

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORTS

PRESENTED AT
THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
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Reports of Sabbatical Officers

Association Director of Events & Services

Daniel Palmer

The Union was surrounded by heras fencing, portaloos and an office was refitted into a shop. That was the situation as my first semester as Director of Events and Services began. We had enjoyed an ambitious year of entertainments under the previous DoES, Jules Findlay, which I wanted to continue; but circumstances have been against us. Yet we've had the second-most commercially successful Freshers' Week, the biggest ever Refreshers', a successful RAG – but against that, we've not met many of our Entertainment budget targets.

Freshers' Week

A long summer was spent planning a single week, but such an important week for incoming students. I was unlucky in not getting a bigger name for my Thursday night, but at the same time, the week is about having fun, meeting friends and having (and hopefully remembering) great memories. I distributed spending more evenly between events and above all built a varied lineup. Clan Warfare, Jameela Jamil and S Club were big dance nights, and were alongside the equally popular Ceilidh, hilarious comedy by Daniel Sloss and Acapella Concert. They're all just as important to students, and I hope there was something for everybody.

- Most number of events of any Fresher's Week (10)
- Second-most commercially successful ever
- Income of £54005.04
- Surplus of £25290.10

As ever, marketing was key – the passes sold out in a flash, and we launched our new website. That was a huge exercise on top of everything else, but I am very proud of how it turned out. Yet the volume of publicity we reach for Freshers' can't be sustained, and that showed later in the semester.

Entertainments

Semester One was a real challenge, as a lot of what I identified as our 'casual trade' fell away, with Fridays especially suffering for one main reason – the redevelopment and its many side effects: from the lack of poster boards outside to the confusion over the portaloos. There wasn't much we could do apart from keep up a strong marketing presence. I spend a lot of my time tweeting, but we're almost at 5000 followers! Events with a specific pull, like RollerDisco, still did

well – but running mid-scale events like Silent Disco and our Ministry of Sound nights were poorly attended, making it far too risky to go on to spend lots on big names. It's difficult to gamble Union money when that is what our societies and sub-committees rely on. It meant I could spend all week planning events which then had poor turnout, which was uniquely draining – although Rewind, my new night with old music, proved to be a much-loved hit with students which has grown into a full brand. We've taken that in our stride for semester two, helped by a packed schedule of society events alongside the new £2 pricepoint for the Bop, to make the best use of the space.

That said, the impact on society use of the venues was minimised, by what was a lot of head-scratching by myself and Kelsey on scheduling. I really think the hours I have put in supporting a range of student groups means they have been shielded from the worst disruption of redevelopment, whether that was through alternative planning, miraculous venue turnarounds or fighting to keep Venue 2 as a society booking space. Even still, there were weeks when Venue 2 was cut open to install windcatchers and far more side effects on our bars, offices and venues than anticipated from redevelopment .

Refreshers and RAG Week

The marathon back-to-back fifteen events were hugely successful. Despite the lack of Main Bar, we had the best-attended and commercially successful Refreshers' Week ever. One element within that which I enjoyed was the Study Abroad Student induction, alongside Student Services, to offer them a bitesize Freshers' and a proper welcome. Refreshers' was just as varied as Freshers', and saw us launch our Building Site Bar. RAG Week was well attended, with indications looking very good for a £20,000+ fundraising achievement. They turned the tide a lot, and we've seen footfall increase again despite the lack of Main Bar. Since then, Itchy Feet returned and Mungo's Hi-Fi made a unique debut in St Andrews – and now all eyes are on a second Rollerdisco, and LGBT's Glitterball.

Bars and services

In the Main Bar, I worked on keeping the 72 hour drinks deals; improving branding and menus so students can see what offers we have and introducing a cocktail range. I oversaw the 'One Last Shot' publicity campaign to explain how the popular Main Bar was closing – and introduced the plan for the Building Site Bar. Dividing Venue 1 down with massive projector screens, we kept the expanse of Venue 1 out of the picture, and made the space cosy by re-painting the beer bar and adding the sofas; while also expanding the drinks range and bringing through the pool tables. It deviated slightly from the plan, due to the demands of so many big events, but also as Venue 2 proved so popular with its new glazing. At the time of planning, we had no idea that Venue 2 would be usable, or that it would look so good – for much of Semester One is was closed, or

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reduced with its temporary hoarding and minimal daylight. This meant I've had flexibility to juggle Bops, society events and bars and keep all of them running. I worked hard on finding a way to cut drinks prices as a big and meaningful 'thank you for your patience'. I've also worked on the Old Union Coffee Shop, and the plans for Rector's Café opening very soon. Apparently I've made much more of my 'Services' remit than previous sabbaticals and I really hope it's kept students fore and centre at what we are offering, and as resilient as we could be to redevelopment disruption. We appointed a Commercial Manager this year (a new role), but I still believe the role of DoES is unique in shaping Your Union to really offer what students want, and should move towards more consistent involvement in services decisions.

Redevelopment and the future

I have had a few major breakthroughs on redevelopment planning: the Sky Bar will be students for students to book for their own functions and smaller events; the performance space stage is no longer unacceptably shallow (I had to move a fire exit); and all sabbs (and in valuable consultation with the SSC) have worked on branding for Rector's, Your Shop and Sandy's. The plans are very exciting and will give a future DoES lots of new bars to play with!

My sub-committee team

I spent lots of time supporting our sub-committees, which really built on the work of Meg Platt (DoSDA) last year to make sure they felt as valued and fairly treated as they should be for core units of our Association. A lot of behind-the-scenes refocusing has been matched with always having my office door open to any of our Officers. I have had the real pleasure of working with STAR, and their dedicated Broadcasting Officer Oscar Swedrup. For putting on live events, Music is Love's knowledge has been incredibly value – well done Anna Merryfield for the brilliant suggestions and planning. The entire Mermaids committee, headed up by the ambitious David Patterson, have done a great job. Finally, the Ents Crew have been an incredibly resilient, creative, supportive, amusing and technically fantastic team – every single event in the Union would be impossible without them. I have enjoyed my occasional 'return to my roots' to clamber up ladders with them, but I was able to leave to them to their own devices as I had full faith in Fiona Woodhall, SSC Entertainments Convenor. She has been my right-hand woman throughout the year and I can't fit enough positive words in this 1000-word report. Thank you to the entire Ents Crew, and thank you for your continuing effort despite the redevelopment disruption. (At least we haven't had a mid-Bop power cut...).

A few more thanks are in order – to Joe and Will for sitting on Discipline Committee, former DoES legends Chris Marks and Phil Pass for your advice and support; Mathilde Johnsen for making the Barron Theatre run in such an efficient and welcoming manner; Christine, Chris and Kyle in the General Office for blocking some of the cold callers trying to sell me 3D glasses as 'I

am in a very important meeting'; Phil Hulse for always coming up with a solution; and Bruce Turner for looking out for me (and any tripping hazards which may come my way).

Thanks to the sabbatical team who have been on this stormy ride with me – Chloe for her fierce defence of students, me and what is right; Teddy for his endless optimism and our excitement when our roles overlap. Oh, and I share my office with someone called Kelsey Gold. You may have heard of her. She is fantastic, and there hasn't been a problem too tall that we couldn't tackle between us. We are the greatest of teams, and it is sad that time (do we qualify for an era?) is slowly entering its twilight phase.

Association Director of Representation

Teddy Woodhouse

The good ship Representation sails on, although we can continue to do more to support the student experience. As the Director of this fine ship for the past eight months, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time, getting to meet new people and working to improve the student experience at St Andrews.

We've done a lot this year.

We trained 178 class representatives – more than ever before – and delivered a day's worth of new training to all the School Presidents. We expanded class representative training to add specialist skills. We accredited that training so that it's transferrable to the next academic year. We created our first-ever comprehensive and complete centrally-held online directory of academic reps across each discipline and each level of study. We created a new award, in collaboration with the University, to recognise and reward amazing academic reps. We helped drive forward policy changes on mental health signposting, on coursework penalties, on the taught postgraduate progression threshold, on Honours Entry, on a KPI for the University on study space, and on the shape of the academic year – all of which are on-going developments. Our School Presidents did amazing things as well: I've received tales about careers events in English, tutoring initiatives in Classics, more information in advising for History students, and much more at the local levels of the University.

We created a new SRC Wellbeing Officer, to focus in and create a dedicated student volunteer to an area that has been undervalued in previous years. We brought together Nightline, Student Minds, Mental Wealth, Student Services, and the Athletic Union to help support students during their time here in St Andrews. We created a new Raisin Weekend guide and distributed a thousand kits to parents and children alike to encourage a fun and safe Raisin Weekend. We

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worked with Student Services to ensure that the future of the sexual health clinic remained a priority during redevelopment.

We launched an independent campaign in St Andrews to make clear the negative impacts that the Immigration Bill 2014 would have on our community in creating new barriers for international students in seeking accommodation and healthcare. We collected over 600 signatures for a petition sent to the UK government and sent letters to MSPs and our Member of Parliament, earning assurances of support in return. We sparked action in Westminster to challenge the UK government on how they could justify the damages that the legislation would have on St Andrews. We were the only Students' Association to reply to the government consultation on marriage equality in 2013. We rallied in Edinburgh on the day of the final vote for equal marriage in Scotland.

We measured, for the first time, voter turnout in our class rep elections. We created a new SRC Employability Officer, to support student's enterprise and entrepreneurial passions. We designed a new training program for our SRC members. We increased our steps towards transparency, posting our meeting minutes online and on a timely basis, including for the School Presidents' Forums and for SRC subcommittees. We are about to enter in what I hope will be St Andrews' finest and most thriving student elections yet.

I have used the word 'we' a lot because much of this year's work has been crafted and driven forward by a remarkable team of student volunteers. I owe a debt of gratitude for being able to work with such incredible people, to grow and learn as an individual, and to contribute to a community I care so much about.

We are, broadly, headed in the right direction.

We have stronger, better trained, and more active student representatives at all levels of the University who are working to make the student experience a bit better, in the classroom and beyond. We have a system that is thriving on the passion of committed student volunteers who donate their time to do remarkable things. We can do more.

To reach further, and to make sure that we are able to achieve our fullest potential, our representational activities need to be better structurally resourced. I firmly believe we need dedicated staff support towards proactive representational activities and to help facilitate our student representational bodies. We need to find a space for representation to remain part of our organisation, rather than being pushed out into other parts of the town against the increasingly heavy space and time demands for our redeveloping building. We need to remind ourselves that we are a Students' Association, whose primary aim is to support the health and wellbeing of the student community: we can never let the desire for commercial success outweigh the needs of our charitable aims.

We can do more for the student experience, and I think it's about time we prove to ourselves once again how effective we can truly be at achieving this aim.

Association Director of Student Development & Activities

Kelsey Gold

What a year it has been. I can't believe that it has been almost a year since I found out that I was the next Director of Student Development and Activities.

My overall goal for this year was to build upon the great work done by the previous DoSDA, Meg Platt. I have tried my best to be an accessible advocate and key resource for student groups wherever possible.

Chloe, Teddy, Daniel and I started working almost immediately after being elected. We spent countless hours in the library making elaborate plans while eating junk food. Yes, we were supposed to be studying or writing dissertations, but we were pretty stoked about this 'being a sabb' thing.

As sabbs-elect, we created the Sabb Map to clearly define our roles and advertise what we do to the student body. Our remits later became formalised as we updated the constitution as part of the governance review. We also overhauled 'The Book' that all first years receive and started to sketch out the new Union website. I achieved the first of my goals as DoSDA-elect by proposing 'A Motion to Introduce Association Projects'. The Councils passed the new framework and Scott Lang Dinner, the Class Gift and On the Rocks became the first projects under this new designation.

Handover flew by and suddenly it was the 1st of July. Plans to clean the Services Office quickly disappeared as meetings, emails and phone calls all thundered in.

Communication

Communication was a key priority for the summer and the sabbs spent numerous days and nights creating the new Union website. I am so grateful to have Robert Dixon, the SSC Member for Societies Elections, who was brilliant in creating the new Societies Portal over the summer that integrated so well into the new layout. I'm also really glad I set up a DoSDA facebook profile to go along with the twitter account to improve communication. It is the only way I can keep on top of all the subcommittee groups I am in and has worked well as an informal way for students to contact me.

Activities

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Societies reforms were another big summer project that continued into term. The Societies Committee has changed so much from this time last year: the weekly Societies Clinic makes the committee much more accessible, the Affiliation Agreement clearly laid out the relationship between the Association and societies, training and the new Societies Handbook had good feedback and much more. I hope that the reports from Courtney, Robert and Emily expand on what we have achieved as I see it as one of the biggest accomplishments of the Association this year.

I also started attending weekly **subcommittees** meetings from September. I am so proud to have worked with George, Joe, Will, Anna, David, and Fay this year. They all proved to be great leaders and their subcommittees flourished under their direction. There have also been some changes to subcommittees this year: Re Pictures is no longer a subcommittee and the DoSDA now line-manages the Postgraduate Society with the DoRep.

I have also worked with Oli Clayton (Scott Lang Dinner), Rachel Coleman (Class Gift), Cameron Kirby and Emily Rogers (On the Rocks) as leaders of the new **Association Projects**. The projects are all directly funded and supported by the Association, which has worked very well so far!

Redevelopment

Redevelopment has been a constant headache (literally: drilling) with electricity being shut off, holes being cut in the floor and other construction related madness.

I have been involved in redevelopment directly through the rebranding and fundraising elements of the project. Working with the architects, students and the Development Office on these areas has been much more time consuming than I initially anticipated but I am excited to see how they progress in the coming years.

Space during the construction has been a particular challenge – we simply do not have enough rooms to accommodate all our activities. I am continuing to work with the University so we can offer room bookings in the Medical Science Building and other University venues as phases continue. I am also very grateful to several Halls of Residence and the Mansfield Building for accommodating groups when they can. I am currently working with the University to centralize an online room booking system, which will hopefully be ready for September.

I am quite proud of how well both the Freshers and Refreshers Fayre went this year. They were both extremely well attended, the largest on record and made over £12,000 to fund societies. I sought alternative locations over the summer but chose to host both in the Union with some compromises and hard labour from the Societies Committee (thank you again!).

Employability

I will admit that employability initiatives have been a lower priority during my time as DoSDA. I feel that my time is better spent when working directly with student groups on their initiatives.

That said - I am very pleased that Teddy and I were able to introduce the role of SRC Member for Employability. Lonie Sebahg has laid an excellent foundation for the position and I am excited to see how the role expands.

I have also enjoyed working with CAPOD and the Careers Centre, particularly on the Career Launch Employability Conference we held in January. The feedback from the conference was great and I hope to pass on the project to my successor.

Looking back, I am really pleased with how this year has gone. I have achieved almost all of my goals, worked with brilliant people and learned how to function on very little sleep.

Looking Ahead

This year, I have thought a lot about what 'Student Development' means as part of the DoSDA role. After this year, I believe that the best thing the DoSDA can do for student development is to run a really solid student activities program.

A strong, well-funded and well-supported student activities program allows students to put on bigger and better events, take risks with their activities, reach out to the community and shape their own experience.

I hope the next DoSDA takes full advantage of their role as a leader of student activities and shapes the program to fit the needs of our endlessly ambitious student body. As the student body changes, we need to adapt along with it. We can, and should, do more to support students in their endeavours in the years to come.

I also hope that the DoSDA role becomes less operational in years to come. Shifting certain duties to staff will not dilute the role – rather it will allow the DoSDA to become more proactive instead of spending as much time on admin.

Final thoughts

I would encourage everyone to get involved in the Students' Association, whatever form that may take. I have learned so much from my time in the Association and am glad that I was pushed into staying on for one more year.

Finally, I would like to say a massive thank you to my fellow sabbs: Chloe, Teddy and particularly Daniel – I couldn't have done this job without you.

Association President

Chloe Hill

This year has been more difficult than it could have been. Our General Manager has been on sick leave since May, and the redevelopment started on the same day we started work. Both of these have brought many unexpected issues to deal with throughout the last 8 months.

The beginning of our jobs in July also came with the development of a new union website, the content of which was almost entirely written or edited by one of the sabbs. This was a huge job that had to be finished by mid-august so that the website was online in time to sell fresher's week tickets. The website is still not perfect and I hope that the new sabbatical team take on the challenge of making it even better.

Over the summer the previous Accommodation Advocate left, and I was involved in employing Naomi, the new member of staff who has taken over this role. I have helped to develop the position she has, and have ensured she works much more closely with the accommodation team to improve the overall support we offer students, and to ensure projects and institutional memory carry over in to future years.

The final change we made over the summer was to the SRC budget. Instead of just a central SRC general budget, we worked with the SRC officers on their own committee budgets, meaning we had a clearer idea of what money was being spent on, and could better justify how much money different committees received. This also meant we had to plan a rough timetable for the year of events, 'weeks' and campaigns, which helped us be more organised.

In Semester 1 I worked on four key areas:

I wrote a Zero Tolerance policy for the Students Association. The zero tolerance to sexual harassment campaign is a national campaign which was established with the aim of helping Student Unions create an environment where all students can enjoy time in their union without persistent and unwanted attention of a sexual nature. The policy covers offences which are already dealt with by the discipline committee, but the new policy uses the nationally recognised definitions of harassment and discrimination, and coherently explains the various type of harassment so students are better informed.

I've been working closely with Resident and Business Services (RBS) to agree the plan for university accommodation. A paper has been agreed outlining a plan for subsidized accommodation to be mobile – that is, for students entitle to subsidized accommodation to be able to choose their hall in the same way as everyone else, but get their room subsidized, rather than having to live in the allocated subsidized accommodation, as has been the case.

I have lobbied for a fairer policy on international fees, and have secured an agreement that ensures that fees for the entire 4-year degree are advertised from the start, and capped at no more than a 5% increase, so that students can budget without getting caught out by unexpected increases. This isn't perfect, but it is a step on the way to making international fees fairer.

Finally, the Students Association had an external governance review carried out over the summer, and I was tasked with taking 12 of the recommendations forward. This has included reviewing our committee structures and our resources, updating the laws, and more – tedious but important work to ensure our union works as well as it possibly can.

Semester 2:

In week 3 I ran the 50th anniversary event, celebrating the joining of the male and female Unions. This event was predominantly for current students, but we also invited all past sabbaticals to the event, in an effort to kick start building an Alumni network for the Students Association. I themed the event around gender equality, and invited Dr Ann Kettle and Professor Lorna Mine to give talks about gender equality at the University over the last 50 years. We looked at what improvements have been made, and what still needs to be done to improve equality in the future. I think it gave people a lot of food for thought, especially regarding our Association Elections' lack of female sabbaticals.

For the rest of this term I have four projects in the pipeline:

As ever there will be more work on accommodation, this term focusing on the private housing sector. The student Letting Agency, which was one of my key proposals during the election, has been ticking along in the background of last term, and will continue to do so, as it is such a big project I always knew it would take more than a year to get going. Our Landlord/Tenant charter is also reviewed annually so I will be looking at how to make this better enforceable for next year. Accommodation in general is undoubtedly going to remain an issue for students in St Andrews in the coming years, but I hope that future sabbaticals continue to address the problems faced.

I would like to get my teeth in to some environmental and ethical work in the run up to green week (week 7) by reviewing our sustainability policy and making sure we actually act on it. We have already updated our fair trade policy, and have been working on the menu for the new café, ensuring it is as fair trade or ethically sourced as possible.

The 'Beyond five' project is a widening access scheme run between ourselves and the principal ambassadors. I've really enjoyed working with the ambassadors' this year, both on university open days, and on widening access issues. This project is an opportunity for us to go out to schools to talk about all the extracurricular stuff students can get involved in at St Andrews (i.e. everything the Students Association does) and we have 4 school visits planned for this term.

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Finally, I want to run a series of workshops around women in leadership, looking at public speaking, confidence building, and addressing some of the reasons why fewer women run for, and get elected to, senior elected positions on the Union (and else ware.)

I am now over the word count for this report, but want to quickly take the opportunity to thank all the students who have worked so hard for the SA this year, in particular the Accommodation team, Community Relations Officer, External Campaigns Officer, Environment and ethics Officer, and Member for Widening Access (and participation).

Reports of Officers

Arts/Divinity Senate Representative

Sophie Kelly

This year has been a successful year for the education committee. My goals for the year were to be more accessible to the school presidents and to get their thoughts and opinions out there. With the creation of the SOAC, we have managed to integrate the student opinion into the Academic Council agenda. My job has involved, so far, two academic council meetings, which have aimed to assess how the university is managing their education system. In these meetings we have debated anything from exams to marking schemes to new research that is coming to the university. This year is going to be very different for my position. Teddy, Chloe, Peter and I all agreed the new changes make more sense to the system with the head school Presidents taking the position of the art and divinity senate representatives. Arts and Divinity senate work does work, but I think this position needs to feel more integrated. It's hard to feel you can make a difference with only four meetings, in which most of the business seems to be conducted elsewhere. The debate was often hard to break into, and went around in circles so I found it difficult to get my opinions out there. With that being said, a school president will feel more comfortable with heads of school and will be more aware of how the system runs and what the issues are. I implore my predecessor to speak up in meetings!

Association Chair

Maxwell Baldi

I began the year with the goals of making the Association Councils more accessible, more transparent, and fairer. I believe that I will demit office with these goals accomplished. On my first day in office, I introduced J. 1 – A Motion to Reform the Standing Orders of the Association. The motion repealed the existing Standing Orders – many of which dated back decades, prescribed byzantine procedures for debate, and were often at odds with the fundamental principles of parliamentary procedure – and replaced them with a total redrafted set of rules.

The new standing orders make the Councils more transparent. They require a two-thirds supermajority to adjourn *in camera*, and insure that minutes are still kept in *in camera* sessions. They require that agenda and motions are available publically to days in advance of every meeting.

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The new standing orders make the Councils more accessible. They provide for an open forum at the start of every Councils meeting that allow any student to address the Councils for up to two minutes at the start of every meeting; they also allow students full rights to participate in debate when they bring petitions to the Councils.

The new Standing Orders make the Councils fairer because they are clear and easy to understand. They adhere to the principles of deliberation that ensure that a minority may dissent and then a majority may act. I have consistently applied the Standing Orders to give everyone an equal voice in debate.

I have also taken advantage of the Association's new website since September (and Dropbox and Twitter) before that to ensure that information is freely available to students.

I've tried to better foster social unity and cohesion amongst officers (read 'have more fun') and accordingly brought back the Councils Christmas dinner. I've also arranged an order of jackets and hoodies for the officers – and worn mine nearly every day since.

Finally, I've presided over the division of motions in to R-, S-, and J-Series. This minor administrative change has made motions easier to track; however, it also has created a change in the way joint business is seen – introduced simultaneously in both councils – that I feel better protects the prerogatives and privileges of the Councils.

Outside of the Chair, I've helped lead the Association's governance review and its examination of the interrelationships of the Association. In the second semester, I've been asked to lead the final few components of it to completion.

As thrilled as I am with the year, I'm disappointed that I was not able to better engage students with the Councils. The structure and mechanisms are there, but the desire amongst students' to avail themselves of their rights is not. I hope my successor strives and succeeds where I didn't manage, and successfully encourages the submission of petitions and participation in the open forum. I also was not successful in introducing the recording of meetings for podcast, yielding to overwhelming opposition in the Councils; I think a new Chair with a clear electoral mandate to record meetings could overcome that opposition and pursue a policy that would truly make meetings available on demand.

On a personal level, I must thank the members of the Association for granting me – and the officers of the Association for supporting me in – what has truly been the honour of my time in St Andrews. I've loved every moment of my chairmanship, and I know that I leave the Councils stronger and better organised than when I joined them.

Stat Scotia, Stat Aula.

Association Community Relations Officer

Katie O' Donnell

Time has flown by since I was co-opted into this position in October, and although things were slow to start with it seems that some great progress has been made in these last few weeks, with some projects that I hope will be continued by my successor.

My aim for this year was to foster some new links between student bodies and town organisations, as well as help to maintain existing ones. This has involved liaising between On the Rocks, the student-run arts festival and local schools and youth groups, in order to help them set up art projects with local children and young people.

I feel that my biggest role this year has been as a "middle-man", putting people in touch with each other and offering advice. However I'm pleased that I have managed to get involved with a campaign to promote the use of KeepCups by lobbying local cafes to offer a discount to users, a scheme which was recently implemented in university outlets. This project is now well underway but a lot remains to be done to make it a town-wide initiative.

Student safety in and around the town is an issue I would have liked to focus on more this year, although I played a small part in the petition to lobby Fife Council to light Kinburn Park. However recently I have noticed that road safety is a problem, particularly amongst cyclists, and I would like to see this taken forward next year, perhaps with some form of safety campaign supported by the police (who raised the issue) to ensure the wellbeing of everyone in the town.

Thank you everyone for all your help this year, and all the best for the future.

Association Environment & Ethics Officer

Dominyka Urbonaite

Aims and main activities:

My aims when running for the Environment and Ethics position were to connect different environment groups in St Andrews and work together towards events and policies.

It was busy, but a good year for Environment and Ethics, forming lots of new partnerships between various groups in St Andrews. The new term started with the development of new training for Halls environment representatives in partnership with CAPOD. Halls environment representatives have been introduced to representatives from the Estates Environment Team and

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Transition in the very beginning. As a result, new partnerships between Halls and Transition or Environment Team evolved, namely hall student gardens increasing in number to three (Albany Park student garden joined by University hall and John Burnet hall gardens).

Also, for the first time, an Interhall Energy competition joined Halls Charities and Interhall Sports competitions to form a new 'super' competition - Hall Champions league.

In the Fresher's Fayre we saw a Big Green Fair where all environmental focused societies came together for a chilled afternoon with music by Jazz Works and opportunity to try bike powered car electrics.

Second semester has been fully occupied organising Green Week. This year for the first time it is going to be a project organised by the joined efforts from Estates Environment Team, Transition and Environment and Ethics officer (all three groups previously attempted to organise green week separately). Because of this, Green Week this year is going to be bigger and better. We have lined up a number of exciting events such as the Green Ceilidh, Environmental career networking event, Blackout and Grill Environmentalist Panel Debate.

Something I would do differently:

It would be better if Environmental Reps training would take only one day instead of a series of sessions through the year. It was our first time collaborating with CAPOD and we have learned that one day training in the beginning of semester would suit students' timetables much better. Also I would suggest to the new officer to have an environment reps forum instead of incorporating them in E&E subcommittee. Having too many people in a subcommittee makes it harder to find a time when everybody is available and discussion tends to circulate around halls.

Looking ahead:

It is important for Environment and Ethics officer to keep engaging with various groups and societies in town. I would also suggest to have a committee member for environmentally focused societies and a member for halls to keep them engaged. In addition it would be good to spend more time on creating new motions which would seek to make The Union greener.

Association LGBT Officer

David Norris

This year has been a fantastic year for the LGBT society and LGBT people as a whole. The LGBT committee and constitution has been reconfigured creating two distinct sub sections, an events subsection and a welfare subsection, helping us to be more productive and better equipped to deal with the divers array of events and services we provide for the student body. The

reconfiguration also created the position of wider community relations officer (a title that may need to be examined).

This position has been vital in trying to achieve my main goal this year, the inclusion of straight allies to the LGBT cause and events. This year we have seen more straight ally's not only at our events but on our committee. With the help of rag week, we through our dRAG walk where not were 5 out of the 12 people taking part being straight but we managed to sell 96 out of 100 tickets bring drag culture to a wider audience, giving people a better understanding of what we do, while raising money for charity at the same time. We also had not only our first female but our first straight Mr ST Andrews contestant, which has again helped create a more inclusive society.

This year we had our first LGBted talks where we had speakers discussing there interests and experiences on subjects such as, growing up gay in Pakistan and trans* invisibility. This event was received well, educating people on all sides of the LGBT spectrum on things they may have never encountered and due to the response it received last time we are running another LGBted talk on the 3rd of March.

This year will also see our first Glitterball. This event has been in pipe line since April of last year and to see it finally come to fruition will probably be one of highlights of my year. The entire LGBT committee has been working hard on everything from creative ways to promote the event, and the most extravagant ways to decorate, to getting best possible entertainment and I am pleased to announce that as of Wednesday we have been at a profit.

Finally I would like to talk about the representational side of the job and my hopes for the future. This year the Association past a motion that made bathroom usage more Trans*people friendly. Motions like this one are an extremely important part of this job, alongside sitting on the wellbeing and equal ops committees. I hope that the next person to take this position bares this in mind and takes it as seriously as I have.

My hopes for the future are that Saints LGBT continues to grow, that we get more ally's involved in our cause (after all when it comes to parties the bigger the better), that the Glitter ball can become an annual event improving with experience and reputation, the fight for LGB and especially T visibility in is carried on and the next LGBT officer gets as much from the position as I have.

Association Postgraduate President

Scott Schorr

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This has been a very exciting year for the postgraduate community at St Andrews. The Postgraduate Society has expanded its event calendar, increased its representative capacity, and strengthened its line of communication with fellow PGs. To begin my term, I simply promised, "Next year I will not reinvent the wheel, but facilitate a smooth 2013-14 transition". I would like to think that I have met and exceeded this initial goal (although I had initial temptations to redesign a wheel), and I look forward to concluding my term on 1st July and assisting with the handover process.

St Leonard's College

First and foremost, I am most proud of contributing to the re-unification of St Leonard's College for both taught and research postgraduates. The University has been an incredible partner to work with this year in my role. They have been enthusiastic about working with us, value student input, and I will miss meeting with them on behalf of postgrads. I am looking forward to being a student for more years to come under their leadership. To reach this stage, we were able to successfully provide the University and St Leonard's College with student input from the PG Committee, PG Rep Forum (all School-elected PG reps), and a motion from the Students' Representative Council.

Future of the Postgraduate President Position

To more effectively provide postgraduate representation within the University and Students' Association, and to account for the increased time demands and event offerings associated with the Postgraduate President position, the Postgraduate Presidency will now officially be split into two roles when my term concludes in July. This has been approved by both SSC and SRC, and agreed upon within the PG Committee. The Postgraduate Society President (pgpres@st-andrews.ac.uk), will be socially focused, and the Postgraduate Convenor (pgconven@st-andrews.ac.uk), will be academically focused. Newly elected postgrads will begin their term 1st July, when this change will officially take effect. Additional information about both roles may be found on our website during nomination week, and has previously been distributed to the postgrad mailing list. Feel free to contact me with any questions if you are considering running.

Events

Our event calendar this year has been a highlight for us. We started off with Freshers' Week activities, continuing the tradition of the Postgraduate Safari, Speed Friending, and a Main Bar postgrad invasion (literally hundreds, we owned the place that evening). Our two largest events of semester one were the Postgraduate Society Gala at the Scores Hotel, and a 600th Finale Ball partnership with the Fellowship of St Andrews, including a postgraduate-only Wine Reception in Lower College Hall. Other events have included Movie Nights (Dr Strangelove, Jurassic Park, V for Vendetta), bonfires (and marshmallows) on East Sands, additional Main Bar Pub Nights, and an Edinburgh Christmas Market Bus Trip. We also partnered with postgrads external to the PG

Committee to help support event ideas from within our own community, such as the Running Dinner. Finally, we just co-hosted a wine reception with St Leonard's College on 20th Feb, with another co-hosted wine night with DRA scheduled for 1st March.

Website

We provided you with not one, but two new PG Society websites this year. The first launched in semester 1, and the second in semester 2. (<http://stapgsoc.co.uk>)

Representation

To help increase communication between Schools regarding academic policy, Tania Strützel, this year's Vice-President for Academic Relations on the PG Committee, has created the PG Rep Forum. The PG Rep Forum consists of all elected taught and research postgraduate School reps, and meets twice per semester. This task will be inherited by next year's PG Convenor.

PG Society Constitution

The PG Society Constitution has been significantly updated to reflect the increased offerings of the Society, and provide more detailed structure for future Committees.

The Sunday Postgraduate

Perhaps my greatest personal touch this year was the weekly newsletter called The Sunday Postgraduate. This idea developed organically after my first mass e-mail, and I believe (or at least hope) it has helped to increase the visibility of the Society and Students' Association within the postgraduate community. The messages are fun for me to write, and I genuinely hope they are continued by my successor(s).

Looking Ahead

The PG Committee and I have a few more surprises left up our sleeves, but to keep the list brief, I can promise at least one more Ball. It has been a privilege serving as Postgraduate President this year, and I will miss the late Sunday night e-mails.

Athletic Union President

Jess Walker

No report submitted.

Rector's Assessor

Pat Mathewson

As the Rector's Assessor is required to wear many hats throughout their time in the position, I suspect my report will vary somewhat from the officers of the Association. I will however, do my best to speak across the breadth of the role. Although Alistair Moffat's term ends this Autumn, I believe we have made substantial progress along this final stretch. Applications to the Rector's fund have more than doubled year on year, following a successful publicity campaign. The quality of applicants remains exceptionally high. Furthermore, we on the selection panel have noted the outstanding range of accomplishments and career aspirations amongst the candidates.

Additionally, with respect to employability, I have worked hard to mitigate the shortfall in Saltire Foundation funding. While the incredibly short time frame from when we learned of the issue did not lend itself to a one year stop gap solution, the careers center is now confident that they have reached a long term solution.

Surgeries continue to be well attended, and endure as the most satisfying part of the role. We have maintained a highly visible and accessible profile on this front, and Alistair and I look forward to another jam-packed afternoon this upcoming Monday.

As a member of the University Court, I have made every effort to be an active and vocal student representative. Furthermore, I have endeavored to bolster the issues put forth by The Association President and Director of Representation. My own central areas of advocacy have been focused upon the governance and nominations process of the Court, areas where I believe issues such as transparency still leave room for improvement.

My advice to the next assessor would be that although there is a temptation to embrace the role as simply an intermediary there remains great scope for initiative and leadership. They will have access to people and resources denied to many, and thus have great potential to serve the students of this university. I strongly encourage whoever fills my shoes to challenge their rector in aspiring to ever greater goals and to make their voice heard at every level of our university.

SRC Accommodation Officer

Scott Taylor

Introduction

We have had a busy year and 500 words is not enough. Thank you Chloe, Anna, Ruth, Naomi and everyone else who has helped us! Limited in time, I have to cut to the chase.

Motions

We passed two motions

- Ruth's one set out our position on private halls
- My one means we do the accommodation survey every two years.

Events

"Have your say on accommodation" – a public debate on 15th November discussing accommodation in St Andrews with speakers from the SRC, RBS, Preservation Trust and Community Council. Speakers enjoyed it, ten people attended and the minutes are available on request. Ran by Scott.

- Do next year or consider a full blown conference.

"Flatmate speed dating" – An opportunity for students to find flatmates, with wine. Ran by Ruth. We may run one with an additional advice table.

- Do next year!

"How to Rent" workshops – we went to halls with Chloe & Naomi to provide information on renting properties.

- No choice but to do next year!

University Accommodation

- Training (my most enjoyable and probably most impactful contribution)– We initiated and developed training for Hall of Residence Senior Students, Secretaries and Treasurers.
 - We are currently refining hall training which will be delivered by the new SRC Officers.
 - We plan to provide basic training to all committee members
 - Energy and Charity will now be included.
- Finance – we have brought in treasurer training, a new standardized spreadsheet and are working towards finalizing a financial agreement form
 - We will be agreeing on the finalized forms of these at the next Senior Student Forum.
 - We would advise our successors to try to bring in some auditing process to ensure the culture of responsible autonomy we have tried to engineer is checked.
- Senior student forum – Anna runs this effectively.
- League table – new sports/charity/energy league introduced successfully.

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- Not attempted – It was found that there is an existing policy on Halls for year abroad & bursaries did not come under our purview. We took no action on these.

Private Accommodation

- Property Factor's Meeting – the team attended this with Chloe.
- How to rent guide – we assisted Chloe and Naomi in the development of the How to Rent Guide and Renting Rights for Disabled Students.
 - I am currently trying to have videos of these made by Bubble TV.
- I would recommend the Accommodation Officer/Member for Private Accommodation consider the following which were not completed this year:
 - UDS Debate on accommodation
 - Providing information for students on their year abroad about private accommodation
 - Energy efficiency and "how to run a flat & get your deposit back" workshops or resources for those in private accommodation
- Not attempted - using the discretionary fund for deposit assistance, assisting students who have unfairly not received the deposits back, Being the "legislation expert." The first isn't possible and the last two outwith purview.

Ideas for next year

- Student drop in sessions: possibly best left to Naomi.
- Affordability/Housing fayres with all the information tenants need to know.
- Set up a blog – beat the union gremlins! Be better at communicating the work of the team.

Closing remarks

I'll finish by once again thanking those who have helped us this year. I wish my successor well and am always here when assistance is needed.

SRC Education Officer

Ondrej Hajda

The role of SRC Education Officer was revived again after a 2-year break. I took over the duties of the SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources but also agreed with the Director of Representation (DoRep) to work closely with School Presidents on University-wide education issues. I chaired the SRC Education Committee and the newly created Student Opinion on Academic Council (SOAC) Advisory Group.

Education Committee & SOAC

Education Committee met biweekly to discuss a number of issues ranging from collecting feedback on TGAP to the problem of seat hogging. There were two additional SOAC meetings to discuss the student perspective on issues debated at the Academic Council. One of the main outstanding challenges is to unite the representation on education issues within the University system under the role of DoRep and gave them membership on the Academic Council instead of the Association President.

I was extremely lucky to work with very active postgraduate representatives to the Education Committee and I would only encourage my successor to maintain this good relationship with the postgraduate community. Together with the Postgraduate Society and the Union Debating Society we arranged a debate on the motion *This House Believes University Does Not Prepare Students for Real Life*.

At the end my term I proposed reorganization of the Education Committee to better incorporate the School President system into the Union structures.

School Presidents

Alongside the DoRep, I attended School Presidents' Meeting and was also responsible for taking and distributing minutes from these meetings.

There were two major issues I worked with the School Presidents on. First, I made sure that contact details of School Presidents and Class Representatives were published on relevant School's websites as well as the Union website. I also asked all School Presidents to publish minutes from their Staff-Student Consultative Committee (SSCC) meetings online on the School website or distribute it to students in other way. Second, I strongly encouraged School Presidents and Class Representatives to play a more active role in discussion of the module evaluation questionnaires results to support student engagement in learning and teaching enhancement.

Library

I worked closely with the Library management on a range of student issues. We successfully lobbied the Library to eliminate inter-library loan fees for undergraduate students. The Education Committee ran a Student Library Survey at the end of first semester. We received over 1,000 responses and unsurprisingly the major issues were insufficient number of: power plugs, study spaces and books. As a result, the Library is now looking whether it is possible to install more power plugs. Data from this survey will also be useful for my successor to lobby the University for extending opening hours in the Main Library on weekends, as well as other smaller libraries (specifically JF Allen & St Mary's College Library).

AOCB

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Together with the SRC Member for Ethnic Minorities, I looked into the possibility of setting up a peer proofreading scheme within the Union for non-native speakers of English.

The issues of study spaces will be one of the major challenges for the incoming Education Officer and will include looking for alternative study spaces as well as upgrading old ones. The SRC also passed a motion to lobby the University for further study space and oppose any expansion in student numbers without an adequate provision in study spaces.

Major things to be considered in the coming year(s) include: TGAP review, new academic year review, collaboration statements with the University and Scotland's Referendum 2014.

Relevant SRC motions:

- R. 14 - A Motion to Support Student Engagement in Learning through Access to Module Evaluation Feedback
- R. 16 – A Motion to Lobby the University for Further Study Space
- J. 9 – Motion to Create a Student Opinion on Academic Council (SOAC) Advisory Group
- J. 28 - A Motion to Change the Composition of the SRC Education Committee

SRC Employability Officer

Lonie Sebagh

As you may know, the Employability Officer position is a new position that was created at the start of this academic year, so I have done my best to shape it based on my previous experience and ideas for the role.

When starting my position in October, my main project and focus was to work with the different School Presidents and 'employability' Class Representatives, following Teddy's new Class Representative training opportunities. I wanted to work on providing tailored help to the different Schools, either in the events they wanted to organize, the different needs they had or what employers in their field were looking for in students and Graduates. But, over the course of the year, I learnt that initial plans sometimes don't make the cut. After getting in touch with School Presidents and Class Representatives my project didn't quite take off, due mostly to timing issues, and I had to look for other opportunities and ideas to pursue.

This year, from an employability point of view, mainly saw the development of a new Career Conference during the inter-semester break organised by all CAPOD, the Careers Centre and the Students' Association. During the months preceding the conference I worked on the realization of this event, participated in preliminary meetings about the different activities we wanted to see

organized, the speakers we could invite, the budgets and then attended the conference, helping through either filming the different events or running my own assessment centre activity. The conference was a real success, I enjoyed working with all the staff involved in this project. I hope it will become a yearly event that my successor will want to get involved in as well, because it is a wonderful experience both to organize and to attend as a delegate.

This position has been a great way to familiarize myself with the works of the SRC and the Students' Association in general. It involved making a lot of contacts within the Careers Centre and CAPOD in order to go forward with different ideas and projects, and everyone I had the chance to be in contact with during the course of the year has been very helpful. In order to make it easier on the incoming Officer, I am hoping to organize a survey after elections about students' perceptions of Employability advice on campus, including the Careers Center, CAPOD or even the Students' Association. This will give my successor some invaluable information and hopefully a good starting point considering what students need/want and what can be bettered.

Although I chose to follow a specific path over the past few months, there are many directions which Officers can pursue in this position, from issues of equal opportunity when providing employability advice to helping students with entrepreneurial ideas. I would encourage anybody who is interested in running for this position to shape it as they wish and as they feel their experience and knowledge can be most helpful to the students.

SRC Equal Opportunities Officer

Hibak Yusuf Mohamud

AIMS OF THE YEAR:

- Introduce FOCUS DAYS instead of awareness weeks
- Cooperate with societies on events that coincide with our different remits.
- Meet more regularly with the committee
- Organise Black History Month with the Ethnic Minorities Rep
- Organise a Career Fair for students with disabilities

SUMMARY OF YOUR ACTIVITY THIS YEAR:

- Introduced FOCUS DAYS – A Disabilities Question time and Black History Month: Honouring the Past, Inspiring the Future.
- Worked on a video for prospective students with the admission office. This video tried to cover every aspect of the university experience
- The committee met fortnightly, compared to no committee meetings the previous year.

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- Worked on a campaign for international students against the new the immigration bill.

SOMETHING YOU WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY:

- Work more on policies and look at what other universities were doing to improve equal opportunities.
- Increase the committee's online presence and transparency
- Work more closely with the university representative for Equal Opportunities – although this was difficult because he never got back to me.

LOOKING AHEAD FOR YOUR POSITION:

- Work with the International Students Representative on creating an International Students' Forum, with initially hall members and eventually also members from national societies in St Andrews.
- Work on the Union becoming more accessible – propose "Inclusive Participation" during the societies training, so students will be able to make union and AU events more accessible to all students.
- Work with the Career Centre and Employability Officer on career fairs and mixers.
- Get an overview of annual equal opportunities events that other bodies and societies put on and see if there is room for collaboration.
- Do more FOCUS DAYS – encourage committee to put on awareness days, workshops and surgeries.

SRC External Campaigns Officer

Callum Bryce

My aims and goals for the year were:

To ensure that the Conflict-Minerals movement was being actively carried out by the University and to try to support the movement in any way possible. Unfortunately the university has not responded to requests for a meeting with procurement. There is the positive, however, that Apple and Intel are making positive steps towards making their technology conflict-free, so hopefully my successor will stand in better stead for holding the university to account in this way.

To make the Union more ethical and more environmentally friendly. The Environment and Ethics Officer and I were able to pass a motion reducing the amount of paper waste in the SRC, but we were unable to pass a motion saying that the new Union Café should operate a Meat-Free Monday.

To support any campaigns brought to me by other students. I was asked to help campaign for a Living Wage on campus by Labour Students, and did pass a motion to this effect, though this has not yet been implemented by the Association and as far as I'm aware the University has not responded to requests to sign up to a Living Wage.

Something I would do differently would be to try to actively engage more with student societies to see what external campaigns they think that the Union should be promoting. I think that the next Officer should look to rearranging the External Campaigns Subcommittee into a body that includes student activists as well as elected representatives.

SRC Member For Ethnic Minorities

Soraya Walli

Working with the SRC and representing ethnic minorities, has taught me a lot about not only the way the association runs, but also the crucial aspects of engaging with all members of the student society- the majority and the minority. My goals for this year were to bridge the gap between the majority and the minority, to celebrate the diversity of the student body and to raise awareness on the issues faced by minorities in St. Andrews.

My hope for the next year for my successor would be to continue to raise awareness on issues faced by minorities in relation to equality. With the change in title from Member for Ethnic Minorities to Member for racial equality, the aim would be to address any inequalities faced by the student community pertaining to discrimination limited to not only to race, colour or creed .

During my term, I was able to help organize the Annual Black History Month which celebrated the legacy of ethnic minorities and their contributions to the UK. I also helped to organize an informative session for first year students to help them adapt to life in St. Andrews. Also currently the SRC Education officer and I are working on a Peer essay review scheme for non native speakers of English, which we hope to be up and running by the end of the academic year.

Something I would have done differently would have been to get involved earlier, and work with societies to ensure there is full participation of all students.

It would have been more helpful to work as a sub committee of the SRC for a particular goal, and fulfill it rather than have several aims and not enough resources to fulfill the individual goals.

All in all, I hope in the next year there will an increased awareness in racial equality in St. Andrews in terms of campaigns and events.

SRC Member For First Year

Josh Carlton

Aims:

- I aimed to improve the areas of the Union and University website dedicated to First Years. With the revamp of the Union website, this was realised, yet not by myself.
- I wanted to help to alleviate some of the stress caused by finding private accommodation in St Andrews. Accommodation is a very complex problem, but I hope that my contribution was worthwhile, helping with the information talks held in the Halls and the very successful 'Flatmate Speed-Dating' event.
- I wanted to meet and greet as many First Years as possible in the first few weeks of term. I knew that the majority of Freshers greatly enjoy their first experience of St Andrews life, but I knew that there were also many who felt hesitant or uneasy – and these students were who I was elected to help.

Serving on the SRC, I not only had the opportunity to represent the First Years and voice their views on the decisions that are made. I also learned so much about the inner workings of the Union and its interaction with the University, coming to value its great contribution to the student experience even more than before.

SRC Member For Gender Equality

Ali West

I entered my post as Member for Gender Equality with a set of goals in mind that would transform as the year went on- an agenda which would be influenced by events, an increased knowledge of Association policies and methods, and the evolving needs I was contacted with by students. This year has had both its successes and its learning experiences; the adoption of a Zero Tolerance, the continuation of Vagina Week, and the uptick in both visibility and activity in gender-related politics in St Andrews is something I am delighted with and have done my best to foster.

Unfortunately, a severe illness in my first semester disallowed me from realising everything I had planned, and threw off the timeline I had in mind for my time in this position. Fortunately, though- and due in part to my willingness to collaborate with like-minded societies- I think that there has been a solid groundwork laid going forward. I would highly encourage my successor to consider narrowing their focus to two or three projects a semester, and to have these planned out well in advance. I would like to see a continuation and expansion of the Zero Tolerance Policy

into a charter, and a successful Sexual Health Week next year as examples of this. Similarly, I would advise my successor to utilise and support the presence of other groups on campus which share similar goals, and to work within the existing framework they provide.

SRC Member For International Students

Caroline Rhoads

Aims for this year

My aims for the year were to be a good representative for international students and vote according to what I believed was best for the international student community, host and attend events to make international students feel more welcome, and to stand up to any injustices I felt were committed against the international student community of St Andrews.

Summary of activity

Along with the Equal Opportunity Officer and Member for Ethnic Minorities, hosted a talk for incoming international students. Current international students from many backgrounds were invited to speak and share their experience of being an international student and answer any questions the incoming students had. Attended a few events in Freshers' Week as representative of the Union to speak to international students and to learn more about Visa issues faced by international students. Along with the Director of Representation, the Association President, and the Equal Opportunity Officer, led campaign 'In Good Health', against measures taken by the UK government to limit the rights of immigrants and international students. Also still currently working on setting up an 'international students' forum' with the Equal Opportunity Officer.

Something I would do differently

I was approached by postgrads in the previous year about holding an international students' festival for the 2013 Freshers' Week, but they backed out before final planning could be done and so therefore the event was never held. If I could do it differently, I would have made the time to go ahead with the event.

SRC Member For Mature Students

Mel Turner and Ross Quinn

No report submitted.

SRC Member For Students With Disabilities

Fay Morrice

In my role as SRC Member for Students with Disabilities (MFD) my goals were to help sports teams incorporate those with disabilities into their training, to oversee and help with access requirements in the redevelopment of the union, to spread disabilities awareness week over more than the week and to forge better links between student services and accommodation services. Regretfully, I did not manage to make headway with the training for sports teams, though I do strongly believe that it should still happen, though I imagine it will take a long-term plan. I don't believe I was the main port of call for redevelopment issues (I think that all stayed at levels above my role). I managed to work with debates to have a Question Time event with some brilliant speakers. I would have liked to have done an event with Mermaids and an employability event but time got away from me. Student services and accommodation services also operated on a level above me and on a system which I couldn't influence though I did speak to them about it when I first entered my role. I am very pleased that an Inclusive Learning Policy draft got written so that there is a document which the new member can progress with the incoming DoRep. The ILP, if passed through, would set us more in line with universities such as Edinburgh. I am currently helping with the launch of a St Andrews Access Group.

SRC Member For University Accommodation

Anna Kennedy O'Brien

Being on the SRC has probably been the best thing that's happened to me this year, I know that's not really relevant to my report but I feel compelled in some way to put across how much I've enjoyed my role. Coming into the position as Member for University Accommodation I had several aims; I wanted to introduce some sort of hall training, reform the bursary system and make hall finances more transparent. I like to think that I went some way to achieving all of these; I devised and implemented a system of training for all members of halls' executive committee and helped encourage a universal form of accounting which if adopted by halls will make their finances clearer. On the bursary front I was not directly involved with the change in system, however the Association President managed to secure what I wanted, a bursary system while distributes subsidies across all residences. I've also managed to help with numerous events planned by the Accommodation committee as a whole, such as the very successful Flatmate Speed-Dating event and the Have Your Say evening where numerous different people gave their opinion on housing in St Andrews, although I regret not advertising this better to enable use to attract a larger audience. I feel I've implemented numerous things this year, and I hope my

successor will be able to continue and improve these, especially in terms of the finances of hall committees, an area which still needs a lot of work.

SRC Member For Widening Access

Ben Anderson

The university refuses to discuss any sort of '4 for 3' policy. Whilst I disagree with this, discussion with the admissions office showed the money is used for access projects and bursaries within the university. They are also doing a lot of work to help, not only SIMD20 students but also SIMD40 and 50 students with bursaries.

The main focus became making people aware of these bursaries and access projects. I have furthered links with the Principal Team and the Ambassadors, bringing a representative onto the SRC. I also changed the role to 'Access and Participation', a change that brings the job in line with other departments and groups within the university. Finally, I have worked to restart 'Beyond Fife' with the Principal Team after the university initially dropped it.

Although I was also told it would be too difficult to have students putting up prospective visitors in their halls, the university now operates a bursary system for all halls. Students from lower income backgrounds are now integrated into halls rather than being put into Albany or Fife Park.

There aren't many students who have direct experience with access and participation. My handover was difficult due to this, a lack of contacts and WAP group meetings not starting up again until November. I will continue to help the member with the beyond Fife project and introducing them to the Principal Team. This will hopefully allow the association and the university to build on the progress made this year.

SRC Wellbeing Officer

Avalon Borg

My main goal for the year was twofold. Firstly, goal one was to design and implement a campaign during revision week to aid students in maintaining their mental health. Goal two was to try to coordinate all mental health working groups to deliver events together therefore providing students with a better sense of what St Andrews could offer within this domain.

I was voted in to fulfil the role of Wellbeing Officer in October after the position was created by the SRC and voted in as a co-op position. My first project was the task of Raisin Weekend. In the past, the Students' Association has lacked in any informative campaigns or awareness packs in

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order to support students during Raisin Weekend, often with 'children' in the dark about what typically happens. The DoRep and Wellbeing Officer created separate Raisin Packs for children and parents. Each contained different and appropriate literature for the given roles. Explicit rules and regulations were included amongst fun food and drink tips in order to promote a safe Raisin Weekend. The kits, which were built by fellow SRC & SSC officers, included a pocket size pamphlet, raisins, face paint, and solo cups. Student Services funded all the costs. To my knowledge, this was the first time the SRC had supported students in some way during Raisin Weekend. I believe this was an excellent decision, especially after the University's stern message to students about Raisin Weekend potentially being pulled.

The rest of semester one included various Wellbeing Committee meetings that became a meeting place for all heads of mental health working groups to update each other on future events. Support was given to Student Minds to help promote their "Swap Shop" to help raise funds for their group. The beginnings of a "It's not you it's Scotland" campaign unfortunately never came into volition, however the foundation for this campaign is built as both I, and the DoRep, had compiled the literature. I was able to attend an NHS Mental Health First Aid course that was graciously funded by the AU that was a unique experience that I encourage any Wellbeing Officer to organise for any SRC position that potentially comes into contact with vulnerable students.

The majority of my time was spent working on branding for the role of Wellbeing Officer in the form of my #TakeCare campaign. With the help of Alice Herbison, a logo was created and a Facebook page was set up. The campaign's aim was to remind students to take care of both their mental and physical fitness during revision week. The emphasis was placed on the role of sleep, anxiety, and stress on learning and encoding information. In addition, various coping strategies were also included. These concepts were translated into poster designs. Unfortunately, there was a massive delay with the poster designs and therefore we could not reach the breadth we envisioned for this campaign. However, we were able to purchase a Mind Apples Tree and install it in the library for a short period of time.

I recommend that the next person who chooses to run for this role have plenty of energy. The foundations and tools have been built and provided. What is needed now is someone who has time (perhaps not a post grad student) and a basic understanding of students' wellbeing needs.

SSC Broadcasting Officer

Oscar Swedrup

A year of quality, community and creativity.

When I look back to my year as Broadcasting Officer for STAR I am extremely happy and proud of the amazing people I have worked with. When the new committee sat down at the end of semester 2 last year we asked ourselves what does STAR do well but what more importantly what needs improvement? It became clear that the great programming content on STAR was our most valued asset. However, we noticed that the quality of the broadcasting wasn't "100 per cent" even though we had just invested in a new expensive sound desk. We also realized that even though STAR is such a big society, too many students were still unaware of who we were, and those that knew us had an outdated impression of us. It became clear for us that we should aim for a broadcasting year of quality, community and creativity.

Quality.

Buying new expensive equipment is good, but you need to have the supporting software, and knowledge in order to use it properly. We therefore invested in:

- A new server to host our new shining website.
- Upgrade of the STAR player app.
- New microphones and headphones.
- Other equipment for a studio revamp.
- Proper equipment training for all presenters.

These investments have all helped our broadcasting to be done more smoothly and sound better!

Community.

It was interesting how such a big society like STAR could have so many members that were totally unaware of each other. We therefore tried to organize events in order to bring everyone together, in order to put a face on the fellow voices of STAR. Some of the events we organized where:

- A fresher's week house party for STAR members only.
- STAR lounge and live broadcasting from Starfields.
- STAR launch party at Rascals.
- STAR McDonalds Christmas dinner at the Brewery.
- 14h Rag Week Charity Broadcast.
- Mungo's Hifi gig.
- Encouraging STAR members to attend committee meetings.

Creativity.

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The creative profile of STAR in the community was outdated. We therefore decided to revamp the image of the station using "Gorilla Joe", our beloved mascot, in order to communicate this message. This has helped increase listenership by an almost 100 % this year, something we are extremely proud of. Some of the creative initiatives to make this happen were:

- Painting and re-decorating the studio.
- Designing a new website.
- Publishing three printed issues of our music magazine Hearing Aid.
- Videos, posters, sweaters, stickers and other promotional material.

It's easy to bullet point all of our achievements but the real effort lies in the daily commitment of the committee, and especially in the dedication of all of our fantastic presenters to broadcast amazing, exciting and creative shows 96 hours of the week.

I'm happy to say that the future of STAR has never looked brighter. This year's committee has established a strong foundation that next year's leadership can easily build upon. However, there remain issues concerning redevelopment, stronger news reporting and investment in outside broadcasting equipment that needs to be addressed by the new Broadcasting Officer. Whoever that person is, I am more than confident that he or she will do an amazing job.

SSC Charitable Development Convenor

Joe Tantillo

The Charitable Development Committee, now just two years old, has seen several big changes over the past year. The aims of the committee are quite simple; we are always looking to acquire grants from external charitable trusts for other union subcommittees so that we may act as a source of additional funding should it become necessary. This year I wanted to change the way that we worked with the heads of various subcommittees so that we could make the grant application process both easier and improve the overall quality of the applications and cover letters. In order to make this happen we used a strategy where either I or a member of my subcommittee would be assigned to work with a member of the subcommittee seeking a grant. My subcommittee and I would offer our knowledge of charity law, while the subcommittee seeking a grant could offer valuable insight into the complexities of why they were seeking money, and by combining our knowledge we were able to create very strong and professional grant applications. This practice became the standard strategy and the subcommittees that worked with us were pleased to be involved in the process and very happy that we helped them to understand what was happening step by step. We worked with several subcommittees this year giving them an opportunity to acquire additional funding including debates, mermaids, STAR and more. I'm proud to say we successfully helped acquire a £1000 grant for the On The Rocks team from the Fife Council which went directly toward their festival budget. The biggest

change from this year was the successful motion that passed both councils that changed the name of this position to the SSC External Funding Officer, and has made it an elected office in the coming elections. Despite a good growing year for the committee there are a couple of things that I would do differently. The first would be to promote the committee more, I believe that there is a significant portion of students who do not know of the service that the subcommittee provides. The second would have been to apply to even more trusts, while we did apply to a fair number I would say that you can always apply to more, and it will only increase the likelihood of receiving a grant. In looking to the future of this position, I would advise that the first person to hold this role as an elected officer needs to assure that they are taking an active role in the SSC and during joint council meetings as they now have voting rights. Additionally they need to continue to advertise the existence of the role especially following the name change, so that the student body can best utilize the services of the committee. By consistently crafting strong grant applications the future External Funding Officer will hopefully be able to build up strong relationships with charitable trusts that the association may benefit from for years to come.

SSC Charities Officer

George Parker

Being the Convenor of the Charities Campaign has been the best job in the world. We have had another successful year and are on track to raise an impressive amount for our three-nominated charities and many more beyond those.

Events

We've had some great events this year, including our Freshers' Week events and a jumble sale. We're due to hold a bungee jump and our Summer Fayre in the coming months. We're very excited to be bringing Big Top Ball back for a second time in April.

Race2 and Jailbreak

Our charity hitchhike was huge success for the campaign this year. Race2 Berlin sold out in just a few hours. Around 170 students raced across Europe in January to reach Berlin. The race went very smoothly, and the fundraising efforts of the racers has been very impressive. Race2 has raised £38,306.47 thus far, with money still coming in. We're looking forward to holding Jailbreak again over the Spring break.

RAG Week

Holding RAG Week in the middle of a building site did not stop it from being a wonderful 9 days of purple charitable fun! We worked alongside the brilliant Ents Crew to put on a variety of events

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from the classic Disney Bop to a sleek CATWALK. The Fine Food Fayre was once again an amazing event; hosted alongside The Fine Food and Dining Society, it was a huge town and gown success. We were glad to receive so much support from the other subcommittees, and really enjoyed the most original RAG week event ever - dRAGWALK. We're still counting the money but it is set to be a huge amount. We are very grateful to the RAG Week exclusive sponsor, KPMG, for their support.

Charities Restructuring and Reforms

- In the past year, the Charities Campaign has undergone a substantial restructuring.
- After reducing the number of charities we support from 6 to 3, we have been able to broaden our fundraising activities to support a wider variety of charities that student are passionate about.
- We have successfully worked alongside charitable societies to provide funding for their events.
- Our executive committee expanded with three new positions; all of these have been working well, and the committee has managed to remain cohesive.

Overall, it has been a wonderful year for the Charities Campaign. The activities listed in this report are merely a fraction of what our group of student volunteers have managed to achieve. I am unbelievably proud of the effort, dedication and enthusiasm that all involved have shown.

For all those involved next year I wish you the best of luck - you're all going to be amazing. Enjoy yourselves! #chazza4lyf

SSC Debates Officer

Will Lord

My Aims

I had a number of goals upon becoming Convenor of the Union Debating Society. Most notable of these were holding a number of excellent public debates with top-flight speakers in Lower Parliament Hall, maintaining our world-leading reputation in competitive debating, securing the sponsorship deal initiated by the last Convenor and expanding our schools volunteering work in the state sector.

Activity

All in all being Convenor has been a very demanding, but often extremely rewarding role. Public debates have seen some real successes: in both our Austerity and Constitution debates we were able to put on two fascinating events with prestigious guest speakers such as Lord Robin Butler and Sir David Edward, and our Valentine's Day debate was terrific. Competitively, St Andrews teams won the famous Cambridge IV, the Scottish Novices and broke to the Semi-Finals of the World Championships. We have expanded our state school volunteering, held a superb Schools Competition (although that is entirely due to the great work of our Schools Secretary Clare Armstrong), and I was able to both close the deal on £2500 of sponsorship from Accenture and acquire extra funding from the Students' Activities Fund.

What Would I Do Differently?

Although we have had many triumphs, there are certain things I wish in hindsight I had approached differently. I would have prepared public debates even further in advance, as there have been a few too many rushed, last-minute organisations of debates that should not have happened. I also would have put in place a more formal mechanism for cooperation with student societies. It is great that so many want to do joint events, but we had a few problems this year with miscommunication, especially over the subject of financial contributions from societies. Importantly, I would have tried to consult more widely on the setting of the budget. There was not a lot in the way of information from last year to go by, but I wish I had made more of an effort to find it. We have had a few financial difficulties this year, mostly caused by public debates being much more expensive than we anticipated. I will make sure my successor is given much more in the way of preparation for the year ahead, to avoid making the same mistakes.

Looking Ahead

Overall, I am very confident about the future of the Union Debating Society. We have some truly committed individuals who will be taking the reins once the 'old hacks' like myself have left. In the next year, the society will need a President who will work hard and devote a substantial amount of their time to the task at hand. I also cannot stress enough the importance of a strong Board of Ten, particularly the roles of Internal Secretary, Chief Whip and Treasurer. Whoever is Convenor next will need experienced and ambitious people to fill these positions if they want to do a good job. But to conclude: it's onwards and upwards for the oldest and finest!

SSC Design & PR Team Convenor

Stephanie Ekanayaka

After spending the previous academic year attempting to rebuild and reinvent the Design Team, the committee decided to widen the Design Team's reach to include activities for those who

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wanted to learn and expand their skillset. Following Daniel's idea, we also expanded the Convener's remit to include a new team dedicated to providing creative marketing and advertising for Union events. As such, the PR Team was created and introduced as a pilot and established in the Constitution for future Design & PR Conveners to improve and mold to fit our evolving marketing needs as the Union continues through its redevelopment.

In terms of specific achievements, the Design Team has:

- Put on regular and diverse free workshops (including film screenings) both semesters
- Expanded the weekly Photoshop Classes
- Completed at least 20 projects in Semester 1
- Improved our communication with Designers and Clients
- Developed a standardized project system detailed on our website
- Began developing a Stock Photography Database
- Adopted Adobe's Creative Cloud Suite, and will be purchasing tablet hardware
- Will be introducing a rewards system for Designers

With an impressively dedicated and creative committee, the Design Team has been able to grow in terms of regular designers and workshop attendees. As Convener, I would have hoped to improve our communication both to our clients and to the student body in general. I am acutely aware that our services and our existence in general still is unknown to a large portion of the student body. However, I hope that my work, and that of the outgoing committee, has served to breathe new life and purpose to the Design Team. We are still a work in progress but I believe that future Conveners can use our foundation to create a purposeful and diverse Design Team. I look forward to see how the Design Team and currently budding PR Team will transform to suit our students' needs.

SSC Entertainments Convenor

Fiona Woodhall

Ents Crew is a special sub-committee of the Student's Association. When describing the Crew to people who've never heard of us I always begin by saying we are a close knit family. We have no budget, we appoint our entire committee and whilst some sub-committees have hundreds of members, our entire crew is smaller than some of their committees alone. We rely on the dedication of around 10 volunteers and a handful of DJs to provide in excess of 120 events to students throughout the year. Working directly with various departments within the Union, we provide an essential service that underpins every event.

Freshers' Week is our favourite time of year. After spending the summer planning with Daniel we get to present nine days of fantastic events to new students, showing them the best of what the

Union has to offer. As the unseen backstage crew it can sometimes be hard to explain exactly what the Ents Crew does as we are often the first to arrive in the venue and the last to leave. It doesn't leave much time in Freshers' for the usual Meet-and-Greets so building on lessons from last year, we introduced two Access All Areas sessions to our schedule to let new, and old, students see first-hand how we bring events to life. These served as opportunities to recruit new Ents but also educate students on who we are and I'm happy to say some members of the current Crew started out from one of the AAA sessions.

Strangely, whilst Freshers' is the big start to the year it's not our busiest time. Refreshers' and RAG Week this year provided 15 consecutive days of 18 events, plus lectures! – which required careful planning so the first event felt as fresh as the last, always a challenge when RAG Week finishes with the complexities of Catwalk. We enjoy working with Charities to realise their novel takes on classic events and this year I started planning early on, holding meetings with event heads as early as October. Most of the planning for RAG Week was in place before the semester started helping identify the busiest nights and relieving the stress of such an intense period. When the final walk for Catwalk ended it dawned upon me that the marathon of Refreshers' and RAG Week is unlikely to return in such splendour after the redevelopment however I am sure that the reincarnation of RAG Week will always be able to depend on the support of the Ents Crew.

The variety of events on offer during those 2 weeks was astounding, from Laser Tag to Disney Bop and from ceilidhs to Catwalk. However that variety of events has been observed throughout the year thanks to the hard work and imagination of Daniel. The introduction of Rewind featuring S Club during Freshers' Week was a huge success which continued throughout the year for the monthly cheese night. Favourites like the Rolla and Silent Disco are popular with students, but importantly give Ents some variation from the usual dance night. As we are currently entering play season, with On the Rocks just round the corner, it's hard to forget the adaptability of Venue 1, from being able to entertain students for a play on Thursday before transforming for the Bop on Friday. In the venue's last semesters, directors have begun to use the space in ever more interesting ways with several plays this year not even using the stage.

Publicity is an area that needs resolving next year. Whilst the Ents Crew are able to provide events throughout the year it has been observed that compared to previous years attendance has been low which in turn lowers crew morale. Whilst certain events out-perform themselves, I feel the redevelopment has caused an overall reduction in attendance which could solely be due to the external appearance of the Union. With the opening of the new bars for Freshers' Week I hope this alleviates some of the issue however the Union needs to invest more in publicising events and perhaps the Crew should plan further in advance to facilitate this.

This year the Ents Crew invested in state-of-the-art DJ decks and radio microphones ready for Freshers' Week. Not only was it exciting to have new "toys" but in the long run the investment

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will save the Union equipment hire costs whilst letting our volunteers use the same standard of equipment as professionals. I strongly believe that during the redevelopment the Union should aim to work with the Ents Crew to modernise its sound engineering facilities as this is still an area where hires are common. The Ents Crew has already begun to work towards improving this aspect of events by planning a sound engineering training course for later this semester. We've developed new training methods this year to give every Ent a basic understanding of all aspects and training should continue to be an area that the Crew improves upon to relieve pressure on the more experienced volunteers.

The continuation of the redevelopment will provide the Ents Crew with new challenges in the year to come, including the loss of our Ents Cupboard, our home. Knowing our family I am certain they will adapt and continue to provide students with events to enjoy throughout the year. I'm incredibly proud to lead such an inspiring group of students and am humbled by their dedication and loyalty to the Union and each other.

SSC Member for Societies Elections

Robert Dixon

This last year has seen some profound changes to the relationship between Societies and the Association, and it has been a privilege to be part of the process bringing these changes about. In previous years, the Societies Committee's requirements have been extensive and poorly communicated, and were often not adhered to. We have made a significant effort over the last year to strip down the rules to the bare minimum, and make sure Societies understand what is needed through training and regular contact in the form of Societies Clinics.

In the spirit of reconciling Society practices with Association policy, I have, throughout the year, reviewed the constitution of every Affiliated Society and made known any breaches to our requirements. It is my expectation and hope that by the end of this academic year, every society will have amended their constitution accordingly. I also feel that the Societies Clinics have created more of an advisory image for the Societies Committee than it previously had, enabling us to help Societies maintain a much more functional relationship with the Association than previously existed.

Along with one-to-one advice at clinics, I have endeavoured to make sure Societies understand General Meetings by producing a General Meeting Guide explaining how to run them. From my experience of the past two years, I have come to discover that simple policy and lots of communication is the most effective way for us to help Societies, and I would urge the next Societies Committee to continue with this ethos.

SSC Member for Societies Grants

Emily Dick

The Societies Committee had undergone much reform this year and this has altered the grants process for the better. The introduction of the Societies Clinic has allowed us to aid societies much more with their applications than previously was the case. It has encouraged many more societies to apply for funding, and made the application process much friendlier. We have also improved the accountability of the grant considerations process, providing the exact reasoning behind each decision formally when informing societies of the result of their grant. Finally we have introduced further protection measures for societies allowing them to keep money in strategic reserves, yet still be eligible for grants, this not only allows higher protection for each society but has allowed more societies to benefit from grants than in previous years.

This year we have funded a wide range of events and activities, we have helped many societies to purchase much needed equipment, helped to subsidise some fantastic trips both locally and internationally, assisted societies to compete on a national stage and supported societies in running events both locally and on a larger scale.

We have awarded over £15,000 to support these activities, and almost 70% of all finances applied for have been awarded. This demonstrates that not only have we succeeded in supporting the majority of activities and events but this figure also represents the high quality and merit of the applications we have received, something that I believe has very much been a result of the new support in place for societies.

Working in this role has really shown me the wide array of high caliber events and activities our societies achieve, it is something we should all be proud of and I hope that we can continue to support successfully in future years.

SSC Member Without Portfolio

Keith Cordrey

12 months ago I spoke of a prophecy in which an ancient man would return when a worthy member without portfolio appeared. The ancient man would return on a pure white horse with a portfolio of the utmost importance and made of fine Italian leather at a time when the Association was most in need. I believed I could be that member without portfolio to fulfil the ancient prophecy.

But apparently I'm not, 'cause he never showed up.

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So instead I read some minutes and wrote some tweets.

SSC Music Officer

Anna Merryfield

I would describe Music is Love as a growing collective of students who are passionate about creating a successful music culture within St Andrews. Of course we are affiliated with the union and benefit greatly from their support and structure; however it has always been said that Music is Love feels more like a group of friends than a sub-committee. We seek to incorporate both local talent and professional acts from further afield to create a sustainable and successful music culture in St Andrews. This year one of my main aims was to really make the most of our budget, booking bigger acts and keeping ticket prices low as well as investing in free showcases and more generally in St Andrews' talent. On top of this I was determined to bring some diversity to the kind of acts Music is Love brought to St Andrews and to ensure that our events echoed the music interests of our student populous. In this vein we have had gigs ranging from electronic music with visual animations, strobe lights and smoke machines, to our standard angry, disenchanted Scottish indie folk, to reggae and dub and even a massive church hall Christmas party with King Creosote and copious amounts of mulled wine. We have mixed student acts and DJs with professional acts to allow students the opportunity to play professional gigs and support big names. Additionally we have held regular open mics, have released student mixtapes for RAG week, held weekly jamming events and have hosted musicians' speed dating to bring together St Andrews' aspiring bands. We have collaborated with many different societies throughout the year such as Art Soc, St.Art, Afro-Caribbean soc, The Stand and STAR. There has been a lot to learn from this year and obviously there are things which could have gone a bit more smoothly, but generally I wouldn't change a thing. For the coming years it wouldn't be a bad idea to give more structure to the committee positions so that people are able to take on more responsibility and have a better idea of their role. However, it has been great seeing everyone pull together again and again for each event and I hope that in future years Music is Love is able to maintain its friendly atmosphere while continuing to put on a diverse range of events.

SSC Performing Arts Officer

David Patterson

My Aims for the Year

Broadly speaking I had four aims: to guarantee being able to produce the same number of shows as we had last year despite the redevelopment; to ensure that shows had adequate spaces to

rehearse and perform; to introduce a loyalty card; to improve the visibility, professionalism and transparency of the committee.

Summary of the Year

Over all we have reached and in many places improved upon the aims we set. By the end of the year we will have produced 30 shows, which exceeds last years number. We have managed to off set the challenges posed by the redevelopment thanks largely to the support of the Productions Co-ordinator, the Barron Manager and the General Office. Everyone seemed satisfied with the use of space.

We introduced our loyalty card this semester: see three shows get a fourth Barron show free. This replaced the old Mermaids Unlimited card and works on an easier financial model.

Mermaids Socials have been regular and very well attended. The full committee has been present and accessible, always on hand to help with any problems. We budgeted for free wine at each event and miraculously still have some left over for the AGM. Moreover, Mermaids Christmas Ball was a roaring, sell-out success and our Ball Convener out-done herself.

In addition we introduced a new 'Public Meeting' in advance of our regular weekly committee meeting. This is open to everyone and all the production teams and full committee are present. It allowed the committee to interact with each team, address issues and find areas where collaboration was necessary more smoothly. It also allowed us as a committee to pass information to the various shows and to solicit feedback on an issues or new ideas.

To further improve visibility and transparency we published summaries of all our *in camera* meetings, and of course continued to publish our minutes where appropriate. Our Secretary revamped the *Mermail* to make it more intuitive and informative and this has been well received.

We launched a new website, created by our Press and PR Officer, it's slick and easily updated and allows us to promote our many upcoming shows. At the start of the year we changed the old Facebook group to a Facebook Page, a more centralized and efficient way of disseminating information. (We also have an Instagram and a Twitter account.) And with the dedicated work of our marketing officer we have a beautiful new look that is continuous across all our publicity.

We introduced the Fringe Representative to improve and professionalize the Fringe Application process and this has been a great success.

Finally, we are looking forward to our revived SAND Festival (St Andrew New Drama) and our first ever awards evening – The Golden Seashells.

Looking Ahead

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The smooth running of Mermaids is dependent on a good, strong committee. Everything we've achieved has been the result of teamwork and commitment to improving Mermaids for our fellow Students. Mermaids should remain focused on professional, fair, and accessible performing Arts. It's the next president's job to ensure that Mermaids works practically and pragmatically. I wish them all the best.

SSC Societies Officer

Courtney Lewis

I started my role as Societies Officer with a simple approach – societies first. Starting with a colossal overhaul of the rules and regulations that bind societies, the Societies Committee stripped the red tape from required society governance to give societies the freedom to operate in a way that best fits them. To facilitate that process, the Societies Committee has taken vast strides to clarify information, improve communication, expand services, and look to the future.

Societies have long been confused about the requirements the Societies Committee imposed on them. Alongside deregulation, the Societies Committee clarified the exact relationship between societies and the Students' Association through the Affiliation Agreement, signed by every affiliated society. New societies now have access to both the New Society Request Form and Affiliation Paperwork that gives step-by-step instructions on how to affiliate, both of which were created this year. The grant request form has been amended for greater clarity and an easier-to-use format, including allowing for more money if a society meets various merit criteria. This year also introduced Grant Motion Forms, allowing societies to see the exact reasoning behind decisions made by the Committee in awarding money to societies.

All of this information was communicated to societies through a variety of mediums. To start, society presidents and treasurers were trained at the start of the academic year and every form was explained. This year also resurrected the Societies Handbook which gave simple and easy explanations of society business, as well as the creation of an Elections and Constitution guide. All forms and guides have been uploaded to the Union website, giving everyone access to essential resources. Societies receive periodic updates on the Societies Committee's business, as well as any useful reminders or dates to note. Updates are also communicated through the President's Forum on Facebook, which is helpful for last-minute updates or emergency changes. The Committee also hosts a weekly Societies Clinic to assist societies with grants, constitutions, conduct training, and offer advice and support.

In looking at the needs of societies, the Committee has brought two new positions onto the Committee – the Publicity Officer and Charitable Societies Coordinator. When asked by societies, our Publicity Officer has been promoting society events via the Societies Committee's social media platforms and puts events on the Union calendar. Our Charitable Societies Coordinator

handles grant requests of charitable societies, allowing for a member with specific knowledge about charities to address such needs. The Committee has also expanded to offer arbitration for societies to settle disputes as well as built a new portal for society administration.

Looking to the future, I believe the changes made by the Committee will only lead to a more functional and helpful Societies Committee. With 136 currently affiliated societies we've managed to have incredible society turnout for Fayres, get better feedback from presidents on how to improve, and give out larger grants. I can only look to my fiercely dedicated Committee with endless gratitude, admiration, and pride in making this year a monumental success.

SSC Volunteering Officer

Fay Holland

The SVS has had a positive year, with over 250 regular volunteers working on 44 different projects in the local community. We have developed new partnerships with: Equal Approach (Mentoring for Success Programme), Cambo Estate, the Bums Off Seats initiative, St. Andrews British Red Cross Group, and Teddy Bear Hospital St. Andrews. We have also launched our Town and Gown Befriending Scheme, which continues to expand, and continued to promote the Saltire Award to student volunteers.

As in previous years, the majority of our projects were over-subscribed during the initial fresher's week recruitment period and we have had good levels of interest throughout the year. We have tried to make volunteering accessible by advertising new opportunities widely, ensuring that we communicate effectively with the wider student body, and marking Student Volunteering Week for the first time in St. Andrews. Committee members are currently working on changes to the website and promotional materials as this is definitely an area that we can improve on in future.

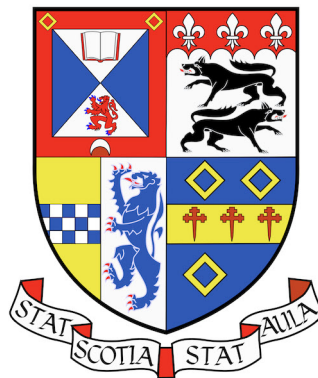
Improving the way we communicate with and gather feedback from volunteers was one of my main aims this year. Due to the large number of projects SVS volunteers work on, many do not have frequent direct contact with the committee and as a result it can be difficult to get an accurate sense of individuals' experiences. At the end of last year I organised a survey which produced constructive feedback on training, levels of support, and reasons for volunteering. We have continued holding weekly office hours which has allowed us to find out about problems that occur and deal with them quickly. This spring we plan to build on this by running focus groups from each project area.

This year has seen the expansion of our schools and befriending volunteering. We now have 14 volunteers helping as tutors or classroom assistants in the Learning Support Department of Madras College and have sent volunteers to Lawhead Primary School for the first time. There is

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always high levels of interest in schools-based volunteering as it provides valuable work experience and the assistance is appreciated by staff and pupils. We launched the Town and Gown Befriending Scheme in September, taking referrals from local GPs and care homes. Although we have run on our own befriending partnerships in the past, this has allowed us to increase the number of partnerships and work with external organisations. Its success is testament to the hard work of my predecessor and our Befriending Officers and I hope that it will continue to expand and provide a beneficial service for the community in the next academic year and beyond.

Next year, I recommend increasing the training for committee members to allow them to better support volunteers throughout their involvement with SVS, beyond the recruitment period when they receive a lot of contact. Improvements to the website and mailing list will allow much better communication with volunteers and I would suggest reviewing our Volunteer Handbook to make it a more helpful and usable resource.



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