

## **EC8 Benedict Allbrooke - Treasurer**

Proposer:	Benedict Allbrooke (Brighton & Hove Green Party)
Agenda item:	A Reports

### **Report Details**

I was elected to the role of treasurer at convention 2017 having been co-opted to the role of internal comms a matter of weeks earlier. I therefore had a small start on understanding the role of treasurer but it is one of a very different nature to the rest of EC and a large number of demands. I am also serving as ERO for the YG annual ballot, the details of which are covered in the SPC report. In addition to this I have participated in a range of general committee activity.

As part of my term I have got setup an online donation form which can be found at [greenparty.org.uk/YGDonate](http://greenparty.org.uk/YGDonate) which allows both one-off donations and direct debits. I would encourage anyone wishing to financially support the work of YGs to use this. This has also substantially increased our income.

Much of my work this year has focussed on improving the understanding of our own finances, improving procedures and documenting these. Treasurer is a somewhat odd role as it involves few individual projects and a large degree of being aware/across the different projects going on in the organisation as a whole. The broad tasks which fall into the role are to process all expenses, sign-off central expenditure, facilitate the organisation drawing up a budget, and working with others to enable their finance interactions.

Myself and Sam Bristow with support from Ben Parker formed a fundraising subcommittee to try to increase YG income. We did not have the available time and resources to make full use of this but generated a lot of useful ideas which I would encourage future committees to take forward. One area we were able to fulfill was to produce a physical donation form for use at conference and other events. Sam led on the merchandise side for which there are more details in Sam's report.

I feel I have achieved a large amount in this role, particularly in areas which will help the organisation in future terms. Unfortunately my ability to achieve things and in many cases even engage with YG activity has been diminished by the negative actions of others. I have also seen this borne out in abusive statements made about previous members of the committee - including severe ableism. A member of the committee this term left after being berated for not apologising "well enough". In my situation this has included bizarre incidents such as being abused by someone for recanting a decision they both voted for and even proposed.

For the majority of this term of office I've faced almost constant bullying from a small minority of others including (but not limited to) abusive statements, swearing, ganging up, shouting down, tone policing, gas lighting, undermining and general unrelenting criticism regardless of the situation.

At various points I raised the severely adverse effect this was having on my welfare and sought to address the situation. Despite this and the claims made this year around prioritising welfare, this was entirely disregarded and even the idea of raising my own welfare was dismissed.

During one EC meeting designated to address concerns around this issue, I raised the specifics of the behaviour and pointed to how this breaches the YG safe spaces policy. This was further dismissed and equivocations made by those responsible as to whether behaviour such as tone policing, explicitly forbidden in YG spaces, is a bad thing.

All this has meant that due to the end of my term I have been forced to disengage, for my own mental health, and faced further personal abuse for doing so. It is clear that for the YGs to match the values we publicly espouse there is much to do in improving internal behaviour.

### **Conference**

One of the key ways in which YGs raise money is through activities at GPEW twice annual conferences. The YG stall allows for sales of merchandise and a hub for raffle ticket sales which along with the YGs quiz raise significant amounts. We have previously only recorded the total income rather than the breakdown between different activities so I formalised the recording of these and made sure we could report accurate totals for VAT liabilities on merchandise. For both the running of the stall and the quiz I produced guides which were further updated and refined.

The proposals within the Holistic Review for reducing the default number of GPEW conferences from 2 to 1 per year present a severe risk to YG finances.

### **Relationships within the party**

One of the major difficulties in this role is that we are not in direct control of our bank accounts. All transactions have to be done through the GPEW finance team who hold YG money as a separate management account. This is understandable as the YGs are not a separate legal accounting unit, as local parties are, and so it is necessary for our money to sit within this for reconciliation of budget lines. I investigated with finance the possibility of a separate account early on in the year but this was concluded to be legally and logistically impossible.

To reduce the drawback of this arrangement I sought to build good working relationships with the GPEW finance team, consisting of 3 roles. I have had regular email contact with them, some phone calls and trip to the GPEW office to discuss things in person including a line-by-line walk through the previous accounts and budget tracking. There has however been a full turnover of GPEW finance staff during my term of office, with all 3 leaving the organisation and causing significant disruption on our side. During the changeover there was a long period of short-staffing where understandably our accounts became a low priority and following this the structure of our accounts changed somewhat. The GPEW finance team are a really capable group who it's been good to work alongside and they deliver extremely well for the organisation, especially given their small size in comparison to the size of the party.

Due to the difficulty in not managing our own accounts and the difficulty sometimes in getting copies of income/expenditure schedule from GPEW I've put a large degree of effort into proactively monitoring our own transactions. The detail of much of this can be found in the description of income/expenditure below.

During the 2018 local elections I worked up a budget proposal for YG to be given dedicated funding by GPEW for a TTW leaflet supporting YG candidates. This involved drawing up a proposal after being notified by the co-chairs on the same day as the deadline for submissions. This was granted by the party CEO and finance co-ordinator. The production of the leaflet was then passed on to YG staff member Georgia and other party staff.

One of the unexpected but very rewarding parts of the role was in helping local YGs groups, groups of the regions of England and student societies. I had a number of finance related queries which I was happy to help with regarding aspects such as access to SU funding, banking and general treasurer work.

### **International Activity**

As a member of the Federation of Young European Greens we pay a membership fee at their annual general assembly. I produced a summarised copy of our realised budget for the last year so our membership fee could be calculated and arranged payment of this.

A proposal had been presented to the FYEG General Assembly which would have resulted in vastly increased fees in future years. Myself and Amy Heley worked to amend this to avoid this impact on YGEW and ultimately prevented it.

### **30u30**

One of the more significant areas of activity the YGs carry out is in the 30u30 training scheme of which there will be more information in both co-chairs reports.

To support this I helped draw up a budget breakdown to help ensure all of the training weekends had adequate support and worked with both co-chairs to monitor this and adapt as needed. I took part in allocating Access Fund where this had gone a bit awry and processed all Access Fund claims for all claimants for all of the activities.

A major part of work for 30u30 was in arranging the trip to Brussels, generously funded by the office of Molly Scott Cato MEP. Strict rules govern the way that this funding can be provided and the trip is intended to be at zero cost to YGs. Money is only provided to fund this following the trip and not in advance.

We do not have the required balance on hand to book this so have to borrow from GPEW, paying back following the trip. This request for loan has to be authorised by the party CEO. To enable this I produced a detailed budget outlining the allowable amounts from technical EU documentation and obtained sign-off from the CEO.

As part of this it was imperative that at the time of booking we had the number of participants signed up for which we were booking for. The parliament do not reimburse for people who do not attend and this has caused an issue for the last few trips - losing money from the YG budget. I insisted on not booking until we had a full list of name and I'm pleased that this helped us not lose money on this trip for the first time in several years. Unfortunately this led to personal accusations of me delaying activity which was completely unfounded as both travel and accommodation were booked in a timely and well managed way.

### **The Budget**

The Young Greens budget is traditionally set at the first residential consisting of EC, SPC, representatives of Wales and the regions of England, Lib Group co-chairs, and Green Students. Due to the late starting of this EC's term it was impossible to have a residential until after Christmas. Due to this and to enable the residential to actually happen, I prepared a short term budget to carry us over until the residential consisting almost entirely of residential spending with a small degree of contingency for funding necessary activity which might come up. This was presented to and agreed by EC.

For the major budget for the year I took the approach of setting it for January to November given the uncertainty of convention timing at that point and to avoid an abrupt cliff edge at the change over of ECs. I have since pulled the short term and full budget together into full year budget tracking.

To draw together the list of income & expenditure items needed in the budget I looked through the preceding few years of budgets and consulted fully with the rest of EC for feedback. During the December and very early January period before the residential I had conversations/meetings to discuss these with members of EC including Ben Parker & Sam Bristow to discuss fundraising, Hannah Graham & Emily West to discuss events (including convention), and Hannah Graham and Ben Parker to discuss 30u30 and many other over-

arching aspects of the budget including the EC travel budget designed to ensure EC members were present to push fundraising at GPEW conferences and enable attendance of affiliated groups' AGMs.

I also discussed the constitutionally required items such as the annual ballot with the Structures and Procedures Committee to ensure we were in a position to meet these requirements at the end of the year.

There was lack of final budget income/expenditure totals available previous years so it was difficult to come up with initial budget proposals from these. I therefore used what was available and made various estimates for existing and new budget lines. By tracking these through the year I hope YGs in future years will be more able to make use of this to allow for easier initial budget setting. The proposed totals were produced in consultation with those involved whilst also ensuring a balanced budget which did not suffer from adverse cash flow issues. It was necessary to reduce the proposed amount budget for some items due to recent reductions in income and also set moderately ambitious fundraising targets.

The budget was presented and discussed to the residential which resulted in one proposed amendment. I formalised this with those proposing it. Both amendment and full budget, including the terms around each budget line, we approved unanimously by the residential attendees.

A very large hole appeared in the budget due to the lack of a trust fund grant - plus a few income areas under-delivering. We applied for two but both were turned down. The realised budget has still remained more or less balanced as a number of budget lines have under spent.

A tracked copy of this budget is shown, with some items grouped together, attached to this report. As the budget runs until the end of November there is a current total showing what we have in to date and the expected totals where there is known income/expenditure coming. Some summary comments are included here but I am also happy to answer more detailed questions.

## **Income**

- Regular donations includes some long standing standing orders and a decent amount of direct debits enabled by the new form I had setup. Not all the avenues of regular donations planned have materialised but a number of ideas have been generated for handover to the next treasurer.
- There has been a drop-off in donations with joining due to a change in the GPEW joining form which I raised with the co-chairs so it could be addressed at GPEx level but for which there has been no resolution yet
- We have one large donation promised and pending but which has so far not been transferred
- Spring conference came in below expectation due to the snow reducing greatly the number of attendees. The amount raised is very positive considering the numbers present. This is also offset by the amount of EC travel used due to some members of EC sadly being unable to attend due to weather.
- Autumn conference was close to budget despite the lack of stall on the first day and the lack of promotion of the quiz in the conference agenda. Those involved did very well to still bring in this total.
- No other events have been run so no income or merch sales there

- YGEW did not get any Workers Beer money through London YGs, coming as it would have done just after an Active Greens bid was turned down, but GPEW TU group provided £200 thanks to the kind and hard work of Paul Valentine.
- In a previous year we were banned from Workers Beer involvement but this has since been lifted. Two members of the committee were made aware of this ban being lifted in November but did not make myself or other members aware of it which has probably led to the loss of activity which would typically generate several hundred pounds, up to about £1000 of income. I was only very recently made aware of this directly.
- Both trust fund applications were unsuccessful as described above
- The campaign crowdfunder was planned to support a 2nd stage of the PIP campaign and as it was tied directly to this there is no hole created in the budget

### **Expenditure**

- Our membership of the Federation of Young European Greens is not done in quite the way their documents suggest so came in slightly higher than budgeted.
- There were residual commitments to LYG Bees campaign, PNN and Burnley fees carried over from last year but Burnley did not end up making any spend
- Budgeted campaigns spend included PNN and PIP for this year for which PNN are expected to full fulfill their expenditure but PiP will not - this detail is described in Sam Bristow's report
- Publications and printing is a little under due to the work Georgia has done in getting the majority of freshers pack sent out for free and us using largely existing materials. Next year there will need to be more investment in new materials
- Convention is largely unspent as yet but it is strongly expected it will all be used (including separate social media budget which has already been spent)
- Residentials have come in under budget largely due to people who had applied for, and been allocated AF, not attending and there was in the end no EC away day
- EC travel is below expected due to the snow at spring conference and a reduced number of events requiring travel than expected. It was expected that much of this would be required for Georgia's attendance of events but an alternative arrangement is now in place
- The budgetted amounts for ballot and motion software are not required thanks to the excellent work Lucas has done in setting up and hosting the platform for this
- 30u30 has come in slightly below, only requiring a small amount of the contingency set aside
- None of the approved Active Greens funds events called upon the funding allocated, either due to events not happening or the expenditure for which the fund was allocated not being used

**Attachments (If required) [PDF]**

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<u>Income</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Expected</u>
Small and Regular donations	£1,610.00	£1,833.00	£1,953.00
Big one-off donors	£300.00	£0.00	£350.00
Spring Conference	£800.00	£650.09	£650.09
Autumn Conference	£1,200.00	£1,112.99	£1,112.99
Other Events income	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00
Separate Merchandise (not at conference)	£200.00	£0.00	£50.00
Worker's Beer	£400.00	£200.00	£200.00
Trust Funds	£1,500.00	£0.00	£0.00
Campaigns Crowdfunder	£150.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,260.00</b>	<b>£3,796.08</b>	<b>£4,316.08</b>

<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Expected</u>
FYEG Subscription	£58.35	£65.19	£65.19
Carried over campaign commitments	£342.64	£192.64	£192.64
Campaigns	£550.00	£17.10	£250.00
Printing/Publications/Postage/Misc Admin	£430.00	£234.08	£274.08
Social Media Ads	£20.00	£20.00	£20.00
Convention	£1,000.00	£265.69	£1,000.00
Other Events	£50.00	£0.00	£0.00
Residentials/Away Days	£690.00	£393.10	£393.10
EC Travel	£750.00	£274.70	£274.70
Annual Ballot/Motions	£400.00	£0.00	£90.00
30u30	£1,500.00	£1,380.05	£1,380.05
ActiveGreens	£350.00	£0.00	£0.00
Merchandise seed money	£200.00	£199.98	£199.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,340.99</b>	<b>£3,042.53</b>	<b>£4,139.74</b>

Operating Profit

<b>Total</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>(80.99)</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>753.55</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>176.34</b>
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Balance

Opening Balance	£1,931.64	£1,931.64	£1,931.64
Cashflow	-£80.99	£753.55	£176.34
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£1,850.65</b>	<b>£2,685.19</b>	<b>£2,107.98</b>