

University of St Andrews Students' Association Annual General Meeting: Reports from Officers

Sunday 22 February 2015, 7pm, Rehearsal Room

Chair of the Students' Association Board: Chris Marks

The University of St Andrews Students' Association brings together the very best of the old and the new. We represent and provide an essential voice for our diverse student body. We are the foundation of the St Andrews student experience - through numerous societies and subcommittees. All whilst our premises and facilities undergo a cutting-edge redevelopment.

This year has been yet another success, with the Association once again even further enhancing the St Andrews community with its focus on diversity, representation and creativity.

We're proud that this is all achieved through a '**student led and student run**' philosophy of democratic engagement, which permeates to the very core of our constitution. Our outstanding accomplishments are only achieved through the ambition, hard work, and flair of our amazing students who volunteer their time and abilities to plan, organise and work towards an even better Association and St Andrews.

Looking forward, I have no doubt that there will be challenges as we work towards our future goals. Yet we can be confident that with the foundation already in place and through the remarkable talents of our student community we can look forward to even greater things to come.

SABBATICALS

Association President: Pat Mathewson

As within any sabbatical's tenure, the first 8 months of our term has presented a unique set of challenges for the Association. Redevelopment, a shifting local accommodation climate, reforms to the Scottish HE sector, amongst others have the prospect to provoke fundamental change at the core of our organization. Navigating this challenging terrain and the accomplishments we have made therein would not have been possible without the support of my fellow sabbaticals, who in addition to their outstanding talents have grown to become close friends. It must also be mentioned that the true engine of the Association often goes unrecognized, the permanent staff and student volunteers that frequently go above and beyond the call of duty to enhance the student experience.

My central focus this year has been to pursue solutions that are tangible and add value to the student experience. I would like to draw special attention to progress in the following areas:

- Successfully negotiated an increase in the Association's block grant, an enhancement of approximately £70,000.
- Launch of the 7 day a week, year round University Bus Service (Nightbus).
- Successfully negotiated a £450,000 pound increase in accommodation bursaries over the next two years.

- Approval for an employability advisor program, with a pilot due to launch this upcoming spring. This program will aim to provide continuous support for a student's career aspirations from the beginning of their time in St Andrews.
- Successful advocacy for new university housing, as the University is now reviewing several business cases for further accommodation expansion in the coming 2-3 years.
- Launch of a student-centric alumni effort, which will be culminating in a student-led alumni reunion weekend this upcoming April. And with this effort has come the closet partnership between the SA and the AU in years.
- Successful prevention of the withdrawal of support for Raisin Weekend, by offering more robust partnership to the University in terms of discipline and welfare.
- Promoted good practice in the private housing market via our Landlord Tenant Charter, and holding those who deviated from good practice to account by removing them from the charter.
- Promoting close partnership with Student Union's beyond the bubble, particularly in Glasgow with the GUSRC. This has been undertaken with the aim of achieving a more permanent forum for us with other Scottish Sabbaticals, particularly those outwith the NUS.

Looking Forward

Moving into the second half of my current term, I still firmly believe that the Association should aspire to tackle ambitious projects for itself and the university at large.

There remains a significant opportunity to address the operational strategy of the Association, with particular attention to how we utilize our new building to its fullest extent.

Finally, it is my hope that towards the end of my term, with a year's experience under my belt I will be well situated to address some of the more deep-seeded and long term hurdles in terms of the transparency, efficiency, and governance of the Association. These first 8 months have been an experience like no other and I look forward to what we will accomplish in the near future.

Director of Events and Services: Leon O'Rourke

Freshers' Week 2014

This Freshers' Week saw one of its busiest line-ups with 10 events ranging from the Ceilidh and A Cappella concerts to one of the country's top comedians Jon Richardson, and Hot Dub Time Machine.

The introduction of a Golden Ticket that allowed access to the 5 big dance nights was a welcome replacement for the Freshers' Pass which resulted in underselling and logistical problem in previous years. The allocation of 500 Golden Tickets sold out in an 11 hour and 24 minute period. This quick sell-out can be attributed to higher quality acts than in previous years and also a promotional strategy that saw each act announced on a day by day basis with big posters and videos of acts on online media.

The rest of the individual tickets then sold out all online allocations other than that of the A cappella concerts, and one or two other nights. These then sold out during in person ticket sales on the Saturday of Freshers'. Our only issue here was that the level of demand meant a number of students were left disappointed.

Every event was very well attended and well received so it is my opinion that we can look at this Freshers' Week as being one of the best for levels of student satisfaction.

One issue that we should re-examine is the contentious issue of the introduction of a £2 door charge after 11pm. This was initially introduced through the advice of senior management and was accepted by the Sabbatical Officers as an incentive to bring people into the building earlier.

On a purely commercial basis, based on ticket sales, this was by a large margin the most commercially successful Freshers' Week of all time. With sell outs of all high risk events, the introduction of the Golden Ticket, and impressive resell numbers, we exceeded predictions by a large number. Spend on acts and other expected expenses was significantly higher than in previous years but with ticket sales reaching very large numbers, the result was a profit of over £34,000 which exceeds the previous record takings by over £5,000.

Overall this has been a very successful Freshers' Week.

Bar Entertainments

This year we introduced a number of new free bar entertainment options which have been for the most part, very successful.

Every Sunday we have had a pub quiz hosted by Kyle Blain who has maintained high numbers and a high quality quiz every week. While promising a prize of £100 every week we have been paying out this money through the entertainment budget; bar takings on a Sunday night have been reasonable and show a marked increase.

Friday nights have been the greatest success with the introduction of Karaoke with the newly formed Karaoke Society. These nights have had Sandy's Bar regularly packed to capacity with students expressly looking to attend the event. The initial plan was to make these a fortnightly occasion but have since been made weekly due to high demand.

Music is Love were given a weekly open mic night on Mondays from 8pm which has had varying levels of attendance. We are going to look into a change of day/time and also an increased level of advertisement to try and raise levels of attendance for second semester.

Finally, as far as bar entertainment is concerned we introduced DJs into the main bar on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays but have reduced this to just Fridays and Saturdays due to lack of numbers on Thursdays. These have been mostly successful with the makeshift dance floor filling up on these nights.

This semester also saw our continued work with the Coffee House Sessions, a live music tour devised by Coalition Talent. This tour allows newly signed and up and coming musicians to visit various university campuses and play a live set to their students. I was able to organise to be the final stop on each acts tour and have the sessions at 5.30pm every Friday. This timing and consistency has been a huge improvement on the sporadic and poorly timed options we were given previously. Further to this, the location switch to Rector's Café has been very advantageous to the smooth running of the events and has resulted in a number of acts giving us the accolade of favourite Venue on the tour. There will be more sessions to come in second semester and hopefully we can continue this success.

Venue 1 Entertainment

This year I tried to combat the declining numbers we have been seeing on Friday nights by rebranding what some saw to be an outdated and 'uncool' brand – namely "the bop". Starting this branding process in Freshers' Week we went with "Fridays @ The Union", intending "Fridays" to be its more commonly used moniker.

Even through the rebranding, we found numbers, while an increase on the previous year, were not sustainable. Students were either not out in numbers or preferred the space in our Main Bar and Sandy's Bar to the now outdated Venue 1.

Another somewhat failed attempt was that of bringing in an external promoter in the shape of Circus Saturdays. While external promoters work in every other union and club in the country, ours struggled to get off the ground through no fault of the company themselves. Their PR strategies were sound, tried and tested methods but numbers still fell flat of what was required to keep them going.

Owing to the nature of the external promoter arrangement, we lost no investment in the project and in fact made money on bars for little to no work on our part. Our counterpart at Circus Saturdays, however, lost much of his initial investment and so we mutually terminated our contract with them to allow for future collaboration if we find the right project for both parties arises.

Filling Venue 1, even at half capacity has been an issue for not only us but various user groups. This year the Students' Association has been sponsoring three sports teams; Women's Football, Women's Rugby, and Netball. Each was offered the chance to hold fundraisers in our Venue and did their own promotion. Only Netball sold out its half capacity Venue with Football and Rugby only achieving just under half of this 500 capacity Venue.

User Group Projects

One of the main points of my manifesto was to allow more students user groups to create their own events and this was something I looked to achieve this year to mixed results. A large number of students came forward with event ideas and we tried to accommodate as many as possible, but it must be noted that this put unnecessary strain on our volunteer Ents crew who performed over and above the call of duty on countless occasions.

The major pitfall of this semester, which will be reflected in my entertainments budget for the year, will be the user group event FFALL. This was an event taken forward initially by two students who then formed a committee with the aspiration of forming a student music and arts festival. The idea, while an extremely interesting and doubtless admirable concept, was altogether badly put into action by both the user group and Students' Association. It is as a result of this that I have started writing an 'Event planning guide' to be used by user groups with as much information as I can provide for as many different types of events. This, I hope, will provide groups with all necessary information to avoid the problems faced in this particular project; a full write up of this event will be available soon after this report is made available to all.

Sinners Sports

Yet again, as has been proven in the last few years, the event known as Sinners Sport, organised by the Athletic Union, has been our best attended outside of the Freshers' Week program. These monthly events are better attended and provide more commercial revenue than any other events held in normal term time.

The final Sinners of the semester and the final in Venue 1 plays host to the Vengaboys, who were booked at the request of the AU. Ticket prices were increased to accommodate extra spending on act fee and flight costs. At the time of writing, ticket sales are going steady and we predict a complete sell out which will cover all cost as well as providing the AU with £1 per ticket sold and have a contingency profit margin.

Refreshers Week

With the loss of Venue 1 we faced an interesting dilemma on how to provide suitable entertainment to constitute an exciting Refreshers' in our limited entertainment spaces.

Bearing this in mind we moved towards introducing as many society and user group driven events such as "Bubble Bath: The Comedy Panel Show", as well as trying to change the way we view spaces such as the Main Bar. On this note, I spent some time booking in some live entertainment such as live local bands including the ever popular Black Sheep Music Society and tried to introduce new DJ and dance nights with new branding for the semester.

In order to offset the cost of this live entertainment and without a Venue to use as a ticket point we decided to put a £2 charge on the bottom floor after 11pm which allowed for free entry if people came in early and was justified by the entertainment provided for this cost. If people did not want to pay this nominal fee I left Beacon Bar as an entrance fee free location.

Remainder of Term In Office

For the remaining time that I shall hold the office of Director of Events and Services, I shall be focussing on a few main areas: The first of which is continuing to provide a roster of entertainment for students within our bars and spaces for the rest of the semester. My second focus, and possibly the most time consuming one, will be the planning of **Graduation and Summer Ball 2015**. At the time of writing we have made progress in some of the early stages of planning but still have much to accomplish over the next few months. I hope that this will be the send-off our graduating class deserve after a long second semester; a feeling I am only too aware of. The third area of focus will be simply the administrative upkeep of our commercial areas; helping user group events, finishing my event guide for future reference and helping with elections and HLMS. I hope that my term in office will be viewed as a success and that I have opened the channels necessary to keep us moving in the right direction.

Director of Representation: Ondrej Hajda

Education

My big focus this year has been on **study spaces**. We have managed to negotiate an increase in the opening hours for the Main Library, which is now open 8-2am every day during term-time. I said I would look into opening up alternative study spaces that would be laptop-friendly and fit students' needs. A new **Gateway Study Centre** opened at the beginning of Semester 2 and we will also be campaigning for opening up the **JF Allen Library** in North Haugh on weekends. The University also provisionally agreed (pending further approval of designs and budget) to increase the number of seats in the **Main Library** by 200-300 extra study spaces. We have also put together a list and map of alternative study spaces on yourunion.net/studyspaces.

I invested a lot of time into supporting and developing the **student academic representation** on both the undergraduate and postgraduate level. I have reviewed the **School Presidents** role with the aim to make our 21 School Presidents even better equipped to represent you. The beginning of Semester 1 saw the most interest in Class Rep Elections ever as we have elected 340 Class Reps and received over 4,000 votes in the election (nearly doubling the turnout from 2013-14). Similarly, I have initiated a review of the **Class Representative** role to ensure more effective and consistent academic representation across all levels. I have worked closely with our two **Faculty Presidents** on promoting academic representation in interdisciplinary modules and Study Abroad.

Together with Student Services, I have also initiated a discussion about introducing an **Accessible Learning Policy** for the University and we are bringing a draft proposal to the University Learning & Teaching Committee in April.

In Semester 2, I would like to focus my attention on **student engagement with quality enhancement** and to ensure that all students, not just the elected representatives, have the chance to participate in enhancing our learning and teaching experience.

Last but not least, we have secured the money to recruit a new support staff member in the Students' Association. The **Education & Representation Coordinator** shall alleviate some of the time pressures on the Director of Representation by taking the lead with supporting our academic representatives and ensuring that accumulated knowledge does not get lost each year with a new sabbatical team.

Wellbeing

A part of my wellbeing strategy was increased training in mental health issues and 19 Students' Association officers now have the **Scotland's Mental Health First Aid** certificate. This year, we have increased the Students' Association wellbeing budget five times in comparison to 2013-14, which allowed

me to work with the expanded **Wellbeing Committee** on several projects, including the **Sexual Health Awareness & Guidance (SHAG) Week**, **Raisin** campaign, **exam support** page, **Healthy Body Healthy Mind** award (together with the Athletic Union), and the newly established **healthy lifestyle group** that launched the **smoking survey** and succeeded in lobbying the University for introducing **alcohol-free accommodation**.

I have launched publicity for the **John Honey Award**, which is the most prestigious award given out by the Students' Association in recognition of an outstanding and exceptional contribution to student welfare.

Equal Opportunities

One of my big election priorities was the idea of launching a **women in leadership scheme** and encourage more diverse candidates to stand in the Students' Association Elections 2015. I was distracted by other projects and I consider the lack of initiative on my part in this area to be one of my biggest failures.

I have been helping the Equal Opportunities Committee members to put together some events but I hope that I will have more time in Semester 2 to start working on this election promise. I am also working with the University on their equality and diversity projects and introduced student representation to different University committees that deal with equality and diversity issues.

Democracy

From my predecessor, I have inherited the task to introduce an SRC reform that would make the Students' Representative Council more effective. Some changes to the structure of the SRC were approved in February but I believe that a close monitoring of the changes and a further reform will be needed.

Over the summer, I have initiated contact with GUSRC in Glasgow, DUSA in Dundee, and EUSA in Edinburgh. They have all been a very good contact to have and I have aimed to pair up our SRC officers with their counterparts in Glasgow. While both sabb teams were very keen on the project, we have received only a limited interest from our SRC members.

I was the chair of the Student Election Committee for the **2014 Rectorial Election**. Despite our efforts, there was only one valid candidate and Catherine Stihler was therefore duly appointed as the 52nd Rector of the University without voting. As the Senior Elections Officer, I am currently responsible for organising the **Students' Association Elections 2015** together with the rest of the Elections Committee.

Last but not least, I have promised that I will focus on the ensuring sufficient information, a proper handover and training for all our elected officers. I have created **role descriptions for all our elected officers** and am currently planning the handover process for new SRC members and School Presidents that will be elected in March.

Your Union

One of my flagship policies was an introduction of a **volunteer recognition scheme** for the great numbers of students who spend their time volunteering for the Students' Association. The project has taken longer than expected but Fay, Sarah and I are almost ready to launch the the volunteering portal on a pilot basis.

From the beginning of my term, I have also aimed to regularly **update the Students' Association website** and make it a place where student can find useful information. I have made sure that all SRC officers, SSC subcommittees, and School Presidents have a profile on our website and that students can also find who their academic rep is in our Class Rep directory.

Director of Student Development & Activities: Fay Morrice

The Book – I took a lead on design and content coordination and worked with the Design and Marketing Officer and the other sabbaticals to create the 2014/15 Book. We had intended to decrease the written content but were unsuccessful. We added more graphics to try and make it more user-friendly and break up the text-walls.

Orientation/Freshers' Guide – compiled all society events and liaised with Student Services to ensure 52 A4 pages of society events got advertised through the guide. Due to redevelopment related space issues there were a lot of last minute society edits which sadly couldn't all be changed in time for the print deadline.

Freshers' Fayre – due to space restrictions all societies had to share tables which worked well enough. We crammed in as many groups as possible but cut down on non-affiliated societies and externals. The Fayre ran from 10am – 4pm and was incredibly busy throughout due to the small space. Next year the entire building will be complete by Freshers' Week so there will be no space issues and corporate externals and non-affiliates will be able to increase again.

Redevelopment Fund – at the start of the year we set aside a pot of money purely for affiliated societies who were displaced because of redev. Over half the amount has gone this semester and with the top two floors almost ready, I predict that the money will go to larger venues next semester with the loss of Venue 1. This pot of money has been untouched since last semester so I will re-advertise its existence to both subcommittees and societies.

Affiliating societies – the majority of societies completed training and paperwork by the deadline of October 10th. We are continuing to chase up the outstanding societies.

Subcommittee meetings – large amount of time is spent at subcommittee meetings and supporting subcommittee activity. All the subcommittees are doing well. We have had RAG Week, and it is currently Give Back Week. Mermaids productions are doing particularly well this year. The next large event on my radar will be On the Rocks (3rd-12th April), which is incredibly well-organised and under control. UDS continues to hold high-quality debates and training. The PG Society are consistently doing well.

Scott Lang Committee – after interviews with myself and the previous Chair, we chose a committee of three: one Chair and two Dinner and Speaker Convenors. The committee have had preliminary meetings. The advertising of the Dinner will soon go out to students and staff, as the date of the dinner is planned.

Byre opening – meetings with the General Manager and Artistic Director to try and find a way to make the Byre work for subcommittees and societies. As they are still starting up, we are allowing for teething room while they get themselves up to full running and over the next semester I want to have a formal agreement with the Byre in place. The Byre Advisory Board has been set up, but I am in the process of setting up a meeting to firm up the Union's involvement with the Byre, to ensure fair and equal treatment of all of our societies and subcommittees.

University Challenge – I organised two rounds of try-outs and have narrowed down 100 people to five and the team have sent their application off. This is now out of my hands and in the hands of our competent team!

Volunteer Recognition – working with the DoRep and the AU President to come up with a volunteer recognition scheme. I found an IT system that is being adapted for us by a current student. We are hoping to have it launched by semester two and be approved for inclusion on transcripts. We are ready to launch the scheme and it is HEAR-inclusion approved.

Refreshers Fayre – the date is set for 1st February and the applications are open for affiliated societies. The Fayre will take place on the top floor and will run from 1pm-4pm. The Fayre took place on the 1st, and

ended up running from 11am – 4pm. It was very well attended by societies, subcommittees and university units. We also had Endsleigh and The Student Housing Company in attendance.

Career Launch Employability Conference – I was working with CAPOD and the Careers Centre on the conference in January. The programme of events was confirmed and the capacity has been doubled from last year (50) to 100. Sadly, the Employability Conference had a very limited uptake and had to be cancelled when we didn't have enough students signed up by the deadline. We are in discussions about ways to resurrect it.

Alumni Festival Weekend – I am working closely with development to try and put together a schedule of events for the Festival taking place 17-19 April. Society uptake has been lower than hoped so I will continue to push this to societies. Subcommittees are organising great events that will hopefully be well attended by alumni!

Redeveloped society space – the rooms on the top floor are now open and in use by societies and subcommittees. We are still working to find the best compromise for both the building and the students.

Athletic Union President: Sarah Thompson

It's been a very busy semester with lots of projects, both within Saints Sport and in collaboration with other groups across the University. We kicked things off with St Andrews's first ever Colour Run, which was a huge success with over 300 people taking part. Throughout the semester I have been working closely with the DoRep and Wellbeing Committee on the Healthy Body Healthy Mind initiative to widen the impact of the project.

Alumni Engagement has been a big project for me so far this year; the AU Alumni Officer and I have been working with our sports clubs to help them engage with their alumni and begin correspondence with them. In addition, I've been working with Pat to organise an alumni weekend in April where alumni from sports clubs, subcommittees and societies all return to St Andrews for one weekend.

We've been working hard on publicity and have set up Saint Sport News, a weekly newsletter sent to all students with a roundup of the previous week's results, upcoming fixtures and spotlight on sporting success, both club and individual. We are still on the lookout for anyone with a keen media interest to help out with coverage of fixtures, with the view to increasing our coverage of sport in St Andrews.

The first Club Captains Forums ran successfully and gained a lot of positive feedback from those who attended. From the success of the Club Captains Forum, we also organised a Treasurer's Forum to give club treasurers the opportunity to discuss any issues they had encountered and receive advice from other treasurers.

Volunteering has been another big focus for me this semester. I have been working with Fay and Ondrej on volunteer recognition, to make sure that all volunteers receive recognition for their work. Recruitment for UK Sport IDEALS and Saints Stellenbosch Outreach has just finished, and I am continuing to develop the opportunities for our students while in Stellenbosch.

I have also been working with representatives from Saints Sport and Admissions to develop a joint strategy for recruitment, a project which will continue through Semester 2.

Semester 2 is set to be a busy one with the launch of the Volunteer Recognition Scheme, Alumni Festival Weekend, our Hall of Fame Awards Night and Sports Ball all on the horizon. I will continue to work with the other Sports Presidents in Scotland to develop sport across Higher Education institutions through sharing best practice.

Over the intersemester break, the Athletic Union took part in a review with Lean, the Change Department. We looked at our current roles and processes, and identified areas for improvement to ensure we are able

to provide the best sporting opportunities to students in St Andrews. Implementation of these changes will be an ongoing project for Semester 2 and the current Exec.

We conducted a review into our current kit supplier and on the basis of the responses from clubs, took the decision to go to tender for a new supplier. A new supplier is due to be appointed within the next month.

Redevelopment kicked off at the start of semester 2 with the work on the new Sports Hall. Now that the first phase has started, we turn our attention to the next stage which will be a refurbishment of the existing building including extending the current gym. I will be working closely with the Department of Sport to ensure that the interests of our students and sports clubs are kept at the forefront of the plans.

To increase publicity of Saints Sport, we are increasing our video production. Post-match interviews with players and coaches will be posted on our YouTube site and we are launching a monthly video competition for our clubs.

Club Committee handovers will be a big focus of mine over the coming months to ensure that new committees are in place, and have the right training to allow the clubs to continue to develop. The Club Captains Forum will continue to run with new club captains, alongside Club Excellence Sessions.

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Association Chair: Joe Tantillo

Over the past eleven months as the Association Chair, I have done my best to increase the transparency and student knowledge of the Union, as well as, cut down on the bureaucracy of meetings. At the start of this Councils term I assisted in the training of Councils members; instructing them on both the rules of the Councils, as outlined in the Standing Orders of the Association, and on how to best draft a motion. I have assisted the majority of councilors who submitted motions this year in writing motions, particularly when they required assistance with the legal language that we often use. Additionally, I have provided assistance to both councilors and sabbatical officer in understanding how they can best implement certain policies within the confines of what is allowed by our Laws and Constitution. In order to make meetings more efficient, I have placed less of a focus on procedure and more focus on discussion by adding an open discussion period to the agenda. This has proved a useful platform for free flowing conversation about possible policies and the future role of the SRC. I have assisted the DoRep in updating the information on the website to assure that it all reflects our current practices. I have also created a simplified version of the standing orders and uploaded it online for the convenience of our members. The largest project of my time so far has been the organization and execution of the “That’s Union” campaign. This campaign saw a concerted effort from all Union officers to raise awareness about what the union does, and how students can best utilize its internal structures to assist them in both there day to day life and future projects. I have also made minor changes to the standing orders, which in addition to the restructuring of the SRC should facilitate more productive and efficient meetings. Some of the changes made are the submission of electronic reports before meetings, formalizing the formatting of motions, and increasing the amount of time that Councilors will have to read the agenda before meetings. My final project for this year will be to revamp the training that all Councilors receive in order to ensure that the next set of Councilors is more than prepared to serve the students to the best of their ability. While there is always more work to be done I am pleased with the steps that we have taken to make the Union a more productive organization. I wanted to bring the Union to the students, and I believe that this year the organization has become more inclusive and accessible to all students.

Association Community Relations Officer: Zara Evens

My main focus in Semester 1 was on cycle safety. I ran a project in conjunction with Student Services and the Police. We designed posters and leaflets for distribution around the town, all of the halls and depending on future correspondence with estates potentially the bike sheds as well. The posters highlight the key points and highway code for cyclists to take on board as well as where they can seek further information. These posters were funded by Student Services who were consulted throughout the process and they have also been given the pdf copy of the poster so the information may be redistributed in the future. There is now a dedicated page on the union website which also has links to official information. In my opinion the biggest success in this campaign was purchasing bike lights/reflectors including batteries that are available at the subsidised price of £5 from YourShop. The subsidy was obtained by motioning SRC to finance the project using the SRC discretionary fund. The community council have been kept informed about this project throughout the process and were pleased with the attitude the association has taken towards the issue of cycle safety as it is one which is of importance of the town. Cycle safety was also identified as one of the most important issues to be addressed this year by the Community Engagement Meeting and this project directly engages with the concerns outlined in this. This meeting is

chaired by the Police Liaison Officer, Leisa Metcalfe, from the St Andrews branch of Police Scotland. To maintain a healthy discussion about bike related issues I have helped the University Discipline Officer set up and will be participating in a Bicycle User Group which will consist of interested parties from the University, Association and Police.

I am currently working with Foodelicious events who are putting on an event at Craigtoun Park on behalf of Friends of Craigtoun to market the event to students as it is in the interests of the local community. Additionally, I am organising student volunteers for the event. This ties into one of my broader goals which is to encourage more community engagement from societies. I will be meeting with the Societies Officer soon to discuss this.

There are a number of projects that I wish to pursue next this semester and semester. I wish to continue my work on bikes with a particular focus on solving the problem of 'dead bikes' that clutter the town. Additionally, the Community Council have identified a problem with waste management within the town which I will be further investigating. I also wish to conduct some research with the townspeople regarding the HMO ban.

In my semester one report I highlighted the main projects I have been working on. The biggest one being cycle safety. I have successfully negotiated with Estates and Transition that the Cycle Safety posters be turned into dibond plaques/vinyl stickers to be placed in bike sheds and other relevant locations around campus! It will be great to have this information as a permanent fixture to promote safety year on year. They should all be up in the next couple of weeks. In terms of bike lights, the 'action plan' that Fife Police are conducting to encourage bike light use is live. Additionally, the test batch of one hundred bike lights in YourShop has sold out. Following their success, they will be restocked. Throughout this semester I have continued to liaise with the Community Council as well as a number of different relevant groups. Most notably, at the February Community Council meeting Catherine Stihler, our Rector, was invited to make a presentation about her policies and discuss them with the community councillors. Overall, it has been a successful year and a pleasure to serve as Community Relations Officer.

Association Environment and Ethics Officer: Madeline Belt

Aims

My aim this year is to broaden student involvement by appealing to a wider demographic. I want to interest students from all academic backgrounds in the work we are doing.

I hope to have Green Week (week 7 of semester 2) appeal to every student by planning events that address a wide range of interests, while also relating the events to sustainability.

First Semester

The year began by training the Hall Environment Representatives. CAPOD and the Environment Team led the training. Instead of training over a period of a few months, we had a one, five-hour session. This increased attendance and passed along information more efficiently.

The Hall Champions League combines sports, energy use, and charities donations in each hall. It is in its second year and is going well.

We agreed that Keep Cups would be sold in Rector's and the Old Union Diner Café. This would accompany the discount on any hot drink.

I wrote a proposal for the Director of Representation, the Teaching Infrastructure Strategy Group and the Proctor and Deans. There was a large interest in putting more sockets in the library and we took the opportunity to include energy savings ideas for both Students' Association and University. These ideas

include solar panels, bicycles that generate electricity, and surveys to help us learn what aspects of student and staff life use the most energy.

This Semester

This semester will be incredibly busy with organizing Green Week. Planning events that will prove interesting to a wide range of students will be difficult, but I'm hoping the ideas will draw attention to the efforts of the University regarding sustainability. With Green Week approaching quickly, the events are coming together and will hopefully continue to fall in place.

I hope to help every student and staff member be aware of what the University and Students' Association is doing to help keep a green and ethical campus.

Association LGBT Officer: Fallon Sheffield

My term as Association LGBT Officer has, in my opinion, been a success. The year started off well with the highest Freshers Fayre sign-up to date for Saints LGBT and with a welcome bonfire which saw attendance of over 100. It continued in similar fashion with the revival of Queer Question Time, which was hosted in conjunction with the Union Debating Society. Event participation has certainly increased since previous years, with good attendance especially at our 2 clubbing trips (Glasgow and Dundee), Halloween party and speed friending evening. The subcommittee is also actively working to raise money for Terrance Higgins Trust for World AIDS Day. So far we have raised £73 through the sale of ribbons and themed cocktails and we hope to increase this amount by hosting a bake sale on 1st December.

Participation has also been positive with regards to the committee. Vacant positions have been easily filled this semester, with positions of Sexualities and Gender Officer and First Year Officer having 5 and 6 candidates respectively. The Campaigns and Publicity Officer position has also been successfully filled, although our Postgraduate Officer position was filled but has subsequently stepped down. We hope this role can be filled in Semester 2. The committee structure has seen a change with the recent amendments made to the constitution which will allow the executive committee to create positions on the rest of the committee as they see fit. We have also made the positions of Vice President (Welfare) and Vice President (Social) interviewed to ensure future committees continue to provide the same quality of events. Over the winter break I drafted a booklet which will be handed down through the committees in order to offer assistance and information to future years.

Currently myself and the Welfare Officer are working on a project called "Safe Space". This initiative will see the subcommittee and Student Services providing training to staff to give them the tools to help pupils who have any LGBT* related queries or issues. We hope to have this implemented into the school of International Relations before the end of Semester 2, with the aim of having the project grow over the upcoming years to encompass as many university departments as possible. Our Welfare Officer is also going through the necessary channels to set up an anonymous email, which will allow students to contact the society confidentially and receive advice and support from the welfare team privately. The protocol has been finalised so the email should be active in the upcoming weeks.

Semester 2 started off with bang with the arrival of Queer Fest. Our opening event (which was also the headliner of RAG week), dRag Walk, saw a nearly sold out audience and £1300 raised for Terrence Higgins Trust. Queer Fest continued to succeed with attendance at all 9 events being good. Highlights including an appearance by Human/LGBT rights Activist Panti Bliss and a rather Queer Bubble Bath.

Plans for Glitterball are well and truly underway, with our ticket sales happening in the coming weeks. It looks like we are going to sell out, and hope to host yet another outstanding event. We also have the return of our lgbTED talks coming up which have had so much interest we are only just squeezing in the speakers.

Overall this year has seen Saints LGBT gain a positive name for themselves, with a number of societies approaching us for collaborative events. I hope that in the coming years this trend continues and I wish the best of luck to in the incoming committee.

SRC OFFICERS

Accommodation Officer: Sarah Gimont

This past semester as Accommodation Officer I have helped to implement and execute the **Private Accommodation Viewing Service (PAVS)**. The scheme helped many incoming postgrads to secure private accommodation before arriving in St Andrews to begin their course. I additionally attended a property factors meeting alongside the Association president, representatives from the university, and local letting agents. The Accommodation team has also run accommodation information talks in Halls, held multiple **Senior Student Forums**, and most recently held our second successful **Flatmate Speed Dating** event. Additionally, the Association has worked to create 700 extra spaces for the next year and passed a resolution urging the university to not increase student levels without also increasing resources.

Arts/Divinity Faculty President: Charlotte Potter

Science/Medicine Faculty President: Katy Rae

The majority of our time is spent working with the **Education Committee**; this began in summer, when we met with Cat Wilson, from CAPOD, to help plan the School Presidents' training. We subsequently helped the DoRep run this training session in September. We regularly attend Education Committee meetings and School Presidents' Forums, and we meet as part of the Executive Education Committee to set the agendas for these meetings beforehand. We also have regular meetings with the library and attend SLUG. In our work with the Education Committee, not only do we provide a level of support for School Presidents and assistance for the DoRep, but we have also written a **report on closing the feedback loop** and constructed a template form to **encourage good Class Rep practice**. We have been involved with a study spaces working group that is looking to classify and improve study areas in the University. As School Presidents last year, we wanted to introduce a **social aspect to the Education Committee**, so as to foster good relations and build a stronger team. We have done this through a number of School President socials and hope to continue this practice next Semester.

Over summer we contributed to an LTC working group (comprised of the Faculty Presidents, 2 Directors of Teaching, and a Senior Academic Liaison Librarian) focused on **early module information**; our recommendations were to stipulate module handbooks be made available before pre-Advising and the compulsory provision of an entry to Honours talk for all Schools. A paper was drafted from the working group which was discussed by the LTC in November, and it was approved with minor alterations. Throughout the summer we also attended a number of meetings involving the Senate Efficiency Review (SER) where issues such as Admissions, Advising and Interactive Workspaces were discussed and we were able to voice student interests.

A big project for the Semester was the introduction of Class Representatives to **interdisciplinary modules** – namely ID1003 (Great Ideas) and ID4001 and ID4002 (Teaching and Communication). This involved reaching out to Module Co-ordinators; setting up the elections for Class Representatives; co-ordinating Class Representative Forums and chairing/minuting SSCCs. We feel there is a lot of value in involving student representatives in these modules, and hope that this practice continues.

Part of our role is to act as the **Senate representatives** for Arts/Divinity and Science/Medicine at the Academic Council. We have attended one meeting so far this year, with the other due in December. At this meeting we contributed to the three discussion points which were international admission, casual

teaching staff and University governance. Summary of the September meeting can be found [here](#). As a follow up, Charlotte met with Ben Stride, the Director of UK Admissions, to discuss how the Faculty Presidents could work with incoming students and Admissions – this may involve having a Faculty President presence at Open Days, as Advising is one of the biggest concerns of new students.

After discussion with the SRC Employability Officer, we both considered possible Academic careers events; this led Katy to ask CAPOD to include Integrated Masters students at their Science PhD event, and Charlotte to organise a half-day conference on women in academia and beyond. Charlotte's event will take place in April at which three senior female academics from across the country will be invited to talk about their career paths, offering motivation and inspiration to students. Katy has also been working with the SRC Member for Gender Equality to provide support for the University's Interconnect Champion, and to provide student representation at an Athena SWAN institutional meeting.

Our current project is tackling an issue which was discussed at School Presidents' Forum is the on-going question of a **Reading Week** in Semester 1. We have investigated through consultation with School Presidents current replacements for Reading Week within Schools and have drafted a paper of recommendations to be presented to the Education Committee, and then the Deans and Proctor. We have also joined the newly-established Teaching Infrastructure Users Group, which will look at improving student teaching and learning spaces. We also intend to meet with Dr Iain Matthews (Pro-Dean (Advising) for Science), Dr Steven Tyre (Pro-Dean (Advising) for Arts) and Dr Martyn Quick (Director of Teaching for the School of Mathematics and Statistics) to discuss **Qualified Entry to Honours**; the arguments made for and against this and possible future plans. This is an action point arising from a School Presidents' Forum.

This has been the first year the roles of Faculty Presidents have existed, and we feel that they have been successful in linking the SRC, Education Committee and the Academic Council, and streamlining academic representation.

Education Officer: Darya Smirnova

Two main projects I was involved in are the Study Spaces working group and the development of Language and Grammar Review scheme. The Study Spaces working group with School Presidents of Art History, History, Philosophy, Science/Medicine Faculty President and Postgraduate Convenor successfully collected all the information on all the study spaces in the University studying areas, including the Main library. We determined the criteria to describe the best achievable study space.

I worked on the Language and Grammar Review scheme with SRC Member for Racial Equality Sium Ghebru and Jane Brooks from the English Language Teaching (ELT) Department. Together, we determined that the scheme would target students from School of Modern languages doing a year of teaching abroad as volunteers and train them to check grammar of the essays submitted by students before the deadline. We discussed the training and time frame of the scheme. We will be soon recruiting a Language Correction Scheme Convenor who will be working on developing the project further.

Employability Officer: Lydia Bowden

This semester kicked off to an excellent start, with the launch of St Andrews first ever Enterprise Week. The week was a great success. We had a keynote event with five different speakers, society led events during the week and to finish it off there was a society and sports competition. There has been an interest for this event to happen again next year. In order to improve, we will work on publicity, to make sure we

have a greater turn out at events. We are currently in the process of recruiting a new team for the next Enterprise Week.

I have been working with the Careers Centre and Alasdair, the SRC Member of Disabilities, to run a series of Careers talks for students with disabilities. The first event will take place on 25 February. Eileen Cunningham who is a disability employment adviser for Jobcentre Plus will give this talk. She will talk about what disability employment advisors can do for students with disabilities.

I have been working with Employability Class Representatives. I hope to introduce a new strategy, whereby the representatives write handover notes for their predecessors. They will be informed about this at the next Employability Forum. I have been working on publicizing my role as Employability Officer. I have been in contact with the Design Team, who have created a logo and a Facebook cover page for my position.

I was also involved with the planning for the Employability Conference run by CAPOD. Unfortunately, due to numbers the event did not go ahead. This is something that is being looked into.

Equal Opportunities Officer: Roddy McGlynn

In Semester 1, we started off the year with a welcome event for all our new international students, we've had a month of events celebrating Black History Month and LGBT is seeing its highest ever levels of involvement!

In Semester 2, the Equal Opportunities committee is committed to fulfilling our promise to make all possible bathrooms gender neutral. Right now, we are currently in the process of writing a consultation with Saints LGBT for our students, particularly our trans and non-binary students, to fill out and see what kind of signage our students would like to see. Our goal is that, by Spring Break, the whole process will be complete!

In addition, we'll soon be launching to monitor the diversity of speakers and other people our societies invite to the University as we try to make sure that we get the best people from all backgrounds coming to speak at St Andrew.

External Campaigns Officer: Walt Andrews

This year was quiet but relatively eventful. Pints and Politics was a successful event that should definitely be repeated. Motions were passed supporting the Royal and Ancient admitting women, and regarding the UCU marking boycott, but both rendered further campaigning unnecessary soon after the motions were passed. I attempted to organize a group down to London for a national demonstration for free tuition. Finding transportation took a long time, and in the meantime I didn't do enough to recruit participants, so even once we had found transport we weren't able to send a group for lack of people.

It's pretty clear that activists in St Andrews need some life breathed into them. For the most part, activists may not know each other or be able to reach out to each other for their campaigns. I hoped to change this by bringing activists from various groups together early in Semester 2, something like Pints and Politics but in a quieter space where people can talk. I'd also like to work on creating better online records of union policy, which may give activists a better sense of where the union already has policies on topics, and where policy needs to be written. Hopefully this will serve as a useful activity to connect and grow an activist culture in St Andrews, which may be able to organize more campaigns in the future.

So far we haven't been able to put together an event like this in Semester 2, but instead we have had one major campaign come up, about the Scottish Guidance regarding a UK terrorism bill. I think activism

around Holyrood would be something to examine in the future. We're also working on hosting general election debates through the Students' Association, so hopefully that goes well.

Member for First Years: Jo Boon

Semester 1 Report:

At the end of last year, I met up with some perspective students to talk to them about what being a first year student in St Andrews is like and to ease any concerns they may have had. Throughout the summer I tried to make contact with the new first years and many people emailed or messaged me with questions, which helped to establish contact. To try and raise awareness of the role I have also created a Twitter account (@JoBoon1stYrRep (<https://twitter.com/JoBoon1stYrRep>)) and have been working with Eden Court doing some peer mentoring. This has enabled me to meet more first years and I would encourage anyone experiencing difficulties in first year to get in contact with me. It can be a stressful year in many ways, so no problem is too small and if I am not able to help myself I will help get you in contact with the most appropriate person.

I have set up an unofficial subcommittee of the first year representatives, of their equivalent roles, from the SSC subcommittees (/activities/subcommittees/). This helped bring the largest groups in St Andrews together to discuss how we can reach out to first years. I am hoping to have more success second semester but this semester has been a good start to get everyone in contact and talking about ideas. It has been particularly helpful to involve postgrads, as it is the first year for many postgrads too.

I am also working on setting up a new webpage on the Union website called 'Burst the Bubble.' The idea is to collate information for students about how to travel easily and cheaply around Scotland, the EU and further afield. The draw of the website will be a couch sharing idea for St Andrews students where students can volunteer to put down their email address and home location so that other students can email and ask to stay over or be shown round their home town on their travels. We are a very international community so hopefully this will make travelling easier for people and bring the student body together. The project is in its infancy but if I don't complete it by the end of the year then I will pass everything on to the next Freshers' rep so that they can continue it.

Addition:

I have continued to work on the projects that I began and am putting together an information pack of where the projects are up to for whoever takes over from me. I have been encouraging first years to take on the role, as I strongly believe the role is best filled by a second year. I have had several people contact me about the role and I have outlined what it involves and offered my help should they be elected.

Member for Gender Equality: Annie Newman

Throughout Semester 1, I was working with the Equal Opportunities Committee, the Director of Representation, and the Students' Representative Council on forming and implementing various policies and initiatives.

Alongside the Association Community Relations Officer, I proposed a **Zero Tolerance** town initiative, in which Union representatives would work with drinking establishments and bars throughout the time to create, edit, and publicize the business's zero-tolerance policies. We ran into difficulty during first semester, particularly when chain restaurants were involved, however have created a brand new timeline and new resources to combat this next semester. The initiative will be carried forth after the Christmas holidays.

In addition to this, I've been working with the Equal Opportunities Committee on developing an informational survey to better understand the level of **diversity** experienced throughout society lectures and conferences. We hope to begin collecting data in Semester 2, and use this data to ensure that St Andrews events display a high level of gender, racial, sexual, and overall equality.

Finally, I've continued to work with the Arts/Divinity Faculty President, Charlotte Potter, on planning an event focusing on **women in academia** that will take place on 16 April. Planning on this event has continued, as we've reviewed the endorsement of both the Principal's Office and the Rector. Stay tuned for more information about the event!

Member for International Students: Omar Ali

Semester 1 Report:

My election onto the Students' Representative Council coincided with the intake of one of St Andrews' largest and most diverse classes of first years in the university's history. As such, I saw that now more than ever, the SRC's welcoming strategy for international students needed to be revamped in order to ensure that new students would transition into our community as smoothly as possible. With the help of our Director of Representation and the Equal Opportunities Officer, I streamlined and rebranded the International Students' Welcome Guide and bolstered its reach through social media and by word of mouth. I also inaugurated the International

Students Reception in September, bringing together representatives of our many cultural societies, members of the SRC and SSC, older students from a variety of disciplines and degree programmes, and representatives from the ASC and the University to welcome 250+ international students in Freshers' Week.

The success of this event led to a renewed dialogue between myself and the cultural societies which were looking for creative ways to reach wider audiences and I began to work towards establishing a forum for cultural societies to interact with the SRC in order to widen access and membership outside of the traditional Societies Committee route. This forum will be launching next semester and will occur twice each term. Its aim is to bridge the gap between the cultural societies in order to allow for joint endeavours between them as well as to give these societies an avenue for raising concerns and ideas with a representative of the SRC whose remit encompasses a large number of their members.

In order to widen the SRC's outreach mechanisms, I've also begun to talk to Senior Students of halls regarding the introduction of an international students representative onto each of their respective committees. This will eventually pave the way for increased communication between the SRC and first year international students so that their questions may be answered and their concerns may be voiced. It also provides a novel platform for the Union to market its activities and events to first years. I plan to maintain this relationship through regular meetings with Senior Students and their international students representatives.

Finally, I've taken on an active role in educating the student body about the Union, its governance procedures, and ways through which students can get involved. This undertaking has been achieved by formal routes, such as the "That's Union" campaign for which I created graphics, videos, and an overall marketing strategy but also through less formal routes. My involvement with student societies and other elected positions has allowed me the unique ability to talk about the Union with my peers and to hear out their ideas and opinions outside of a traditional setting. I plan to carry this strategy through to elections in order to bolster student engagement and turnout with regards to nominations and voting.

Since my election onto the SRC, I've been an outspoken advocate for your interests, I've brought your voice to the table on issues in and outside of the classroom, and I've prioritised bridging the individual

parts of student life (accommodation, education, societies, and more) into a more cohesive and streamlined experience.

Addition:

In Semester 2, I turned my focus to JSA students and the handover process. We kicked off the new year with a wine reception at Sandy's Bar to welcome inbound students studying at the university for the semester. Providing free wine, music, and an informal setting for students to mingle and meet one another, the event proved to be highly successful. The following weeks were marked by the last meetings of the Joint Councils and finally the dissolution of the SRC. In order to make the handover process efficient and informative, I plan to sit down with my successor in order to talk through ongoing projects, projects that were cut short, and successful projects from throughout the year. This year has tested my patience and challenged me to think about how to restructure certain mechanisms of the Association in order to more directly appeal to international students. It has been a pleasure to serve on the SRC and I look forward to watching the role develop and grow in the wake of recent SRC reforms that were debated and enacted by the Association during my term in the position.

Member for Mature Students: Mel Turner

Semester 1 Report:

- Admissions have agreed to fund membership to Townsend Society for all STAR (i.e. students through alternative routes) students attending the University of St Andrews in 2015.
- I have organised a Christmas meal for mature students and STAR students to encourage participation and cohesion within this group.
- I have taken part in promoting the Access scheme to the General Degree program here to local colleges.
- I have participated in promotional material for the University to encourage other mature students to give St Andrews a chance.
- I am looking forward to working with our new Rector to get the voices of student parents heard by the University.
- I hope to work with the Association President on the situation with building the crèche facilities.

Addition:

- I am still working with admissions to continue advertising the General Degree Program for College Students.
- Work is continuing with the crèche and hopefully will progress further with the commencement of the new building.
- I hope to make student parents a more visible part of the student body and increase the chances of the children and families of mature under graduate students to be part of the student experience.

Member for Private Accommodation: Verity Baynton

Semester 1 Report:

The work for the SRC Accommodation Team this year began in the summer with the initiation of the new Private Accommodation Viewing Service to respond to the unprecedented housing demand from international students who were unable to secure a property without having seen it previously. This service proved successful in going towards combating this problem.

Since the semester started, the majority of my achievements in my role took place in week 10. First, there were the hall visits with Naomi to give residents information on renting privately. I visited Agnes Blackadder Hall, Andrew Melville Hall and University Hall where I answered students' questions. These talks were well attended. Alex and I also ran a very successful Flatmate Speed-dating event. 30 people attended and we received positive feedback. A secondary effect of the talks and the event were an increase in the Accommodation Team's Facebook reach. I also contributed to this year's edition of the How to Rent Guide, and brainstormed around the subjects of a forum for the reviewing of letting agencies, and private accommodation bursaries.

For the rest of the year, I would like to post timely information online about the renting process and letting agencies throughout the time of students' flat hunting. As affordability remains a pressing issue, I would like to further investigate bursary opportunities. We will repeat the Flatmate Speed-dating event in second semester. Finally, I would like to provide information and support for year abroad students looking for housing for their return.

Addition:

Semester 2 saw an increase in the Accommodation Team's activity, as letting agents began to release their housing lists in January. Through online social media channels, I ensured that we were communicating the dates of these as well as other key information for flat hunting.

In addition, the rest of the Accommodation Team and I led a second Flatmate Speed Dating event at the beginning of February. With around 20 attendees, the evening was productive as many left having exchanged contact details of potential flatmates.

With the planned opening of private residence Ayton House on the horizon, as well as a restructuring of the SRC Accommodation Team, the next academic year promises to be challenging and interesting for the next SRC Accommodation Officer and his/her team. I wish them all the best!

Member for Racial Equality: Sium Ghebru

In March, I've set up the campaign #ITooAmStAndrews, which was designed to celebrate diversity in the student body in St Andrews. There have two separate photo shoots, one in March and one in October. The campaign got a great variety of participants and I am looking into whether or not I will do an event next semester and also how I would introduce a new co-ordinator to the program.

My main project in Semester 1 was the Black History Month, where we had 5 events which encompassed the return of #ITooAmStAndrews, a slam poetry event with African-Caribbean Society, a film screening with FilmSoc, a Black History Month-themed debate with DebateSoc and an external speaker coming in to deliver a lecture.

The events were engaging with the audiences that came by and especially the slam poetry event was very well attended and had great participation. The turnout for the external speaker was quite low but the event was one of several on that night so I was not too disheartened.

There was another event planned which had to be cancelled due to poor levels of interest. The event in question was a dance performance with Keneish Dance and the event's publicity and organisation was not up to scratch and I have talked with Ondrej Hajda, the Director of Representation, about how we would have improved the organisation and publicity for future events like these.

There was a Black History Month Facebook page where I posted stories, articles and historical events on the page.

I had also planned a Language and Grammar review scheme with Darya Smirnova, the Education Officer for the SRC. The idea of the programme would be that non-native English speakers from 1st year would

be able to give their assignment to a student reviewer, who would check the assignment for obvious grammatical flaws and if the sentence's structure was correct. We are working with Jane Brooks from English Language Teaching to establish our framework and how we would teach our volunteer student reviewers.

I have been in the Race Equality Charter Mark group since the beginning of the year and we as a group have been thinking about how to improve the university's diversity from a racial perspective. I and the Director of Representation, Ondrej Hajda, were the student representatives in this group and we helped craft the questions of the Race Equality Survey prior to its publication in December.

As for the future, I will be handing over the #ITooAmStAndrews campaign to my successor and I have also written a handover report in regard to Black History Month and in both cases, I will provide them with help and advice and inform them of what changes I would have made with the benefit of hindsight. I will be on a panel to interview candidates for a new specific role in overseeing the Language and Grammar review scheme and ensuring that it comes to fruition.

Member for Students with Disabilities: Alasdair MacIennan

DID NOT SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT

Member for University Accommodation: Alexandre Ciric

The highlight for the work of the Member for University Accommodation has been the Senior Student Forums. Being one of the most important parts of this role, the forums have been extremely useful for not only Senior Students to converse with the Students' Association but also between themselves and with other factions of the university.

Four Senior Student Forums were held in the first semester with one more planned before the end of the semester. All were very productive and well-attended by the Senior Students. Despite our Facebook group closing down without warning or reason, we have still been able to communicate with a new Facebook group set up afterwards and resorting to email in the interim period.

Another highlight of the work done in the past semester was a meeting with the Accommodation Team, the Association President, a Senior Student—Mr. Josh Gumbley—and Mr. Ben Stuart, the head of the University's Residential and Business Services branch. This meeting was a great opportunity for the Accommodation Team to hear from a representative of the university on issues surrounding the university's long-term strategy on accommodation, the development of new halls of residence and bursaries.

A motion was passed in the Student's Representative Council meeting in October (R. 14-5) that mandated the Accommodation Team to investigate into sources of bursaries for student accommodation.

Regular meetings with Naomi, the Accommodation Advocate in the Students' Association were productive. As a team, we were able to put together "How to Rent Guides", a series of talks in halls of residence on how to rent a flat and one "Flatmate Speed Dating" event.

The "Flatmate Speed Dating" events were a success from the eyes of the Accommodation Team as events were held in November and February as total of nearly sixty people attended across both events.

The Hall Champions League results have been coming in regularly and a good sense of participation and interest was felt by all halls.

The expenditures from the Accommodation Team budget went towards publicity for the “Flat Mate Speed Dating” events as well as the printing of the “How to Rent Guides.”

In Semester 2, as letting agencies, the work of the Member for University Accommodation overlapped with the rest of the Accommodation Team in answering students’ questions regarding flat searching. The types of questions and concerns of the students were varied but, as a team, the Accommodation Team was able to address all of the questions that were brought forward via email, Facebook, at Accommodation events, or in person.

Before the elections, the Member for University Accommodation would like to organize another Senior Student Forum and would be happy to answer any questions surrounding this commitment.

Member for Widening Access & Participation: Nicola Kennedy

Due to my co-option mid-way through the semester, it has been unfortunately difficult to start any major projects. However I have been busy planning and preparing for semester two! My first plan is to “Jazz up” the Students’ Association table at Visiting Days by having more reader-friendly material for perspective students. This includes material from societies and sub-committees that may be of interest to perspective students. I have also been discussing with the Design Team on ways we can incorporate a widening participation leaflet. I am also incorporating a Students’ Association element into town tours discussing the new development and what the Union does for our University.

As well as this I have been working closely with admissions, the Association President, as well as the Principal Ambassador on how we can promote widening participation around the University. Ideas so far include, Widening Participation Week, a question time and perhaps a newsletter. The Principal Ambassador and I are also looking to start the “Beyond Fife” project, which promotes the Students’ Association, student life and higher education within regions, as the name suggests, outside Fife.

Looking to the future I have now established some foundations for a new alternative prospectus. This is a big project but will be very beneficial to the University and the Students’ Association. An alternative prospectus offers a student insight into the university answering many of the questions that prospective students ask on Visiting Days, i.e. accommodation, funding, traditions etc. I am hoping this will become a reality soon and hope to still be involved after my dissolution.

I have also set up a link with Teach First and look forward to building on this relationship when my predecessor arrives.

If you have any other suggestions or queries please do not hesitate to contact me on ndk@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Postgraduate Convenor: Tania Strützel

It has been an eventful and busy time for postgrads over the past year and I have very much enjoyed working on many different projects and issues to enhance the postgraduate experience for both Masters and PhD students in St Andrews.

For the first time, we elected **77 postgraduate representatives** across all Schools to represent the interests of both Masters and PhD students. They were elected as part of the Students’ Association’s class rep elections in week 3 thus providing a standardized system across all Schools for the nomination and election process. With a few exceptions all 77 postgraduate reps also received **training** specifically designed for them by the Director of Representation and myself, along with a postgraduate rep handbook.

The PG Exec reps of each School met three times this AY to discuss any issues and concerns with the Provost and the PGT Pro-Dean.

Together we have addressed ongoing issues that concern postgraduate students such as the lack of a dedicated **study space** and the **support for PhD tutors**. The PGR reps surveyed their cohorts on available training, support and payment for tutors and have initiated discussions within their Schools as a result of that. Moreover, most reps have been incredibly dedicated to improving their cohort's experience this year by addressing issues in their program or organizing **readings groups and social events**. The PG rep system has undoubtedly strengthened and improved the PG experience for all students and I greatly appreciate all their hard work this year.

On the University level, I represented postgraduate students and their concerns on Academic Council, Learning & Teaching Committee and the Postgraduate Research Committee as well as in communication with the Library, RBS, Careers, CAPOD and Student Services.

The AY 2014/15 has seen a strong focus of the University on taught postgraduates and provision for them. As a member of the **PGT portfolio review** panel that looked at provision for Master students by the various units of the University as well as recruitment, admission and long-term development strategies of each School we produced a report with recommendations on how to improve the PGT experience that will inform the University's strategy. At the beginning of this AY, I also conducted a survey on the **dissertation experience** of the outgoing taught postgraduate cohort, results of which are included in the review report. Besides School-specific strategies, the main recurring themes were the demand for a dedicated PG **study space** and more guaranteed PG **accommodation**. Both issues are being addressed with the opening of new study spaces in the second semester and a larger number of PG accommodation places available in 2015-16 than in previous years.

In an effort to enhance the PG community feeling, **CAPOD** has been arranging a wide variety of events from **induction** events in Orientation Week over focus groups to joint events with **Student Services** to address stress and time management or with the **Careers Centre** to provide information about the transition from PGT to PGR study. I have been involved in the planning and organization of all of these events and am currently planning an event on non-academic careers for Arts PhD students with the Careers Centre for the end of the second semester.

Finally, as a member of the SRC Education, Education Exec, Employability, and Postgraduate Society Committee, I have contributed to ongoing projects in these committees. I am looking forward to ending the second term with the organization of **St Leonard's Dinner** bringing together postgraduate students and staff in celebration of the postgraduate community.

While of course not everything is perfect and there are still many projects to be pursued to the benefit of postgrads, I have been struck by the dedication, enthusiasm and hard work in making the PG experience the best it can be by everyone involved – may that be students, PG reps, University staff or Union staff. It has been a privilege to be part of this journey as Postgraduate Convenor and to see the **postgraduate community** grow and interact with every part of University and Union life.

Last but not least, I want to **thank Pat, Ondrej, Leon and Fay** for their ongoing support and from start to finish as all these projects would not have been possible without this fantastic Sabb team!

Principal Ambassador: Bryony Shepherd

As ever, we have had an extremely busy year within the Student Ambassador scheme. We received over 100 applications in September from students wishing to work with us, and welcomed the majority of these as associates. We have been mightily impressed with the commitment of these students so far and hope

to see most of them progress throughout the scheme over the next few years. We were really fortunate to be able to offer some of these associates' contracts this new semester, and they now join us as Junior ambassadors.

We had four successful Visiting Days last semester, the first being in Younger Hall due to the renovation work in St Salvator's Quad, moving back to College Hall for the other days. We have also encountered many changes to our usual Visiting Day entrances, directions and tour routes, but these do not detract from the day itself. Our Semester 2 visiting days will be taking place in March and April and are expected to be very busy. In terms of our Widening Participation projects, these, once again, began running in September. We have seen several shadowing days take place alongside ambassadors being involved in School Liaison, REACH Project, First Chances school visits and several ambassadors also took part in a Lego 'Unleash the Brick' event in Dunblane. Space School and HSBC 'Living Local, Thinking Global' started up again this semester, and are going well so far.

An exciting project which has come to fruition this semester is the creation of our Schools Liaison Ambassador Team: a team of ambassadors who will be visiting national school career fayres and UCAS events throughout this semester.

At the beginning of the semester, the Principal Team made the decision to consolidate and improve the Scholarship Committee, which was founded last year. It was decided that we would open applications for the committee in March of Semester 2 to coincide with the selection of the 2015-2016 Principal Team, with this allowing both teams to work in tandem from this year forward. Despite not having a committee in place, we have managed to raise over £200 for the Ambassador Scholarship fund so far.

Despite the resignation of the SRC Member for Widening Participation and Access earlier this semester, and the election of Nicola Kennedy to this post mid-semester, we have been able to lay some significant groundwork for joint ambassador-Students' Association projects next semester. Myself, Nicola and our VP for Tours, Kyle Blain, successfully reviewed the Students' Association participation in visiting days, with Nicola putting in place plans to improve this next semester. Nicola and our VPs for WP are working together in order to create a document to give student's advice about setting up and running their own Schools Liaison and Access projects in the local community. We are also working together at the moment to create an 'Alternative Prospectus' for the union.

All in all, this has been a very productive and successful year for the Student Ambassadors.

Rector's Assessor: Annie Newman

As Catherine's first full semester as Rector heads to a close, I have worked primarily on planning and arranging her installation ceremony and **Rectorial Drag**. On February 20, **Catherine was officially installed as Rector** by Principal Richardson and Pat Mathewson as President of the Students' Association, which followed her traditional Rectorial Drag, as well as a torchlit procession held in her honor.

Outside of the installation ceremonies, Catherine and I have worked primarily on three fronts: accommodation, alumni relations, and the Rector's Fund. Catherine visited Community Council twice since she started her term in November, speaking on the state of **accommodation** and advocating for stricter regulation of private landlords in Fife. We are also working with the Management Society to host an accommodation case study, to take St Andrews' accommodation problem and get students' ideas for solutions directly.

In regards to alumni relations, we've established the **Rector Inspirer Series**, a lecture series which aims to bring St Andrews alumni back to town to speak to students, and strengthen an alumni connection back to the union and university. Our inaugural lecture was given by Barbara Woodward, the UK's first female

Ambassador to China, and was delivered to a full audience. Our next speaker is Dr Beth Breeze, Director of Philanthropy at the University of Kent. This lecture will be held in conjunction with the Union's Alumni Weekend and in cooperation with the Charities Campaign.

Finally, we've been working on the logistics of growing the **Rector's' Fund**. Established to provide financial support for student internships, we will continue working throughout the rest of this semester to grow the fund through a mix of fundraising drives, alumni efforts, and external sponsorship.

Wellbeing Officer: David Norris

DID NOT SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT

SSC OFFICERS

Broadcasting Officer (STAR): Sean McDonald

DID NOT SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT

Charities Officer (Charities Campaign): Kyle Blain

This year has been another busy success for the Charities Campaign. Freshers' Week was as non-stop as ever and our EGM in week three saw each of our positions contested for the first time in years.

Race2 was a huge success as always, with 170 students all successfully making it to Madrid and with money still coming in we stand in good stead to raise as much, if not more than last year.

RAG was very different this year due to redevelopment but with a pre-rag in semester one to make sure that our big events were still on the St Andrews calendar and a RAG Week bursting with exciting new and old society events such as dRAGwalk, Assassins and a major launch night – we managed to paint the town purple once again and have raised tens of thousands of pounds for our three nominated charities.

Big Top Ball is ready to go. We have our ticket sales this week and marketing will be going live in the next few hours. Elephants, circus performers and good drinks deals have all been promised as the Charities Campaign yet again offers all the fun at a competitive ball price.

Halls have had the most charitable year to date raising over £8,000 at the last count. Dean's Court are top of the league table but St Regulus Hall is close behind. In terms of societies and sports teams, we have worked alongside Rowing, Tae-Kwando, Bubble TV and Amnesty this year, and have a number of larger grants in the pipeline before the end of the current committee's post. Our largest new success this year however, is the creation of our specialised Events Team who have successfully ran two bake sales and made over £4000 with their forty man bungee jump trip to Killiecrankie.

Postgraduate involvement has also been a huge success with a committee now set up to keep the postgraduate community up to date with all our work and to specifically facilitate charity postgrad events. With three candidates running for Postgraduate Officer at our EGM, the postgraduate side of the Charities Campaign is moving from strength to strength.

Our biggest change this year however, was the introduction of a limit on the nominations of current nominated charities. Coming into effect this year, any charities elected to be represented by the Charities Campaign will, after their year as part of the Campaign, have to take a two-year hiatus before being permitted to run again in the semester two elections. This new clause allows every student to see at least nine charities helped by the Charities Campaign over the course of their academic career at St Andrews.

So far the charitable effort within the Students' Association is reaching around the £60,000 mark but with the big events planned before we leave post at our AGM we are excited to see this total increase even further.

I have had an amazing year SSC Charities Officer and can't thank the campaign and the union enough. I am so excited to see what the next year brings charities and wish everyone involved all the luck in the world.

Debates Officer (Union Debating Society): Charlotte Andrew

One of the most successful events we have ever held in recent years, the Union Debating Society began Semester 1 with a debate on Scottish Independence. The huge turn out has continued, with consistently higher attendance at each weekly public debate than the previous year. We've had speakers ranging from Sir Menzies Campbell and John McTernan to our newly elected Rector who spoke at the start of this semester in a debate about Britain's future in the E.U, another phenomenal success.

One of our aims this year has been to increase co-operation with other subcommittees and societies; over this year we've collaborated with MUN, Saints LGBT, MedSin society, Blind Mirth and The Revue, RAG week, the Fairtrade Society, the Postgraduate Society, the Philosophy Society, the Feminist Society and the History Society. We have also held a public speaking training session in conjunction with CAPOD, and we will be holding one in nominations week for election candidates. The variety of topics we have covered this semester, as well as the focus on attracting students from other societies, has contributed to not only the overall high attendance at our public debates, but also the presence of students who may have never attended before.

Our weekly training sessions have also been significantly more successful than previous years in retaining new debaters, and we have established our first ever Fresher subcommittee to improve our inclusivity and the all important fund-raising. We've competed in University debating tournaments around the country, including competitions at Cambridge, Durham and Glasgow. Additionally, we've hosted two competitions for Scottish schools and sent two teams to Malaysia over the Christmas holidays to compete in the Worlds Debating Competition. In the last few weeks we also hosted the Scottish Mace and were fortunate enough to have two St Andrews teams reach the final. Our Chief Whips (the heads of training) won the competition and will go on to compete in the International final against the winners of the English, Welsh and Irish Mace.

Socials this year have been especially numerous and have certainly contributed to our large retention of new debaters. We would also like to think that the new inclusion of cheese in our port receptions at public debates has improved the quality of the Union Debating Society's events.

On a more serious note, we've adapted our constitution to require all public debates have a diversity of genders represented amongst the official speakers attending each week. This will hopefully go some way to address the continuing issue of gender representation within debating- although St Andrews is already one of the best societies in Scotland in terms of gender balance.

Overall, we've had an exceptional year and that looks set to continue.

Design Team Convenor: Nathalie Mitchell

Last semester, the main focus of the Design and PR teams was wider inclusivity and access. Our goal was to increase awareness of our teams and the services we provide. To boost access and awareness we:

- Created a new website, to provide detailed information about the teams from the designer and client perspectives, and increased our presence on Facebook and Twitter
- Created a new social officer position, which aims to connect designers through social events
- Continually updated our Design Team Hub Facebook Group with new projects and opportunities, and updated the format of our mass emails to make them more appealing and informative to readers
- Extended the capacity of our Photoshop classes, and added an Illustrator class

This semester, our additional focus has been on creating a greater sense of community by maintaining a regular schedule of events. The opening of the new Design Suite has provided us with a designated venue

to implement our plans. The suite and the regular schedule have already proved to be beneficial to our goals this term- our event attendance numbers have increased significantly. Notable events and achievements this term are as follows:

- Developed a consistent schedule of weekly events, including workshops, Photoshop and Illustrator classes, movie night socials, and Design Dialogues
- Made plans to collaborate with societies (such as ArtSoc, PhotoSoc, and CraftSoc) and organizations (such as Transition) for workshops, and established two themed workshops for society officers and election candidates
- Gained an increase in design project requests, a total of 41 this year so far (with a quarter via our new website)
- Purchased new equipment for workshops, including a thermal binder and a screen printing kit

I wish the new Design Convenor the best of luck, and hope they are able to further carry forward our aims to be an accessible community of designers, providing the student body with educational and creative opportunities.

Ents Convenor: Lavin Ge Tian

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 46 events and assisted a few Mermaids plays in Venue 1 since September. We also helped with the weekly Bar events like Karaoke, Open Mics and DJ in the Main Bar on Fridays and Saturdays. Working directly with various departments within the Union, we provide an essential service that underpins every event.

Freshers' Week was our favorite. We started working with Leon (Director of Events and Services) through the Internet in August when our crew members are scattered around the world in different time zones. We did our best to find the possibility of the Union event. While the new students were impressed, we also had a lot of fun. Acts complimented our technical crews that "in some aspects, is even better than the O2 Arena". It was also a great opportunity to recruit new crew members. We managed to train up a few new crew members and DJs throughout the semester.

After Freshers' Week it was less busy in Venue 1. Along with helping out with events, we also assisted the redevelopment progress and demolishment of Venue 1. We worked with the building staff to evacuate equipment from the venue while there are still events happening. It was a challenging tasks but so far I think we managed it well.

While providing support for events, we tried various ways to utilised the Association building and the shiny top floor and Beacon bar in Semester 2 when Venue 1 is demolished. We had weekly Friday ad Saturday themed nights in the Main Bar and they worked really well. We have also recruited and trained new DJs who are speicalised in various genres to provide the student body different night-out experience. Meanwhile, we worked closely with Just So Society and Mermaids on technical aspects in different venues while connecting with the Byre theatre to further develop crew members' technical skills. We also provided advice for events across St Andrews to let them have the best lighting and sound effects with limited budget.

The redevelopment is also a heating topic. The Entertainments Subcommittee was working closely with the Association building staff on planning the new venues. We investigated the specification for the new venues and advised on the equipment purchase within the budgets for the best outcome possible. Based

on the plans for the new venue, we have also changed the committee structure, to ensure the smoothly running of events in the new venues.

This year has been challenging and stressful for the Entertainments Subcommittee and 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. The challenges will continue next year, as the new venues will be finished for the new Freshers' Week, and we will keep on learning about the new equipment and new techniques. I believe that this group of people will continue being amazing and align with the elected Director of Events and Services to provide the student body better events experience next year.

Finally, on a side note, if you want to find out more, or want to join us, either as a DJ or lighting/sound technician, please email ents@!

External Funding Officer: Michael Thadani

Semester 1 Report: This fall the External Funding Committee put out a call for applications to fill the three grant writer positions that were open. We got off to a slow start with just enough applicants to fill the available positions, but fortunately all the candidates were well qualified and have proven incredibly helpful. Our work thus far has been focused on writing grants for On The Rocks. The goal is to leave the festival with a more secure endowment and ease the pressure on next year's On The Rocks committee to secure one off funding. Last year's External Funding committee was successful in getting some money, and we're working to expand on that success.

Addition: The committee proved unsuccessful in securing grants this year.

Member without Portfolio: Anna Kennedy-O'Brian

I don't seem to have another poem in me, so I apologise to anyone who was eagerly anticipating the sequel to Member Without Portfolio: Semester 1 Report, because this will inevitably be a let down. When running for this position I promised that I would demonstrate my 'astounding live tweeting abilities', and if any of you have followed the Association Councils feed (@StACouncils if you didn't know already) I hope you can agree that my generally confused and bad tempered tweets have lived up to that promise. I also said that I'd plan some great socials, after the Dissolution Party this Tuesday I will officially crown myself 'Queen of the Socials'. It will be that good. Throughout my time in this role I've helped out with numerous union activities; I've put together nightline exam packs, baked for bake sales and community coffee mornings, and generally agreed to do just about anything that's been asked of me, even when that has involved spending days in special collections searching every back issue of the Saint for mentions of the John Honey Award, which has now been reinstated, so nominate anyone you think has made an outstanding contribution to student wellbeing! I could go on and on about the tiny things I do each week in this role, but instead I'll stop rambling on and leave you with one promise; board games will eventually be coming to Sandy's! I refuse to graduate until I've managed that.

Oh and apparently in my manifesto I promised to be friendly. Not sure I'm a good judge as to whether I've achieved this, but I would just like to say that the people I've worked with on Councils have been the most incredible group of individuals, and my Tuesday evenings are going to be very empty without them.

Music Officer (Music is Love): Anna Merryfield

Semester 1 kicked off in a very hectic manner. We filled Freshers' Week with student musician focused events such as open mics, acoustic performances in Taste and a bonfire on the beach. We also provided

the music for the Art's Lock In bringing in Prehistoric Friends to play from Glasgow. Soon after the committee were working towards a larger event: Messenger Soundsystem. This was our largest event this year, selling out its 600 capacity.

After that event we decided to tone things down for a bit, continuing to host our weekly open mics, providing music for a variety of society's events and hosting our musicians speed dating. We also began a collaboration with student run production company atb who hosted their first event in Sandy's Bar last October and who have just completed their second event last Sunday night. While this was going on we hosted an EGM and managed to recruit two new members which we had just added to our constitution: our first ever freshers rep and graphic designer.

In late October we organised the day time accompaniment to Ffall's evening event, a relaxed day of music in All Saints Church with food from Veg Soc and an exhibition and decorations from Art Soc. Our line up featured both student musicians and professional musicians from further afield. Shortly after this event we organised a secret gig at Pittenweem's Chocolate Company; for this event we booked local musicians from Fife and Ditte Elly from Newcastle. On 24 November we hosted a very successful Living Room gig which saw people spilling out onto the street just to try and hear the music. We then finished the semester with our annual Festive Bash in All Saints Church Hall, an evening of music, mulled wine, baked goods and arts and crafts.

Semester 2 began with another collaboration with Art Soc: we invited Glasgow based The Idiots to kick off the evening in the Barron as part of their second Creative Lock In. We are currently planning our International Women's Day event on 8 March and are also organising the Opening Event for On the Rocks and well as planning another Hidden Sounds evening. We have continued recording our St Andrews Session videos which feature local musicians performing their material around St Andrews.

Performing Arts Officer (Mermaids): Ben Anderson

By the end of the year, Mermaids will have funded 26 shows, including four Freshers' Plays and four On The Rocks shows. We will also have provided a 'play in 24 hour challenge'. Three of those shows will have been in the newly reopened Byre theatre. We have also worked with On The Rocks to get *Hookhitch*- a professional touring company- to visit the town and put up *This Was The World and I was King*.

Our workshop program has been more focussed this year, with a wider variety of workshops- including one run by *Hookhitch* and a hugely successful 'how to get into drama school' workshop run by alumnus Ben Fletcher-Watson. We have also provided workshops for the community as part of MUSA's latest exhibition on Flore Gardner.

Our RAG Week show, *As You Like It*, was a great success, raising money from every ticket sold as well as trialling a pre-show and interval bake sale- raising almost £70 over two nights. With more societies and groups realising they can work with us in this way, the aim is to build on this link to encourage more charitable activities, such as our semester one collaboration with *Marrow on Backbone*.

This year, one of my main focuses has been in getting Mermaids to reach out more. Whether that's having dancers giving us workshops on movement, supporting other societies or just advertising to a wider group of students. This will, I believe, pay dividends in the future in terms of the ambition and variety of projects that Mermaids produces and is able to get involved in- such as the newly established *Cow Shed* in the Byre on Monday nights.

The relationship with our affiliated societies has been improved this year with a Presidents' Forum. This has allowed a proper dialogue as equals that will hopefully be reinforced by our segment for the alumni weekend.

Christmas Ball was incredibly successful this year, with the trialling of a new larger event that returned a profit of £16963. With this money we have funded three shows to go to the Edinburgh Fringe, sending two student-written shows; *Bear Hug* and *Patriots*, and one musical; *The Pirates of Penzance*. Additionally, £1000 will be invested in supporting these shows, including group publicity that we trialled last summer. It is my intention to save some of the rest of the Christmas Ball profits in preparation of our 100th anniversary in 2017.

When I started this job, there was absolutely no paperwork. A large part of my year has been spent correcting this. We have begun to introduce contracts to shows; starting with revamped Barron contracts this semester. General show contracts and investment contracts will be ready for the next academic year. Our publicity schedules and workshop programme have been tightened in order to keep everything more organised and consistent. There is also a large handover book with advice for future committees on how to run things and how to build on what we have worked on this year. In this vein- work on the costume tagging system has begun again, with the aim of leaving a system ready to be picked up on next year. With a *How To Produce* handbook already in the works, the aim is to complete a similar style handbook for the other roles in the theatre to make taking on these roles more accessible for any newcomers.

We have had contractors in to get us quotes for redeveloping the Barron flooring and seating-rack, so it is my hope that we'll be able to deliver a figure to the Barron fund at the next Student Drama Advisory Group in April. We are also developing a new policy for keys and Barron use over breaks when the committee are not here to open and close.

With no easily usable venue or date for a careers event, this idea quickly became very difficult. Instead, I am focussing the committee, in it's last few weeks, on building the basics of an alumni network: a web presence and an archive, in the hope of emulating societies such as *Gilbert and Sullivan's* success in reconnecting with old members. This will hopefully make a careers event in the future easier, as well as provide a contact list for our 100th anniversary.

The end of the semester will be marked by the return of *The Golden Seashells*, on Sunday 26 April but, using the Beacon Bar, we will be aiming to create a slightly less formal- although no less enjoyable- atmosphere than last year's event.

Postgraduate Society President: David van Brussel

In Freshers' Week we introduced all new postgraduate students to the society, the university and the town with six events throughout the week. Four of them were very well attended; the other two could have been better. All in all, I believe we did a good job at making all the postgrads feel welcome and get familiar with the society.

At our AGM on 29 September all positions were filled, only two positions were contested. We now have a committee consisting of 7 people formally elected and two people attending meetings and helping out without having an official position on the committee. During the semester we co-opted a Publicity & Marketing Officer, the position was not contested. In the beginning of Semester 2, two committee members (Event Convenor and Treasurer) resigned due to time management issues. One committee member without portfolio was co-opted as Event Convenor and a new committee member was co-opted as Treasurer, both positions were uncontested.

In the first weeks of Semester 1 we organized socials in the Main Bar on Friday evening. The first of these was very well attended but numbers decreased slowly. I think that as the semester progresses, the need to organize social events for people decreases, as they get more familiar with student life in St Andrews. In Semester 2 we have organized one social in RAG Week and are planning to organize monthly socials, ideally in collaboration with another society.

Throughout Semester 1 we organized monthly movie nights in the Barron Theatre, these have always sold out. This is something we will continue to do throughout Semester 2 and the summer. In Semester 1, we organized a ceilidh, to which 100 people showed up and a bus trip to Loch Lomond that sold out. The society was planning to organize a bonfire on Guy Fawkes night. Due to involvement of the Fife Coastal and Countryside Trust (FCCT), we had to cancel this event. I'm planning to contact the FCCT to make sure our bonfires we're planning to organize next semester don't get cancelled.

In Semester 2 we are planning to organize a whisky tasting on 26 February in the Union and a ceilidh in the Holy Trinity Church Hall on 27 February. Furthermore, we are going to organize another bus trip in April to a location in Scotland and a bonfire in June. So far we have organized a Joint Debate with UDS about the European Union and the Social in RAG week. There are a few events planned to take place in the summer months such as a Summer Ball and a Barbecue in July, however depending on the plans of my successor it is possible to adapt the event schedule for the summer.

On 1 December, there was a graduation ceremony at which a lot of postgraduates graduated from the university. The night before, 30 November, we organized a social at the Byre Theatre and on the evening of 1 December, we organized Graduation Ball at the Old Course Hotel. The ball was sold out and was attended by 300 people.

In an effort led by Jo Boon (SRC member for First years), we're trying to come up with ideas to increase involvement of first year students, including first year postgraduate students. We had one meeting this semester.

A number of societies and subcommittees elected postgraduate representatives this semester and the society is reaching out to those in order to collaborate in organizing events and help them to increase postgraduate involvement.

It has been a very nice experience to have been the President of the Postgraduate Society and I particularly enjoyed working together with a very motivated and good committee. Hopefully, the postgraduates have enjoyed the events we have organized and will enjoy them the rest of their time in St Andrews. I look forward working together with my successor towards the end of my term and ensure a good handover in July.

Societies Officer (Societies Committee): Courtney Lewis

The Societies Committee started the year with a two-year strategic plan for the future schedule of societies. The main change that will be occurring is moving society training to the spring, which should allow societies to know what's happening even if they're away for the summer.

First semester, training for societies was hosted in late September and offered presidents training, treasurers training, and a health and safety awareness session for over 400 society members. Along with our old societies, ten new societies have affiliated this academic year to date.

The Societies Committee continues to host a weekly drop-in clinic for any and all society-related queries (every Monday 4-6pm in the Main Bar!), in addition to our weekly meetings. The Societies Portal has also been updated and a resource page has been created for societies to have easy access to all relevant documents, guides, and information.

This year we've worked hard to counter the lack of society space in the Union by partnering up with halls of residence to offer additional meeting space alongside University venues, the Byre and Barron Theatres, and venues around town. A Room Availability Booklet has been published for societies which incorporates the rooms on the top floor of the Union along with alternate venues. A special thanks to Senior Students for helping us liaise with Residence Managers, Wardens, and everyone in-between.

The Societies Committee has undergone a review of all society policy and continues to hold its sprit of deregulation, cutting out various requirements and hopefully making everyone's lives a tad bit easier. We have also come to an agreement with the Library's publicity and marketing department regarding society publicity in the library; we hope to streamline this process by incorporating the current system into the Societies Portal.

Additionally, we have discussed and come to a preliminary agreement with the University regarding insurance for society events. While the final Memorandum of Understanding will be submitted to the Association's Board of Trustees, both representatives from the Societies Committee and the University have reached a happy conclusion. Many thanks must be given to the University's EHSS staff, all of whom were all exceptionally helpful in this process.

We have piloted our first workshop program in collaboration with the Design Team as a design and publicity workshop, which will hopefully be the first in a series of workshops for societies in the coming year. We continue to reach out to societies to improve services through feedback forms regarding all areas that effect societies.

To date, the Societies Committee has granted over £15,000 in the form of grants and nearly £3,000 in the form of loans.

To finish the year, the Societies Committee will be preparing for the switch to spring training. With this will come an AGM deadline as well as the Societies Awards and the Societies Committee AGM. We will also be looking to revamp society training (particularly for treasurers), re-evaluate the way we determine merit for grants, strike a deal with IT Services regarding society email accounts, finalise the insurance Memorandum of Understanding with the University, and explore options for and lay the foundations for stronger town and gown relations through townspeople's involvement, and hold strong to our commitment to give societies the freedom to operate in a way that best suits them.

Volunteering Officer (SVS): Nicole Timpone

This was a very successful year for SVS, which saw the inclusion of new volunteer schemes, better online facilities and resources for current volunteers, and increased publicity. We had a difficult start to the year when our Events Officer quit just before Freshers' Week, but we were still able to get our new promotional materials, including leaflets and a banner, ready in time. Our Freshers' Week beach bbq event was also attended by around 50 prospective volunteers, a dramatic increase from the event we had held the previous year. At our information night/ EGM we filled the remaining three committee positions, the Environmental Project Officer, Development Officer, and a new Events Officer.

This year we added 8 new volunteer projects, making our total number of running projects 44. In our first round of project applications we received 147 from volunteers. We successfully placed all volunteers that applied, and opened up a second round of applications for projects that weren't yet full. We held a training for our committee members, and then two nights of trainings for new volunteers that had just been placed on projects. An upwards of 70 volunteers attended the trainings, whereas only around 30 attended the previous year.

One of our biggest developments this year was when we launched a new website and volunteering portal. The volunteering portal makes it easy for volunteers to keep track of any pending applications as well as their active projects, and to log hours. For Project Officers it offers a more organized way to sort through and accept applications, as well as keep track of and correspond with current volunteers.

We also launched Pippa's blog, which we intend to be a way of relaying SVS news and events, including spotlights on specific projects we offer, posts where volunteers share their experiences, and information about new volunteer opportunities. Our website has also been updated to include a section specific for

Pippa's Blog, another for Give Back Week, and volunteers' expense claims can now be submitted electronically through the website.

We were very happy to introduce **Give Back Week in Semester 2**, which was our very first volunteering week. It featured various one-off events so that students who didn't have the time to volunteer regularly could try their hands at some of the different projects we offer, including a games night with Families First, a craft session at Madras, a bums off seats Cosmos Walk, and an afternoon at the Botanic Gardens. During this time we also held a talk on the Saltire Awards, as well as on international Volunteering, so that our volunteers are kept aware of the many opportunities that are available to them. We also held a very successful Open Mic Night which kicked off the week, and ending the week was a social in honour of our mascot Pippa Penguinton's birthday. Unfortunately attendance fell short at some of the events during Give Back Week, especially the social, but we still considered Give Back Week a great success overall, which greatly increased our visibility and outreach with more of the student body, and we hope to continue and expand it in following years.