University of St Andrews Students' Association

Annual Report 2023/24





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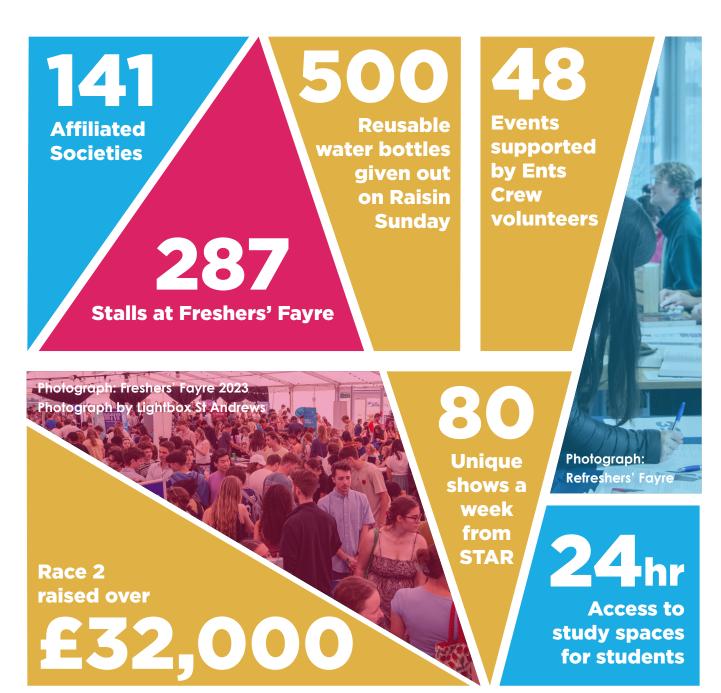
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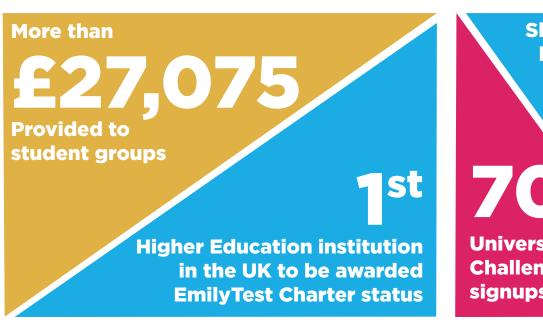


Year In Numbers











Change Programme



In January of this year the Students'
Association launched an ambitious and comprehensive Change Programme.

The Change Programme is an initiative aimed at addressing the challenges faced by the Students' Association. It is designed to guide the organisation through a period of transformation and adaptation in response to evolving student demographics, changing expectations, and global events like the pandemic. The programme involves strategic changes, structural improvements, and operational enhancements to ensure that the Association remains resilient, efficient, and effective in fulfilling our mission.

The Board of Trustees has created a Change Committee which is a subcommittee of it. Its primary purpose is to take decisive action in addressing the challenges that the Students' Association is currently facing, particularly in the areas of governance, financial stability, operational efficiency, and strategic planning. This committee has the authority to make decisions and implement changes swiftly.

The Committee is led by Antony Blackshaw. As the Change Director Antony is playing a central role in the Change Programme. He is responsible for orchestrating the development of a comprehensive Review Report and the implementation of a Change Plan.

Antony is working closely with stakeholders within the Association, including elected Sabbatical Officers, senior management, and staff, to address the challenges and guide the organisation through its transformation. Antony brings over thirty-five years of student organisation experience to the project, twenty-five of those in a Chief Executive, Interim Chief Executive and Change Director roles.

The Change Plan will be a comprehensive strategy that serves as the cornerstone of the Association's transformation efforts. It will outline a structured and purposeful roadmap to address the challenges and opportunities identified within a fresh Business Health and Review Report. The plan will focus on: building a sustainable organisational and financial structures, as well as updating strategic and operational plans, which will guide the Students' Association post the Change Programme.



Association President

Barry Will

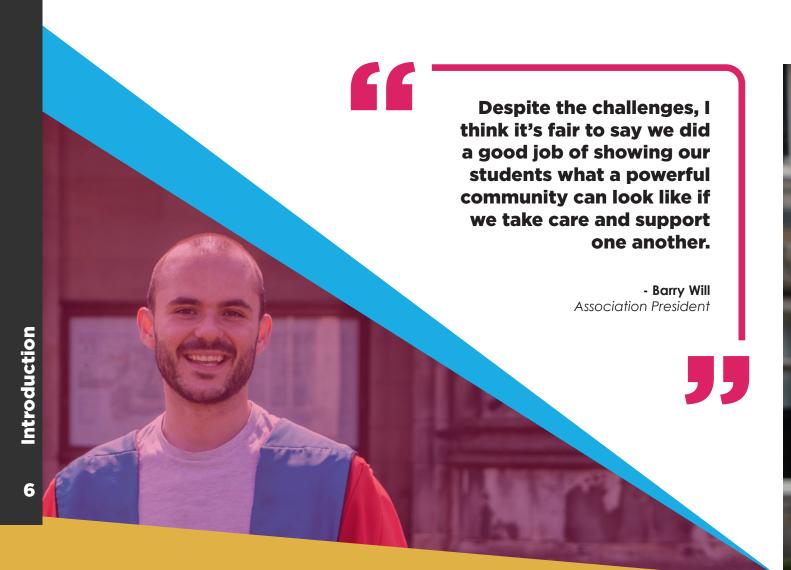
What a year! I started my term by leading 2000 students the wrong way down a bottleneck path on the Pier Walk and along the side of the cliffs, which on reflection seems a fitting metaphor for how the year was set to go. Although, I have loved every minute.

This year, we brought the Campus Larder to life which is a pantry that provides free food and essential items to students and staff in need. It started from quite humble beginnings (which you can read as me and the Director of Education doing late night Aldi trips to stock a larder which housed items on £30 B&Q shelves in a shared room – the only space we could utilise after the closure of 601).

In my final months, the larder now has its own dedicated space in the Union and provides hundreds of different items for free to hundreds of our members. We have a team of the most wonderful bunch of volunteers, and we have been generously supported by the University community who continue to donate to keep students and staff eating well during the cost-of-living crisis.

We fought hard on the development of Albany Park and convinced the University to go back to the drawing board to build more affordable accommodation instead. We ran the most successful cost-of-living appeal ever, and our weekly emails are the most read they've ever been!

We also navigated the difficult job of addressing the ongoing global conflicts in Israel and Gaza which have divided our community and have tried to support our representatives during what has been an exceptionally atypical year.



Introduction

Director of Student Development and Activities

Sam Gorman

I started off this year advocating for change to the Student Spend budget. By the start of the semester 1, things already looked different from last year: The Postgraduate Subcommittee had been dissolved as part of wider reforms and the grant repurposed into the PG Events Fund, allowing the Association to support any Society or academic rep wanting to support the PG community. Elections support was increased in line with our strategic plan. Society grants were completely restructured with the establishment of the Societies Fund: Defining why and how the Association wants to support our affiliated societies. Lalso created the New Societies Fund to help affiliating societies host their first event. Existing Association Funds were also formalised and given specific aims. I hope these reforms will start the process of the Association being more strategic in how we incentivise the projects we want to see from students.

Freshers Fayre (once again combined with Sports Fayre) was held in the Freshers Marquee due to the closure of the Sports Centre running track and club being out of action. While the Fayre unfortunately coincided with one of the hottest days in summer

it was again a success and the AU is keen to continue the partnership next year.

The Association's Employability projects have had a bit of a shakeup this year. Our independent Careers Week has been shelved in favour of supporting the existing efforts from the Careers Centre, meanwhile we helped promote the first Enterprise Week; an initiative from the Entrepreneurship Centre, hosting many of their events in our building.

Looking towards the end of the semester: In agreement with Saints Sport we're rewriting the Volunteering Award to reduce the evidence required for submissions to the minimum possible, with the aim of relaunching in September and getting more students using it. In collaboration with the Director of Events and Services I've put together an induction program for incoming Association Officers to centralise the core handover process. I'm also restarting the community Volunteering Subcommittee after a hiatus for 2 years, which should be ready to go for Freshers' Week next semester.



Director of Wellbeing and Equality

Caitlin Ridgway

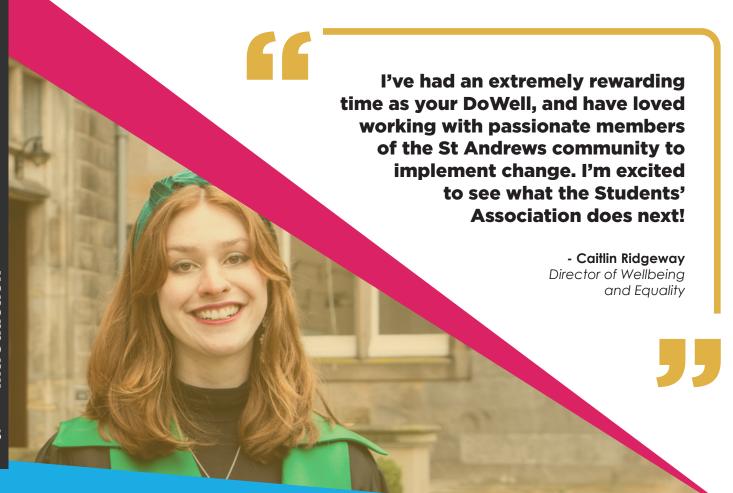
This year, students have continued to face the effects of the cost-of-living crisis in the UK. We have also seen how devastating global conflicts and crises have impacted members of our local community. Now, more than ever, we need a community built on compassion and solidarity.

Much of my work this year has been linked to compassion. Alongside the Director of Education and other student representatives, I advocated for linguistic changes in the Academic Alerts policy that centre student wellbeing. This will hopefully ensure that students feel supported and valued, making them more likely to seek support at an earlier stage so they can stay on track to study at St Andrews. The need for a caring institution has never been more crucial than in the last few years, when there are increasing reports of student wellbeing difficulties and calls for the sector to evaluate its duty of care to students.

One of my proudest achievements from my time as DoWell is that I successfully advocated for

and created a webpage with harm reduction information, support, and signposting for students who do sex work. People get involved in sex work for various reasons, especially in times of economic difficulty, and it's important that we acknowledge this reality and equip students with resources to be as safe as possible. SRC passed a motion that the Students' Association should advocate for a harm reduction approach to sex work, which gives us a strong base from which to vocally support student sex workers and build on this year's work.

In terms of EDI, I was heartened that the University were awarded the EmilyTest Charter in November 2023. The award recognises the work of staff and students from across the institution, including the work of student representatives and staff from the Students' Association in tackling gender-based violence. We created 'Saints Solidarity,' a subgroup of the Equality Committee, which is a student initiative which will focus on combatting abuse, harassment, discrimination, and hate-related incidents in our community. I also worked with student representatives and Student Services to update the 'What Now?' reporting booklets, so they better reflect the support available.



Introduction

Director of Education

Cam Brown

We have had an exceptionally successful year in Academic Representation, with wins on:

- Completely redesigning the structure of the semester two academic calendar
- Remodelling the University's extensions policy
- Designating 24 hour study spaces for students
- Reimagining the way we do student representation on University Committees
- Fixing academic alerts (to be more wellbeing focused)
- · Consulting students on changes to academic appeals.
- Simplifying the Postgraduate Representation system (and expanding the number of student seats on Senate)
- And so much more!

I have been privileged to lead alongside an incredible Education Executive Team. The Faculty Presidents, Hitanshi Badani and Calum Naughton, and the Postgraduate Presidents, Cooper Smith and Callum Irvine, have been tireless advocates for students on an incredible number of issues – from careers and employability, to lecture capture, to the way Reps are listened to and supported. Behind each of them are dozens of School

Presidents and Language Convenors and hundreds of Class and Postgraduate Reps, all of whom make efforts every day to improve and shape the student learning experience.

As a trustee, I've also worked alongside my fellow Sabbatical Officers and Students' Association Board Members convene the Change Programme, an important initiative that will shape our future as a Student Union. Beginning with hiring Antony Blackshaw as our Change Director, we've launched a comprehensive review and restructure of how the Association functions. As the Vice-Chair and Convenor of the Change Committee, I worked in partnership with the University to support the Change Programme, which will bring our Union up to par on the services and representational support we offer and will look at ways to make us more responsive to the student voice.

There have been countless other opportunities and challenges throughout my term as Director of Education, from responding to the discovery of RAAC in Purdie and other University Teaching spaces, to rebranding the 1413 Teaching Awards, hosting an Open Forum with the Library, hosting two Undergraduate Academic Fora, and relaunching the Student Partnership Agreement with the University.



Director of Events and Services

Lucy Brook

Whilst I might have been a two term Sabb, this year has felt like a completely different role than last. Last year was full of large events in StAge and 601 and a real focus on the night-time activities, but this year I have had to adapt events with a focus on the rest of the building (due to the discovery of RAAC in our main venue and have been able to give more of my attention to my subcommittees.

This year I have tried to focus more on students and through this it was raised that those in the Performing Arts sphere felt under-supported and under-represented. As part of addressing this I worked with the current Music and Performing Arts Officers to gain these positions a seat on the SRC. This is just a start in increasing the support for these students and I hope its continued and furthered in the coming years.

More recently, I have turned my attention to addressing the Volunteer burnout that we so often see among our student subcommittee members and volunteers. To help address this I have

produced training for the incoming Sabbs and Officers, as well as other relevant members of their subcommittees, but this is not where the work ends. In collaboration with the Wellbeing and Equality Co-ordinator, the Director of Wellbeing and Equality and ther LGBT+ Officer we are attempting to put more systems in place to support our student volunteers.

I have been working this year to increase the support given to the DoES when organising and running events. To bring the greater Union Operations team into the creative process I have set up Creative Ops, a space for collaboration between departments. This collaboration was perfectly demonstrated in Freshers Week, which was held in a marquee near the Sports Centre this year. Having to fully kit out and produce a weeks worth of events off site is not something we had experience with, therefore we had to all work closely together to produce what was an amazing week. Looking towards the end of my term I will be putting on the Graduation and Summer Ball as my final event.



Athletic Union President

Fiona Waddell

This year has been yet another fantastic year for student sport, and it has been a privilege and joy to be a part of it! As the Athletic Union President, it is easy to find enough to do just within sport, but it has been a great experience and great fun to work more closely with the Association and all its officers, growing our relationship with the Students' Association to provide the best possible experience for all our students. This year, my focus on the Association side of my role has been on initiatives that enhance student engagement, inclusivity, and collaboration within our athletic community. Here are a few ways we have addressed this, with hopefully many more to come!

Recognising the importance of diverse voices, we have been working on the creation of a more inclusive and representative student voice structure within the Athletic Union. This framework ensures that all voices across the town are heard and considered, fostering meaningful dialogue and broader participation. The new 'AU Rep' will hopefully be live for September 2024, and we very much look forward to engaging with the ideas and influence it yields.

I've had the amazing opportunity to work closely with several Association officers, groups, subcommittees, and societies to promote collaboration across the Athletic Union and the Students' Assocaition. Notable collaborations include initiatives with the Disabled Student Network to enhance accessibility of fitness classes, collaborating with the Director of Wellbeing and Equality on an anti-spiking initiative to promote safety and well-being and the Director of Education in continuing to advocate for protected Wednesday afternoons. In addition, we've updated and implemented the AU/SA partnership agreement. This revised agreement provides clarity on societies and clubs, increased support from Saints Sport for societies, and expanded opportunities for collaboration between the Athletic Union and the Student Association, and affiliated clubs and societies.



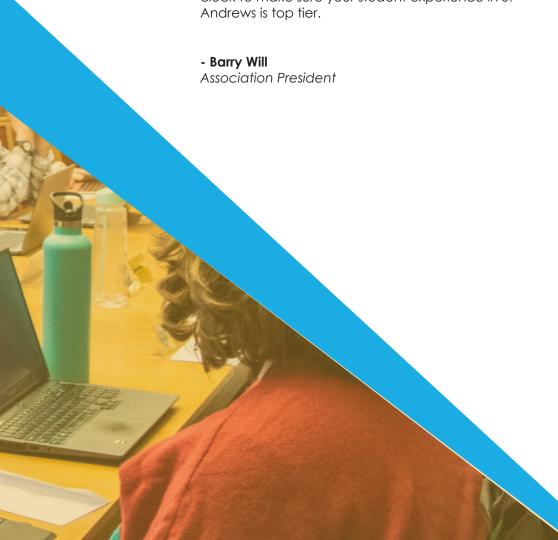
Representation

Representation

This year, the Union and its hundreds of student volunteers and representatives have worked tirelessly to ensure that every voice within the University of St Andrews is valued and heard.

At the heart of the Union's efforts are the elected representatives, who serve as the direct link between the student body, the university, and the wider community. The job of a student representative is to ensure that the community they represent is listened to, understood and cared for. That's something we do best in the Association – there's a reason we got ranked in the top 10 in the UK for academic representation!

More than academics, student representatives help bring people together. From the stellar activities of BAME's multicultural week to the Environment Subcommittees Green Week lectures and outdoor events, to your School Presidents who have hosted your student reps work around the clock to make sure your student experience in St Andrews is top tier.



Students' Representative Council

Successful SRC meetings Vacant positions filled

Selected issues raised and confronted at meetings:

- Save our Scottish Universities launched
- Postgraduate Representative Reform
- Carers, Commuters, Mature, and Flexible Learners rebrand
- Academic Calendar Consultation
- Anomalies in Laws and Standing Orders Amended
- Opposition to cinema closure
- Saints Solidarity initiative launched
- Housing Reform update
- Music Fund Officer and Performing Arts Officer granted SRC seats
- Will Christopher
 Association Chair

"Met with student groups to discuss issues affecting them."

"Worked to improve accessibility and advertisement of SRC meetings."

Students' Representative Council Officers

Association President	Barry Will
Athletic Union President	Fiona Waddell
Director of Education	Cam Brown
Director of Events and Services	Lucy Brook
Director of Student Development and Activities	Sam Gorman
Director of Wellbeing and Equality	Caitlin Ridgway
Accommodation Officer	Noah Schott
Alumni Officer	
Arts and Divinity Faculty President	Hitanshi Badani
Association Chair	Will Christopher
BAME Officer	Meagan Neves
Carers, Commuters, Mature, and Flexible Learners Officer	Mandy Thompson
Charities Campaign Officer	Alice Chapman
Community Relations Officer	Jack Mcnealy
Disability Officer	Molly Reade
Employability Officer	Jacob Carey
Environment Officer	Eva Neill
Gender Equality Officer	· Arlo Bitcon
International Students' Officer	Gabriel Vargas Berroa
LGBT+ Officer	Jack Kennedy
Postgraduate Development Officer	Klaudia Grat
Postgraduate Research President	· Callum Irvine
Postgraduate Taught President	Cooper Smith
Science and Medicine Faculty President	Calum Naughton
Secretary to the SRC	
Societies Officer	
Student Health Officer	Grace Greene
Widening Access and Participation Officer	Katie McAdam



Achievements in Academic Representation

Across 30 academic departments, our 500+ Academic Representatives have made huge improvements to learning, teaching, and research at the University of St Andrews. The Students' Association has a strong voice in the classrooms of every school, targeting key issue areas like equality, diversity, and inclusion in education, sustainable development, careers and employability, accessibility for disabled students, and postgraduate taught and research affairs.

- The Education Executive Team



From our School Presidents and Language Convenors, here are just a few highlights and achievements:

- Co-hosted a highly successful Voices Unheard Symposium with the BAME Subcommittee, focusing on underrepresented topics and speakers in higher education
- Launched the second iteration of the Arts & Divinity Faculty Journal, publishing essays from 34 students
- Expanded participation in Language Cafes (Modern Languages)
- Launched a campaign to ensure more sustainability in printed sheet music (Music)
- Held an incredible Pride in STEM Week, collaborating with Saints LGBT+
- Held mixers for students and staff to get to know each other (International Relations)
- Supported the transition to a new business school (Management & Econ/Finance)
- Launching of a campaign to decolonise the management curriculum (Management)
- Led an exam wellbeing event (Earth & Environmental Sciences)
- Launched the Irvine Atlas academic journal (Geography & Sustainable Development);
- Organised a 4th Year Dissertation Writing Group (Social Anthropology)
- Proactive planning for accessibility and disability concerns in School EDI Committee (Film Studies)

- A successful collaboration for Ides Ball (History, Classics, and Art History)
- And DOZENS of social events (pub quizzes, garden parties, etc.), careers events, and educational opportunities across all 30 departments!

This year, we saw an all-time record number of candidates in the Class Rep Elections; 938 candidates stood for election, which is over 9% of the entire student body! Elected representatives advocated hard on issues like lecture capture, extensions, exam marking and feedback, and dissertation support at Student-Staff Consultative Committees in every department.

At the Undergraduate Academic Forum meetings, Academic Representatives worked with Senior Decision Makers (such as the Proctor and AVP Dean of Learning and Teaching) on a number of high-priority issues in Schools, including: tuition-fees for placement students, closing the feedback loop, transparency about grade curving, and study spaces. We were even joined by Principal Sally Mapstone for an Education Committee meeting, where we discussed knowledge of academic representation and disengagement with lectures.

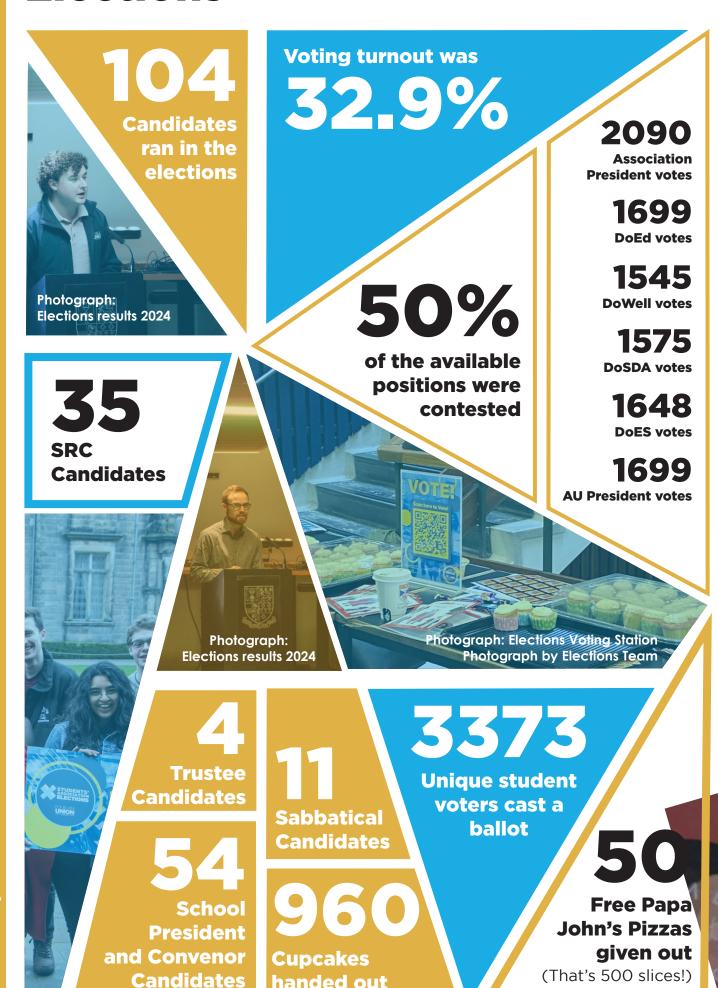
Academic Representatives

School Presidents and Convenors

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	Art History School President Biology School President Chemistry President Classics School President Computer Science School President Divinity School President Earth and Environmental Sciences School President Economics & Finance School President English School President Film President Geography & Sustainable Development School President	Rebekah Bryson Harry Burrows Michael Pagano Ben Vardy David Byrne Gemma Laker Syna Singh Aarushi Malhotra Sairaa Bains
	History School President International Relations School President Management School President Mathematics & Statistics School President Medicine School President Modern Languages School President Music School President Philosophy School President Physics & Astronomoy School President Psychology & Neuroscience School President Social Anthropology President	Olivia Benbow Daria Gusa Ruchi Dadu Krish Chaudhary Shreya Apsani Harry Brett-Butcher James McNinch Mariana Razina Anna Conti Chloe-Anna Hunt
• • • • • • • •	Arabic & Persian Convenor Chinese Convenor Comparative Literature Convenor French Convenor German Convenor Italian Convenor Russian Convenor Spanish Convenor	Anastasia Jeffcoat Kiera Martin Federica Consiglio Tom Rippon Harriet White Rohin Buch Sydney Ash



Elections



handed out

This academic year
we had the chance to
curate two dynamic
weeks of events
showcasing the cultural
richness of the BSN
community, one each
semester. The first
being BAMEfest, and
the second Multicultural
Week, along with
key events regarding
advocacy for Palestine.

Event Highlights:

- BAMEfest: We engaged in activities such as the celebrations of Diwali and Diyas, conducted information sessions with the Careers Centre and Report + Support, and offered a creative outlet of events, including art crafting, jewellery-making workshops, food events, and many more.
- Advocacy for Palestine: We organised teach-ins with specialised speakers like "Gaza In Context" with over 180 students and staff attending, and successfully passed the motion for advocating for a ceasefire at SRC.
- Multicultural Week: We hosted a week full of cultural delights, including live music performances, movie screenings, immersive art nights, Lunar New Year preparations, discussions on queerness and communities of colour, and cultural photoshoots!
- 'Voices Unheard': A symposium on diversity and inclusion in academia, which included a Keynote address, presentations from student speakers on their research on underrepresented groups, and a panel discussion.
- Agathe Merlevede BAME Marketing Officer





Saints LGBT+ this year in a few words... standing up, showing out, and being there for our community.

As queer people, we always have existed (and always will), and perhaps this year has been a great example of where we've stood up and made our mark, whether hosting over 35 wellbeing events, German Film Fest collaborations, or working on internal policy changes with colleagues across university departments for the betterment of trans and non binary folks.

I could not write such a summary message of what we've done this year without giving immense credit to my team of volunteers- whether on our main committee, heading up their own projects, or anyone who has got involved. From a zine that reads like an anthology every time, to wellbeing events, team making bracelets and looking out for students, to another two fantastic Transfests, a Queerfest celebration of all things we stand for, the infamous Glitterball, or even the background work done by so many Saints LGBT+ volunteers that never sees the light of day.

I am so immensely proud of this community that never ceases to show its cheeky side, its dedication to looking out for another, and the immense work of all volunteers. If you're one of these fantastic people reading this, never stop! If you want to be one of these amazing people, come and get involved.



Disabled Students' Network



This year the DSN has hosted more events than ever before, with 4-5 regular weekly events and many other one-off events. This includes a new regular mental health event and a new endeavour of collaborating with sports clubs. We have also run disability-tailored exam pack giveaways both semesters for the first time!





Network

- We launched accessibility training and an office hour for societies to get advice on including disabled people.
- At the beginning of the year, we published two guides to help people acclimate to university, both have been successful with over one hundred people having read each – which is a feat when one is thirty pages long.
- We launched a discord, pulled off two themed weeks and a Disability History Month display in the library.
- On what you might not have seen –
 we undertook major projects discussing
 accommodation accessibility this year. This
 included lobbying the university on opening more
 accessible halls accommodation in town and
 asking them to work with the council to improve
 accessible routes throughout St Andrews.
- We were involved in the overhaul of the Academic Alert system – in an effort to include less punitive language.
- Additionally, alongside the Disability and Academic Support Reps, we have worked with the university to process feedback on the new extensions policy and improve reading lists.
- Other projects we have undertaken this year include overhauling how the university 'triages' disabled students, working on the assistance dog's policy and improving study space accessibility.
- Molly Reade
 SRC Disability Officer

Carers, Commuters, Mature, and Flexible Learners

- Rebranding: Led an exciting rebranding effort, carefully creating a distinctive and inclusive title for the subcommittee. Eliminating uncertainty and offering clear directions to students in need of assistance was the goal. Since these changes, online engagement metrics increased dramatically, showing a 47% rise of CCMFL students actively present on CCMFL groups. This remarkable rise displays the impact of rebranding initiatives and the creation of community it has produced.
- Advocacy for Student Carers: Established a
 comprehensive campaign to increase support
 for students who are carers, and students with
 parental responsibilities. Through collaboration
 with students and the university, I led the
 development of an extensive proposal
 advocating for enhancements in the support
 system and inclusion. Working alongside student
 carers, I have strived to ensure the support
 offered will be more inclusive, relevant, sensitive,
 and adaptive.
- Commuter Support: Created and published the Commuters Guide. I passed a motion at the SRC advocating for a dedicated commuter student support role that would be committed to the unique needs of commuters. Additionally, I meticulously audited commuter facilities, supported by research that demonstrated the major influence these areas have on students' educational experiences. I carefully crafted a comprehensive proposal for improving commuter student facilities, ensuring inclusivity and alianment with academic enhancement, whilst ensuring collaboration with commuter students and seeking advice from specialists in the field of academic spaces. I submitted the proposal to the Principal's Office and EDI Fund.

• All-Inclusive Campus Advocacy: Advocated for a more inclusive campus environment, with particular focus on mature students and students with parental responsibilities, I created a microaggression booklet focusing on communication barriers in education and supporting healthy inclusive language whilst advocating for campus spaces where students can bring children. Ran several all-ability events where no demographic was excluded, encompassing all CCMFL students, the wider student body, and St Andrews Community.

- Mandy Thompson

Carers, Commuters, Mature, and Flexible Learners Officer

Photographs:
CCMFL pier walk
(top), CCMFL with
The Highland Cycle
Ability Centre all
ability Freshers' event
(bottom)

Photographs by Carers, Commuters, Mature, and Flexible Learners

Employability

The Employability Officer role has undertaken exceptional development this academic year. It now has a much broader role, focusing on representing three key student groups: Students looking to develop their employability, students in part-time work and careers. and employability representatives.

The role has become a much more active student representative within the University, being part of four groups:

- The Employability Working Group
- The Entrepreneurial Education Working Group
- The Widening Access and Participation Group
- The Assessments Group

With that as a focus of the role, The Employability now chairs and convenes the Careers, Entrepreneurship and Employability Forum, inviting every Career and Employability Representative, every School Employability Officer, and many University Representatives, including the Director of Student Experience and the Director of Careers. This has all been done to create stronger partnerships with the Careers Officer, Centre for Enhanced Educational Development and Entrepreneurship Centre.

The Employability Officer now engages with all Sabbatical Officers and other Student Representatives to varying degrees, ensuring that every aspect of a University of St Andrews Student's Experience allows them to grow their employable skills. In addition, they have taken a much more active role in the education representation system, attending many education committee meetings and every undergraduate academic forum. They have been working with the Director of Student Development and Activities, and the Management Account on the Employability Fund has seen more requests than ever before to fund more careerfocused events. In addition, they are currently a judge on the exceptional Enterprising Mind of the Year Award.

- Jacob Carey SRC Employability Officer

Community Relations

"We promoted motions to "We raised support St Andrews awareness and students and a healthy town funding for at the Community "We storehouse and worked **Council Meetings.**" the Ecohub." with BID to rethink "We successfully the market ran the St Andrews and student **Day Market.**" engagement with town events." - Jack McNealy Community Relations Officer



Support

The Students' Association provides independent information and advice around University procedures, and also directs students to the support resources they need. We regularly update and refresh our support pages so they reflect the most accurate information and student needs. This year, we have updated our pages for spiking and nights out, support for student sex workers, cost of living, and the HelpHub. We also provide free, sustainable period products to any student who needs them, as well as condoms.

Another way the Students' Association provides support to our students is through safety initiatives. On Raisin Sunday I ran a free bread and water stall for participants from 8am-6pm. Main Bar was used as a first aid triage area and Sandy's was a respite centre. I also produced Academic Parents and Childrens' guides, ensuring that students were empowered with information to make sure Raisin was fun and safe for everyone.

The Students' Association is a hub of activity through which students build community and networks of support. StAnd Together is a partnership initiative with Student Services which facilitates important conversations with students on consent, alcohol and drug harm reduction, and supporting friends. Our elected student officers represent students to the University and push for stronger provision so that students feel valued, respected, and safe while studying at St Andrews. The Student Mental Health Agreement, a partnership project with the University, is another way we work with the University to put student needs at the centre of our activities.

We are always striving to improve the support we provide to students, enabling them to not just get by, but flourish during their time in St Andrews.

- Caitlin Ridgway
Director of Wellbeing and Equality

StAnd Together

What StAnd Together has achieved in 2023/24

- Provided training to hall committees, all sports social secretaries and many other society committees on inclusive events for any level of alcohol use, safe alcohol use, harm reduction and responses to spiking.
- Hosted sober crafting events to help create events for everyone.
- Gave out informational posters, unit measuring cups and safety advice to academic parents prior to Raisin Weekend.
- Involved in a review of student and staff drug and alcohol policy.
- Partnered with drinkaware to get free resources for students ahead of Freshers' and other events.
- Provided posters and social media support for events such as Glitterball to promote safe drinking and response to drink spiking.

- Begun a review of the mocktails available at pubs around St Andrews to raise awareness for where non drinking people can still get good alcohol-free drinks. These will be useful for future Freshers' documents as we can recommend pubs and activities for Freshers'.
- Participated in organising for Sustainability's Student Alcohol and Drug Awareness Week with social media resources, handing out resources and a pre exam bag decorating event.
- Currently involved in adding sections to union and university websites on recognising alcohol addiction and signposting where to get help and support.
- Created social media posts around big events like raisin to raise awareness for common issues and how to be inclusive and safe.

- Samantha Insall

GotLimits Coordinator

Got Consent

- GotConsent is dedicated to eradicating genderbased violence and fostering a culture of support for survivors of sexual and interpersonal violence.
- We aim to raise awareness and empower individuals to take action.
- We offer dynamic, student-facilitated workshops that cover topics such as bystander intervention, supporting survivors, healthy relationships, and prevention culture.
- This year alone, its workshops have reached approximately a thousand students.
- Spearheads awareness campaigns and events. From social-media campaigns, to free condom and menstrual product giveaways, GotCrafts, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and the Clothesline Project, GotConsent strives to engage the St Andrews community and amplify its message.

- Sam Fidler

Got Consent Coordinator



Support

Gender Equality

Achievements in 2023/24

- Collaborated with the union on implementing anti-spiking measures to ensure the safety of all students.
- Provided comprehensive support and resources for students involved in sex work, fostering a supportive environment.
- Spearheaded initiatives to enhance accessibility to reusable period products, promoting sustainable and inclusive practices.
- Championed and supported motions aimed at fostering positive changes within the institution to promote gender equality.
- Organised and facilitated bi-monthly SGBV forums, providing a platform for open dialogue and addressing issues related to sexual and gender-based
- Arlo Bitcon Gender Equality Officer

Equality Committee



This is a space for student representatives to discuss equality issues in a safe, supportive space. We also have the Student Equality Forum, where University staff and student representatives meet to discuss shared issues and work together where relevant.

Achievements 2023/24

- This year, we created 'Saints Solidarity,' an
 initiative that comes under the Equality
 Committee. Saints Solidarity will ensure the
 Students' Association will stand firmly against
 discrimination and promote intersectionality and
 inclusivity, by bringing together student officers
 who are lived-experience experts.
- Members of the Equality Committee worked with Student Services to update the 'What Now?' booklets which explain how to report and get support following harassment and sexual misconduct. These updates made the booklets more accessible and informative for students.
- The SGBV Forum, a working group of the Equality Committee, has discussed anti-spiking initiatives and been involved in planning events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.
- Caitlin Ridgway

Director of Wellbeing and Equality

"

We started off with a tote bag decorating session which was wildly popular and very fun. Students and got a free tote bag and art supplies to decorate it in the Beacon Bar. Many students came alone and sat with new groups and made new friends!

SHAG week was a huge success. We promoted sexual health, awareness, and guidance resources through our Instagram campaign and hosted a SHAG pack and sex toy giveaway events. Our SHAG packs contained resources for sexual health and some free goodies. They were all taken within 30 minutes! We also had a free STI testing clinic come into the union to take drop-in STI tests. This was a hugely successful event, and it was jampacked all day! In addition, we organised period product giveaways and condom giveaways.

We had a successful Valentine's giveaway campaign, which caused many smiles! We gave away 200 packs with all things related to Valentine's Day, including chocolates, inspirational cards, mints, fidgets, roses, condoms, and period products. Every pack was taken within an hour and we got a lot of support from students who received the bags.

We collaborated with many societies on events this year. We introduced weekly free yoga sessions with Yogi Soc to increase the number of students with access to free exercise. We also organised many dog cuddling and walking sessions with Dog Walking Soc. During Movember we organised a Board Game Night with Board Game Soc and a hole-digging competition with Hole Soc to win a Rectors youcher.

- Grace Greene Student Health Officer

Support

Photographs: Valentine's Packs (left),
Students gathering for Doggy cuddling session in collaboration
with Dog Walking Society (right)
Photographs by Wellbeing Committee

HelpHub



The HelpHub is the Students' Association's Advocacy Service. It offers free, impartial, and independent advice on University processes including academic and non-academic misconduct, academic appeals, complaints, termination of studies, and fitness to practice.



The HelpHub offers advice on University and private accommodation enquiries, including lease checking, property viewings, and tenants' rights.

Our goal is to give students clear, compassionate, and high-quality advice, so they can make the best decisions for themselves. Our independence from the University allows us to give the kind of advice that University colleagues would be unable to give, as we are separate from the structures and processes that are causing students to seek advice in the first place.

Frequently, referrals to the service come from official University letters, such as following grade releases or academic misconduct notifications. Students are also often referred via Student Services.

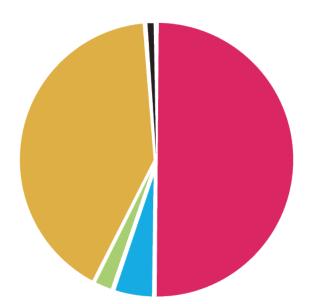
Below you can see the split of our caseload over the last calendar year, from 01/04/2023 to 08/03/2024. Please note that 'Academic' includes academic misconduct, academic appeals, S-coding, termination of studies, and other general academic enquiries.

This academic year, we significantly improved our content on the Students' Association website, providing in-depth content on all the University processes we advise on. We summarise policies in simplified language, providing 'how-to' guides and flowcharts to clarify often opaque University processes.

The HelpHub is only staffed on a part-time basis by the Education Advocate, with some support on lower-level cases from the Wellbeing & Equality Coordinator. This means that students can face delays in response times due to limited service capacity. The service requires additional, dedicated staffing in order to ensure that students continue to receive high quality and timely advice.

- Holly McDonald

Wellbeing & Equality Co-ordinator



HelpHub Cases 01/04/2023 - 08/03/2024

- 188 Academic
- 154 Housing
- 18 University Complaints Handling
- 9 Non academic misconduct
- 5 Fitness to Practice



Activities

Last year in this section I said it's impossible to be fully aware of everything being done by our students, and being the only person to hold the role of DoSDA twice you'd think I'd be getting closer but instead I've continued to find more incredible work going on everywhere, affecting all parts of student life.

After some push from me, the activities budget had its first substantial increase in more than 7 years, increasing by just under £19k compared to last year. This is against a backdrop of some substantial changes this year:

Ents underwent some restructuring and became a full subcommittee funded from the activities budget, with tech work for Union events being run by paid student staff.

The closure of the StAge has forced a lot of student groups to move elsewhere for their events, often at increased costs. The Union has spent a lot of time this year trying to mitigate these costs by providing alternative space in University buildings at subsidised costs.

Discussions about the support the Union can provide for student music and theatre have continued from last year, and we've now added the Music and Performing Arts Officers to the Association Elections, with a hope that these Subcommittees can take on a more representative role to highlight the ongoing issues faced by their cohorts in future.

On The Rocks Festival was taken on by the DoES this year after the Festival Convenors left without successors, moving forward the DoES will lead OTR as a special project rather than a subcommittee.

While we've yet to create a successful centralised events calendar for students, I'm optimistic that eventually we'll find a way to make it work for students and event organisers.

- Sam Gorman

Director of Student Development and Activities

Entertainments Committee

2023/24 Highlights

- Had the greatest number of new members join in one year since Covid!
- Ents Crew Volunteers have helped make over 48 events happen.
- Held events in 4 different venues across campus while we wait for StAge and 601 to reopen.
- Maintained our ability to train members, seeking out new and inventive ways for training whilst the venue was closed.
- More theatre engagement within the wider theatre community.
- Held workshops in the Barron.
- Had a workshop with a lighting designer covering aspects of the design process and the industry as a whole.
- Theatre lighting programming training from ETC.
- Events lighting programming training from Avolites.
- Looking forward to new training and event opportunities next year once were.
- Shona M'gadzah Ents Convenor



STAR: St Andrews Radio

2023/24 Highlights

- STAR has maintained a schedule of over 80 unique shows a week and got the studio back up and running to full microphone operation. We've also updated our Show Host agreement and security procedures to be more thorough to ensure smooth running in future. One of our shows was also recognised with a Silver Student Radio Award!
- Alongside our usual roster of music events, such as Sounds of Sandys and Bell Pettigrew Sessions, we co-hosted a number of other events such as the Freshers' Week Music Festival, Reflections on Empire with BAME and Drink & Draw with Capture Collective. We've also begun trying to give back to our artists by recording during Bell Pettigrew Sessions!
- Our three subcommittees, starTV, The Record and Hearing Aid have all produced a greater variety of content with far more consistent output. Included in this is the revival of our TikTok and Youtube channel, consistent event reviews, including Songs in College Hall, and a new edition of Hearing Aid.
- Matthew Colquhoun STAR: Broadcasting Officer and Station Manager

Charities Campaign

"

It's been another jampacked year for the
Charities Campaign.
We've been fundraising
this year for three
fantastic, student
nominated charities:
The Wave Project,
Smart Works Scotland
and Emergency UK.

Some of our highlights include:

- Race2's 35 teams, over 80 racers, racing to Copenhagen over spring break raising over £32,000
- CATWALK had an incredible show, selling out Younger Hall and showcasing student designers and sustainable fashion alternatives.
- Challengers have teams set to head off to Machu Picchu and Morocco this summer to complete incredible treks.
- We have held inter-society events throughout the year and have a play in the Botanic Gardens in the works.
- RAG sold out tickets for their annual Take Me Out show and raised over £5000 in RAG week.
- We have run the cloakrooms for most of the events in St Andrews totalling somewhere close to £10,000.
- We ran outreach events with charitable societies in St Andrews including a third-sector careers fayre, speaker nights and mixers.
- We will be running our annual Gives Back
 Awards to help recognise the hard work and time
 given by those that volunteer in the St
 Andrews community.

The over 100-person committee has worked so hard this year and the totals fundraised really demonstrates this.

- Alice Chapman

Charities Campaign Officer

Photographed - RAG Week Escape Room (left)
Race2 Teams (Right)

Photographs by Charities Campaign

Union Debating Society

- Hosted two competitions (Scottish Mace and St Andrews Open) inviting institutions from across Scotland, UK & Europe. Record levels of attendance.
- We hosted two internal competitions for our novice debaters.
- We will be hosting our first training academy in preparation for the European Championships in Glasgow.
- We won Durham Intervarsity this year.
- We hosted our schools competition at St Leonard's which saw high school attendance (over 40 teams).
- We will be hosting our World Schools tournament in May.

- Hosted our 1794 Ball which had well over 100 people in attendance (doubling from last year).
- Held two pub crawls and a Christmas social.
- Hosted our weekly public debates & training for St Andrews students including a collaboration with Scotland Future Series, UNA & Visualising Peace, and TedX St Andrews.



Music Fund



2023-24 has been an extremely busy year for Music Fund. In this time, we have supported student musicians throughout St Andrews in many ways.



- Events Team: Cosi Lovegrove-Leak and the events team ran weekly open mic nights in Main Bar, collaborating with societies like ArtSoc, PoetrySoc, and BAME, fostering a safe environment for first-time performers. They also organised additional events such as music pub quizzes and bandstand events.
- Festivals Team: Led by Ava Alexander, the festivals team organised bi-semesterly large-scale events including joint band/DJ nights at the Vic and Musicmas celebrations at Beacon Bar. They also organised Music Week in semester two, collaborating with various groups and venues across St Andrews, culminating in a highly successful event at St. Sizzle. They are in the process of organising Battle of The Bands for the end of this semester.
- Rental Scheme: Enthusiastically managed by Calum Cooke, the rental scheme offers equipment like PA systems, monitors, and microphones, so far supporting events up to four times a week and providing a steady cash flow

- times a week and providing a steady cash flow to Music Fund. Allows for affordable tech rentals within St Andrews.
- Halls Representatives: Under Constance Goh's leadership, Halls representatives addressed concerns in halls such as ABH and Powell, securing funding for instrument repairs and purchases.
- Music Officer Role: Collaboratively, efforts
 were made to establish the Music Officer role
 on the Student Representative Council, ensuring
 continued communication and advocacy for
 music-related initiatives.
- Acknowledgments: Special recognition goes to Jonah Sweidan for design and marketing, Julie Hatfield as treasurer, Mohib Ali for secretarial duties, and Jenna Fisher all contributing to Music Fund's success.

Mermaids Performing Arts Fund



This year we have put on 14 amazing shows including our 4 Fresher's Drama Festival shows, which saw 34 new students participate on stage and backstage. In total we have had over 80 new students join our productions!

- Our amazing Christmas Ball Convener, Abby Kelley, along with the Christmas Ball Subcommittee organised our Annual Christmas Ball with over 1700 guests, this year it was Aurora Borealis themed!
- With the help of an amazing student community member, Caitie Steele, we launched Mermates, a weekly theater games session where all students can participate in theater!
- Our wonderful Barron Subcommittee held their inaugural playwriting competition which received over 15 submissions, the event was sponsored by an Alumni of St Andrews, and the winner received £250!
- The Barron Subcommittee has also worked tirelessly to strengthen our relationship with the Byre Theatre, and with this being our third year in the Barron at the Byre we seem to have finally found our footing at the top floor of the Byre, with six Mermaids shows performing in there this year and several other student groups performing there as well!
- We are excited to be sending four more amazing shows to The Edinburgh Fringe Festival this Summer!
- This year we have also focused on promoting and supporting all student theater within St Andrews through joint socials with our affiliated societies organised by our Engagements Officer, Eleanor Whorms, and our 'Ultimate Guide to St Andrews at the Fringe' compiled and advertised the 13 shows that represented St Andrews at the Fringe in August 2023!

2023/24 Highlights:

Mermaids Performing Arts Fund

 After two years without storage for our sets, props, and costumes in St Andrews we were able to move the majority of our items into storage at The Old Burgh School, making our resources accessible to anyone wanting to do theater in St Andrews.



Activitie

On The Rocks



This year On The Rocks became a special project ran by the Director of **Events and Services with** the help of Jacob Carey. We slimmed down the festival to only being held in the Byre, with a focusing of keeping the festival going in the face of a change in its organisational background.

Within the Byre 4 productions were put on over the 7 days, as well as 5 workshops that represented a diverse genre of entertainment.

Our festival took place from 13th to 20th March with the following lineup in the auditorium:

- Blind Mirth Sketch Show
- Jazz Symphony Concert
- Jekyll and Hyde The Musical
- The School for Scandal

There was a focus on collaboration with different student groups. Through either shows or workshops we worked with:

- Blind Mirth Sketch Show
- The Music Society
- Musical Theatre Society
- Mermaids Performing Arts Fund
- Ents Crew
- Music Fund
- PRISMA Photography Magazine

- Lucy Brook

Director of Events and Services

Societies Committee

We've managed to get a lot done this year:

- Creation of the Accessibility Award in collaboration with DSN.
- Successfully advocated to have Society Award grant money directly given to Societies rather than reimbursed from receipts.
- A sustainable model for Society Got Consent training agreed.
- Establishment of Refreshers' Fund: Supporting Societies with welcome back events, encouraging free sessions for semester abroad students.
- Greater Support for new Societies:
 - New Societies have 2 academic years to reach 25 members, no longer punishing new groups who affiliate after the start of Freshers' Fayre.
 - Creation of the New Societies Fund: New Societies can apply for funding to support their first event before they have the membership income to pay for it.
 - Societies Committee publicity: From next year projects supported by the Societies or New Societies Fund will be promoted by the Societies Committee.

 £14,000 from 34 grants awarded (at time of writing)

This year has seen a culture change for the Societies Committee: asking ourselves what we want to use our grants to support and identifying barriers consistently stopping students from successfully setting up a self-sufficient Society.

We've separated our internal budget for events from the money in the Societies Fund. We've agreed a social media strategy for next year, and we've written guidelines on our internal procedures for future committees. We've spent the year identifying what our goals are and how we want to achieve them.

- Sam Gorman

Director of Student Development and Activities

We started with Freshers being held in a marquee near the Sports Centre. Fully kitting out and running a weeks worth of events off site was a mammoth task that required input and collaboration from all Union departments. Whilst organising Freshers we also had to plan how to make the Union as a whole an attractive place for a night out in light of the lack of 601.

The summer was spent revitalising our spaces, with lighting rigs going up in Beacon and Sandys to allow them to be used as nightclub venues and some new paint and wallpaper in Main Bar to freshen up its look. The lack of 601 meant refocusing of events to the rest of building, the use of Rectors as a karaoke venue for full building events proved to be popular and Beacon became our new main club space.

This year has been a period of growth for all our commercial departments. Ents and Customer Safety have increased their off site activities, regularly being asked to provide support to events in St Andrews. Bars have been extremely busy as the number of Balls being held in St Andrews has continued to increase and our catering department has also opened a cafe in the Sports Centre.

We are also currently working towards the reopening of 601, looking at what changes can be made to the space itself as well as the user experience as both customers and event organisers.

- Lucy Brook

Director of Events and Services

Spaces, Events and Staffing

Staff

Staffing has been a challenging area for us this year. The closure of part of the building has meant we employed fewer student staff than we would normally do. At the same time, we have worked to make sure that the student staff we do have enjoy rewarding and challenging work, and are able to support themselves financially in a way that complements rather than interfering with their studies.

We want to take a minute to recognise the long service of some of these staff: Phil Hulse, Building Manager - 25 years, Jillian Cowan, Deputy General Manager – 25 years, lain Cupples, HR and Advocacy manager – 25 years, Mandy Barnes, Porter – 25 years, Charlene Dick, Old Union Coffee Shop – 20 years, Susan 'Pee' McCulloch, Bars Manager – 15 years, Sam Robertson, Catering Manager – 10 years, Jade Lumsden, Rectors Team Leader – 10 years, and Lesley Millar our Kitchen Supervisor – 10 years.

We must also thank **Dave Whitton** our General Manager as he approaches 29 years of service and leadership, Christine Miller Clerk to Board and PA to the General Manager - 28 years, Rob Dibb our Facilities Supervisor for over 20 years of service, Rachel Hughes our Design and Marketing Manager for over 10 years of hard work, and Donna Scott from the Old Union Coffee shop, last but certainly not least, approaching her 39th year with us!

This is not to neglect the contributions of the staff who've joined us this year - including Anton McAleese, Eliane Boyer, Adam Ellahi and Kevin O'Neil in Catering, and Hayley Lennie in Reception, who has done a stellar job replacing Chris McCue, who left us this year after an amazing 38 years.

We've added more student interns, supporting our officers, communications, committees and student elections, and their contributions have been amazing. The work our student staff have taken on in our trading and support departments (bars, café, cleaning and customer safety) has been just as impressive and professional.

Our Customer Safety and Bars teams have been looking to expand beyond the building, providing student staff for student events (supported by the expertise of experienced permanent staff with wide experience in the night time economy). The aim here is to make sure that the student experience for all is improved, not just in the Union (recognised as an excellent venue by our Best Bar None awards) but across St Andrews.

Our permanent staff have continued to impress also, providing steady support for students in areas like societies, representation, and wellbeing as well as high quality food, entertainment and safe social spaces. The standards they set are incredibly high.

We want to express our warm admiration and respect for all our staff - they do what they do very well, and they are an

> invaluable resource for the Association.

- Senior Management Team



Operations - RAAC Update

As most of you will be aware, in March 2023, we discovered a type of aerated concrete in the roof of our nightclub space. This is a product that was used mainly from the 1950's onwards in academic and council buildings, churches amongst others, as a strong and cheap material for construction. The apparent problems with this so called RAAC was only an emerging issue at the time, it was the diligence of our building management team that led us to identify this as a concern in our own building. The venue was closed immediately for a specialist assessment given the risks associated with the material and it's potential for significant degradation after 25 years or so.

Fast forward to April 2024 and we have safely removed all of the RAAC, the rebuild of the roof is well under way and the space should be handed back to us at the start of August in good time for Freshers Week. The repairs have been a real collaborative effort between the Students' Association, the University and the appointed contractors – Morrisons as the lead – that have pushed the project forward. Without the support of the University, it is unlikely that the project would have been an option or certainly wouldn't have moved forward anywhere near as quickly as it has.

We have a new sound system being installed as part of the refurbishment, the bar has been extended and we have been able to increase sound proofing and – most importantly – we now have a brand new, wind and water tight roof!

We look forward to welcoming new and returning students back into our venue, so that everyone can get the full student experience during their time in St Andrews.

We will be recruiting for staff, DJ's, music acts and entertainment acts and we will be taking bookings for the space in the coming weeks.



Afterword

This year has been quite unique, by all standards. It started with our club space 601 closing, and the efforts of the year being drowned out by the noise of machinery and construction.

We faced challenges that none of us could have expected, but as a Union, we've come out the other side and our community is stronger and more resilient as a result. Despite all those challenges, I think it's fair to say we did a good job of showing our students what a powerful community can look like if we take care and support one another.

The sabbatical team have loved working together, and collectively, we've achieved so much. With the Change Programme, this year's team is leaving a legacy that will hopefully allow our Union to grow and develop and continue to support our members.

66

After all, this is your Union - and we'll always make sure every member feels at home here.

- Barry Will Association President



Closing

Incoming Sabb Team 24/25





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