**Student Council 3rd Week Trinity Term 2021**

**Tuesday 11th May 2021**

**Virtual – 5:30PM**

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| **Item** | **Agenda** | **Actions** |
|  | **Welcome and apologies**  Wesley Ding (Chair of Council) welcomed council members to the meeting and explains how Student Council will run, and some ground rules.  **Chair’s Announcements**  The Chair informs the Council of the following:   * By-election hustings are to be held next week on Monday from 5.30pm. Candidate manifestos will be released this Friday. For anyone who wants to submit a question to the candidates there will be a form on the SU website and SU social media for the candidates running for SU President. * Book space to virtual hustings. * Sabbatical officers and it happens here campaign have joined up to run an event on the 28th of May- tackling sexual violence at Oxford- what's next- there will be a number of different speakers on the panel- book on at SU website   The Chair informs the Council of the trigger warnings for today’s meeting, visible on the Agenda. | To note |
| **A** | **Minutes of the previous meeting**  Chair opened the floor to questions and comments regarding the minutes of the previous meeting and any matters arising from the minutes. | To receive |
| **B** | **Matters arising from the minutes**  There are no matters arising. | To receive |
| **C** | **Elections in Council**  There are no elections in Council today. | To receive |
| **D** | **Reports from and questions to Sabbatical Trustees**  Sabbatical Trustees supplemented their written reports available on the website with a short verbal update. Reports from the Sabbatical Trustees can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/21tt3w/).  **Links:**  Join us to work with us to develop uni mental health policy next week on 18th May- get your free ticket: <https://www.oxfordsu.org/ents/event/2232/>  Here’s the survey Alex mentioned- please get involved and fill it out! <https://twitter.com/oxfordstudents/status/1392138330414977024?s=21>  Divisional Rep Applications: <https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/academic-reps/>  CW: Sexual harassment & sexual violence  Your voice, OUR SPACE. Students can make a difference.  Anonymously, confidentially, and safely, share your perspectives on and experience with sexual harassment and sexual violence at the University of Oxford. [https://ourspaceoxford.qualtrics.com/.../SV\_3t4J8hphY0ODwcS](https://ourspaceoxford.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3t4J8hphY0ODwcS?fbclid=IwAR1zcJ_Y8CUWAdspT8awH5L06JjO290LxlmoZ365Wlt2RP9pE1IT1e5TZZw)  Lauren (VP Graduates) not present due to a class, Amelia (VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities) not present due to illness and Nikita (SU President) not present.  Nikita (SU President) message of apologies conveyed via Chair: Dear all, apologies for not being present at this meeting. I have recently undergone surgery after an accident and I am taking time to rest and recover, so that I can better serve the student community when I am back. I have updated my report on the website with the work I have been doing within the Race Equality taskforce and I would strongly encourage to go have a look if you are interested in what I have been up to or how Race Equality work is progressing in this University. You can always contact me at [president@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:president@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk) or over Facebook and Twitter. Thank you for your understanding and stay safe and well.  Ben (VP Charities and Community) conveyed verbal reports on behalf of Amelia and Lauren to supplement their updates which can be found on the Oxford SU website.  **Chair opens the floor for Questions and comments on officer reports**  There are no questions.  **Chair reminds the Council that the meeting is being recorded.**  **Note: Sabbatical officers are maintaining blog pages on the Oxford SU website in the hope that this will be more accessible to students.** | To receive |
| **E** | **Reports from and questions to Women’s Campaign and Class Act Campaign**  **Report from the Women’s Campaign**  **Eleanor Redpath:** Not loads to report as we finding our feet with everything as a really new campaign that has just been set up recently, but one big success we have had so far is that we have a Trans rep now, that passed last Council, which we didn’t have previously. We do not have a person filling the position, but we will be advertising that as soon as we can. We are also still in the process of updating the constitution to make the wording more inclusive, which is in motion. I talked about some of the projects we have in mind for future, for example we are thinking of hosting an event about women and disabilities and disabilities that are commonly underdiagnosed in women and how women are treated by doctors sometimes and also over the summer thinking of creating a guide for freshers who haven't been out yet once restrictions are lifted, so that people know how to get home safely and how to go on a night out safely, as this is something that people have not learnt recently due to COVID.  Full report can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/pageassets/representation/student-council/21tt3w/Oxford-SU-Womens-Campaign-Report.docx).  **The Chair opens the floor to questions for the Report from the Women’s campaign.**  There are no questions.  **Report from Class Act Campaign.**  **Skye Fitzgerald McShane:** Skye, one of the Co-Chairs of Class Act. We have spent this term getting to know the committee and getting together and having ideas. We have set in motion the organisation of some events surrounding class and inclusivity at Oxford, specifically a collaboration with the magazine blog organisation Melanin at the end of term and a potential collaboration with FemSoc about class and feminism, as well as usual discussion groups on class on topics such as imposter syndrome. We have also begun work on setting up a report about bursary provision across the colleges and the University and disparity between access to bursaries, issues in how bursaries operate around Oxford, we are in the initial stages of this and will take it to the Ethics committee. We also have some ideas to use funds to create Stash/ merchandise with Class Act on to create community and a good use of our money. Continue to plan events and listen to our students.  Full report can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/pageassets/representation/student-council/21tt3w/Class-Act-Campaign-Report.docx).  **The Chair opens the floor to questions for the Report from the Class Act campaign.**  There are no questions. | To receive |
| **F** | **Reports from and questions to Social Sciences UG and PG Divisional Representatives**  **Report from the Social Sciences UG Divisional Representative**  Not present, report on the website.  Full report can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/pageassets/representation/student-council/21tt3w/Theo-Kelly-Div-Rep-Report.docx).  **Report from the Social Sciences PG Divisional Representative**  Not present, no written report submitted. | To receive |
| **G** | **Items for resolution** | To receive |
|  | **Motion to remove the Sackler name from the Bodleian Libraries building**  **Trigger warning: Drugs, Epstein**  **Council Notes:**   1. Donations are an essential part of the financing of non-for-profit institutions, especially among higher education institutions. The University of Oxford is not the exception, and this current situation reflects that some of its buildings have the name of its most crucial donors since its foundation. One specific case is the Sackler trust donations, a fund created by the Sackler family, an important benefactor of Oxford University, with an estimated amount of money donated, since 1991, around £11 million (Cherry, 2018).      1. The Sackler's name is not only on a library building but their contributions are being used by the University for other purposes, including research. However, this family is currently under investigation due to their involvement with the opioid crisis in the United States. They are the owner of Purdue Pharma, the company that produces Oxycontin, a potent synthetic morphine pill (Marks, 2020), which has been identified as one of the main culprits of this crisis. Multiple institutions are now rejecting their donations, returning funds already given, declaring no intention to receive any future ones and even removing their name from buildings named after them (Hopkins, 2019). Numerous authors (Carson, 2020, Ciulla, 2020, Dunn, 2010, May 2020, Saunders, 2012, Taylor, 2020) have raised the problem of not-for-profit institutions, like Universities, that receive funds from sources that may not be legal or ethical.      1. As the Sackler family's legal and ethical consequences and their role in the opioid crisis are unfolded, another case may come to mind: Jeffrey Epstein. Epstein's donations to MIT and Harvard provoked a public relations scandal when made public. The convicted sex offender was a regular donor to these prestigious universities. Due to the lax process and even worse controls, MIT still maintained financial ties even after Epstein was convicted in 2008 (Chaffin, 2019). These mistakes result from inadequate policies and rules that prioritize money collection over University's values or principles.      1. Thus the question we should ask: are the funds donated by the Sackler family ethically acceptable? The answer given by several institutions is negative: for example, Tufts University is not only returning their donation but even removing their name from a building (Markowitz, 2019), and it triggered an internal audit to verify how donations are accepted (Tufts, 2019). This audit was led by former U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts Donald K. Stern, who found an urgent need of "developing a more stringent conflict of interest policies, strengthen compliance practices and leadership, and creating and publicizing guiding principles for gift acceptance" (Tufts, 2019, p.1). This reaction is similar to other higher education institutions and non-for-profits organizations like museums: the Mets (Hopkins, 2019) and the U.K. National Gallery (Badshah and Walters, 2019) are both returning or refusing future Sackler's donations, vis a vis the multiple lawsuits they are facing and investigations of their role in the opioid epidemic in the United States.      1. The Sackler family is now under U.S. state and federal investigation (Dwyer, 2019, Keefe, 2017, Ryan et al., 2016), with one U.S. congressman (Walters, 2020). stating that "I'm not sure I know of any family in America that is more evil than yours" (Walters, 2020, p.2)      1. Oxford has previously refused donation; an example is Oxford's swift and extremely fast rejection of Huawei's gifts (BBC, 2019) in January 2019. This cancellation was five months earlier than the President's Trump ban on American businesses with the Chinese telecom giant, issued in May 2019 (Mengting and Lee, 2019) and the full official U.K. sanctions were put in place in July 2020 (Liu, 2020). In this case, Oxford's decision was probably the result of the British government's pressure, a stakeholder with enough leverage to accelerate the judgment.      1. Oxford Student Union has been the only stakeholder that has publicly expressed some concerns on the ethical grounds of building and donations under the Sackler's name. In a statement in 2018, it read the "S.U. believes that the university should not accept money from sources that the student body disapproves of" (Cherry, 2018, p.2). They have formally rejected Sackler's donations, and it has insisted on more transparency on the way funding is accepted (Krasteva, 2020).   **Council Believes:**   1. When a university names some of its buildings after a wealthy donor, based solely on the donation's size, it may communicate the wrong priorities or values to its students (Fliss et al., 2020). 2. When individuals see the Sackler Library in Oxford, they implicitly receive the message that wealth is the University's priority.      1. In the case of the Epstein donations, the warning is the evident risk of waiting too long to denounce a donor when his crime has already gained general public scorn. 2. The Sackler family has purchased social status over decades through their donations but, despite their considerable efforts to conceal their involvement in the opioid crisis, their time to the limelight has come. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to dissociate their funding with all the pain and sorrow the abuse of Oxycontin has brought to American society. 3. The worst fall out from all this ethical problem may be on the final message Oxford University is communicating to their students, implying that the end justifies the means. 4. Ultimately, branding a building by accepting contributions from some "tainted" sources, "money from the Sacklers should be understood as blood money" (Associated Press, 2019, p. 2), may prejudicial to the University, no matter the size of the donation. Following that logic, Oxford may well receive gifts from Pablo Escobar or Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman (at least until they were found guilty by a jury). 5. From a long-term perspective, we should ask the Oxford community who dismissed the origin of Sackler's funding, how many students would be attracted to attend the "Hitler and Stalin School of Medicine" (Sanky and Appel, 2020). Even if that School is at Oxford University, we are guessing not many. 6. It is time for Oxford to follow the example from other institutions and drop the Sackler name from the library building.   **Council Resolves:**   1. To mandate the SU President and Vice-President Charities and Community to lobby the Oxford University to drop the Sackler name from the building due to their involvement in the opioid epidemics in the U.S. 2. To mandate SU President and Vice-President Charities and Community to invite author Patrick Radden Keefe to present to the Oxford Student Union his book "Empire of Pain," in which he describes how the Sackler family has intentionally profited from the opioid epidemic.     **Proposer:** Marco Rodriguez, Balliol College  **Seconder:** Sadeq Quraishi  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  The motion mandates the Student Union to ask the University to remove the Sackler name from the Bodleian library. The proposer notes that the motion has been submitted previously in 2018 and was rejected by the University. The proposer believes new evidence provides greater support for the involvement of the Sackler family, including the donors to Oxford, have on the opioid epidemic in the US. The proposer notes the concerns this raises for the reputation of Oxford University and the moral image presented by this. The proposer wishes to bring a stronger communication of this issue to the University to provide greater support for the motion.  **The Chair thanks the Proposer and opens for short, factual questions.**  There are none.  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  **Michael Wood:** I back the motion and also as an American, the opioid epidemic, what Oxycontin did, during my years in high school, I saw it first-hand take a lot of people. I am a drug addict, I went through period of time in high school and became addicted to opioids. Strongly back the motion, disgraceful to have this name, as well as others, on campus.  **The Chair notes that voting is now open on the website for the motions of this meeting, the page for which can be found** [**here**](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/21tt3w/)**.**  **Results:**  Votes 51  For 40  Against 5  Abstain 6 |  |
|  | **Air Pollution (Policy Renewal)**  **Council Notes**:   1. The policy “Air Pollution” will lapse at the end of Trinity Term 2021 unless it is renewed.   **Council Believes**:   1. This policy is crucial to a healthy and safe environment.   **Council Resolves**:   1. To renew the Oxford SU Policy titled “Air Pollution” without amendment. The text of the Policy reads:    1. “Oxford SU will seek, monitor and (where reasonable) support any initiatives aiming to lower air pollution levels locally and more widely.”   **Proposer**: Michael Woods, Brasenose College  **Seconder**: Edward Peckston, Brasenose College  **The Chair explains that policies are SU motions that are passed and last 3 academic years after the year in which they were first passed. They need to be renewed every 3 years.**  **The Chair states that the Proposer and Seconder have sought to renew three policies today and asks them to give a general overview, rather than speaking on each individually.**  **Michael:** After reading these, I felt that it was a no-brainer considering they had been renewed number of times. I am open to modifications of the language to make them more suitable, but otherwise I think they should be renewed as they serve a basic environmental need.  **The Chair thanks the Proposer and opens for short, factual questions.**  Caleb: The notes and beliefs of Policy Renewal motion 3 relate to 2.  **Note: This error will be corrected in the minutes and agenda of this meeting.**  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  No speeches  **Results**  Votes 52  For 47  Against 2  Abstain 3 |  |
|  | **Condemning Harassment-Discrimination (Policy Renewal)**  **Council Notes**:   1. The policy “Condemning Harassment-Discrimination” will lapse at the end of Trinity Term 2021 unless it is renewed.   **Council Resolves**:   1. To renew the Oxford SU Policy titled “Condemning Harassment-Discrimination” without amendment. The text of the Policy reads:    1. “Oxford SU condemns discrimination and/or harassment, on the basis of class and/or any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. Oxford SU also condemns discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of protections not included in The Equality Act 2010: paternity or non-binary parenting, gender expression, sexualities other than hetero/homo/bi-sexuality, wealth, income or class.”   **Proposer**: Michael Woods, Brasenose College  **Seconder**: Edward Peckston, Brasenose College  **The Chair thanks the Proposer and opens for short, factual questions.**  There are none.  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  No speeches  **Results**  Votes 52  For 48  Against 2  Abstain 2 |  |
|  | **Ethical Code of Practice for Oxford SU’s Commercial Activities (Policy Renewal)**  **Council Notes**:   1. The policy “Ethical Code of Practice for Oxford SU’s Commercial Activities” will lapse at the end of Trinity Term 2021 unless it is renewed.   **Council Believes**:   1. That Oxford SU should have an Ethical Code of Practice for their dealings with external organisations for commercial purposes. 2. That Oxford SU should take all practically possible steps to ensure the organisations they engage with for commercial purposes are committed to minimising their negative impact on the environment and the communities they operate in. 3. That Oxford SU should give preference to organisations that take an active stance on minimising their negative impact on the environment and the communities they operate in.   **Council Resolves**:   1. To renew the Oxford SU Policy titled “Ethical Code of Practice for Oxford SU’s Commercial Activities” without amendment. The text of the Policy reads:  |  | | --- | | Student Council Believes:   1. That Oxford SU should have an Ethical Code of Practice for their dealings with external organisations for commercial purposes. 2. That Oxford SU should take all practically possible steps to ensure the organisations they engage with for commercial purposes are committed to minimising their negative impact on the environment and the communities they operate in. 3. That Oxford SU should give preference to organisations that take an active stance on minimising their negative impact on the environment and the communities they operate in.     Ethical Code of Practice for Oxford SU’s Commercial Activities   1. Advertising Space    1. OSSL/Oxford SU will not sell advertising space to companies or organizations that have been proven to take away the rights of the individual, or to manufacturers of torture equipment or other equipment that is used in the violation of human rights.    2. OSSL/Oxford SU will not sell advertising space to businesses that derive more than 10% of their profits from the manufacture, sale, licensed production, or brokerage of armaments    3. OSSL/Oxford SU will preference businesses that take a pro-active stance on the environmental impact of their own activities 2. Investments    1. In the event that Oxford SU/OSSL needs to invest money, Oxford SU/OSSL will take into account Oxford SU Council policy applying to University investments, and, when appropriate, consult with Oxford SU campaigns. 3. Miscellaneous Decisions    1. On occasion, OSSL/Oxford SU will make decisions with regard to specific companies involving ethical issues not explicitly included in this ethical policy. These decisions should be taken with the involvement of the relevant member(s) of the Sab team, and OSSL/Oxford SU staff input. |     **Proposer**: Michael Woods, Brasenose College  **Seconder**: Edward Peckston, Brasenose College  **The Chair thanks the Proposer and opens for short, factual questions.**  There are none  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  No speeches  **The Chair notes that if anyone wishes to make amendments to any of the policies, these can be submitted using the amendment process which is accessible from when the agenda is made available for the meeting until 10am on the day before the meeting.**  **Results**  Votes 50  For 42  Against 3  Abstain 5 |  |
|  | **Support across the Common Rooms for the Oxbridge Student Action for COVID Relief in India**  **Trigger warning: Covid deaths in India**  **Council notes:**   1. That India is being ravaged by a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a devastating impact on Indian civilian life and healthcare systems in dense cities and rural areas alike, principally due to the shortage of oxygen supplies it has engendered. 2. Every day last week, India posted a new world record for cases, with almost 400,000 cases and over 3,000 deaths reported between 28th and 29th April. 3. The severity of this wave is such that the welfare of all Indian students at the University of Oxford is being directly impacted. It is impossible to concentrate on exams or assignment submissions when almost every Indian student is aware of a relative or a friend suffering severely from coronavirus. This is in addition to the bombardment from global media reporting patients dying in hospital for lack of oxygen, people dying in queues on the streets waiting to be treated, and the bereaved having to fight to cremate loved ones. 4. Indian students, as well as staff, compromise one of the biggest ethnic minorities in the University of Oxford’s population. This means that virtually no student at the University is more two degrees of separation from a relative or friend whose life is currently at risk. Student welfare has already been and will severely be affected by this. 5. The Oxford India Society (OIS), Oxford Hindu Society (HumSoc), and Oxford South Asian Society (OxSAS) are fundraising ([Oxbridge Student Action for COVID Relief in India](https://www.gofundme.com/f/oxford-student-action-for-covid-relief-in-india?utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer&utm_campaign=p_lico+share-sheet)), with the aim of raising £50,000, contributing to efforts to address the crisis and offering students a valuable outlet via which worry and fear can be channelled into direct action, directly addressing student welfare. 6. Some Common Rooms have already made contributions to the fundraiser set up by the OIS, HumSoc, and OxSAS.     **Council believes:**   1. Oxford SU, as well as undergraduate and graduate common rooms, have a duty of care towards the welfare of their students, which is currently being severely impacted. 2. Oxford SU should support the activities of Oxford University student societies.     **Council resolves:**   1. To mandate the President and VP Charities and Communities to promote the OIS, HumSoc and OxSAS’s fundraising efforts on all of its channels of communication. 2. To mandate the President and VP Charities and Communities to forward to all Junior and Middle Common Room Presidents and Secretaries a template motion that resolves to transfer a flexible amount of funding to the OIS, HumSoc and OxSAS’s fundraising efforts (provided this is permissible under the Common Rooms' constitutions) so this student action can be continued. 3. To mandate the President and VP Charities and Communities to commence lobbying for Colleges to transfer a flexible amount of funding towards the OIS, HumSoc and OxSAS’s fundraising efforts so this student action can be continued, and where possible to match the amounts passed on by their Common Rooms. 4. To mandate the President and VP Charities and Communities to report on the progress of these above three mandates at Council meetings for the rest of term.     **Proposer:** Damayanti Chatterjee, Brasenose College  **Seconder:** Edward Peckston, Brasenose College  **Damayanti Chatterjee:** Damayanti highlights the severity and size of the COVID crisis in India, including in both cases and deaths. She notes the impact this is having on Indian students in Oxford, with the proximity of friends and family in the crisis, including her discussions with Indian students in her college. She further notes that Indian students make up the biggest portion of minority students (plus staff) in the University. Oxford Indian, Hindu and South Asian society have launched a fundraiser to support charities that are supporting oxygen and hospital beds. Students looking for action they can take. SU has welfare duty to the students and supporting the actions of charities. Looking to distribute template motion to JCRs and MCRs suggesting theyto put forward a motion to support the fundraiser. Mandating VP C and C to lobby colleges to match donations and promote fundraiser more widely. The proposer notes that legal issues surrounding this motion has been clarified.  **The Chair thanks the Proposer and opens for short, factual questions.**  There are none.  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  **Edward:** Thank you to everyone who has put this together and brought it forward, it is a very important thing, something we are in a position to help, something the Common Rooms should really be going, something we can make a real difference with and help.  Vedang: I support the motion and thank you for bringing it forward. I urge people to support the motion not only for empathy for friends and family back home, but also since March the Indian government has banned the export of vaccines. A lot of developing countries and other places depend on these vaccines. Now the government has […} its response back home, it's unlikely they will allow the export of vaccines until the situation at home has improved. So, it is important to support India’s recovery and to help the rest of the world as well to put the pandemic behind us.  Michael: Strongly support this motion, an ethical concern that all the common rooms and colleges need to take into consideration and they should be very proactive in doing so as it is.  Tucker: I also wanted to extend my support to the motion and to thank Damayanti and the team for going such […] and making sure it was legal within student council and under the framework of the common rooms. I hope it passes and that common rooms start passing motions.  **Results**  Votes 49  For 45  Against 2  Abstain 2 |  |
| **H** | **Emergency motions** |  |
|  | **Mandate the Oxford SU President and VP Charities and Communities to issue a public statement condemning the ongoing violence being committed against the Palestinians in East Jerusalem by Israel security forces**  **Trigger warning: Violence**  **Council Notes**   1. As Muslim worshippers in East Jerusalem sought to observe the last days of Ramadan (the holiest month in the Islamic calendar) through prayer in the Al-Aqsa mosque (one of the holiest sites in the Muslim world), Israeli security forces initiated an unprovoked campaign of violence.      1. This included attacking the worshippers indiscriminately using tear gas, rubber bullets, stun grenades, skunk gas, and brutal force.      1. Video testimonies from Palestinians caught in the violence, and videos from settler communities, all depict unarmed worshippers being subjugated to violence. Evidence includes (viewer discretion advised) videos of worshippers being trapped in prayer halls whilst being tear gassed, <https://youtu.be/ZH3wGNiuxIc>; Israeli security forces brutally attacking women worshippers, <https://youtu.be/L9Lluic9dJM>; Israeli grenades being thrown inside the prayer hall whilst worshippers are seen praying, <https://youtu.be/iiZ_esFG5uM>; Israeli forces throwing stun grenades at a crowd of worshippers trying to break their fast.      1. An adjacent medical centre also was attacked. Over 200 were left injured, with dozens hospitalised.      1. The testimonies have also been corroborated by international media located on the ground, including [Al-Jazeera](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/8/world-reacts-to-east-jerusalem-eviction-rallies-israeli-assaults), [Middle East Eye](https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-aqsa-sheikh-jarrah-jerusalem-world-how-reacting), and [Sky News](https://twitter.com/skynews/status/1391611773145468932?s=21). All journalists have expressed perplexion and frustration at the way in which the Israeli security forces have targeted Palestinians. Mark Stone, Foreign Correspondent, Sky News, who has been on the ground amongst the violence stated: "For no logical reason, the Israeli police are moving in and, in a very blunt way, controlling, as they say, the crowd - a crowd which doesn't, as far as we've seen, need any control".      1. Figures from sources on the ground have suggested that violence being orchestrated by the Israeli security forces has resulted in at least [200](https://secure.avaaz.org/campaign/en/save_palestinian_homes_in_jerusalem/?wXSHhab) Palestinian worshippers being injured, with figures at time of writing suggesting over [500](https://twitter.com/LocalFocus1/status/1391869811383324679?s=20). At least deaths have already been recorded, with at least 3 being young children.      1. The recent attacks have been widely criticised by major political stakeholders, including (for space we have not included an exhaustive list):      * 1. [Keir Starmer](https://twitter.com/Keir_Starmer/status/1391833073470345217?s=20), Leader of the Opposition in the UK, Labour Party: “The violence against worshippers during Ramadan at the al-Aqsa mosque was shocking. Israel must respect international law, and must take steps, immediately, to work with Palestinian leaders to de-escalate tensions.”   2. [Nicola Sturgeon](https://twitter.com/NicolaSturgeon/status/1391012494345388035?s=20), First Minister of Scotland and Leader of the Scottish National Party: “Attacking a place of worship at any time is reprehensible, but attacking a mosque during Ramadan is utterly indefensible. It is also a violation of international law. Israel should heed calls to halt the violence immediately.”   3. [Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez](https://twitter.com/AOC/status/1391115189458804739?s=20), US Representative, NY-14 (alongside many other Democratic members of the U.S. House of Representatives): “We stand in solidarity with the Palestinian residents of Sheikh Jarrah in East Jerusalem. Israeli forces are forcing families from their homes during Ramadan and inflicting violence. It is inhumane and the US must show leadership in safeguarding the human rights of Palestinians.”   4. The [Government of Jordan](https://www.globalvillagespace.com/jordan-takes-stand-against-israels-barbaric-attacks-on-al-aqsa-mosque/): “What the Israeli police and special forces are doing, from violations against the mosque to attacks on worshippers, is barbaric (behaviour) that is rejected and condemned”   5. [UN Human Rights](https://twitter.com/UNHumanRights/status/1390688651525373958?s=20): “We call on [#Israel](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Israel?src=hashtag_click) to immediately halt all forced evictions in occupied [**#Palestine**](https://twitter.com/hashtag/Palestine?src=hashtag_click), including those in [#SheikhJarrah](https://twitter.com/hashtag/SheikhJarrah?src=hashtag_click), and to cease any activity that would further contribute to a coercive environment and lead to a risk of forcible transfer.” Learn more:<http://ow.ly/oZi650EH885>   6. [Volkan Bozkir](https://twitter.com/volkan_bozkir/status/1390758759706865665?s=20), President of the United Nations General Assembly: “I am saddened by the news that the Israeli police raided with sound bombs the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem,on the last friday of the Holy month of Ramadan. I urge display of respect to all places of worship,including Al-Aqsa, which is sacred & significant for 1,8 billion Muslims.”      1. Furthermore, the Governments of France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom issued a joint statement, urging Israel to stop further construction of settlements and calling on both sides to “refrain from any unilateral action”.   **Council Believes**   1. Oxford SU is an institution that is grounded in fundamental democratic principles, including the belief that all have the right to liberty, security, and religious expression. It is also an institution that has a proud history of challenging unjust violence across the world, including calling out state-sanctioned violence in China and India. 2. Oxford SU should unequivocally express solidarity with the Palestinian people suffering from subjugation, and condemn the ongoing violence being orchestrated by the Israeli security forces.   **Council Resolves**   1. To mandate the Oxford SU President and VP Charities and Communities to issue a public statement condemning the ongoing violence being committed against the Palestinian people in East Jerusalem by Israeli security forces, and supporting the fundamental human rights of the Palestinian people.   **Proposer:** Tayyaba Rafiq, Regent’s Park College  **Seconder:** Zeeshan Ali, Kellogg College  **The Chair urges the Council to be sensitive in their words surrounding this motion and to refrain from making generalisations. The Chair also notes that this motion will be subject to approval of the Trustee board, as some risks have been flagged to them. This motion will only take effect once approved by the Trustee board.**  Highlights of speech from Zeeshan:  We are attempting to mandate the VP C and C to issue a statement. Zeeshan provides context of the violence related to the motion and details of the violence worshippers and civilians have been subject to. He notes evidence of the violence, including through international media. He also notes the targeting of medical officials. He notes the escalating figures surrounding the violence. He further notes the political context of the violence, including statements from international political figures. He notes the statements made from national governments and the calls they have made. He notes the democratic grounding of the Student Union and the University, including the rights to liberty, security and religious expression. He further notes the history of the University challenging unjust violence across the world. He notes that the SU should show solidarity with those affected by the violence and condemn the perpetrators for their violent actions. He repeats the motion and asks the SU to keep a close eye on the progression of the situation with regard to the events discussed in this motion.  **The Chair thanks the Seconder and opens for short, factual questions.**  There are none.  **The Chair opens for speeches on this motion**  Asif: The events that have unfolded across this particular region have been quite devastating for a lot of use who have been praying. Especially the last 10 nights of Ramadan, this night has special significance, it is where your next year is set in stone and where your prayers are answered, so you gain rewards for seventy years of praying, so a lot of people join congregation to pray together, to amplify, maximise their rewards, it is part of our faith. I know personally that across Facebook and other places, a lot of movement has started, a lot of people are very disturbed by it and thank you Zeeshan and Tayyaba for raising this and I think it is very important to consider. I know a lot of this is within our remit to consider and to voice against and some of it perhaps we can also consider in the future, aspects we have not considered this time as this is very relevant to the emergency, which was 3 days ago that was conducted. A lot of your Muslim friends will be affected as well, so I ask you to be kinder ask them how they are feeling.  Michael: I would like to strongly support this motion. It's to me, the height of disrespect and inhumanity to have attacked the mosque as is clearly displayed. The plight of the Palestinian people is among the worst and most harrowing of the last 100 years and so especially given the place of Oxford and the UK in the situation with Israel Palestine, I think it is absolutely mandatory that a proper statement be made.  Sameed: I wanted to ask the Chair the legal basis on which you have made this subject to the approval of the Trustee board and what happens if this is democratically passed in the council and vetoed by the Trustee Board. What is the constitutional basis for the SU to do that?  Chair: Under article 23.4 of the articles of association of Oxford SU, the trustee board has the power to revoke any decision made by student council under certain circumstances and a member of the Trustee board has flagged it for attention by the Trustee board. They will consult legal advice to assess if there any legal issues with the SU making certain statements.  Sameed: Is the decision of the trustee board subject to challenge?  Chair: I will get back to you after the meeting, I will check.  Sameed: to ensure if democratically passed in the council, there should be no basis for the trustee board to veto it.  Chair: The article says if the decision is made or advice given by council which the board reasonably considers incompatible with those […] referring to legal duties, as company directors and charity trustees. Having sought advice where appropriate it may be unable to implement or endorse the decision or advice and at its discretion the board may decline to do so.  Ben (VP Charities and Community): It is purely because of the emergency motion, this process happens with every motion that goes through, it's just because it was an emergency motion submitted today, that process hasn’t been able to take place. So, it is not because it won't happen, it's that the SU has to do that process every time to make sure we can do that as there are extremely strict rules governing charities in the UK and governing companies. As the SU is both, we have to go through and make sure we are not going to get ourselves in hot water. As I say, I don’t think we would do in this case, it's that we simply have not had the time as it is an emergency motion to be able to go through that process, which is why we cannot wholeheartedly sit here today and say it is going to happen tomorrow because we have to go through those processes to make sure that it is compliant with the relative legislation. It's not that there's be a view that has been taken that we don’t want this to happen, its simply that we have to go back and the Union and its trustees has to go and go through that process as the Trustee board does with every single motion that we are discussing today, it's just that all those were submitted last week so we had time to go through that process.  Chair: it is to ensure it is in the charitable objects of the SU.  Asif: the trustee board is generally concerned with what is the legal ramification to society and because they are trustees they are main directors. So if it bound to cause something or something will happen they need to be aware of it and be involved with it. However, the way SU conducts its business, the decision, the vote is unaffected by the trustee board looks at the governance of all of this and looks at whether something that has occurred with the SU needs to be ratified. This motion was flagged as there is a lot of movement happening in Oxford over the coming few days. If the trustee board could turn this around in a few days.  Marco: My motion may go through the same process because donations from donors such as the Sackler family may have some legal obligations. That may be a reason for the previous removal of the name. From a public perspective, the SU, correct me if I am wrong, can still support the motion even if it may have legal consequences for the University, if the SU considers that it is ethically viable and relevant for the student values and principles that we defend. Did I understand that correctly or not?  Ben: Conscious of getting two different motions confused.  Marco: the article applies the same, legal implication that means that the trust can deny, breaking of the charity thing or a political position, the same (legal) principle applies, how that happens when the legal principle is applied by the trust and the SU wants to still sustain that motion.  Ben: the one that has come through today has to take the time to go through that process because it hasn’t gone through due to when it came in due to the time.  Uri: This is an emergency motion meaning that there can't be amendments right? (Chair confirms) I generally support this motion, I agree with the points that were being made, attacking a place of worship and in this specific time even more is utterly reprehensible, and want to express my personal solidarity with those affected. Debate to be had about statements like this made from the SU in terms of condemnations because I am wondering what the motion is set to achieve, so its good to condemn and call out injustice in the world, but ultimately I believe a motion like this should focus more on the welfare of Palestinian and Muslim students at the university or anyone who has been negatively affected. What I am missing from the motion is that it doesn’t mention anywhere, a lot of Palestinian students will have family living in that region and assume this must be quite distressing. I think a condemnation is right, but I think it should focus more on the welfare.  Zeeshan: (in response to Uri). I do agree and to give feedback on the motion, proposer and I spoke to a lot of Muslim students in the University and a lot of them had the same sentiment that something needs to be done. Issuing a statement seemed like the bare minimum we can do as Oxford students to showcase we are calling out the violence. On to the point of doing something for Palestinian students in Oxford University, we are reaching out to Palestinian students and thinking about long term implications, I feel like those two motions can be separate. I feel like this statement will have gravity on its own, and have tangible benefits on the discourse that is happening. We can introduce other motions to push for welfare of Palestinian students. I do agree with your concerns Uri.  Michael: I agree the necessity for putting out a statement is in itself an act of welfare for Palestinian students and I think about how in the US in particular, there is such an attempt by the media to eradicate this story and so simply the silence that has occurred is something that the SU should counteract.  Tucker: I agree putting out statements is very important and can be an act of reassurance and I think that the SU team is looking forward to working with the proposers of the motion, assuming it passes, on developing out statement and we hope to get back to you on the news of Trustee board as soon as possible. I know that there is a question regarding the number of days, but I don’t think we can really answer that at this time, as it has fallen out of our number cycle of motions, all go to steering committee before going to student council. Looking forward to working on this issue over the next few weeks.  **Results**  Votes 53  For 43  Against 5  Abstain 5  **Note:** The results of the vote on this motion will only take affect following the approval of the trustee board. |  |
| **I** | **Any other business**  Michael: I submitted an item to discuss that the Ruskin school of art is taking towards its anti-racist strategy and figuring out a potential motion I could bring forward for the council in regards to creating an anti-racist strategy for programming of visiting artists, speakers, alumni etc. Would I be able to a speak to that now?  Chair: Apparently we have not received it, so if you can just submit it for the next meeting.  **Chair declares the meeting finished at 18:38** |  |