



MANIFESTO

My name is Avery Kitchens and I am running to be your next SSC Societies Officer!

In the following document, I have outlined my plans for the next year, if elected as Societies Officer. The Societies Officer is in charge of chairing the Societies Committee and helping the Union's 160+ affiliated societies with affiliation, grants and elections.

I will set out my policies in the following areas:

- Collaboration with Sabbatical Officers
- Increasing Society Collaboration
- Reorganising the Fresher's/Re-Fresher's Fayre
- Promote Accessibility for Society Events
- Make Society Trainings More Comprehensive and Clear

EXPERIENCE During my three years at St Andrews, I have been very involved with both the Students' Association and the Athletic Union. I have served on the Student Representative Council, as Member for First Years, on the Athletics/Cross Country Committee, as Men's Captain and Social Rep, as Convener for the Ambassador's Ball, and on the Elections Committee. I have sat on the Societies Committee for two years, and this year as Affiliations Officer, where I affiliated 13 new societies. I hope to use the work ethic and passion that I have gained in these roles as Societies Officer.

1. Collaboration with Sabbatical Officers

Although the Society Officer is line managed by the Director of Student Development and Activities (DoSDA), I plan to use this platform to work with the other Sabbatical Officers in an effective way.

a. Work with the Director of Wellbeing – I plan to collaborate with the DoWell to create an accessible room guide that societies can access in order to hold events that are more inclusive to the mobility impaired students in St Andrews.

b. Work with the Director of Education – With the help of the DoED, I plan to create closer relationships between academic societies and their respective university faculties. In doing so, I believe that students will engage in more societies, and these societies will be able to hold larger and more successful events in conjunction with academic schools. This plan will also engage faculty, school and society presidents.

c. Work with the Director of Student Development and Activities – I plan to work with the DoSDA to advertise the Societies Committee's grants. Over the past few years, societies' grant applications have been gradually decreasing and I want to fix this. I also plan to work with the DoSDA to create a better "flow" in the

madness that is the Fresher's Fayre. Fresher's Fayre is one of the most attended events in St Andrews, yet it is impossible to navigate. I hope to work closely with the DoSDA and the Union Staff to try and combat this issue to the best of our abilities.

d. Work with the President of the Athletic Union – I hope to clearly differentiate what a society is and what a sports club is when new society/sports club applications are received.

e. Work with the Director of Events and Services – With the DoES, I plan to spell out exactly what societies can do in the building. The Union is a fantastic space to hold all kinds of events, but many societies do not know about what exactly they can do! This would include equipment hire and alcohol provisions. I also plan to work closely with the DoES to have the Society Awards continue to reward societies for their hard work and excellence, and also to increase the frequency of society 601 club nights, especially for charitable societies.

f. Work with the Association President – I aim to work with the Association President and SRC Accommodation Officer in an effort to advertise affordable housing at Re-Fresher's Fayre, as this is when students are hunting for the next year's housing.

2. Increasing Society Collaboration

Society collaboration is always something that is a goal for the Societies Officer, but is rarely acted upon. I will use the following methods to encourage societies to work together, in order to make the Union a more interdisciplinary space:

a. Society Mixers – This year, the Societies Officer instituted a society mixer, where societies that traditionally would not collaborate created events and submitted the ideas to the Societies Committee (e.g. Sexpression and Psychology Society - The Psychology of Flirting). I hope to have between one and two of these events a semester, to encourage joint events and participation.

b. New Charitable Society Liaison – In April, the Charitable/Societies Liaison that sits on both the Societies Committee and the Charities Committee was created to more adequately address the needs of charitable societies. I plan to work directly with the SSC Charities Officer to define the boundaries and workload of this role and utilise it to the best of its potential.

3. Reorganising the Fresher's/Re-Fresher's Fayre

The Fresher's/Re-Fresher's Fayre is always one of the most fun events to start the semester. Here are my ideas to make the Fayre more organised:

a. Change table numbers – Navigating both Society Fayres is very difficult, and I believe that the maps provided at the Fayre do not help with this difficulties. I plan to renumber the tables, so each room will start with a corresponding letter, so navigation becomes easier (e.g. MB1 - Main Bar Table 1). This will also limit the traffic in the Union Reception, as there is always a queue of people asking where each society is.

b. Start "Access Hour" earlier – "Access Hour" proved to be a great success at the 2020 Re-Fresher's Fayre, although people without Access Passes were not aware

that they were not allowed in to the Fayre until 12:30 (as the Fayre started at 12). I would combat this by starting the “Access Hour” at 11:30 AM, Placing a sign on the sidewalk to clearly state that “Access Hour” is happening, and have only one entrance (preferably the Reception entrance) open during this time, in order to adequately guide traffic.

c. Group like societies together more effectively – Although like societies are grouped together quite well already, I intend to continue the push to make the Fayres more organised.

d. Shorten Re-Fresher’s Fayre – Fresher’s Fayre is always extremely well attended, but Re-Fresher’s Fayre usually attracts around half of the attendees. By shortening the Fayre by one to two hours, the Fayre will seem busier, more engaging and more inviting to students. People behind society tables also get bored and become disengaged when there are not many people in attendance. This will hopefully lead to more people signing up to more societies.

4. Promote Accessibility for Society Events

The Union is a very accessible building already, but there are steps that I believe that the Societies Officer can take in order to make the Union make accessible for all. These include:

a. Continue “Access Hour” – I plan to continue the “Access Hour” during all large scale Fayre-type events. The “Access Hour” is in place to make it easier for students with disabilities or extra needs to join societies and take part in one of the most exciting parts of Fresher’s/Re-Fresher’s Week, just like every able-bodied student.

b. Promote accessible spaces – The Union is full of accessible spaces for societies to hold events, so by publishing an Accessible Room Guide, societies can include more members in their events and not be exclusionary. I also plan to promote that grants can be used (and should be used) for room bookings (especially when there is an issue with accessibility or the room is in the Union and it costs money).

c. Signage throughout the Union/website – The Union does a decent job with signage throughout the building, but there is not a map of the Union on the YourUnion website. Why is that? By instituting this map, I hope to make the Union a less intimidating place for all students.

5. Make Society Trainings More Comprehensive and Clear

Society trainings are outdated and disengaging.

a. Health and Safety Training – As of now, the Health and Safety Training given during the affiliation process takes between 10 and 15 minutes to give. This training encompasses Risk Assessments (GRA and SRA), general safety, and what to do if something goes wrong. Half of the slides repeat each other as well. I hope to work closely with the DoSDA and Phil in the Union to institute a test for attendees on how to fill out a risk assessment, as almost all risk assessments are sent back to be amended. By doing this, I hope to allow more societies to be covered by the Union’s Public Liability Insurance and be able to collect awarded grant money.

b. President Training – In President's Training, I will institute a slide discussing event declaration forms. These forms are used for any event over 100 people, involving people outside of the society, or when the society is preparing their own food.

c. Treasurer Training – Treasurer training has gone well, but some parts of the Powerpoint are outdated, such as the number of signatories on the account and who they should be. I believe that this section should be more clear before the trainees take the test.

Voting takes place on 5th and 6th March

Thank you very much for reading, and make sure you vote Avery for SOCS!