

NB: The Riveters are the Women's Rights Collective, they will get mentioned a fair bit!

The Riveter/Riveters

- over the summer I commissioned articles for, and fully edited, the new Riveter : this was ready by freshers week
- it's also now online
- Riveters has been going brilliantly and there are about 30 people attending, we've got some big campaigns planned such as Object Feminist Fridays which is about challenging objectification of women in the media (especially lads' mags in Sainsbury's) and reclaim the parks which is about making parks safer at the same time as raising awareness about the myths surrounding rape and violence against women.
- The Riveters give me a lot of work but it's great as it tends to be very student focussed and they basically act as quite a big focus group for me to feed ideas into and get feedback on

Liberation handbook

- Vicky and I worked together on re-writing and editing the liberation handbook, I mainly concentrated on the women's section and the 'out and about' section. They contain information and advice on all the liberation campaigns, including important contacts in the Union, and helplines etc. We still have a lot left but they are going well.

NUS training

- Handover: Staff from NUS conducted our initial training which made us work together as a team and think about our roles
- Understanding and Supporting liberation: this training was really valuable especially for finding out more about the other NUS liberation campaigns and meeting the national officers for these campaigns who are all brilliant – if any of the liberation secretaries need extra support they would be good people to contact
- Active Political Leadership: a week long training course covering lobbying, campaigning and media work among others. Some has been useful, some not, as is the way with training.
- Women's officers: I've met with all of the full time women's officers to discuss and share ideas for the year. I've also met with Liv Bailey, the national women's officer on a few occasions and it seems like NUS Women's will be a great support this year.

Contacts

- I've been making long lists of everyone in University I think might be interested in feminism and gender, with the aim of inviting them to events, but also in the hope that they will support suggestions I make to the University.
- I've also been updating general women's office contacts and working out who exactly I need to call in various situations

Case work

- case work is entirely confidential but I've had some over the summer and now that term has started too.

Students with Caring Responsibilities

- this has been the major project over the summer and is ongoing (it carries on heavily from last year)
- handbook: this is a one-stop shop of information on the Union website for parents or prospective parents and links to all the relevant University policies and is full of information on local childcare and funding.
- Equality and diversity: I've met with Catherine Prescott from equality and diversity a few times who is busy putting together a new equality and diversity policy for University – she is inputting a lot of the suggestions about student parents and would like to meet with all of the liberation secretaries together.
- Proposals for the enhanced learning of students with caring responsibilities: this is an extensive set of proposals to make the lives of prospective student parents, and student parents, much easier and make learning more accessible to them. I have had good feedback verbally from numerous people but very little in concrete. The head of E&D is meeting me this week to discuss breastfeeding spaces (which was one of the proposals). The proposals went to the Teaching and Learning Group (an important University committee) on Monday but unfortunately I wasn't allowed to be there to argue my case for each point, and they didn't get much discussion. Thus it's back to trying to get in contact with various university people, which is incredibly difficult for

me to do. (They like to go through Gabriel, or send me to Equality and Diversity, which frankly just doesn't do the trick).

- International Society: I have been meeting with the International Society about this as they have a very active support programme and go on trips etc. It appears Sue Fernley (who runs Int Soc) has been trying to get the University to collect proper statistics on student parents for a long time (which is what I've been trying to do)
- The biggest Union based thing is that we now have a £500 fund which student parents can access to claim £5 towards childcare costs for attending any society or union event.
- There will be a bring your kids to uni day, hopefully in half term, which should highlight some of the issues student parents face.

Strategic plan

- I wrote the Representation, Advice and Welfare (RAW) section of the strategic plan and input parts about liberation and campaigning too

Pro-choice week

- is this week!
- I started planning this in the summer and it's been a long struggle. Managed to get speakers in from Abortion Rights UK for a film showing, lecturers are involved in a debate, and there's a talk about sex work from the English Collective of Prostitutes and Manchester Action on Street Health
- I've put in a motion to the general meeting as well which is the same week so hopefully that will help with making quorum, though my motion is 4th on the list

Reclaim the Parks

- Jacques helped me design an initial poster (thanks Jacques)
- I wanted to do some community outreach with this so-called most of the community / park based groups I could find. Friends of Platt Fields Park really liked it and a few of them came along to the first one.
- I went to the first planning meeting for Leeds' Reclaim the Night to get ideas for ours which was really useful
- I spoke on BBC Radio Manchester about Reclaim the Parks and managed to get the message across: together we are strong and can use these spaces, but they could be made safer still with better lighting and permanent signs

Involvement with other liberation campaigns

- tried to organise a poetry night for black history month but this fell through (Benjamin Zephaniah couldn't come for a start!)
- Have organised an event about white-dominance in the women's movement and a celebration of black women writers for black history month

Night bus

- I've been trying to get extra funding from the library and university to fund a 24-hour night bus for a 24 library but this has been difficult.
- The latest development is that they've asked us to show how much we can/can't afford with the implied suggestion that they might fill the gap

Exec

- we've all been getting on really well and working together on various things. I feel we've got quite a supportive team and hope that will filter into council too.

Freshers week

- I did a few days of emailing and calling departmental staff to secure the union slots in their welcome lectures to show our video.
- I held an alcohol free film screening in freshers week and discussion afterwards
- I staffed the Riveters/women's officer stall all day Tuesday and Wednesday and talked to as many students as possible. Barely went outside but apart from that it was really positive – for every sexist comment, there were two women ready to sign up.
- Did quite a few welcome lectures, and specifically nursing as the average nursing students is a 28 year old woman with kids and the nursing school has a lot of problems
- Wrote a debate piece for student direct about beauty pageants
- Went to a day's training on pregnancy options in London which was brilliant – a report from that can be seen if anyone wants, I feel confident that I could help someone coming to see me through the decision making process

Diversity training

- I conducted diversity training, covering gender, race, disability, religion and sexuality for Student Direct and the Peer Support Centre (which some of exec came to)

Careers service

- met with someone from the careers service and every day as part of women's week next semester there'll be a workshop for women on career-based issues such as negotiating pay and interviewing skills.

Sexual Health Awareness Week

- Chlamydia test training: I can get people to take a Chlamydia test and send it off to MRI
- Planned a sexual consent workshop (with the help of a random health collective in America) which will be called: Making sense of consent, and hopefully get a few people along

WiSET

- had a meeting with co-ordinator of student and staff network, women in science, engineering and technology
- they've given me a 5-10 minute slot at their welcome lecture to talk about how I can support them and if they have any problems to come to me so we can formulate them into something useful
- I have drop-in hours on north campus on Tuesdays 10-4 which have already proved successful

Environmental stuff

- as is on my manifesto, I've been working on some environmental things too
- helped out with go green week by being a green beam and helping out at Laura's events as well as running the film night on the Monday
- went to climate camp and made some very useful contacts
- Miriam Kennet of New Economics Foundation is coming to speak about women and climate change next semester

Women's office

- tidied it massively and updated the library and dvd collection

Publicity

- I've been doing quite a lot of my own postering which obviously takes up unnecessary time
- Creating facebook events for every event and inviting lots of different groups

Domestic abuse

- went to a conference of really useful training and information day about domestic abuse as a workplace issue but gave me lots of useful contacts and ideas about the sex discrimination act in relation to students
- met with greater Manchester against crime about domestic violence

I've started planning for various future events as well but right now need to get back to students with caring responsibilities, the university has a 2015 goal of widening participation, so let's hope they mean it!