**Officers’ Reports 2017/ 2018**

**Jane Darke, Chair**

What an eventful time we've had since March 2017! Obviously the highlight was the general Election. We started 20 points behind but came through strongly with an incredibly strong result in Oxford East and an excellent showing in OxWAb despite calls for tactical voting. Canvassing almost every day we saw attitudes changing and weren't as surprised by the result as the commentators were. Thank you to our two brilliant candidates, Marie Tidball in OxWAb and Anneliese Dodds in Oxford East; and thanks to to Andrew Smith for getting us into the habit of year-round campaigning as well as for his 30+ years as a hard-working locally-rooted MP. As a lifelong Socialist I am delighted that Corbyn has allowed us to use the S-word again and even more delighted that the mainstream media has been proved wrong about the popular appeal of these policies.

The GE was called during the final sprint for the County Council elections, strengthening both campaigns. We made notable gains in the county (bucking the national trend yet again), winning 11 of the 14 seats in the city (9 of the 11 are women) and remaining the official opposition under Liz Brighouse. At this point it gives me great pleasure to mention that, in suffrage centenary year, women hold all TEN of the following posts: MP for Oxford East, most recent parliamentary candidate for OxWAb, City Council leader and deputy, County Council leader of the opposition and deputy, Organiser, Chair of Labour Group, Chair and Secretary of O&DLP. (Thanks to Tom Hayes for noticing this). This is a first; group photo to follow.

I'd like to thank the Labour group on City Council for showing Labour in power doing an excellent job in difficult circumstances. In particular, Bob Price has been quietly inspirational as leader, particularly in his skill at working with those of different political colours to benefit our city and region. But all Councillors deserve our gratitude, and thank you for your service to those who, like Bob, have decided to retire. Labour Group on County has by skilful bargaining managed to mitigate some of the worst excesses of the Tory group.

The Chair and Executive have continued to try improve our performance on equal opportunities. Colleagues have started a BAME group and a Muslim Labour group. If you haven't heard about these groups contact one of us later: there are gaps in the party's data about its members so it's difficult to target communications. Marie Tidball has led a project to boost political involvement of people with disabilities. Our new candidates include several Muslims, mostly women and from a younger generation than existing Muslim councillors, and three disabled members. There are also two non-British Europeans. Please get out there and support their campaigning.

We have moved towards ensuring that postholders in branches comply with the rules on gender balance. So we're doing better on some aspects of diversity but less well on social class. Tory-driven changes in the nature of work and of Trade Union powers has made it more difficult to recruit manual workers, so that section of the Oxford population is under-represented. We will continue to work on these issues.

We are broadening our focus, campaigning on single issues through street stalls and leafletting as well as voter ID. We are also trying to put a fairer share of our collective efforts into the parts of OxWAb that are outside the city boundaries: Kidlington, which has elections this year, Abingdon and the villages where we hope our efforts will bear fruit in elections next year. Building support in areas where Labour has rarely canvassed is a slow process but vital if we are to win a general election. Again, please do what you can to help.

I welcome the influx of new members over the last 3 years, and the energy and impetus they have brought. It has sometimes made meetings challenging to chair: sorry if I haven't always got it right. It's important that the chair is impartial and that we as a party listen to a range of opinions with respect and courtesy, remembering that we fight the Tories (and Greens and LibDems), not each other. Rabyah and I as co-chairs will try to make sure this continues. We are always open to suggestions on how to make meetings more accessible and lively.

I'd like to thank all the Exec members who help keep O&DLP running smoothly and never to become complacent. I particularly thank Ann Black for her outstanding contribution over many years in Oxford and nationally, recently in the face of wholly unfair criticism. We are all in her debt. Finally, thanks to you all, the active membership: keep up the good work.

**Ann Black, Secretary**

This has been another extraordinary year. At the last AGM no-one would have predicted that Anneliese would be the MP for Oxford East, Theresa May would have lost her majority, and Jeremy Corbyn’s status as leader of the Labour party would be unchallengeable and unchallenged. The general election brought a renewed surge in membership, and reversed a slight downward trend after the article 50 vote. On a sadder note Jennifer’s untimely death was a shock to us all, and we have lost a comrade and a friend.

With attendance at all-member meetings fluctuating between 70 and 130 room bookings for all-member meetings continue to be a challenge. If the room is too small, some people have to stand. If it is too large, the collection does not cover the hire charge. If anyone knows of new venues, capacity 120, reasonable cost, on bus routes and with car parking, please get in touch!

I would like to thank all my fellow-officers and members of the executive committee, without whom the workload would simply not be manageable, but particularly Jane for her continued leadership and Felicity for taking minutes at all-member meetings and support throughout. New members will be joining the executive at this AGM and I hope that we will continue to work together for the common good

Finally, you may have noticed that my phone number is on every membership card. In the last year I’ve been called by people who have found cards in bags left on a train in Kent, a nightclub in London and a café at the foot of Snowdon, and have been able to reunite members with their belongings, a very satisfying aspect of the job.

**Jane Stockton and Dan Iley-Williamson, Membership Officers**

The total membership has remained stable over the year, and now stands at 3906 (-3.3%). This stability disguises a large turnover of members, with 575 new members replacing leavers concentrated in a small number of branches (North, Summertown & Wolvercote, Abingdon, and Greater Marston). These leavers seem to mostly be those who are critical of Labour’s Brexit strategy. Now that some former members are rejoining, and with continuing strong recruitment (53 new members already this year), we are starting to see membership once again grow.

This year we have initiated a great many membership activities, including organising/producing:

* A new members social, with Richard Burgon MP and Gordon Brown in attendance
* A summer picnic
* A screening of ‘I, Daniel Blake’ (which raised over £500 for Oxford Food Bank)
* A ‘Convincing Conversations’ workshop, training members and supporters to have persuasive conversations on the doorstep
* A ‘how to canvass’ video for the general election (which was shared across the country on social media)
* An updated membership welcome pack
* A phonebank of members, encouraging greater participation in the party
* Visits to Branches to listen to ideas and share good practice
* Skills training and support for Branch officers

This year’s general election, when thousands of members across the country were engaged in the Labour campaign, illustrated the crucial role of our grassroots membership in bringing about the socialist government we desperately need.

In Oxford, campaigning has been invigorated, and the emergence of a strong BAME voice in the party has created a more vibrant and diverse party. In the coming year, we aim to strengthen and grow our fantastic membership.

Dan Iley-Williamson & Jane Stockton

Co-Membership Officers

**Jamila Azad, Ethnic Minorities Officer**

I am so pleased to see Candidates from BAME communities and wish them all good luck and success in May 2018 elections. Newly formed BAME Forum had our first meeting on 26th October and was attended by 75 members of the community and by all BAME Councillors, and Candidates. It was a successful meeting where everybody engaged in discussions and contributed positively to move the Forum forward. We need to increase the Membership of Afro-Caribbean community and engaged with them.

Labour Party Democracy Review recommendations were discussed at all Members meeting and because of very short deadline we needed to submit our proposal in January 2018 and didn’t have enough time to consult. I hope we can continue to develop our selection process in a way that members from BAME communities would be encouraged to come forward. We need to select them in higher positions in our Party throughout Council and Labour Party. We need more EC Members to represent this community. We need Leaders of the BAME community who are engaged with local community, to increase our votes and party members at local level.

I am a member of BAME cross party Association of BAME Councillors Council in UK. We meet at varying locations in the Country. I have also attended LGA Annual Local Government Conference at Nottingham University and joined the debate regarding Democracy Review and various fringe meetings and workshops including social care, NHS and housing. I have arranged two community meetings with Thames Valley Police and community members to resolve issues and concerns regarding burglaries, drug dealing and stop and search, more than 50 people attended this meeting. I am also working closely with Tell MAMA organisation which deals with Hate Crimes against Muslims and Islamophobia. I have successfully managed to get Hate Crime motions passed at Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council. I have attended numerous community events at community Centres throughout Oxford. I have been active in support for Rohingea Burmese refugees with Bangladeshi community.

I have recently attended LGA BAME Leadership Course at Warwickshire University and found it very useful and met other Councillors from all over the Country. I am continuously supporting Labour Party and its values and policies within the people of Oxford and making new Members, giving support and help if needed. We got many more BAME members in all the Wards. I am sad to see two Councillors standing down in May and but hope that we see more Labour Councillors in next election. I thank you for two Councillors and thank them for their hard work and wish them well.

I am Shadow Cabinet Member of Children and Families at County Council and Parenting and Fostering Panel and serve many more committees. A Member of Scrutiny Committee Oxford City Council, Planning Committee and local authority represented on Asian Cultural Centre, East Oxford Community Centre, Regal Community Centre , St. Clement Family Centre and Ethnic Minority Learning Centre. I would like to thank you the EC for their help and support for many years and hope for continue support.

Jamila Azad

Oxfordshire County Councillor for St. Clement & Cowley Marsh Division

Oxford City Councillor for St. Clement Ward

BAME Councillor for Oxford City Council on outside bodies

**Tom Hayes, LGBT Officer**

**Annual Report (2017/18) — LGBT Officer Report by Cllr Tom Hayes**

*07901 853314 | labourred@gmail.com*

Dear Comrade,

I have hugely enjoyed being your LGBT officer this last year and I want to thank you for your support as I seek to be your LGBT officer for the 2018/2019 year ahead.

**I am a Labour councillor for St Clement’s ward on Oxford City Council and, since my election in May 2014, I have supported LGBT causes in the city. In the last year I have:**

* In my role as Board Member for Community Safety, launched a new website, sponsored by the City Council, for the LGBT community, partly to raise awareness about what a hate crime is, how to report it, and where to access support. The website was launched on International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia. More [here](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15291017.Police_officers_wear_rainbow_boot_laces_to_end_LGBT_discrimination/).
* Wrote to the University of Oxford’s Vice—Chancellor Prof. Richardson following her claims that it wasn’t her job to stop homophobia within the University. Worked with Oxford SU LGBTQ Campaign as they led on this campaign from within the University. More [here](https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2017/09/05/university-of-oxford-boss-who-said-homophobia-isnt-her-issue-slammed-by-gay-politician/).
* Organised our 2017 Pride presence and completed a guide on how to ‘do a Pride’ for future events, including our 2018 Pride presence.
* Supported local LGBT charities with my ward budget, including Oxford Friend (a helpline staffed by volunteers to provides emotional support and counselling, often to not-yet-out LGBT people).
* Successfully requested for the Rainbow flag to be raised above Oxford Town Hall to mark LGBT days. These symbols matter to the community and I’m proud our City Council gets this. More [here](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/531/bi-visibility_day_to_be_marked_in_oxford).
* Spoken on radio and TV on behalf of Labour’s LGBT equality record and plans.

**As a member of our sister party, the Co-operative Party, of which I’m Oxford Branch Chair:**

* I attended the 2017 annual conference in London and 2018 South-West Peninsula Conference as a delegate. I took part in LGBT fringe meetings and support co-operators in strengthening this cause.

**Mark Ladbrooke, Trade Union Liaison Officer**

Our unions are central to the Labour movement.

Last year, an election year, we’ve had very significant local financial support from our affiliated unions (£7000 UNITE, £2000 USDAW and an offer of £500 GMB) and affiliation fees. Perhaps even more importantly, union reps have spoken up for Labour to tens of thousands of local workers.

Union members are a huge asset, which we need to integrate into every level of the party.

This TULO role is impossible without the huge amount of help I’ve had from many of you. Thanks for helping to:

* campaign to promote the Living Wage - working with USDAW members and regional officers, UNITE members and Regional Officers, UNITE stewards, UNISON reps and activists from City, County, Health, and Brookes branches and the Oxford and District Trade Union Council.
* respond to solidarity calls from unions, BFAWU (Bakers’ Union – McDonald’s wage campaign), UNITE (BMW pensions dispute and meeting with Jeremy Corbyn), UNITE Oxford Bus dispute, GMB union anti-victimisation campaign on the taxis and, most recently, the University and College Union pensions strike.