




# Annual Report

## 2025-26



**YOUR**   
**UNION**  
Scottish Registered Charity, no. SC019883  
 UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



University of St. Andrews Students' Association

YOUR UNION

WELCOME

WELCOME

WELCOME

WELCOME

WELCOME

# Contents



## Introduction

3 Year in Numbers

## Executive Team Updates

5 President of Union Affairs  
6 President of Education  
7 President of Wellbeing and Community  
8 President of Student Opportunities  
9 Athletic Union President  
10 Postgraduate Taught President  
11 Postgraduate Research President

## Representation

13 Academic Representation  
14 Elections  
15 Postgraduate Representation  
16 All Student Forum  
17 Disabled Students Network  
18 Saints LGBT+  
18 Estranged and Care-Experienced Students  
18 BAME  
19 Community Relations  
19 The Carers, Commuters, Mature and Flexible Learners

## Support

22 StAnd Together  
22 GotConsent  
22 GotLimits  
23 PeerSupport  
23 GotSolidarity  
24 Advocacy & Advice  
25 Wellbeing & Community Executive and Forum

## Activities

27 Activities Networks  
28 Entertainments Committee  
29 Charities Campaign  
29 Union Debating Society  
30 Mermaids Performing Arts Fund  
31 Societies Committee  
32 St Andrews Voluntary Service  
33 St Andrews Music Society

## Awards

34 One Union Awards  
36 Honorary Life Membership

## Operations

39 Trading Operations

## Closing

42 Afterword  
44 Executive Team 2026/27



# Introduction

Hello!

At the beginning of this year, I was asked to comment on why I think the University of St Andrews had been named UK University of the Year. At the time, I spoke of excellence in teaching, research, tradition and community. A year in, I believe the answer would be slightly different. The true strength of St Andrews resides most with you: the students, volunteers, staff and societies in the Union and beyond who continue, with remarkable generosity, to build opportunities for one another.

This has been a year of considerable change for us. It marked the first Executive Team to work through the implementation of the Change Programme, alongside the arrival of a new Chief Executive, a new Head of Student Engagement, a new Finance Manager and now, the start of a new life for our Main Bar.

Change on such a scale inevitably brings uncertainty, adjustment and challenge, and yet society affiliations increased by 25% across the year, 902 of you put yourselves forward in our class rep, autumn and spring elections combined, whilst of course and (arguably) most importantly, you drank over 16,000 Pablos.

If this report demonstrates anything, I hope it is that regardless of the tough paths ahead, with our community and its compassion, we can shape an even stronger future. That shared vision has been our greatest achievement

Your union is looking forward to welcoming you back soon.

**Alice Hodges**  
**President of Union Affairs**



# Year in Numbers

## £100k

Of funding provided to Societies and Networks to support PGR research opportunities, Academic representative events, and initiatives.

## £68,610

Raised by Race2 in their charity hitchhike which involved: **196** Participants, **69** Teams and **3573** Donations.



## 150

150 Reusable drink covers made available throughout Union bars.

## 3091

Candidates ran in the elections.

## 2,200+

Sexual health items distributed from the Health Shelf in just 4 months.

## 500+

Raisin prep packs of bread, juice, water, and hand warmers given away!



# Executive Team Updates



# President of Union Affairs

For all officers, these reports always come around far quicker than expected.

One piece of advice I was given was to keep a notebook of everything I did throughout the year because it would all go by so quickly and so one notebook with more crossed-out pages than I can count later, I'd say that notebook perfectly sums up this year: lots of transition, plenty of trial and error, and more than a few moments of starting again.

This feels particularly significant because I have had the privilege of being the first-ever President of Union Affairs. To be honest, my answer to "What exactly are Union Affairs?" is probably still slightly different every time someone asks. At its heart, the role is about making sure the Students' Association is still in a strong position for you for years from now. Sustainability here is everything from finances to environmental sustainability and ensuring student voices are permanently where decisions are being made.

A big focus this year has been access and affordability. From free Freshers' Week wristbands (2026/2027), to trialling free breakfast packs during exams and taking breakfast items on tour in Semester Two with no cost to the Union, I have looked for practical ways to reduce costs for students. I also got to push for and work on the newly implemented guarantor scheme and fought my way onto a government working group to help shape the future education funding model in Scotland. I also secured a large increase in funding and a change in methods of funding for Campus Larder, helping ensure this vital support can continue beyond the next year.

Equally, relaunching Save Our Scottish Universities campaign and ensuring its longevity by extending its reach to colleges with its rename Save Our Scottish Education has meant it has grown bigger than the

bubble and will continue to be managed by multiple sabbatical teams across Scotland. What has been particularly encouraging, however, is the growing relationship we have from local businesses, councils, larger organisations, as well as alumni through the ever increasingly successful Cost-Of-Living-Appeal.

Another major part of the role is overseeing our commercial services. Securing a £1.2 million investment loan from the University to improve and sustain those services was one of my proudest moments of the year.

Above all else, I said in my manifesto that I wanted to champion a more connected and empowered Exec Team and did exactly that. It is through our strengthened teamwork that we were able to deliver so many huge, cross remit wins as both undergraduates and postgraduates.

Looking back, this year has been about building foundations. Union Affairs will look different in every president that embodies it, but for me it has always been about leaving the Union in a stronger position than I found it and creating a platform for future officers to build on and make it what students need.

Thank you so much for electing me. I wish you luck in everything you do next.

**Alice Hodges**  
**President Union Affairs**



# President of Education

I have the privilege of representing the academic interests of all students at the University of St Andrews. In a global context, marked by constrained educational resources and eroding academic autonomy, the role of academic representatives is now more critical than ever before. I have been driving forward bold changes to our Union and University. From leading university wide campaigns, to representing students internationally, it's a privilege to serve as your President of Education.

Here is some work I have contributed to:

- Organised the Students' Association's first ever Academic Representation Conference!
- Organised and chaired five Academic Forums addressing student priorities including artificial intelligence, hidden tuition costs, student number pressures, sustainability in the curriculum and student stipends.
- Strengthened the student voice through the introduction of Vice School President roles, the drafting and successful passage of a university-wide Student Voice and Representation Policy, leadership in an Academic Representation Review, and completion of a comprehensive Student Voice Audit.
- Led a Textbook Giveaway distributing over 300 textbooks to students to reduce financial barriers to learning.
- Led the transformation of the union's top floor into a dedicated student study space.
- Increased Class Rep autonomy over mid-semester student surveys strengthening independent student representation.
- Contributed to the university's curriculum review tackling concerns around over-crediting.

- Successfully challenged proposals to deliver teaching in halls of residence, safeguarding appropriate and effective learning environments.
- Represented the Students' Association at a number of national and international events, including presenting on student partnership at the Higher and Further Education Strategy Conference, presenting on effective student feedback with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), membership to the European University Association Quality Assurance Thematic Peer Group, and lots of Scottish sabbatical officer meetings!
- Liaised with national agencies which has included contributions to a QAA paper on AI in assessment, and compassionate communications consultation.
- Attendance at Sparqs' Student Expert Group, National Education Officers' Network's, and Trustee Board have furthered sector-wide engagement.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the 440 academic representatives I have had the pleasure of overseeing, none of my work would have been possible without your guidance and support.

Thank you!

**Emily Bannister**  
**President of Education**



# President of Wellbeing and Community

This year can be defined by three words: policy, productivity, and pride.

Here is some of the work I have been involved in:

- This year saw the revitalization of key community and activism events, such as the first in-person Reclaim the Night march and speaker event in two years to protest SGBV, alongside the successful preservation of St Andrews Pride, which celebrated its 10th anniversary with a parade of over 150 people, a speaker event, and a crafts market.
- New, inclusive initiatives were introduced, most notably the TRANSition Clothing Drive, launched in partnership with Saints LGBT+ and Transition. This initiative provides transgender students with free, year-round access to gender-affirming clothing. The Health Shelf was created, which distributed over 3,000 free condoms and more than 400 reusable period products, significantly improving access to essential health resources. In addition, the Officer Introduction Guide was developed to enhance continuity and effectiveness within student leadership roles.
- A more policy-driven approach to the role was established, resulting in successful advocacy for a full review and rewrite of the University's Leave of Absence and Support to Study policies, a review of the University's drugs and alcohol policy to take a harm-reduction approach, and a push for the University to think critically about how it will implement the Supreme Court Ruling with an emphasis on ensuring transgender students are supported and not excluded. This work aims to ensure that institutional processes better support student wellbeing and accessibility.
- Engagement with students was further strengthened through the delivery of 12 Executive Forums and 5 Open Forums, fostering meaningful dialogue between student representatives and the wider community. The open forums allowed for students to have direct input on University policies; for example, the Supreme Court Ruling draft policy was brought to an open forum and, after listening to student voices, the group extended the consultation period and reached out to transgender students for insight.
- Additional investment was directed towards SafeZone, alongside extended consultation on the implementation of the Supreme Court ruling. These efforts were undertaken to ensure that policies and practices continue to protect and support transgender staff and students effectively.
- To better the University's Student Conduct and Student Services mechanisms, a microaggressions survey was commissioned and conducted to inform improvements to the Report and Support system. Student representation was also expanded within institutional processes, with consultation positions secured for members of JSoc, STAMSA, the Sexual Assault Survivors Group, and BAME networks on the Report and Support Improvement Forum.
- Significant funding achievements included securing over £29,000 to support Wellbeing and Community Networks, enabling the growth of student-led initiatives, including the new network for Estranged and Care-Experienced Students and the preservation of Nightline.

**Alex Chun**  
**President of Wellbeing**  
**and Community**



# President of Student Opportunities

This year has been one of growth, achievement and positive change for Opportunities, with students continuing to demonstrate the passion, creativity and dedication that make our community so vibrant. Across societies, volunteering, employability and student-led initiatives, the breadth of activity has been remarkable. From large-scale events to smaller society gatherings, students have continued to shape the experience of their peers, building communities, developing skills and creating opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom.

One of the highlights of the year has been the continued success of student-led events. We welcomed one of the most well-attended Freshers' Fayres in recent years, bringing together hundreds of students and showcasing the incredible range of opportunities available across the Union. The introduction of a new Performing Arts Officer has also strengthened representation for a key area of student life, helping to ensure performing arts groups have an even stronger voice and platform within our community. Alongside this, Race2 returned stronger than ever, becoming the most successful event since Covid and raising an incredible £70,000 for charity — a testament to the commitment, resilience and ambition of the students involved.

These achievements are only part of a much wider picture. Throughout the year, societies have delivered countless events, performances, competitions and social activities, providing students with spaces to connect, try something new and find a sense of belonging. We have also seen continued growth in volunteering, with over 300 students achieving a Graduate Attributes Award and 30 students contributing more than 500 hours of volunteering. These contributions were rightly recognised and celebrated at this year's

Portal Awards, highlighting the enormous impact student volunteers continue to have both within the University and wider community.

This year has also marked an important period of structural change for Opportunities. Following an extensive review of our systems and student feedback, we introduced a new Opportunities structure designed to better connect student voices with decision-making. The new model ensures that ideas and issues raised at Opportunities Forum can move more effectively through executive processes and directly into the work of our Activities and Employability teams. The creation of new Liaison positions further strengthens communication between society groupings and the Union, helping to ensure student groups feel supported and represented.

Leading these developments are our new Vice Presidents, Cerys Deas as Vice President Societies and Gia Karunakaran as Vice President Employability. Together, this work lays strong foundations for the future, ensuring Opportunities continues to evolve alongside the ambitions of our students.

**Robert 'Romo' Moran**  
**President of Student Opportunities**



# Athletic Union President

This year, sport at St Andrews has once again seen exceptional progress, achievement, and collaboration across the Athletic Union. It has been a privilege to serve as your Athletic Union President and to work alongside an inspiring community of student athletes, staff, volunteers, and club committees who have driven sport forward at every level.

We began the year with a highly successful Sports Fayre, welcoming both new and returning students into our vibrant sporting community. This momentum continued into the Refreshers' Fayre in second semester, delivered in collaboration with the Students' Association. Bringing together sports clubs and societies, it provided another valuable opportunity for students to discover new activities and reconnect with clubs. These events remain central to fostering inclusivity and ensuring sport at St Andrews is both visible and accessible to all.

Our sports clubs delivered outstanding results across league and cup competitions, making this a truly record-breaking year. Collectively, we achieved more league wins than ever before, reflecting both depth and consistency across our programmes. At the highest level, two teams were crowned national champions at BUCS Nationals—an exceptional achievement that highlights the dedication, talent, and resilience of our athletes and coaches. Alongside competitive success, we have continued to strengthen and expand our sporting network. New club affiliations have broadened our offering, enabling more students to get involved and helping to diversify the sporting experience at the University. Recognising the individuals behind these successes has remained a priority.

The Portal Awards, delivered in partnership with the Students' Association, celebrated the invaluable contribution of our volunteers, whose behind-the-scenes efforts sustain our clubs. Meanwhile, this year's

Sports Awards marked an exciting step forward. With a refreshed format, the event was bigger and better than ever, celebrating excellence in a way that truly reflected the scale, passion, and spirit of our community.

Student representation has been at the heart of this year. I have engaged regularly with club committees, Saints Sport, the wider University, Students association and national student governing bodies to ensure student voices are heard and prioritised. Advocacy has been central to this role—working to ensure sport continues to evolve in line with the needs and experiences of our students.

Overall, this has been a year defined not only by success, but by growth, representation, and community. The achievements of our clubs, the commitment of our volunteers, and the strength of collaboration across the University have set a new benchmark for sport at St Andrews. This is a year I will never forget. It has been an immense honour to represent such a passionate and dedicated student body and to witness the power of sport in bringing people together.

I am incredibly proud of all that we have achieved, and I leave confident in the continued growth and success of sport at St Andrews.

**Amy Gordon**  
**Athletic Union**  
**President**



# Postgraduate Taught President

This year, my focus has been on addressing two key issues facing PGT students in St Andrews: ensuring that their voices are genuinely heard at an institutional level and building the kind of community that makes postgraduate life at university feel less isolating and more like home.

On the education side, I have organised and chaired PGT Forums to give students a proper space to raise concerns, debate issues, and work collectively towards meaningful change in their programmes. I then fed back the outcomes of those discussions directly to senior University representatives, and it has been genuinely rewarding to see both staff and student representatives engage with that feedback seriously and meaningfully.

Alongside this, I have been working with University staff to bring greater clarity to dissertation guidance, something PGT students have long and consistently called for, and to push for more meaningful inclusion of students in non-standard pathways (such as those studying remotely), whose experiences too often fall through the cracks of structures designed with a single cohort in mind.

I have also redesigned the end-of-dissertation module questionnaire, shaping new questions that better capture the reality of students' experiences and give staff more useful and actionable feedback.

On top of this, the community work has been just as meaningful. Postgraduate students can feel invisible within a university that celebrates its undergraduate traditions so visibly, and so a core part of my work this year has been devoted to changing that. To start, working alongside fellow exec officers, we organised the first-ever PG Pier Walk as part of St Leonard's Day celebrations, as well as a PG Winter

Social in Beacon Bar before Christmas Break. From those experiences, we then launched the Postgraduate Evenings in Beacon Bar, a regular, relaxed space for PGs to come together, meet one another, and enjoy different kinds of events. The response we had from the postgraduate community has been wonderful.

Finally, I have begun conversations with Union staff, University representatives, elected student officers, and the All-Students Forum about restructuring how postgraduate representation works, laying the groundwork for changes that I hope future presidents will be able to build on. The issues facing the PGT community in St Andrews are, at their core, structural and thus require time for meaningful change to happen. As one year is not enough to satisfactorily fix them, there is still much work to do.

However, I leave this year proud of what we have started together, and confident that the conversations, communities, and changes set in motion this year will give the next presidents something solid to carry forward in the future.

**Pierluigi Maffi**  
**Postgraduate Taught President**



# Postgraduate Research President

This year has been a busy one, full of meetings and responding to the changing research landscape. Here are just a few of the things I and our PGR Reps have been up to this year.

- We launched Postgraduate Thursdays, a weekly takeover of Beacon Bar at the Students' Union Building, which included a mixture of themed events (like Pub Quiz) and normal bar nights. We can't wait to relaunch PG Thursdays for the next academic year!
- Attended and presented at the first Academic Representation Conference held by the Students' Association, on postgraduate student partnership.
- Held important discussions about the changing funding landscape for PGR students, and I took student feedback to the Stipend Review Group, which then provided recommendations to the Scholarship Board.
- Organised a PGR Representation Lunch, at which reps shared best practice for academic community building and discussed research culture within Schools.
- Provided vital funding for research trips from Stirling to Canada!
- Participated in the QAA Institutional Liaison Meeting, providing important context on the PGR student experience in St Andrews.
- Held semesterly PGR Rep Forums, giving reps the opportunity to share feedback from their cohorts on all manner of issues, as well as what went well.
- Advocated for the creation of a new Teaching Award, recognising the contributions of staff to postgraduate student partnership.
- Organised summer events for postgraduate research representatives, recognising that the academic year is different for PGR students.
- Advised on several policies and processes, including

the Annual Review process for PGR students and the Viva process.

- Worked closely with St Leonard's College to create a strong working relationship between the Students' Association and the College, and strengthening networks for PGR students.
- Attended regular meetings such as Research Innovation and Impact Committee, Academic Monitoring Group, Postgraduate Group, and Senate, advocating for PGR student issues.
- Presented at the One Union Awards, recognising the important contributions our PGR students make to life in St Andrews.
- Attended the Winter Graduation Ceremonies to support our PGR graduates!

I'm so proud of everything we've achieved, and also everything we've set in motion. I really feel like PGR students have made an impact, at the Students' Association and at the University, and I hope that strength of voice continues in the next academic year.

**Amy Hopkins**  
**Postgraduate Research President**



# Representation



Academic Representation at the Students' Association is one of the largest student representative systems in both the University and the country.

Over 400 representatives, headed by an Education Executive of 30 School Presidents and Language Convenors, alongside 2 Faculty Presidents, delivered change across St Andrews. There is not enough space to recognise all their efforts here, but we are incredibly grateful for our dedicated volunteers and the work they do.

- 441 academic representatives were elected, from Freshers to PhD students. Their collective work shaped the student experience at every level, from individual module feedback to school-wide curriculum reform.
- Delivered the annual class representative elections, with an exceptional 902 candidates and 2452 votes from across the student body.
- Hosted the 1413 Teaching Excellence Awards in collaboration with the University, recognising outstanding contributions to the student learning experience with 201 student nominations.
- Removed the dual fee system for Russian study abroad, replacing it with a single tuition fee payable via student loan, significantly improving access for Russian department students (Evie Cullen, Russian Convenor).
- Kickstarted a major access and education background project to address elitist perceptions within Art History (Toby Berryman, Art History School President)
- Co-led a diplomatic visit from the Colombian Embassy to the University, contributing to a successful project showcase, Preenacting Women's Lives (Ciara Rooney, Modern Languages School President).
- Ensured parity and accountability between student and staff AI policies (Maya Fenyk, Faculty President).
- Recruited over 40 students to work on sustainability projects within the School of Computer Science, connecting students with charities and non-profits who could not afford technical solutions (Tamra Chan, Class Rep, Outstanding Sustainability Award winner).
- Launched the first-ever Social Anthropology Mentorship Scheme and organised a Dissertation Q&A panel for fourth-year students (Olivia Douglas, Outstanding Class Representative, Arts and Divinity).
- Secured external funding from DAAD for a student cultural event and established ongoing Language Cafés in collaboration with the Austrian Cultural Forum London (Chloe Beechinor-Collins, German Convenor).
- Co-hosted a History × Art History LGBT+ History Month Flash Talks event and launched a new School of Art History EDI Student Fund, supporting four student projects, alongside ongoing work with the 93% Club and the EDI Lead to address elitism and inclusion in the discipline (Toby Berryman, Art History).
- Rejuvenated the academic community within the School of Physics and Astronomy by introducing Fashion Fridays alongside a variety of events (Ellie Shaw, School President of Physics and Astronomy).
- Organised Clinical Psychology careers talk workshops, providing students with professional insight into clinical pathways and laying the groundwork for a continuing careers series within the school (Clara Curtis, School President of Psychology and Neuroscience).



# STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS 2026

**100**

Candidates ran in the election

**13**

Executive Officer Candidates

**33**

Association Representative Candidates

**54**

School President and Language Convenor Candidates

**3,091**

Candidates ran in the election

**700**

Cupcakes handed out during voting

**1623**

AU President votes

**1397**

President of Education votes

**1423**

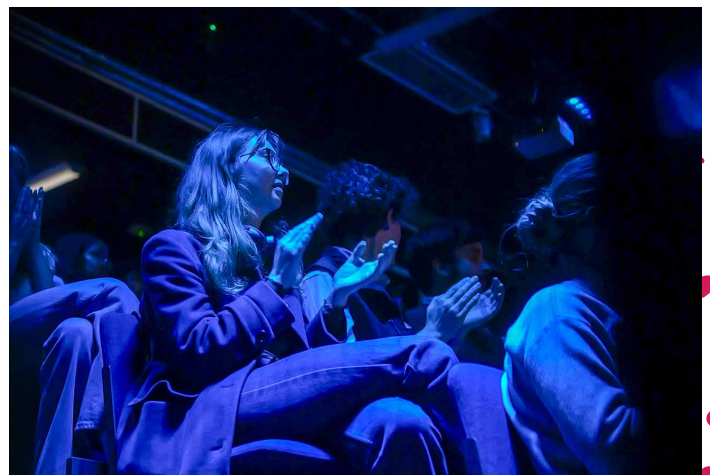
President of Student Opportunities votes

**1570**

President of Union Affairs votes

**1445**

President of Wellbeing and Community votes



# Postgraduate Representation

Alongside their responsibilities of collecting student feedback, presenting findings to Directors of Postgraduate Study, and closing the feedback loop with their peers, PG reps have worked towards building St Andrews' postgraduate community with academic events and informal socials.

- Several PG representatives have had active roles in the organisation of conferences and symposiums.
- Neurosciences PGT Rep (Bradley Teal) chaired and organised the inaugural 'Scottish Neuroscience Postgraduate Conference', a one-day conference held in St Andrews, dedicated to postgraduate neuroscience researchers from Scottish universities. The conference offered poster sessions, short talks, a keynote lecture, networking opportunities and poster awards in a supportive academic environment.
- Biomedical Sciences Research Complex PGR Rep (Keenan Parker) aided in the planning of the Biology PG spring/summer Conference.
- Physics PGR Reps (Holly Seo and Rhona Hamilton) aided in the organisation of the Second Year PGR Annual Presentation.
- MLitt Gender Studies Rep (Meily Denys) aided in the organisation of the Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Studies' Interdisciplinary Conference.
- PG reps have hosted various social events to aid community building such as pizza nights, pub socials, potlucks, seasonal gatherings, and beach BBQs.
- Geography and Sustainability PGR Rep (Gauthier Dulot) initiated specific office hours for PGR related community issues, queries, and actions.
- MLitt Peacebuilding and Mediation Rep (Jessica Black) identified issues with accessibility considerations in the planning of socials with not all rooms and pubs being accessible to all. The rep took steps to resolve this by hosting socials at the accessible Students' Association and encouraged students to discuss accessibility arrangements with staff for university organised events.



# All-Student Forum

All students are members of the All-Student Forum and as such are invited to attend to hear updates, and to make their voices heard.

The All-Student Forum meets a minimum of once per term.

During the 2025–2026 academic year, the All-Student Forum (formerly the Student Representative Council) undertook the significant task of reaching consensus on new Student Association Laws.

At the November 2025 All-Student Forum, students reviewed the initial draft of the proposed laws but were unable to reach agreement.

As a result, a Draft Laws Working Group was established, comprising of ten student volunteers. Over the second semester, this group worked together to review feedback, make changes, and develop an improved version of the laws.

The updated draft was then brought back to the All-Student Forum on 28 April 2026. At this meeting, students agreed unanimously on the new laws, reaching full consensus.



# Networks Updates

Networks are groups of students bound by a common identity that campaign for issues relevant for their community. Our networks represent the diverse student community in St Andrews. Here are their updates:

## Disabled Students Network

DSN ran a wide range of one-off events, including a Sober Graduation Picnic, a Comedy Writing Workshop with "The Squeaky Wheel," a Family Finding Event with Saints LGBT+ and Got Support, a barbecue with the Charities Campaign, a Film Night with Saints LGBT+, a Friend Finding Event with EACES and CCMFL. Two of our one-off events were even popular enough to run again, so we had two collabs with the Doctor Who Society and two PowerPoint Nights.

We held collaborative events with many networks and societies, including CCMFL, Charities Campaign, Doctor Who, EACES, Got Limits, Got Support, Saints LGBT+, and The Comedy Society. We also worked with The Squeaky Wheel and are planning collaborations with other Universities, including UCL and Glasgow.

We hosted a greater variety of Meet-Up Groups this academic year, with more events focusing on Postgraduate students and First-Year students. We have also added Visual Disability meet-up groups to our roster, alongside our usual All Disability, Chronic Illness, Mental Health, Neurodivergence, and Physical Disability offerings. We have also experimented with offering snacks at our meet-up groups, which has been successful.

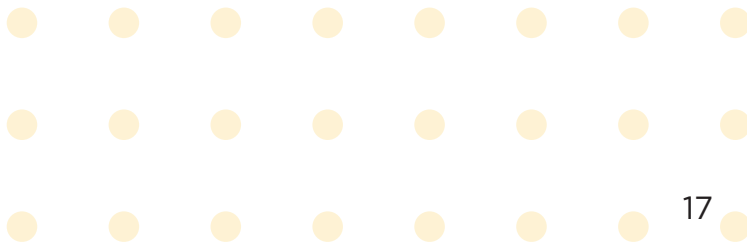
As usual, we handed out disability-oriented exam packs. We served approximately 55 students at our December giveaway, providing easy meals, snacks, fidgets,

stationery, and accessibility tools such as reading overlays and ergonomic pens.

We have been involved in many advocacy projects over the last academic year. We participated in a consultation on the new Digital Nexus building, networked with other disabled student teams across other UK universities, and engaged with University policy around Leave of Absences, Lecture Capture, and gendered spaces.

We are working on updating our Disabled Students' Guides ready for the next academic year. Our Co-Convenor Talia also went to the Disability Summit at Parliament.

We have run more than 50 events this year! Our events continue to provide a range of spaces for students, including study spaces through our Neurodivergent Study Group and social spaces through our Meet-Up Groups and Accessibility Cafés.



## Saints LGBT+

29 total events, including two Ceilidhs (Gaylidhs), the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil, the first student-run charity Panto: the Three Mini Pigs and the Disgruntled Wolf of Unusual Size, Glitterball, Drag Walk, and Pride!

2026 marked the 15th anniversary of Glitterball in St Andrews, the UK's largest LGBT+ ball! The theme was "Curtain Call," with a touch of circus. Sadly, this is the last Glitterball for the foreseeable future that will be hosted in the iconic rainbow tent, as the ball will be relocating due to costs.

The Gay Saint reviewed 20 theatreshows, posted 30 blog posts, hosted 11 events, launched 5 zines! It also released its 9th volume this year, with a total of 5 issues, all in print, featuring stories and art by queer students!

## Estranged and Care-Experienced Students

Over 40 events, 4 Career workshops with the careers center, the launch of the friend-finding groups for winter and summer breaks, and the launch of the Guarantor Survey and scheme to help estranged and care-experienced students find housing.

## BAME

The Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Students' Network delivered a diverse and engaging programme of events throughout the year, creating opportunities for students to celebrate culture, build community, and connect with one another. Activities included a henna and crafts session, a yoga collaboration with Yoga Society, a games night with the Afro-Caribbean Society, a pub crawl, a bonfire and family-finding event, and a CHAI stall delivered in partnership with the Indian Society. The network also hosted BAMEFEST, an art showcase celebrating local artists and creatives in collaboration with Ubuntu and Craffhouse, providing a platform for cultural expression and creativity.

A particular highlight was Multicultural Week, which featured a series of events celebrating cultures from around the world. The week included a Books Around the World pub quiz, a film screening and discussion, Lunar New Year crafts, and a multicultural food fair, all designed to encourage cultural exchange and learning. The network also delivered its annual sold-out FUSE club night, a Boiler Room-style event celebrating global music and bringing together students from a wide range of backgrounds through a fusion of genres from across the world.

Across semesters one and two, the BAME Network held nine events, four of which were collaborative initiatives with student groups and community partners. Alongside its events programme, the network continued to contribute to university-wide work on equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring that the experiences and perspectives of ethnically diverse students were represented in discussions and initiatives across the institution.

## Community Relations

The Community Relations Network continued to strengthen links between students and the wider St Andrews community through active engagement with local organisations and events. Representatives regularly attended Community Council meetings, helping to ensure that student voices were included in conversations affecting both the university and the local area.

The network also took part in a number of community-focused events, including hosting a stall at The Big Hoolie during St Andrews Day celebrations and participating in Transition's Winter Fayre. Through these activities, the network helped foster positive relationships between students and local residents while promoting opportunities for community involvement and engagement.

Over the year, Community Relations attended two major community events in addition to local Community Council meetings. These activities were delivered in collaboration with organisations including Transition and BID, demonstrating the network's commitment to building strong partnerships and maintaining positive community connections.

## The Carers, Commuters Mature and Flexible Learners

The Carers, Commuters, Mature and Flexible Learners (CCMFL) Network delivered a varied programme of activities aimed at supporting students who may face additional barriers to engaging with university life. Events included a karaoke social, board games night, two study sessions, a visit to the Deer Centre, ice skating, cake and coffee meet-ups, a winter dinner, and a visit to the observatory in collaboration with the Astronomical Society.

The network also prioritised creating accessible and welcoming opportunities for students to connect. This included a winter crafts session delivered with the Disabled Students Network and a relaxed, beginner-friendly pool session in partnership with Pool Society. The session incorporated colour-blind friendly balls, reduced lighting, and low-volume music to ensure a comfortable environment for participants.

CCMFL delivered 10 events during semester one, three of which were collaborative activities with Pool Society, the Astronomical Society, and the Disabled Students Network. Many events were designed to be family-friendly, recognising that some members have caring responsibilities. This approach helped ensure that students could engage with university life, build social connections, and access support in a way that was both inclusive and accessible.

# Support



The Union is often described as a safe space for students, whether that be on nights out, or when something's gone wrong with their academic studies. Every year, we create support resources for May Dip, and provide a respite centre during Raisin, putting us at the heart of major St Andrews traditions, exactly where we belong.

Despite challenges, our Advocacy & Advice Service continues to provide support to students facing academic difficulties, housing issues, and non-academic misconduct.

We brought back the Reclaim the Night march in November 2025, working with the University, student groups, Fife Council, and Police Scotland, to show solidarity with survivors and demonstrate that the streets of St Andrews are for everyone. With the second edition of the SGBV Activism Zine and exhibitions like GotConsent's Clothesline Project, we are working to enhance a culture of student campaigning.

The Campus Larder continues to provide a vital service to students facing food insecurity. Thanks to a new partnership with Brakes, we are able to give the basics to students at no cost to us, freeing up resources to purchase other food and essentials. The voucher scheme continues to be well-utilised by students with allergies, or those who cannot meet the usual opening times, and the satellite to DRA brings our service right to students' homes.

Our student groups advocate for policy changes, whether that be in support of trans and non-binary students following the Supreme Court Ruling, or in making Leave of Absence feel less daunting. These groups create community, reduce isolation, and provide spaces for students to come together and feel seen.

Support from the Union takes many forms, but each element has its role to play in making our students' lives better.



## StAnd Together

StAnd Together continues to enhance and support the student experience, creating safe spaces, confronting challenging issues, and bringing students together.

Each Strand has had a significant impact on St Andrews, and through the tenacity of the students leading the Strands, this impact will only become more profound.

PeerSupport has worked hard to reduce the isolation and loneliness many students silently struggle with, creating buddy systems and linking students up with a trained volunteer. GotConsent has continued to engage in conversations around consent and personal safety, attending conferences and holding discussion events with experts. GotSolidarity has been developing bystander intervention workshops for student groups, which will equip them with the knowledge of how and when to intervene in unsafe situations. Finally, GotLimits have been central to internal policy changes, moving toward harm reduction, and away from zero tolerance.

Projects like StAnd Together remind us of the benefits of working in partnership with the University and other specialist organisations. More importantly than that, StAnd Together shows us the power that is created by students working together and leading the way in making their community a safer place for all.

## GotConsent

- Brought back the Clothesline Project in the Quad, where committee members installed t-shirts with student messages around SGBV.
- Created infographics for the 16 Days of Activism on digital abuse.
- Attended a conference from the Young Women's Movement on AI and gender.
- Co-hosted a talk on tackling sexual violence within healthcare, alongside the Women in Surgery Society and the CEO of Surviving in Scrubs.

## GotLimits

- Created infographics for International Overdose Awareness Day.
- Collaborated with the Union on safety messaging for Raisin.
- Took part in SOS-UK's Student Drugs and Alcohol Survey.
- Co-hosted a pre-May Dip study session with the Disabled Students' Network, and an accessible May Dip picnic with beach wheelchairs.



**Each Strand has had a significant impact on St Andrews, and through the tenacity of the students leading the Strands, this impact will only become more profound.**



## PeerSupport

- Partnered with Change Menal Health to better train volunteers, improve support pathways, and run more impactful events.
- Held quiet, safe spaces during emotionally charged events including Trans Day of Remembrance and Reclaim the Night.
- Collaborated with Lawhead Primary School on a 'What is Love' project for Valentines Day, where local pupils worked with PeerSupport volunteers on defining love.
- Worked with other student groups and networks on buddy systems for students who may be more likely to feel isolated.



## GotSolidarity

- Worked on a Bystander Awareness Workshop to be shared with Halls, Schools, and societies.
- Developed a larger social media following to improve reach.
- Held a charity dog walking event for Show Racism the Red card with Dog Walking Society.
- Drew attention to key international days, including International Migrants Day, International Day of Human Solidarity, and World Social Justice Day.



# Advocacy & Advice

The Advocacy & Advice Service, offers free, non-judgemental, and confidential advice to students on University academic, non-academic processes, policies and accommodation issues. The service is independent from the University, meaning that we can help students navigate University processes impartially and in a student-centred way.

This year, we recruited two Advocacy Interns to support the service part-time with Accommodation and Advocacy and Advice, and we recruited a part-time advocate to support students with independent advice.

We also saw the introduction of new branding and marketing for the service. This year we also saw the introduction of new branding and marketing for the service. This was the first time the service had been promoted through posters, social media, and attending Freshers Fayre.

Through the Union Instagram, we have created posts documenting how we can support students and explaining complicated processes like Academic Appeals. Our Accommodation intern, worked with the President of Union Affairs, the Accommodations Officer and the University to support students who need UK based guarantors for renting accommodation. The scheme has been moving forward and should be in place for the 26/27 academic year.

The Advocacy & Advice team has continued to support students in individual cases and help create big picture solutions. In the last year, we have supported students with over 150 cases.

Students overwhelmingly came to us concerned with academic issues (119 cases). This echoes the trend in previous years that academic queries are the most pressing issues students are facing. Housing followed behind, with 19 cases involving accommodation issues. Finally, non-academic misconduct issues accounted for only a minimal number of our cases in the last year.

The service can support students throughout the year and during summer. We continue to work with all students for earlier intervention on all issues.

Please contact us at  
UnionAdvocacy@st-andrews.ac.uk  
or visit [www.yourunion.net/advocacyandadvice](http://www.yourunion.net/advocacyandadvice)  
for more information on the Advocacy and Advice Service.

“

**This year we also saw the introduction of new branding and marketing for the service. This was the first time the service had been promoted through posters, social media, and attending Freshers' Fayre.**

”

# Wellbeing & Community Executive and Forum

The Wellbeing & Community Executive and Forum were created as part of the Democracy Review (2025). These spaces allow elected officers, Networks, and ordinary students to discuss policy and initiatives around student support, EDI, and community-building. In these democratic spaces, students, representatives, and staff have discussed areas including:

- The institutional response to the Supreme Court ruling
- Updates to the Leave of Absence Policy and SGBV Policy Commitment
- Projects to understand the prevalence of microaggressions in our community
- Feedback on University services
- Four funding requests for student projects. We're looking forward to further work in the Wellbeing & Community Executive next year, as well as raising the profile of and interest in the Wellbeing & Community Forum, so that more students get involved in our democratic processes.



# Activities



# Activities Network

This year saw exceptional levels of student engagement across Student Opportunities, with strong participation in Freshers' Week, volunteering, fundraising, and student-led activities.

Across the year, the Union welcomed students through a wide range of events and initiatives, including 46 Give It A Go (GIAG) activities hosted in the Union Building, 236 tables at the Freshers' Fayre, and 71 student societies represented at the Refreshers' Fayre.

Furthermore, the Union strengthened its collaborations and partnerships both within the University and across the local community. A Volunteer Fayre held during the first semester connected students with a variety of opportunities from organisations including The Wave Project, British Heart Foundation, and Families First, alongside Union and University initiatives such as USACC, Campus Larder, and Saints Sport.

Student-led fundraising also saw great engagement, with Race2 enjoying its most successful year. Nearly 200 students took part in the challenge, hitchhiking from Scotland to Madrid during Vacation Week and collectively raising £70,000 for the three USACC charities. This represented the largest participation in the event since the COVID-19 pandemic and was made possible through the dedication of participants and the professionalism of the Safety Team.

Alongside these achievements, the year marked the introduction of a new Student Opportunities structure. Designed to provide a clearer, more collaborative, and student-focused approach, the model places student groups at its heart while

strengthening governance, representation, and consultation. Through the work of the Student Opportunities Executive, delivery teams, liaison networks, and the Student Opportunities Forum, the new structure creates greater opportunities for student voices to shape priorities and drive the continued development of opportunities across the Union community.

Find out more about what our Activities Networks have been getting up to on the following pages.



# Entertainments Committee

This year the ENTS Committee continued developing our training programme to ensure that both newcomers and returning members have opportunities to build and refine their technical skills. On average, our weekly trainings attracted around fifteen to twenty attendees: the highest participation Ents has seen since pre-pandemic.

Across the year we delivered twenty-one weeks of training. Highlights included introductory sessions on theatre lighting and sound, seminar evenings where crew members gave short talks on their favourite niche technical topics, and several sessions focused on video routing and networking. In addition, we hosted three external training sessions, two delivered by Avolites and one by ETC, as well as an external talk from an industry professional. As manufacturers of key technologies used in the venue, having training delivered directly by these companies was particularly valuable for our members.

More recently, we also held a collaborative workshop with Jazzworks, giving both groups the opportunity to learn more about each other's specialities and explore how we can work together to further improve Thursday Jazz Nights for both crew and performers!



## Charities Campaign

Charities have smashed fundraising totals across the Campaign, created exciting new events and new iterations of previous successes.

The year started with Dare2Donate collaborating with different halls in their fundraising, then started prepping in earnest for Race2, RAG Week and CATWALK. Semester 2 brought RAG Week, Take Me Out, 175 students racing across Europe to Madrid and ended with an incredible CATWALK fashion show. Charities also ran most cloakrooms for balls and events around town.

Amounts raised:

- CATWALK (£11589.61)
- Race2 (£68610.14)
- RAG (£5321.42)
- Events (£548.16)
- Cloakrooms (£5096)
- Collaborations with Halls (£484)

Other numbers:

- 3 Charities Supported
- 69 Race2 Teams,
- 175 Race 2 Racers
- 6 Interviews on the radio
- 18 events during RAG Week
- 4 successful matches from Take Me Out
- 60+ individual looks for CATWALK

## Union Debating Society

The UDS had an incredible year, both in terms of public debates and competitive debating teams and training - participation in all of which is completely free and open to all matriculated students.

With over 1400 attendees at public debates as of early March, we have surpassed all records in living memory. The UDS has hosted 30 external speakers, including diplomats, MPs, MSPs, academics, and business leaders. Of particular note were the debates: "TH Has No Confidence in HM's Government", "TH Opposes the Rise of Tradwife Influencers", and "TH Believes that Mathematics is a Human Invention and not a Discovery". The UDS has also continued to excel in training competitive debaters: maintaining a weekly schedule of well-curated lessons for both novice and advanced debaters, alongside attendance at the local, national, and international levels.

Particular highlights from Competitive Debating include winning the Scottish Debating Circuit's "Mace" Championship, and the Warwick Open, alongside countless appearances in finals, and representing Scotland at the World Championship. The St Andrews Union Debating Society is clearly standing as the Oldest and Finest of its kind. Pro Amicitia et Litteris.

# Mermaids Performing Arts Fund

Mermaids supported the production of 15 incredible shows over the course of this year. Over 200 students were involved across all cast and production team roles. Shows were held in multiple venues across St Andrews: The Byre Theatre, The StAge and the Barron at the Byre. Six of the productions were original full-length student-written shows.

We hosted an incredibly busy week-long Freshers Drama Festival featuring 10 shows including productions organised and performed by newcomers as well as works by our affiliates.

Our Backstage Shadowing Scheme Coordinator had a very successful year of bringing newcomers into St Andrews' Performing Arts world. Many of those who participated went on to be involved in major roles on productions in second semester.

We once again hosted the Barron Playwriting Competition. The standard of writing and performance was fantastic, and the prize money was distributed amongst the well-deserving winners

Our Christmas Ball Convenor and her subcommittee organised an amazing, Alice in Wonderland themed, Christmas ball. Following on from this, she brought together this year's Shellies, our annual award show, with a show-stopping Old Hollywood theme. New initiatives that were kick-started.

Our President, the Performing Arts officer, worked in conjunction with the President of Student Opportunities to establish the Performing Arts Network. The newly elected Performing Arts Officer has taken the mantle and will continue constructing how the Network will operate in relation to Mermaids and the wider Performing Arts scene in St Andrews.

We also established a mentorship scheme within the Freshers Drama Festival, so each production team has an extra point of contact on committee for support. This framework will continue to be utilised and developed next year.



# Societies Committee

The Societies Committee has had an incredibly productive year. At every forum, we have brought up radical changes that have altered and improved the way the committee functioned. We reshaped affiliations into a single affiliation month per semester. This workshop-based structure resulted in 35 new Societies joining our ever-expanding membership of affiliated Societies.

We also changed the grants process into a monthly review of applications, resulting in a smoother, more efficient process that has alleviated the pressure from the Grants Officer and onto the Activities Team. The Grant-it: Activities pot reviewed over 140 applications and gave out over £10,000 in funding for Society events. The Societies Committee also fundamentally reshaped our publicity approach. By adopting the Activities Team Mascot Wonkee, our Wonkee Wednesday posts continue to be a beacon of joy and whimsy, publicising the incredible events that Societies put on each week.

This year, however, was not without challenges. Due to financial pressures, we changed the way in which grants were distributed and we worked hard to ensure the affiliation process was better organised and supportive for new societies.

Overall, though, this year has been an incredible refresh of the structures governing Societies that have

brought Societies committee and community closer. As this is the last Societies Committee, following the merging of the Committee into the Activities Team, we want to thank every single member of the Committee, past and present. Your work has been invaluable to every Societies Officer and Society.

May all Societies stay ever social!

“

**We reshaped affiliations into a single affiliation month per semester. This workshop-based structure resulted in 35 new Societies joining our ever-expanding membership of affiliated Societies.**

”

# St Andrews Voluntary Service

SVS had a great year with 2025-2026 being our second year active again after a hiatus!

Our committee of 11 have been working hard all year!

Here are some of the things we have done:

- SVS has been active again for officially two years!
- Established connections with over 35 organisations in the area through partnerships and marketing!
- 367 people have joined our mailing list!
- Teamed up with the Union to have SVS Project Sign-Ups being conducted on the Graduate Attributes Portal (Volunteer Portal).
- Over 100 students have signed up for volunteering opportunities, with many students signing up for multiple opportunities!
- Introduced a new temporary Assistant Project Officer role to better support our Project Officers.
- Collaborated with the Union and Charities Campaign on the Gives Back Awards, which is a part of the One Union Awards this year.
- Helped plan the Volunteer Portal Award Event along with the Union and the AU.



# St Andrews Music Society

This past year, the University of St Andrews Music Society celebrated its 150th anniversary! In April 2026, we marked this occasion by hosting a four-day festival to commemorate not just the rich history of our society but the wider music community within the town. Over the duration of those four days, over 500 attendees - including students, community, and alumni alike - celebrated the anniversary through a series of concerts from the society's six ensembles. Every concert was a spectacle which saw the society double its attendance numbers in nearly every case.

A variety of social events took place throughout this series of concerts during the anniversary weekend, including a reception, dinner, ceilidh, and even a community "play-for-a-day" with the society's Symphony Orchestra. Current students mixed with alumni, from all walks of life (including those who were on the committee for the society's centenary anniversary) and tales were shared of different eras of the society throughout its history.

The festival featured a number of venues, both old and new, throughout town, showcasing the rich history of music in St Andrews, and was enjoyed by many.

A huge thanks to the entire committee, the musicians in the groups, the alumni, the community, and all attendees for making such a musical weekend with us: to the next 150 years!



# One Union Awards

On Saturday 2nd May, we held our second One Union Awards in Younger Hall, encompassing EduRep, Student Excellence, Gives Back, and Societies Awards into one event. We received 286 nominations across all categories, and gave out awards to 35 students or student groups.

One Union Awards is our annual chance to join together to celebrate all that our representatives and volunteers have contributed to the Union and to the wider student experience. Whilst a single event will never be enough to recognise the outstanding efforts of so many students in making St Andrews a better place, nights like One Union Awards reminds us of all what we're working toward, and how impactful our community is.

After organising and hosting One Union Awards for two years, we're looking forward to seeing how this event recognising our volunteers expands and improves in the years to come.

“

**Nights like One Union Awards remind us all of what we're working toward, and how impactful our community is.**

”



# Award Winners 2026:

## Student Excellence Awards

- John Honey Award: Brennan Burke
- Presidents' Representation Award: Ayra Ahmad
- Elsie Howie Award: Lucy Reynolds
- Bruce Turner Activities Award: Amy Elvins
- Dr Norman Scott Kemp Award: Caroline May
- Proctor's Award: Ariane O'Rourke and Maya Fenyk
- Rector's Award: Kaavya Chandrasekar

## Education Representative Awards

- School President of the Year: Ellie Shaw
- Outstanding Postgraduate Representative: Julia Hyman
- Outstanding Class Representative (Arts & Divinity): Olivia Douglas
- Outstanding Class Representative (Science & Medicine): Aro Aziz
- Outstanding Event: Francesca Bisi
- Outstanding Sustainability Initiative: Tamra Chan
- Outstanding Inclusivity Initiative: Ciara Rooney
- Outstanding Accessibility Initiative: Evie Cullen
- Academic Representation Team of the Year: School of Physics

## Society Awards

- Society of the Year Award: JazzWorks
- Best Event Award: Hong Kong Society
- Best Online Presence Award: Breakaway
- Most Collaborative Society Award: Art Society
- Community Engagement Award: St Andrews Madrigal Group
- Most Innovative Society Award: Sanskriti: The Indian Society
- Best Charitable & Volunteering Society: Women for Women
- Best New Society Award: Sri Lankan Society
- Accessibility Award: Celtic Society

## Gives Back Awards

- Volunteer of the Year Award: Julia Hyman
- USACC Volunteer of the Year Award: Piper Jenkins
- SVS Volunteer of the Year Award: Owen Goodacre
- Sport Volunteer of the Year Award: Michail Polakov
- Charitable Sports Club of the Year Award: Tennis Club
- Charitable Society or Group of the Year Award: Race2
- Charitable Event of the Year Award: Swimming Club
- Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community Award: Ines Tramarin
- Outstanding Contribution to the Student Community Award: Peer Assisted Learning Scheme



# Honorary Life Membership

The Students' Association awards Honorary Life Membership to individuals who make an outstanding contribution to enhancing the St Andrews student experience.

Honorary Life Membership is not something that is bestowed lightly. Only around 50 HLMs are awarded per academic year.



---

## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

---



# Winners 2026

Alexander McNeil

Alistair Grant

Amey (Ameline) Kinloch Anderson

Amy Elvins

Anna Alexiadou

Ariane O'Rourke

Ayra Ahmad

Azeem Akhtar-Hoque

Bartosz Rogala

Rebecca Douglas-Svarc

Caeleigh Alexander

Caitie Steele

Callan O'Sullivan

Cameron Coutts

Ciara Rooney

Clare Sacks

Cole Schubert

Donald Campbell

Ellen Winters

Emily Hadfield

Evangeline Cullen

Francesca Farah

Freya Dixon

Gregg Clark

Heather Sherriffs

Heloise Morel-Dierckx

Ines Carla Tramarin

Isabel Knight

Isabella Hirst

John McNealy

Jacob Carey

James Buckle

Joanna Barrow

Lucy Callaghan

Luke Baird

Luke Lynch

Lydia King

Maya Fenyk

Nick Townsend

Reese McDowell

Riya Narain

Sara Whiteman

Scott Sambrook

Tess McCartney

Thane Graham

Thomas Carey

Toby Berryman

Veronica Chiaravalli

William Vincent Smith

Zoe Bremner

Pierluigi Maffi

Amy Gordon

Clare Peddie

Christine Miller

Holly McDonald

# Operations



It has been a year of significant progress across our operations, our focus has remained on delivering a high-quality, student experience while strengthening the long-term sustainability of our services.

We welcomed approximately 86,000 attendees across our events and night-time programme, making this our strongest post-pandemic year to date.

Our events programme continues to play a central role in student life, with major highlights including Freshers' Week, Halloween and St Patrick's Day celebrations. These large-scale events, alongside a consistent weekly programme, demonstrate the value of shared experiences in bringing the student community together.

Beyond events, Rector's Café has continued to perform reliably, and we successfully adapted our food offering in response to staffing changes. The Old Union Coffee Shop has also recovered well following disruption caused by external works to the building.

We are continuing to grow our external events activity, creating additional opportunities to diversify income and maximise the use of our facilities.

Overall, our trading departments have responded well to changing requirements and unforeseen challenges. However, we remain mindful of the ongoing financial pressures facing both students and the organisation. As we work to keep services affordable and costs as low as possible for students, we continue to face increasing operating expenses and must remain focused on maintaining a sustainable balance between value and viability.



# Trading Operations

This year has been one of continued progress across our commercial and operational activity.

Building on the work of previous years, we have remained focused on delivering a consistent, high-quality student experience while strengthening the long-term sustainability of the Union's operations.

Across the year, we welcomed approximately 86,000 attendees to our events and nightlife programme, making this one of our strongest years to date and our most successful year since the pandemic. Through improvements in event delivery, the continued development of themed events, and expanded marketing activity, we have delivered some of the busiest nights in the Union's history.

While many of our weekly events operate on a smaller scale, our flagship events continue to play a significant role in bringing the student community together and driving overall success. The clear lesson from this year is that the Union performs best when we create large, shared experiences that students can enjoy together. Behind every successful event is an enormous team effort. We would like to thank our teams across Bars, Customer Safety, Reception, Design and Marketing, Ents, and Building Operations, who work collaboratively to deliver safe, enjoyable, and professionally run events, often during exceptionally busy periods. Our Finance and Business Support teams have also played a vital role in ensuring the organisation remains on a stable and sustainable footing.

Our trading patterns remain broadly consistent with previous years. Wednesday and Friday events, including Half-Time and BOPs, continue to be our busiest weekly nights, while the monthly Sinners events regularly attract the largest crowds. Earlier in the week, activity

is supported by a different mix of events, including Karaoke, Quizzes, and Jazz nights. This provides a clear picture of where demand naturally exists, while also highlighting opportunities for future growth. The ability to operate until 3am continues to enhance the student experience and allows students to make the most of their nights out.

Online ticket sales now account for the majority of attendance at large-scale events, often representing 70–80% of total admissions. Many students choose to purchase tickets either earlier in the day or shortly before arriving. Our Union Passes have proven extremely popular and continue to represent excellent value for students engaging with our events programme.

Beyond nightlife and entertainment, our wider commercial activity has remained stable and continues to develop. Rectors remains a popular and reliable part of our offering, serving students and the wider local community.

Following the departure of several long-serving members of our kitchen team, we introduced a simplified and value-focused food offer within the Main Bar. Particular thanks should go to our Catering Manager and Assistant Catering Manager, who responded quickly and effectively, developing a new menu that exceeded expectations throughout Semester 2.

The Old Union Coffee Shop experienced a challenging period due to external building works, including a temporary closure and reduced visibility for several months. Although this affected performance in the short term, trading recovered well once normal conditions resumed, and the coffee shop remains an important part of our daytime offer.

Our external events activity has continued to expand throughout the year. We now support a wide range of student-led and external events through bar provision, technical support, and customer safety services. This not only enhances the student experience beyond the Union building but also represents an exciting area of potential future growth.

With the planned recruitment freeze now lifted, we are in a position to strengthen our organisational structure through a number of appointments and team developments. These changes will help ensure that we are well equipped to support both day-to-day operations and future ambitions, while improving coordination and responsiveness across the organisation.

One of the most significant developments of the year has been the agreement of a new partnership to transform the Union's ground-floor bar space. This project will see the opening of a Wetherspoon pub within the building, supported by a full refurbishment designed to create a brighter, more modern, and more versatile social environment.

The redevelopment will include a new bar layout, upgraded drinks systems, refreshed interiors, and expanded kitchen facilities, enabling a significantly broader and better-value food and drink offering throughout the year. The venue will have its own dedicated entrance and is intended to operate as a lively, accessible social hub.

Crucially, the Students' Association will retain ownership and operational control of the space, with staff continuing to be employed and managed in-house. Students will also play a role in shaping the venue, including contributing to the naming of the pub!

While there is a lot to be proud of, we recognise that challenges remain. Our commercial performance continues to be driven significantly by a relatively small number of large late-night events, and improving consistency across other parts of the week remains an important priority.

Our daytime offering is currently anchored by the reliable operations of Rectors and the Old Union Coffee Shop. Looking ahead, we will continue to develop our offering, invest in our facilities, and identify new opportunities to engage students throughout the week. Overall, the past year has seen the Union move into a more confident position. We are delivering successful events, maintaining commercial performance, and continuing to evolve how we operate.

Most importantly, we continue to provide a welcoming space where students can come together in a safe environment, build connections, and make the most of their university experience.



# Afterword

When I arrived at the Students' Association earlier this academic year, one thing became obvious very quickly. This is an organisation full of people who genuinely care.

Every day I've seen students giving up their time to represent their classmates, run societies, organise events, support each other and make St Andrews a better place to study and live. I've seen staff go above and beyond because they believe in what this Association stands for. I've seen officers put an incredible amount of energy into improving the student experience.

This report is a celebration of all of that.

It's also been a year of significant change. Some of that change has been very visible, while much of it has happened behind the scenes. We've welcomed new staff, continued delivering our Change Programme, strengthened our governance and begun improving the way the organisation works. None of that is an end in itself. Students' associations can't stand still. Students' needs and expectations change, the higher education sector and global politics continue to evolve, and we must do the same.

Like many students' associations across the UK, we also face some very real financial challenges. Rising costs, changing student behaviours and increasing pressure on university finances mean we must think differently about how we deliver services and how we remain financially sustainable for the long term. That isn't always easy, but it is essential.

Perhaps the biggest example of that has been the decision to transform our Main Bar through our partnership with Wetherspoon. It has understandably prompted debate, but every decision we've taken has been guided by one simple question: what gives future students the best chance of having a strong, sustainable Students' Association? For me, that is what leadership is about - making decisions that protect the future of the organisation, particularly when they're difficult.

Our work doesn't stop here. We must continue to modernise and professionalise the organisation and ensure our long-term financial sustainability. That journey won't always be straightforward, but it is the right one.

At the same time, we must remain true to everything that makes the Association, the University and the town so unique. Our challenge isn't choosing between tradition and change - it's ensuring one protects the other.

Despite those challenges, I remain very optimistic about our future. The Association has talented staff, dedicated officers, committed volunteers, supportive Trustees and, above all, remarkable students. Those are the things that will define our future far more than any individual project or commercial decision ever could.

I'd like to thank our elected officers for everything they've achieved this year. Their commitment to representing students has been outstanding. I would also like to thank our staff and volunteers, whose hard

work often goes unseen but makes an enormous difference every single day. Many thanks also goes to our colleagues across the University. The relationship between the University and the Students' Association is strongest when we work together in the interests of our students, and I am grateful for the support, partnership and confidence shown throughout what has been a significant year of change.

Most importantly, thank you to every student who has been part of the Union this year. Whether you've stood for election, joined a society, volunteered, worked for us, asked for support or simply stepped through our doors, you've helped shape this Association.

There is still plenty to do, and there always will be. That's the nature of an organisation that exists to serve students. We are still at the beginning of our journey of change, but I'm confident we're moving in the right direction.

The achievements in this report are something to celebrate, but they are also the foundation for everything that comes next.

Thank you for being part of that journey.

**Graeme Kirkpatrick**  
**Chief Executive**



# Your AU and Union Executive Team 2026/27



**Aidan  
Horsburgh**

**Amy  
Elvins**

**Emily  
Bannister**

**Robert  
"RoMo"  
Moran**

**Bartosz  
Rogala**

YOUR  UNION  
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

---

Scottish Registered Charity, no. SC019883

 @standrewsunion  
[www.yourunion.net](http://www.yourunion.net)