

**Community Action Group (CAG) autumn term report**

**Committee:**

Chair: Sam Page (author)

Treasurer: Saber King

Secretary: Ali Kapasi

**Clubs/societies/projects:**

- Activities for Children with Disabilities
- African Development
- Aurora
- Avicenna Project
- Bike Users Group - *Set up this term*
- Coppafeel - *Set up this term*
- E.quinox
- El Salvador
- Global Brigades
- IC Buddies
- Imperial Cooperative
- Interact
- Kenyan Orphan Project
- Project Nepal
- Raincatcher Imperial
- Soup Run
- SSAGO
- Student Action for Refugees
- TEAM Students
- Women in SET
- - **A total of 20 clubs/societies/projects**

Club/Society/Project	Target membership	Membership (as of 10/12/13)	% Membership (as of 10/12/13)	Naughty officers	Training	All documents submitted	Report submitted
Activities for Children with Disabilities	20	26	130%				
African Development	20	21	105%				
Aurora	20	9	45%				
Avicenna Project	20	13	65%				
Bike Users Group	20	3	15%				
Coppafeel	20	11	55%				
E.Quinox	40	38	95%				
El Salvador	20	32	160%				
Global Brigades	20	27	135%				
IC Buddies	20	25	125%				
Imperial Cooperative	20	31	155%				
Interact	20	71	355%				
Kenyan Orphan Project	25	44	176%				
Project Nepal	20	38	190%				
Raincatcher	50	35	70%				
Soup Run	30	124	413.33%				
SSAGO	10	5	50%				
Student Action for Refugees	20	15	75%				
TEAM Students	20	36	180%				
Women in SET	20	82	410%				

Points:

- No clubs have naughty officers.
- Almost half of the groups have training which has not been completed by at least one of their committee members. This is, in almost every case, a Key Information quiz. It should be noted that CAG groups tend to have very large committees; I have brought up the subject of training this term numerous times and although the ‘gaps’ have slowly become fewer in number, at this point in term there would seem to be little motivation to now complete the quizzes. (Global Brigades have a new committee and are keen to complete training as soon as the Union system lets them).
- Over half of the groups have outstanding documents. Excluding Activities for Children with Disabilities, Aurora, African Development and IC Buddies, who have not submitted Financial Responsibility forms, which I would deem as a severe problem, (further concerns about these groups to be discussed later; Student Action for Refugees are submitting a Financial Responsibility form this week, I have been promised!) the remainder of the groups have not submitted at least one of an Affiliations, Instructor Registration or Risk Assessment, despite these not being relevant to many of them. I will continue to work on getting the groups to submit these forms. Bike Users Group – a brand new group – have not submitted contact details but I am in contact with the committee.
- 16 of the 20 groups submitted reports; the four that did not are the same four who have not submitted financial responsibility forms and the same four that I have had no contact with this term...

I have substantial concerns about the four following groups:

- **Activities for Children with Disabilities**

This group has not submitted a financial responsibility form or any other forms and I have had no contact with this club this term. Despite this, membership is high.

- **African Development**

This group has no contact details submitted, so I have no idea who is actually on the committee for this group and so have had no contact with them this term. Again, membership is good.

- **Aurora**

Same situation as African Development; no contact details submitted. Membership low.

- **IC Buddies**

Although they have a committee member (one!) they are as for the other groups in the list, with no documents submitted and no contact made.

Advice on how to treat groups which as far as I can tell have no committees would be welcome.

### **New groups this term**

Both Bike Users Group and Coppafeel have been set up since the start of term (I was part of the NPC committee which approved them over the summer). Their committees have been keen to get involved as much as possible since the start; they have attended CAG meetings and committee members took part in the CAG Felix centrefold earlier this term. Administration-wise, Coppafeel is flawless whilst I am only awaiting Contact Details for Bike Users Group (though this information is known to me personally, they have not submitted the form online). Membership is low, more so for Bike Users Group, but this is perhaps to be expected at this early stage. I have been informed that both groups have strong plans for next term.

### **Outcome from reports**

Individual group reports are included as appendices. The format of the report was left to the discretion of each committee, with some reports clearly more in-depth than others. (Some token credit should go to Project Nepal, Soup Run and TEAM Students for their insightful responses). Some groups required a lot of pestering before they would submit reports; none-the-less, the final outcome is positive, especially in regards to actually having made contact with a committee member of almost all of the groups (certainly a more representative overview than has been achieved during CAG meetings).

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Each group has had successes this term, though some have struggled for various reasons this term. The main topics/concerns which came up are:

- **Fundraising/sponsorship.** Fundraising is an essential part of many CAG groups' activities. (Many of them receive tiny amounts of Union grant). Descriptions of fundraising activities filled out a lot of the reports, with this being an area that some of them identified they need to work on next term.
- **Publicity/attracting more volunteers.** Many groups identified the need for effective publicity in recruiting new members. This term, representatives from four individual CAG groups, plus the CAG Exec, took part in a **Felix centrefold**. I am not sure this was particularly effective publicity, but it was effective at bringing some CAG members closer together (!). Many CAG groups participated in the **Volunteering fair** held earlier this term; feedback suggests this was not hugely successful, mostly due to the location. Further volunteering fairs are in the pipe-line, plus **volunteering week** next term. CAG groups have been encouraged to get involved in this, along with the **Give-It-A-Go** scheme. This term has seen some collaboration with **Imperial Hub**; representatives have attended each CAG meeting; the main ways they can help are: including CAG activities in their weekly emails 'The Week', setting up networks for similar clubs (e.g. International Development/Local Action), a Publicity workshop for CAG groups was held last week.
- **Resolving administration type issues.** This has affected some groups in particular. SSAGO wanted to change their name and membership cost at the start of term after deciding these changes last year; however, these changes took a long time to come into effect. Global Brigades have similarly suffered, after electing a new committee this term. Clarity as to who within the Union system to contact regarding these sorts of issues would perhaps be beneficial for our groups.

There were two CAG meetings held this term: 10<sup>th</sup> October and 7<sup>th</sup> November. Attendance has been satisfactory, but not representative of CAG as a whole. Many groups have been disappointing in not sending apologies/not attending. The next meeting is provisionally scheduled for the 20<sup>th</sup> January. It was the intention to schedule a meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December to coincide with the Imperial Hub publicity workshop, however after a lack of issues to discuss arose, it was decided to distribute any key information through email, with the individual group reports providing a good opportunity to 'check-in' with each of the groups.

I am on the NPC (by default, of course) and am awaiting the chance to review applications from potential new projects. I have attended Union Council/CSPB meetings throughout the term (with the exception of the Union Council meeting 10/12/13).

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**Finances** (as of 10/12/13)

Club/society/project	Final grant allocation (£)	SGI (£)	IC Trust (£)	Faculty (£)	Total (£)
African Development		-59.79*			-59.79
Avicenna Project		116.58			116.58
Bike Users Group		3454.05			3454.05
Coppafeel		56.71			56.71
E.quinox	85.50	229.22	4000	452.36	4767.08
El Salvador	205.60	939.51			1145.11
IC Buddies	30.00	1.67			31.67
Imperial Cooperative		182.17			182.17
Interact	50.00	36.04			86.04
Kenyan Orphan Project	35.00	1748.38			1783.38
Project Nepal	36.00	913.95	2000		2949.95
Raincatcher Imperial	145.00	25.00	4000		4126.50
Soup Run	1428.90	166.68			1595.58
SSAGO	70.00	47.81			82.81
TEAM Students	92	396.12			488.12
Women in SET		11843.00			11583.08

\* Negative SGI inherited from previous year

Note: Four groups - Activities for Children with Disabilities, Aurora, Global Brigades and Student Action for Refugees – do not generate any income through any channel and hence do not appear in this table. General observations

CAG groups possess a vastly differing range of money. Only Soup Run receives a substantial sum from the Union grant (especially compared to other management groups), however almost all groups generate some sort of SGI; in some cases a very significant amount. Only African Development has a negative total; this should only add to the concerns presented earlier. All of the clubs possess finances to carry out their activities for the foreseeable future; in many cases, they will continue to fundraise for their projects next summer. I will continue to work closely with the individual committees over the course of the next term.

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**Appendices:** Individual group reports

### **Avicenna Project**

Compared to last year, the Avicenna Project has been a bit more quiet this term due to the committee being a lot more busy (on calls and night shifts at the hospital) however we used a small portion of the surplus from the funds I raised last year in the project's first year to hold a productive workshop this term- focusing on efficient and cost effective hospital design. Continuing on from our successful and popular lecture series and being the license holder of TEDMED Imperial last April, we are also contributing (in terms of speaker, exhibitions and execution) to next April's event at Royal Albert Hall and "The Cell" event at Sir Alexander Fleming Building- which will be our main event and focus of the year.

### **Bike Users Group**

We've got some lovely tools for satellite campuses (Royal Brompton and Hammersmith), had a couple of workshop sessions that worked quite well. First term Auction went well, looking to make it more streamlined for RAG's end next time. Otherwise looking to order a large amount of tools for south kensington workshop soon and have two bike days organised with LCC & TFL in the new year.

### **Coppafeel**

CoppaFeel! Uni Boob Team has had a mixed start to the year - Freshers' Fair and the following fundraiser cake sale went well and attracted a good amount of attention for the charity. Unfortunately, the Volunteering Fair was less successful due to low turn out. Whilst initial sign-ups were plentiful, we are having trouble with ongoing commitment to the project and so might struggle later on when trying to organise larger events for a fundraising week. Several things are in the pipeline to raise the profile of the charity and project so hopefully we can make a fresh start in the new year and gain some more members to leave the project in a strong position for the next academic year.

### **E.quinox**

For the first six weeks, e.quinox carried out a series of workshops to give the freshers an insight into the different projects. The turn-up to the workshops as quite successful, having around 15-20 interested people per workshop. In the first meetings after the workshops lots of new members showed up. Project work has continued since then for the past weeks and once a week we meet up to update each other on our separate work. So far everything is following according to plan. Work is being put into planning a possible January trip.

### **El Salvador**

The El Salvador project was officially registered with the university in 2013 and it is now being run by 4 committee members. The structure planning of the society is still in its infancy stage and we are currently looking into having more defined committee roles that would be beneficial to the society especially during the transitional stage. At the start of term, we have managed to attract quite a large crowd of students, signing up to our mailing list. Following on that, we then organised another info session in the Civil Engineering department where the aim of the society and past projects were presented. A brief introduction about the 2014's project along with some yearly events were also discussed on. In November, we carried out several informal interview sessions where members of the 2014's expedition team were chosen. Due to the current financial standing, the society will only be sending out a group of nine for the expedition next year. However, if the society do get enough funding within the next few months, we will then reopen the registration for the expedition team. Similarly, we are currently looking into college grants, industrial supports and other charity events to raise funds for the 2014 project. The details and blueprints of the project will be finalised next year.

### **Global Brigades**

Imperial College Global Medical brigades elected a new committee in November 2013. Despite our great efforts, which include countless e-mails and in person visits, Imperial has still not updated their system yet and as a consequence none of the committee members has been able to do their training quizzes. We are also finding it quite difficult to book rooms etc. Besides this we have managed to have our first information session last week and we are having another one this coming Tuesday. In terms of long term plans, we are aiming to have a social in January and a GB week in February, before our extended information sessions in March.

### **Imperial Co-operative**

IC co-op was only set-up in the Summer term of last year, so we are still very much finding our feet.

We are holding a weekly stall that is going really well and are building a regular customer base.

We have been selling vegbags sourced from a local Organic farm, unfortunately the farm have lost their contract with the company they delivered to in central London, so we have no way to support their delivery to us after the end of this term. Although this is a shame, I think it will allow us to focus on building up the wholefoods side.

Our real struggle at the moment is finding enough volunteers.

### **Interact**

#### 1. Activities planned

- Freshers' dinner
- Gardening projects at Ravenscourt Park and with Age UK
- Christmas lunches and parties with various organisations, such as Kids Company, MENCAP and Chelsea Theatre
- Christmas wrapping with Marie Curie Cancer Care
- More activities in Spring Term

#### 2. What went well?

- A wide variety of activities planned for Autumn term
- Sufficient volunteers for each project (gardening projects with consistently the largest number of participants)

#### 3. What went wrong/didn't go so well?

- Organisations can take a long time to reply emails
- Bucket collections not usually popular probably due to nature of project → cancelled
- No response for Spires collection projects probably due to timing and nature of project → cancelled

#### 4. Plans for the future

- Continue to liaise with organisations to organise different volunteering projects
- Reach out to more people, by advertising opportunities via various means, e.g. Imperial Hub

### **Kenyan Orphan Project**

This term has been pretty good. KOP week during November raised £380; tube collect raised £50; krispy kreme sale raised £25; carolling in December raised £180.

In terms of fresher's fair we had around 180 people signing up and for intro night (in November) about 45 turned up.

I think overall this term is going well, but I feel we need to try and get more sponsorship for faster ways to raise money. So more support in this aspect would be great.

Next term we hope to continue to do more tube collects, organise the summer team and have a massive Valentine's Day cupid event which we do every year.

## **Project Nepal**

Our plan for this summer project is to build a boarding house onto the school we are paired with so children that live far away can board at the school. We are also planning on funding a qualified educator, for a year, for both the students and the teaching staff. Thus, following last year's project of increasing the school's capacity, this year we intend to increase accessibility and the quality of teaching. In addition to this, the school has agreed that we can do some teaching this year, providing we create structured lesson plans, and the students are competent at teaching. We have begun planning our first teaching plan to use as a template for other courses. We will probably run 2 short courses over a 6 week period to the students. Our first short course will be on zoology, food webs and evolution.

We are hoping to send two construction teams of about 8-10 people on two separate four week trips. This is so the construction project can be completed in one summer, and we don't have too big an influence on the village. I am also hoping to send a separate teaching team of a maximum of 6 people. This team will go for 6 weeks, and they will overlap with either one or both of the construction teams. The smaller group size and longer time period is so that the children can build more of a relationship with this team, thus allowing better teaching.

This term Project Nepal has been doing fine. We have had a lot of interest and it seems we have about 20 people seriously interested in going on the trip, and a further 30 or so who have joined our facebook group. It has been quite a challenge to manage this many people, as there is little direct contact with all of them. There has been a division of sub teams, but limited clear direction and management of those teams. We are working on this.

We have held four fundraising activities this term. We received donations for Lola's Cupcakes, Nepalese bracelets and trinkets, Krispy Kremes, and we held a film night. The total funds raised is about £350.

We are due to start applying to grants this week, as our template is due to be finished today.

I have begun to organise a collaborative club night with some of the other volunteering societies. We intend to make this an annual signature event. This year we are focussing more on creating the brand and ensuring a good first event rather than profit. The societies involved are El Salvador, KOP, Global Medical Brigades, Global Water Brigades and EWB. So far we have more or less finalised on the theme, date, venue, capacity. We are hoping to hold it in January.

Overall, I feel Project Nepal is doing well, despite a slow start. I am confident we can reach our fundraising target of £10,000.

## **Raincatcher Imperial**

In the largest scale, Raincatcher Imperial aims to improve the general living conditions of rural Tanzania through the provision, delivery and development of water supply and sanitation solutions. This year, the team in the UK has been split into three broad groups:

- 1) Fundraising and publicity;
- 2) Research; and
- 3) Programme development.

The fundraising team, as it suggests, is focussed on raising funds for the programme and to increase awareness of the problems we are tackling. The research team looks at research in engineering areas, while the programme development team focusses on research in the socioeconomic aspects of the problem, including areas such as microfinance and participatory development.

The project is moving forward. General problems faced would, however, be in the membership interest in the society and retention rate. While the number is healthy at the moment, problems might arise if members pull out later in the year.



A few documents have yet to be lodged (I promise I'll do it ASAP!); actually, we need to increase the number of officers in the society, but I've sent Yas quite a few emails and it seems she has yet to reply.

## **Soup Run**

### Description

We are a charitable group that distribute food to the homeless every Sunday evening. We collect the food from local cafes and make hot drinks in the basement kitchen of Weeks Hall, Prince's Gardens before delivering it to Lincoln Inn Fields by minibus.

### Membership

We currently have 124 members which is an improvement on the 107 members last year which is much higher than our membership target of 30!

We ran two introductory sessions at the start of term which explained what we did and how people could get involved. We had really good attendance at both (20-30 people each) and have subsequently been really busy on the rota especially for the actual run although in recent weeks we have been slightly emptier for a couple of the food collections.

I plan to send emails to the Hall Wardens to see if we can involve any students who are staying for the holidays and want something else to do.

### Food collections

We are still collecting from 2 EAT's (Brompton Road and King's Road) and 3 Le Pain Quotidien (King's Road, Young Street and by South Kensington station). Someone has made contact with PRET on Gloucester Road who seemed interested as they give to charities but the ones that collect from there have been quite unreliable so PRET may be interested in changing. I am waiting to hear from them and will chase them up soon.

### Finance

Finance is fine, especially with a large donation of £135 from a fundraising concert I put on in my home town at the start of term.

## **SSAGO**

SSAGO has undergone quite a bit of rebranding this year to become more recognisable and despite taking a while, we managed to get our membership fees sorted. Our activities this term include London Underground Monopoly Challenge, Thorpe Park Fright Nights, World Zombie Day, hiking in the Peak District, attending a national SSAGO Rally in Sheffield and a science museum late in collaboration with UCL SSAGO. We have also had a lot of interest from members interested in completing their Gold DofE and connected people who are interested in volunteering with local scout and guide groups.

## **Student Action for Refugees**

Things have been going fairly well so far, and we had quite a few signatures during Freshers Fair but unfortunately not a great turnout to our first meeting. We've got 5-6 volunteers which is enough to keep activities going, but obviously quite small when it comes to organising bigger fundraising events. The main problems we seem to face is that all of the three committee members this year are very busy and either in their final or penultimate year of Medicine, so meetings are difficult to coordinate as people are away on residency etc. The aim is to keep the volunteering activities going, to coordinate events with other STAR groups in London, and hopefully get enough people interested so that we can at least have a committee next year.

## **TEAM Students**

In numbers: 55 volunteers tutoring 116 pupils from two local schools.

We've had a fairly successful start this term, recruiting XX volunteers, the same number as last year. This year however, we have expanded the group sizes to enable us to offer help to more pupils, and use the benefits of peer learning. We have received record applications from school pupils and there is a real buzz about our tuition at the schools.

Retention has again been an issue, with four volunteers dropping out after a few weeks. This is extremely frustrating as the volunteers seem oblivious to the huge impact that can have on the school pupils. It is also despite Team Up, an organisation who supports us, offering a professional accreditation in an attempt to make volunteers more accountable. This will force us to re-recruit in January, as we did last year.

Financially, we have benefitted greatly from Union support for the first time. We have so far spent some of our grant on providing refreshments for each Saturday School session. Next term we will be looking to make use of the Outreach Lab and possibly arranging a session in the Chemical Engineering Pilot Plant and Discovery Space. Funds from the Union will help hugely in securing meaningful enrichment activities for our pupils. We have also held one fundraiser, selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts to obtain a profit close to £60, which will go towards buying new textbooks.

Volunteers are visiting the two schools in White City on a Wednesday at their own expense which is not ideal. Last year we had an agreement with Imperial Hub who funded our transport costs but this has been withdrawn for this year. Although no volunteers have raised concern about this, we are worried that it may negatively impact on willingness to volunteer, as this is at much too high a cost for us to cover.

We are looking forward to our first social event of the year on Monday 9th December and will hold at least one other next term, along with more fundraising events. Onwards and upwards next term!

## **Women in SET**

This term Women in SET successfully organised three main events as planned- Open Day for school girls, Ada Lovelace Day Exhibition, and Career Networking Evening. Generally, there were quite good turnout. Robogals project also went well this term.

Financial-wise, we managed to receive sponsorship from Barclays.

Publicity would be an area that we need to improve on next term.