

Policies about to expire
A note by the President

The below policies are due to expire.

Decision required:

- 1) **To re pass the policies.**

1. **PRAYER AREA MOTION**
(Passed by Union Council 26th January 2009)

Union Notes:

1. That in excess of 350 Imperial College students and staff have been afforded adequate Friday prayers facilities for the past 15 years in the Southside Gym.
2. That Southside Gym was demolished during the Summer of 2005.
3. That no adequate permanent Friday prayer facilities are being provided at present.
4. That the Islamic Society brought the impending problem of a lack of Friday prayer facilities to the attention of College Executives no later than 6 months prior to the decanting of Southside Gym.
5. That Friday prayers have taken place in numerous venues, resorting to the Queen's Lawn on occasions when no other location was available.
6. The difficulty with informing and directing in excess of 350 people to different locations every week for the Friday prayer.
7. That Friday prayers are an obligation on Muslims.
8. That this issue has generated a lot of support from a wide demographic of students and staff at Imperial College.
9. That upon the demolition of the Southside Gym, other clubs and societies were relocated, and that no measures or arrangements were made to relocate the Friday prayer.

Union Believes:

10. That students should have the right to practise their religion.
11. That there is a contradiction in C&S policy* and the current provision for the Islamic Society to carry out its activities, in particular the Friday congregational prayers.
12. That the College has the responsibility to provide adequate facilities to clubs and societies of Imperial College Union in line with the MoU[†] it has with ICU.

* **Clubs & Societies Policy**, point 10 of section B (DUTIES OF THE UNION AND CLUBS & SOCIETIES)

10. *The Union shall provide a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination for all Union activity (according to the Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies).*

The above point refers to the **Health and Safety policy**; point 4 is of particular interest:

4. *Imperial College Union acknowledges its duty to ensure that all relevant legislation regarding health, safety and welfare is adhered to and that resources are made available to ensure health, safety and welfare.*

† **Memorandum of Understanding**, points 35 and 36 under ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT AREAS:

35. *All space is College Space. Areas are only allocated to the ICU, as to a Department/ Division, on the understanding that the allocation may, after consultation with the ICU, be varied where necessary for the good of the College as a whole. The Union shall occupy the Union Building (the North Wing of Beit Quad and East and West Wing Basements). The Union will also be provided with rooms as identified in Annex D to this document for the furtherance of the social, cultural and welfare activities of the College's students, together with other areas in the College where the Union may carry out trading activities.*

36. *The College will at all times endeavour to preserve and augment the areas used for student activities. However the College may, after consultation with the ICU, alter, withdraw or limit the use of such areas if it is reasonable to do so in the wider interests of the College. In such cases, the College will endeavour to find suitable alternative space if it is possible so to do. Any requests by the ICU, its clubs, societies and other affiliated bodies, for the allocation or use of additional space in the College which is not part of an academic department nor listed above, should be made through the Union President or Union Manager to the College Secretary or such other officer as the Rector may designate.*

Union Resolves:

13. To mandate the President, in consultation with the Islamic Society, to lobby the College in perpetuity in order to find adequate permanent Friday congregational prayer facilities.

**2. Motion to Support the Rivers Access Campaign
(Passed by Council 26th January 2006)**

Imperial College Union Notes:

1. Only 2% of rivers in England and Wales have access rights to the public
2. Restricted access to water is a problem for all students, not just canoeists. Swimmers, boaters, gorge walkers, rowers and anyone wishing to participate in watersport are restricted to using rivers that have undisputed access or where restrictive permission has been granted. This means that we have no access to 98% of rivers in England and Wales.
3. That the Welsh Canoe Agency describes how "Access Agreements have been sought for over 50 years. This approach has not delivered. The supply has not been met... ..Legislation is required to enshrine and enhance the right of access to the water, and provide clear roles and responsibilities for user groups in relation to the preservation of the environment".
4. Fishing and Canoeing happily co-exist in Scotland.
5. That the Conservative Party is at present looking into the issues surrounding access to waterways.
6. No other country, in which our members have kayaked have the same draconian laws. This includes: Scotland, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Norway, Sweden, Uganda, British Columbia (Canada) and Kyrgyzstan.
7. That the activities of the members of Imperial College Union (including members of the Outdoor Club, and the Canoe Club) are unacceptably restricted by not having a right to roam on water. This policy would also have a positive impact upon the members of the boat club and the sailing club.

Imperial College Union Believes:

1. That this situation is intolerable.
2. That Fishing and Canoeing can happily co-exist south of the Scottish border.
3. That negotiated access agreements do not work, and legislation is required to permit access for all unpowered craft over British Inland waterways.
4. That early day motion 957 – "River access for non-powered craft" is a positive step.

Imperial College Union Resolves:

1. To support the river access campaign, and early day motion 957.
2. To write an open letter to Mark Fields (MP for Westminster) thanking him for signing EDM 957. This letter should be signed by the President.
3. To write an open letter to Peter Ainsworth MP (Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) asking him to grant canoeists and users of other non-powered craft the same access rights as those provided for walkers. This letter will be signed by the President.
4. To write an open letter to Margaret Beckett MP (Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) asking them to grant canoeists and users of other non-powered craft the same access rights as those provided for walkers. This letter will be signed by the President.
5. To write additional open letters targeting relevant MPs on this matter
6. The above will be co-ordinated by the Recreational Club Committee Chair.

**3. Preservation of Queen's Lawn
(Passed by Union Council 3rd May 2006)**

The Union Notes:

1. That Queen's Lawn is one of the few remaining green spaces on the South Kensington campus.
2. That Queen's Lawn is extensively used by students and staff as a social area throughout the year and especially during the summer months.
3. That Queen's Lawn is used for several prestigious and important events including Freshers' Fair, the Summer Ball and Commemoration Day.
4. That the croquet club use Queen's Lawn for their core activity.
5. That Queen's Lawn is home to three memorials to both students and staff, the sites to which these memorials will be relocated have not yet been identified and it is questionable that established living monuments will survive transplantation.
6. That building on the Queen's Lawn will greatly inconvenience a large proportion of the staff and students based in South Kensington and will have a large and negative impact on the quality of their working environment for a number of years.
7. That the Central Library suffers from unfavourable levels of natural light.
8. That College has submitted a planning proposal to Westminster City Council (ref: 06/02104/FULL) to erect a three storey temporary building, covering 1/3 of Queen's Lawn for a period of two years as well as a two-storey temporary building on the car-park next to the Skempton Building.
9. This planning application was submitted on the 17th of March, yet students were not informed, the statutory planning notices were not placed in the immediate vicinity of the site and the proposed development was only discovered the day before the deadline for objections.
10. The impact of placing a temporary building on the Queen's Lawn will last longer than the two years that the building will be present as it will take time for plants and the lawn itself to become re-established.
11. The designs for the development are not sympathetic to the surroundings which set the scene for a Grade II listed building.
12. Placing temporary structures on green space is less environmentally sound than placing them on hard-standing.

The Union Believes:

1. That it is important to maintain green space within the campus.
2. That the loss of even part of Queen's Lawn would significantly impact on the enjoyment that is gained from it.
3. That erecting unsightly Portakabins would detract greatly from events held on the Queen's Lawn.
4. That the proposed development would further reduce the levels of natural light in the Central Library.
5. It is disrespectful to remove the memorials currently situated on and around Queen's Lawn.
6. That students have a right to have input into developments on campus.
7. That alternative sites are available by placing Portakabins on hard-standing rather than green space (such as the car park outside Chemistry which had Portakabins on it housing building works until recently).

The Union Resolves:

1. To lobby college to abandon the proposed development and find suitable alternative sites that will not involve the destruction of green space.
2. To follow a policy of active protest should College refuse to revise the development.
3. To seek ways of ensuring that Queen's Lawn and other areas of green space are protected for future generations.
4. To ensure that students are informed of any future developments on campus.