

Deputy President (Welfare) Report

A note by Charlotte Ivison

Campaign Weeks

SHAG Week was last week and seemed to go pretty smoothly. The publicity was definitely greater than previous campaign weeks. I'll be analysing how well the week actually went with a short survey at the beginning of this week.

The next campaign is Limits (drugs awareness) which should be happening at the end of Feb. We've also got events planned for Fairtrade Fortnight (organised by Fairtrade Soc) (focus on cotton with food etc.) and One World Week (film screenings, sport event, Metric night and debate).

Welfare survey

We're writing the questions for the survey and applying for sponsorship from various sources for the prizes, hopefully including something large like an iPad. The survey will be launched on the 1st March.

Visa reforms

I sent off our submission to the visa consultation at the end of January, and publicised it via Felix.

Fairtrade policy

I'm in the process of gathering data from various sources for the paperwork. Ehen that's done, I'll send it off and we'll renew our status.

Projects

The New Projects Committee on the 31st January saw three projects created. One works with disabled children locally, one wants to do development work in a village in Kenya and one wants to improve maternal healthcare in Pakistan. Congratulations to those applicants – there are already three applicants for next NPC so we'll be holding the next one in two week's time.

Halls Committee, Commercial Services and Rent

The President and I have met with Commercial Services to discuss room rents and how they could potentially be reduced. These reductions could include a reduction or scrapping of the Amenities Fund, as well as less frequent cleaning given that Imperial is one of the very rare few to offer such a frequent service. We've written a short survey to gather views on the reductions, to be distributed this week.

Budgeting

I've submitted the RWB budget for next year, which includes a much smaller contingency and larger spending on campaign weeks and welfare officer campaigns. Hopefully this increased structure will make life easier for next year's officers.

Elections

We've started preparations in earnest for this year's elections. This will include a 'promo team' made up of senior union members, such as welfare officers and management group chairs, designed to inform the student population and encourage them to vote.

Patient Participation Group at the Health Centre

I brought up again that the Health Centre website is so poorly designed that students aren't aware that they can get appointments other than doctors appointments, and frequently come away thinking that they can only get a doctor's appointment for three weeks' time. If I say it at enough meetings, it may get changed – watch this space.

PREVENT Workshop

I with other Union staff attended the PREVENT anti-terrorism workshop run by the police. It was designed to encourage identifying easily radicalised individuals or groups and how they could be radicalised, which is useful for us to understand when supporting our student groups.

DisabledGo

I met with a rep from DisabledGo, a service that does accessibility audits for buildings and uploads them to their website, which can then be used as a portal for disabled students and visitors to plan their routes without needing to ask the College lots of questions. I think it's potentially a very useful service, but it does come with a cost so I'm discussing it's viability with senior Union staff and College.

Accommodation

I spoke to accommodation about the functionality of their new private housing website, which should be online next year. We took an idea from another uni to do pre-term 'meet and greets' for students looking for housemates, and apparently that will be really easily done via the message boards. The website will contain all the landlords that Accommodation currently has, with a lot more information like photos so it actually functions in the manner of an estate agent's website which should be really useful.

Halls Committee

The Halls Committee has more members and is now aware of what it should and shouldn't report. The next meeting is scheduled for the 15th, and its agenda is looking at the rent reductions.

Green Reps

We have a meeting scheduled for the 17th Feb to do some more training with the Green reps and define their roles, as there are three different groups which makes the system quite disparate if not organised properly. The training will be done with College Estates.