



BELLA for DOES

MANIFESTO

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ABOUT ME

Hi, I'm Bella (she/her), and I'm running to be your next Director of Events and Services because I'm determined to make the St Andrews student experience **vibrant** and **exciting** as we transition out of a difficult year. I will **revitalise St Andrews nightlife**, introduce **more live music events**, utilise **outdoor spaces**, and ensure that there's something for all students – whatever the COVID situation, whatever your interests.



I've just graduated with a Maths degree, having spent four years at St Andrews actively engaging with the Students' Association in both COVID and non-COVID times. My university experience – from being an avid fan of Friday night Sandy's karaoke and a semi-regular BOP attendee to being Vice President of Mermaids Performing Arts Fund (a DoES line-managed subcommittee) during the weirdest year of our lives – puts me in an excellent position to revamp student events and the Union building as well as making me well-versed in the behind-the-scenes of how the Association functions.

My ideas for successfully transitioning back to in-person events are ambitious, exciting, and realistic. Student consultation will be key to getting things back up and running, and I will actively engage with the student population to deliver the events you want. My inbox is always open.

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Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto and I hope you vote for me on the 26th and 27th of August.

MY EXPERIENCE

MERMAIDS VICE PRESIDENT 2020-21.

As VP, I co-led the student theatre community through ever-changing COVID regulations, managed Mermaids' large budget, and oversaw wellbeing and feedback for all students involved. This has given me tons of experience already in adapting events to a varying COVID situation, and good knowledge of resources available around the university if events need to be outdoors, distanced, or (god forbid) virtual.

I was also heavily involved in the Barron Theatre negotiations – a hot topic of our time – so I know what's needed and what's realistic. Through these, I already have valuable experience working directly with the university advocating for the student body, and I'm ready to leap straight back in.

MERMAIDS PRODUCTIONS COORDINATOR 2019-20.

As Productions Coordinator, I communicated with every production team behind every Mermaids show, guiding them through the proposal and production process and sorting all rights payments. I was also the sole coordinator of the 2019 Fresher's Drama Festival, a week-long festival of shows entirely directed, produced, acted in, teched by freshers. I am a communicative and caring leader, with extensive experience in coordinating different groups of people.

BALLROOM & LATIN DANCE SOCIETY HEAD OF EVENTS 2019-20.

I ran various events for the society throughout the year, culminating in organising the annual Strictly Come Dancing as part of the On the Rocks Festival, which involved communication with both the OTR committee and ENTS. This was sadly cancelled at the last minute due to COVID, but gave me valuable experience organising events in Union spaces and working with different DoES line-managed subcommittees.

BARRON THEATRE SUBCOMMITTEE PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT 2018-19

I was a key part of the team expanding the events happening in the Barron Theatre, corresponding with vast numbers of student groups about the availability of our space and resources – skills I've gained through this are essential to the role of DoES.

1. EVENTS & NIGHTS OUT

1.1 Reinvent Friday Nights

1.1.1 Make the **BOP less frequent** (e.g. Sinners runs less than weekly), with more of a focus on **music-related themes**, which are usually the most popular (e.g. throwback, decades, specific artist themes).

1.1.2 Work with student DJs to **diversify the music we get on Friday nights** – when there's no BOP, run a more classic club night with no theme and more dance music.

1.1.3 More **whole building events** with the BOP price of £3 – having the doors open between 601 Foyer and Main Bar is always good, and using that extra bit of bar space makes the 601 entrance feel less cloakroom/foyer-y.

1.1.4 Run a **major consultation early in the Semester** to get feedback and implement it (the previous one is now a bit out of date). The above is my plan for now, and is adaptable depending on success. I will experiment early on with different approaches so people actually have something to have an opinion on as we run the consultation.

1.2 Work with the AU President to get **Sinners** up and running again.

1.3 Work with Saints LGBT+ to introduce **regular LGBT+ nights out**.

1.4 **GRAD. BALLS.** Ideally 3 separate ones for each graduating class next year. Failing that, MEGA GRAD BALL. The classes of 2020 and 2021 have missed out on a lot, they deserve a proper celebration.

1.5 Reach out to local **DJ collectives** about availability of Union space for their events. Establish active communication with Wax, ASHA, etc. and encourage them to run some Union club nights.

1.6 More **live music** – work with JazzWorks to continue Jazz in Main Bar, and support the Music Fund as they get up and running with time and space around the building and outdoors, both during the evening and the daytime.

1.6.1 Work with STAR to get **Sounds of Sandy's** up and running again.

1.6.2 Work with Music Fund and other music societies to have daytime live music in Piazza and FiEld.

1.7 Continue use of the Piazza outside the Union. Quieter nights with live music making use of the **outdoor piazza bar space** will be invaluable, with the outdoor space being friendly to changing COVID restrictions and covid-anxious pals who may be avoiding club nights still. I will work with the outdoor planning group to make the **space more welcoming to students** – explore the potential for ideas such as a photo wall, 'Piazza' sign, and hanging lights.

1.8 Work with STAR to set up a **collaborative playlist for Main Bar** that students could add to.

1.8.1 Addition via GoogleForm to avoid people adding weird things.

1.9 Push the **events calendar** – proactively add all events run by student societies, as well as any external events happening in the Union building.

1.10 Work with DoWell to create a **safe space for nights out**. This would provide both a quiet place to get away for anyone struggling or feeling overwhelmed (especially relevant as we all adjust to a new normal), and would also be a place to find information/resources if anything bad happens.

1.10.1 Review the '**Ask for Angela**' system in place, and possible renaming as it's now so well known. Better publicise our **Zero-Tolerance Policy** and exactly what it means.

1.11 Weekly Calendar Concept

MONDAY - PUB QUIZ MAIN BAR/BLIND MIRTH IN SANDY'S

Invite different societies to co-host the pub quizzes to engage different communities, and experiment with **hybrid online/in person** for people not able to make it back to St Andrews.

TUESDAY - BEATS 'N BARGAINS

Continue this event, encouraging new DJs to get involved.

WEDNESDAY - SINNERS

Work with the AU President to get Sinners back up and running, and investigate the possibility of getting popular established DJ collectives to collaborate on some non-Sinners nights – non-Sinners Wednesdays have often struggled with popularity, and getting well-established groups in would combat this and be an exciting step.

THURSDAY - JAZZ MAIN BAR/LGBT+ BEACON BAR

Work with **JazzWorks** to put on live jazz in Main Bar, and work with Saints LGBT+ introduce a regular **LGBT+ night out** in Beacon – this is open to adaptation and expansion depending on how popular it proves.

FRIDAY - CLUB NIGHTS

BOP alternating with student DJ led club nights (while of course bringing back everyone's favourite Sandy's Karaoke) – retain popular music-related BOP themes, as these are usually the most successful (e.g. decades, specific artist themes), alongside student-led club nights with different genres and more normal club/dance music & vibes.

SATURDAY - SOUNDS OF SANDY'S

Work with STAR to continue this running every other week.

SUNDAY - GAMES NIGHT/MUSIC FUND

Board games behind the bar available, and keep the slot open for chill performances by the **Music Fund** around Main Bar and the Piazza to support them as they get up and running.

1.11 **Large Refresher's Week** with external acts and DJs, and larger live music events. Especially important this year as all students may not be able to make it back to St Andrews this September.



2.SPACES

2.1 **Utilise outdoor spaces.** Making more active use of the incredible outdoor space we have around town would be provide an excellent **contingency for potential COVID restrictions** should things get bad again, as well as being pretty fun.

2.1.1 Union spaces – the **FiEld** behind the Union has really made its way onto the map this year, and I would push it as a place for society and Union events. Explore the possibility of making it more inviting and aesthetic with a **mural on the back wall of the Union**. Continue the use of the Piazza for bar space as well as **live music and other society events**.

2.1.2 Expand the back of the Union to give some **outdoor bar space behind Sandy's** on the other bit of field.

2.1.3 Correspond with **Fife Council** about usage of different spaces around town for events e.g. Castle, Cathedral. Mermaids attempted to get in touch about theatre in these venues this year but ran into some trouble – I would work with Fife Council to work towards setting a **precedent for student groups wanting to use these spaces**.

2.2 Make **Can-Do Cocktail-esque events** in Sallies Quad easily bookable to **run by societies and subcomms** should COVID restrictions mean outdoor events are necessary.

2.3 Work with the DoSDA to **further streamline the room booking system**, to include 601 and the StAge so people can see exactly what's available when across the building, all in one place.

2.3.1 Create a **guide to bookable and usable spaces around town** to include existing/potential COVID safety measures in each venue, e.g. capacity if we need to go 1m or 2m distanced again and make sure it is accessible and easy to find.

2.3.2 Better publicise the **prices of using society rooms** and Union spaces for **non Union-affiliated groups**. The price list should be easy to find online, and it is currently not.

2.4 **Make Main Bar funkier** – continue regular art competitions to find student art to display in Main Bar, and run art-creating events to jazz up the building.



2.5 Keep **Beacon Bar** and Society Rooms open for **study space** when not in use (this will be limited for Society Rooms once things are fully up and running again, but Beacon needs to happen).

2.6 To make Main Bar a more effective study space, I will work with the DoSDA to explore getting more **plug sockets**.

2.6 The **Barron Theatre** – As VP of Mermaids this year I've been involved with Barron/Byre discussions pretty much from the get go. I know what is and isn't realistic and have a lot of incredibly valuable experience to continue to bring to the table. I **oppose the closure of the Barron**, and am very aware of how tense the discussions have been and how to navigate this while advocating for student interests. I will take this role seriously as a **representative of the student body**, not a peacemaker between the university and the students. Key points:

2.6.1 The Barron wasn't only used as a theatre, but for other society and external events, and this must also to be considered during the move.

2.6.2 Find an **alternative workshop space**. One of the most valuable things being lost in the move is the Barron workshop. An adequate replacement is essential.

2.6.3 Find an **alternative to all Mermaids assets being stored in Ceres**. Students don't tend to have cars, and this situation is unacceptable. If the Barron can't reopen, at the very least its storage space should remain accessible until a more suitable home in St Andrews for literally everything Mermaids owns (assets used by many societies across the town) is found.

2.6.4 **Displaced student groups** – there isn't as much freedom with scheduling in the Byre studio as there was at the Barron, and so for next year Blind Mirth will be displaced to Sandy's and ArtSoc to the Byre conference room. I will ensure that these spaces are available for these groups, and that they are able to run as similarly as they did in the Barron, supporting them and finding alternative space if there are any issues.

2.6.4 It's no secret there are some major Barron-related issues – the seating rack can't be moved, the Byre have a busy schedule in the Studio already that has to be worked around, and there's a noise bleed between the Studio and the main auditorium. The **university have promised to cover all costs of the move** and getting the studio up to the level of what the Barron offered, and sound proofing and a new seating rack need to be thoroughly explored. I will Hold. Them. Accountable. The Barron Fund will **not** be used to cover any of the costs of the move.



2.7 Work with the Byre (who are lovely) to put on more events around the building, especially using the café space by the auditorium. This could be a great space for live music, comedy, student art exhibitions and other creative activities. It's not all doom & gloom – this move is a great opportunity to **actively integrate the Byre with student life all year round** rather than just when there are major student productions on.

2.8 Make sure the Union is **strategic about using commercial space to maximum capacity** – COVID had a big financial impact, we need to recover as quickly and efficiently as possible.

3.COVID

Things are looking positive, but if there's one thing I've learnt over the last year it's that the situation is never predictable. Should restrictions tighten again...

3.1 **Online events** – We're all a bit sick of these, but there will still be students who aren't able to be back in St Andrews in person.

3.1.1 Events like pub quizzes could work in a **hybrid online/in-person format**, and I would experiment with this.

3.1.2 **Feedback here is essential** – we're all feeling online fatigue so keeping in personal contact and gathering feedback from people far away would be integral to the success of these events.

3.2 Produce a **guide to aid student groups with the transition back to in person events**, and ideas for different COVID eventualities. Student groups have been largely left to do their own thing over this past year – producing some guidance would be helpful, and having worked this last year adapting theatre to various levels of lockdown, I have some wisdom to offer.

3.3 There's also the possibility of **live streaming or recording** live music/theatre/performance etc. events (that don't require rights), which will be more possible now that indoor venues are usable, and can be adapted to outdoors if at any point they're not – in the current situation, this would mean more live events while also allowing distant students to get involved. With Mermaids this year I was involved in organising the filming & streaming of plays, so I have experience of how this could work.

3.3.1 Communicate with the student body to investigate how popular this would be.



4. SUBCOMMITTEES

4.1 **Music Fund** – This is in the process of being entirely reimagined, and I will provide support to turn it into something incredibly exciting.

4.1.1 Give them space and support to bring more **live music** to the Union, both in the evenings and daytime. The offer of a Sunday evening slot would be a good initial platform for this.

4.1.2 Help the fund **develop a partnership with the university Music Centre**, exploring the potential for funded Music Centre scholarships. Support the Music Fund to facilitate their idea of creating an album of songs created by student artists recorded in the Music Centre.

4.1.3 Work out how **music grants** are going to work and implement a concrete system, both for events and scholarships. I have extensive experience with the Mermaids proposal system, and while this would obviously be different, I have a good idea of what would work successfully in this area.

4.2 **On the Rocks Festival** – The largest student run arts festival in the UK and an incredible part of the St Andrews student calendar that now hasn't been able to go ahead since 2019 due to COVID.

4.2.1 Navigating the new Barron situation will be a challenge here. Their Byre dates have been cut significantly from what they used to be. I will **prioritise getting Union space for OTR** and helping them find alternative space around town if necessary.

4.2.2 Where most societies/subcommittees have faced their own challenges with moving online over the last year and a half, OTR has not been able to go ahead at all for two years running. As such, recruitment for the committee and subcommittees may be more challenging than usual. I will **ensure the festival and committee applications are heavily promoted through Union channels**.

4.2.3 Discuss with OTR committee the possibility of revising their policy on fining people £30 for missing deadlines (without sufficient reminders) and £50 for pulling out. I love OTR, but it's a bit excessive.

4.3 **STAR** - St Andrews Radio.

4.3.1 Support with **reopening the studio** for show hosts, and developing COVID safety rules for who can go in when and sharing equipment.

4.3.2 Alongside this, support them with **keeping the online system up and running** for students who can't make it back to St Andrews.

4.3.3 Support them in the building of **STAR TV** and publicise their services for use by other societies and subcommittees, and further publicising the equipment STAR has available that other student groups can use.

4.3.5 They have recently joined the **Student Radio Association**, and I will support both the committee and show hosts to utilise the opportunities and masterclasses this provides. The Student Music Network is also affiliated with the Radio Association and would provide good opportunities for both STAR and the Music Fund, and I will support both subcommittees to explore this.

4.4 **ENTS** – ENTS will have a huge job transitioning back to in person events and getting new students involved, and I will work to ensure they are fully supported.

4.4.1 Support to push **DJ training** and make sure it is well publicised. This will be essential for revitalising nights out.

4.4.2 Support ENTS through **publicity via Union channels** to recruit new students and maintain the student-led character of Union events.

4.5 **Design Team** – The Design Team are an incredible resource, and not used enough.

4.5.1 Give them **active support** and help with publicity through Union channels.

4.5.2 Support them in publicising the fact that **societies can get their logos made** through the Design Team.

4.6 **Mermaids** – Give them active support in case of changing COVID restrictions.

4.6.1 Support through the **Barron negotiations**.

4.6.2 Support through the **transition back to in person theatre**.



5. COMMUNICATION

5.1 There is already an **event suggestion page** in place on the Union website (www.yourunion.net/events/suggest). This is great but needs more publicity.

5.1.1 I will work with other Sabbatical Officers to create a more **general suggestion page** as well as the event-specific one.

5.2 Active reaching out & posting as well as suggestion boxes.

5.2.1 Explore the possibility of having a small events consultation group.

5.2.2 Active engagement in Facebook groups (e.g. Polldrews) and on Instagram to get feedback and find out what people want.

5.3 **Instagram** is more in than Facebook with the youths, the Union is already doing a great job with all the Insta stuff, and I would continue to push this.

5.4 Explore the possibility of running regular drop-in **office hours**.

5.5 I will publish **regular manifesto progress updates** via Facebook and Instagram.

6. WEBSITE

6.1 **Union shop** for society merch (www.yourunion.net/shop) is a good idea and should be expanded. It's currently difficult to find.

6.2 Drop down menus are too busy, streamline them.

6.3 Actively ensure the webpages for individual councillors are up to date, and they are able to make the changes they want themselves.

6.4 Ultimately work towards **full overhaul** and hiring someone to redesign the website.



THANK YOU FOR READING!

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto. My plan is ambitious, exciting, realistic, backed up by valuable experience, and will make your Union a vibrant and lively place to be.

If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch either through messenger or by emailing me at isz@st-andrews.ac.uk. My inbox is always open.

-Bella

**VOTE BELLA FOR DōES ON THE
26TH & 27TH OF AUGUST**