign.
- Chatted with Somerville and LMH about the It Happens Here Campaign.

## What I've done about Gender Gaps...

- Facilitated Athena SWAN focus groups for the Medical Science Division in preparation of the April submissions.
- Ran finals forum for Modern Languages and Law FHS finalists.
- Facilitated a stress management workshop for Pembroke's Wellbeing Week.

## What I've done about networking Oxford Women...

- Co-hosted a Women's Garden Party with OxFEST and WomCam that was a super success!
- Held two Women's Brunches to socialise and get to know other female leaders around the University.

## What I've done about Students with Children...

- Held two Student Parent Social in Wad ham's Gardens and Linacre.
- Successfully advocated for a clarification of the maternity leave policy for students.

What else I've done this term...

- Screened *Girl Rising*, a documentary about the impact of girls' education, for around 260 individuals.
- Spoke about women's equality at St. Anne's Equality Forum.
- Co-sponsored the talk given by Bianca Jagger at the Union.

What I'm doing in the final bit of term...

- Helping organise and leading a break out session for a Young Women's Conference to encourage higher attainment for school age girls.
- Training more facilitators for Sexual Consent Discussion Groups.

Shout Out...

This term shout out goes to the permanent staff of OUSU - Cate (receptionist), Theo & Imo (publishers), Max (sales account manager), Sue (accounts administrator), Henry & Karen (DSO), Brona (CEO), Lisa, Jenn, & Stephane (Student Advisors) - you are the reason why anything I've done has been done. Thank you. I will deeply miss working alongside of you all.

### PART TIME OFFICERS

<b>Nick Cooper</b>	<b>Graduate Academic Affairs Officer</b>
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Evening Council,

Another exciting term (/year) over (well, not quite, but once we've had Termly Council, it's essentially over in my eyes).

This term has mostly involved working with Chris, writing up and submitting our report on taught postgraduate courses to the University. This is something I'm very much looking forward to following up with Garlen over the vacation and into Michaelmas term, and hopefully this can shape not only the information given to graduates before applying, but also the course content when they arrive.

Next term will involve, among inevitably other things, working on graduate funding and representation. So exciting times ahead! Have a great long vacation (although for the grads out there like me, enjoy plenty more months in Oxford); do email if you have any questions or suggestions.

All the best,

Nick

<b>Will Brown</b>	<b>Rent &amp; Accommodation Officer</b>
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Dear Council,

I have provided individual common rooms with information and support as they engage in their annual rent negotiations, and have had the opportunity to be actively involved in my own college's ongoing negotiations. I look forward to gathering feedback on OUSU's rent training and support in 8th week, when the vast majority of common rooms will have concluded their negotiations, giving JCR and MCR Presidents the opportunity to shape next year's rent training.

I also attended a meeting of the Oxford Student Community Partnership Group.

Will

Hi Council,

In the last couple of weeks I've finalised the list of sports clubs with mixed gender teams or practices so that people who don't want to take part in single sex sports know what's available to them. I've also chased up the Sports Federation about getting the logo for the government's Sports Charter, stating a commitment against homophobia in sport, displayed on the new website. Over the summer I'm looking to start a couple of more projects, hopefully I should have news about them at the start of Michaelmas.

Katherine

Hi Council!

This term's been exciting for Disabled Students Campaigning! We've had 3 excellent meetings of the Disabled Students Campaigns, held outside of Wadham for the first time this year in 4<sup>th</sup> week. We also hosted the fantastic OxDERN conference in 3<sup>rd</sup> week - a fantastic success, organised by our campaign chair, Dwight Kelly.

We're also finishing the Disabled Students guide to be put into print this summer. It's been a lot of work, and we hope it'll look fantastic when it gets to students in September. Dwight, Katie and I gave an Oxide radio interview in 4<sup>th</sup> week (available online) to promote the work we're doing. Looking to the future, we're beginning to plan the Disability Awareness Week alongside the DAS and the University, and hope that 6<sup>th</sup> Week Michaelmas will be another great success.

Finally, I want to thank Dwight Kelly for all his work as the Disabled Students Campaign chair this year - his enthusiasm and hard work have set a brilliant standard for whoever follows in his shoes. There's one more meeting of term for the campaign - in 8<sup>th</sup> Week in Wadham on Tuesday (tbc), and, as ever, you can contact me on [disability@ousu.org](mailto:disability@ousu.org), if you have any questions or want to get involved in what we do.

Have a great Long Vacation!

Dear All,

We've made it to the end of Trinity!

This term, I've (finally) set up communications channels, and formed a regular mailing list for the Mature Students community. We've also got a new Facebook page, and am looking to finally get the Mature Students Campaign off the ground! The mature students pages in the fresher's guide is almost complete, and we're looking to put together an alternative prospectus for potential and incoming students, who are looking to get a better picture of what life in Oxford as a mature student is really like. Send me an email if you have any interesting stories or experiences that you would like to share.

Be sure to 'Like' our shiny new Facebook page!  
[www.facebook.com/ousumaturestudents](http://www.facebook.com/ousumaturestudents)

As always, email me at [maturestudents@ousu.org](mailto:maturestudents@ousu.org) if you ever have any questions/comments/problems/jokes.

Yours Sincerely,  
Henry Chong  
OUSU Mature Students Officer