

# AD LIBITUM

THE JOURNAL OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS IN OXFORD



Welcome to this, the Trinity Term edition of **Ad Libitum**. For OULD, this has been both a diverse and busy term, with speakers such as **Nick Clegg, David Laws and Martin Horwood**, pints and policy, and all the joys of electioneering. There was even a debate with the strangest of bed-fellows, the **Tory Reform Group** (which, naturally, we won).

As with the term, so with the newsletter, for we have within a wide array of articles for your approval- a note on the **local elections** and the role of **OULD** therein; a piece from Jonny Medland on the **BNP no-platform debate in OUSU**, which he proposed; a fond good- bye from our current president, Alex Worsnip, and a brisk hello from our president-to-be, Katherine Wall, who details **what to be expecting come Michaelmas**.

The Liberal Democrats- all substance. No spin, no fill.

**Martin Nelson, Press and Publicity Officer, Trinity Term 2007**

## CAMPAIGNING IN THE DREAMING SPIRES

**Laith Dilaimi on Campaigning and Local Elections this term**

**OULD Committee Member**, cold-calling: "Can the Lib Dem candidate count on your vote in the election tomorrow?"

**Voter**: "I should think so. He's my husband."

Let it not be said that OULD leaves any stone unturned in its attempt to help Lib Dems gain electoral success. This term we helped out in the May council elections in Abingdon and the Vale of the White Horse, with committee members and other OULD members manning the phones, folding campaign literature and even (in the case of three hardy souls) delivering Good Morning Abingdon leaflets at 6am on polling day, and we'd like to think that we played a part, however small, in the victory there- the Lib Dems' retained the Vale of the White Horse with an increased number of councillors (now 34 as opposed to 30 on the last council).

I'd like to say thank you to all those of you who have helped OULD and the local party with campaigning this term, and I look forward to remaining OULD Campaigns Officer for next term, when we will be aiming to enthuse a new generation of Oxford students to campaign for the Lib Dems within the university, locally and nationally. See you on a doorstep at 6am sometime soon!

**Laith Dilaimi, OULD Campaigning Officer Trinity Term 2007**

## Sunlight as Disinfectant

**Jonny Medland on why a No-Platform policy helps the BNP**

When I first took a motion to OUSU Council to repeal OUSU's no platform policy, I didn't anticipate the final vote even being close. After all, fighting for the rights of the BNP is not the most popular of causes. But the final tally saw 33 people voting to keep the current policy, with 28 voting against. Why?

Well, the best reason is that no-platform policies are not actually a productive way of combating fascism. It was telling that, after Nick Griffin was banned from Oxide Radio, he said that the reason was that OUSU knew that his ideas had support amongst Oxford students.



Anyone who is a member of the university knows that this claim is ridiculous. But in order to actually show Griffin and his supporters how wrong they are, it's necessary to actually demonstrate to them that Oxford students do not support the abhorrent message of fascist groups. If there is an Oxford student who is willing to stand as a fascist in an OUSU election (something which seems doubtful, to say the least), then we should welcome the opportunity to categorically show that we have no time for their arguments.

We must ask ourselves- what is more harmful for such groups? Is it giving them the opportunity to portray themselves as censored and restricted? Or is it allowing them to speak, and then telling them just how wrong they are?

Although the attempt to repeal OUSU's no-platform policy failed this time around, the fact that increasing numbers of students are opposing the policy is a promising sign for the future. Allowing all groups that operate within the law to stand in elections is a liberal principle, and one that is clearly popular within Oxford once more.

**Jonny Medland, OULD Social Secretary Trinity Term 2007**

## President Past

**Alex Worsnip on the term that's been**



Since I became involved in OULD, I've seen it come a long way in a short period of time. I've genuinely enjoyed being President, helping spread our message in a university that desperately needs a liberal voice against the monolithic control-freakery of OULC and the sleazy, prejudiced world of OUCA.

There are several groups of people that deserve my thanks. Firstly, to finalists leaving this term- not only **Rachel Harriot** and **John Colgan**, but also **Chris Stanley**, who has been a brilliant source of help and advice, and **Joe Chick**, the most dedicated member of OULD in recent memory. I also want to thank all of the current committee and especially **Joe Ammoun** and **Katherine Wall**. Without them, there might well be no OULD right now. Equally, **Richard Huzzey** has been a calming presence and a political and strategic inspiration: his future career as a historian makes him the greatest prime minister that never was.

Finally, thank you to everyone who's come along to events! It's been a pleasure.  
Liberal love, Alex

## President Future

**Katherine Wall on the term that will be**



As the summer term draws to a close, we begin to turn our eyes to the summer, a well deserved rest for all. Yet, it is also a chance to gear into action for Michaelmas, and chance to prepare for an exciting year to come. A jam packed term card awaits, with names such as **Chris Huhne**, **Julia Goldsworthy** and **Bill Emmott** (former editor of the Economist).

Campaigning will also become far more concentrated and engaging, running campaigns related to student demand, so get involved and **fight for something you care about!**

Come along to our re-launch event at the start of Michealmas and meet lots of young, bubbly liberals for a night of **punch, politics and partying**. I look forward to meeting many of you and working with you to inspire a new generation of Lib Dems here at Oxford.

Yours, Kat

---

Become a full member of OULD- print out and return to Joseph Ammoun, JCR, St Edmund Hall, Oxford OX1 4AR, or e-mail your details to [joseph.ammoun@seh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:joseph.ammoun@seh.ox.ac.uk) **\*\*\*Last chance to do so for free- charging begins next term!\*\*\***

Name-

Subject-

College -

Year of Graduation-

(Write BROOKES if from Oxford Brookes)

Email Address-