

## **Social Clubs Report**

A paper by Peter Mabbott, SCC Chair

### **Introduction**

I have had a surprisingly high response level (27 clubs out of 59) to my request for reports, and those who have reported in have been holding a reassuring number of activities.

### **Finances and Memberships**

The majority (over 80%) of the £3996 of SCC grant is now unlocked, but very few clubs have spent any of their share of it (only 23.8% of grant spent).

Although 22 clubs have met or exceeded their membership targets, 9 have 5 or fewer members, and 17 clubs remain frozen despite my best efforts.

My in-debt clubs mostly seem to be coming up with creative ways of decreasing their debts, although I have a few concerns about some of them. No contingency claims have yet been made, although I have been warned that the Environmental Society may be bringing a claim that will exceed the SCC Contingency fund.

After a meeting with Aziz, John (SCC Treasurer) and I are undertaking an error checking exercise to get expenditures sent to the correct locations; and I will soon be following up Christian's email of club officers who have not undertaken finance training.

### **Births, Deaths and Marriages (Club creations, closures and constitutions)**

I have had two new clubs join my CSC (Interact and Cascade), closed one (Student Respect) and lost another (Welsh) to the OSC, as reported at the last CSB. The Save the Children Society had a new constitution approved. I have dropped a number of clubs to a membership fee of £0 – in one case removing their budget to achieve it (reassigned to SCC Contingency).

### **Events**

Most of the clubs that reported to me seem to be having an impressive variety of events, aimed both at their members and at students in general. In particular, I'd like to pick out a few notable clubs:

The **Christian Union**, who hold 3 internal meetings every week, and have held a massive number of outreach events (including a Carol Service which this CSB is preventing me from attending).

The **Debating Society** have been doing massive amounts of stuff – they ran their own intervarsity debating competition, and are and will be attending a number of other competitions. They have also been having professional coaches at a number of their meetings.

The **Islamic Society**, who hold more events than I can comfortably track (they submitted a 21 page report on their activities) and appear to be undertaking pastoral care activities far beyond the call of duty.

As self-aggrandising as it may be, the **Science Fiction Society** has been doing very well, having run a lot of events in top of its day to day activities, including a pub quiz against the UCL SF Society and a trip to a British Science Association Meeting that may well result in the society co-hosting a lecture by Doris Lessing, the Nobel prize winning author.

## **Problems**

A lot of the problems clubs have come to me with I have been able to sort with trivial ease, but there are a few issues outside my immediate control:

It is apparently no longer possible for clubs to *book out the Union Bar exclusively* for an event under any circumstances during the week – although I know for a fact that Dep Socs are allowed to. It would be nice if this rule were removed or conditions for its relaxation laid down.

I recently discovered that under Finance Regs, it is not possible to sell non-membership items for *less than £5 on the website* due to the diseconomy of the credit card processing fee. A number of my clubs wish to sell items (Specific examples: Book Club's books, Fairtrade's chocolate event tickets) that are worth less than £5. Would it be possible for such clubs to set up such items with *special dispensation if they were willing to include the credit card handling fee into their prices?* While I imagine it would be an operational nightmare, I think it would seriously help several of my clubs.

In terms of storage space, clubs seem generally happy, although I infer that *more small lockers* in SAC would probably make a lot of difference to those clubs with a small amount of equipment (the food socs, primarily) – but currently, they are unaware that such space is even potentially available.

I have had a few items of feedback on SAC in particular – There have been a few *issues with forms or memberships going AWOL*. Additionally, in regards of *room bookings*, I have had a large number of comments about *slow turnaround on room booking requests* (not *all* due to clubs not booking well in advance), and on *lack of response to follow up to queries/room changes*. I had one specific comment about the Charing Cross campus, where Interact “get no reply”. It was also mentioned that computer access in the SAC is rather limited and a lot of the computers are always locked.

Finally, a lot of my clubs have problems with *logging into Workbench*. Is it possible to just recheck all club logins, rather than taking them on a case by case basis?

Related to that, I would like clearer guidance on *who to go to for various IT issues* – and for the non-urgent cases, which email address to use. The specific problems that spring to mind are as follows:

- Problems with Workbench
- Mailing lists
- Club logins

## **Summary**

The SCC is doing fairly well, but suffers from some incompetence amongst its officers, and a lot of clubs with a strong tendency not to tell the Union anything about what they are doing.

On a cheerier note, I think I'll end with a quote from the Debating Society that really made my day:

“Finally, I'd like to thank all of those at the union once again (including you Peter) for doing all the work behind the scenes to allow clubs and societies like ours to flourish.”