



Royal College of Science Union

# **Report to the Clubs, Societies, and Projects Board December 2014**

Compiled by Philip Kent  
on behalf of the Executive Committee

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## Introduction

*Prepared by Serena Yuen – RCSU President*

This term has been, in general, a success for the RCSU. We have held several traditional events (such as the Balls and Freshers Fortnight events) as well as the first Tri-Union event of the year, selling out Metric.

We are trying to make changes to the RCSU by introducing new events and initiatives or building on existing ones – the academic rep team have really worked well under Zoe Hsu to improve representation in FoNS (Faculty of Natural Sciences) and creating a Rep Handbook with guidelines and help on completing their roles.

Additionally, Ben Stockton is overseeing Broadsheet and pushing it in a new direction to combine science, the arts, and culture – the first issue will be out in the week beginning 8th December, and I hope it marks a new beginning for the publication.

We are also considering re-introducing RCSU Sports clubs either by bringing clubs back from dormancy or by applying to start new clubs.

We were without a VPO for much of the term, which prevented us from performing to the best of our abilities as an Exec and General Committee, but now Nas has been elected we are hoping that the RCSU can move forward quickly and efficiently next term.

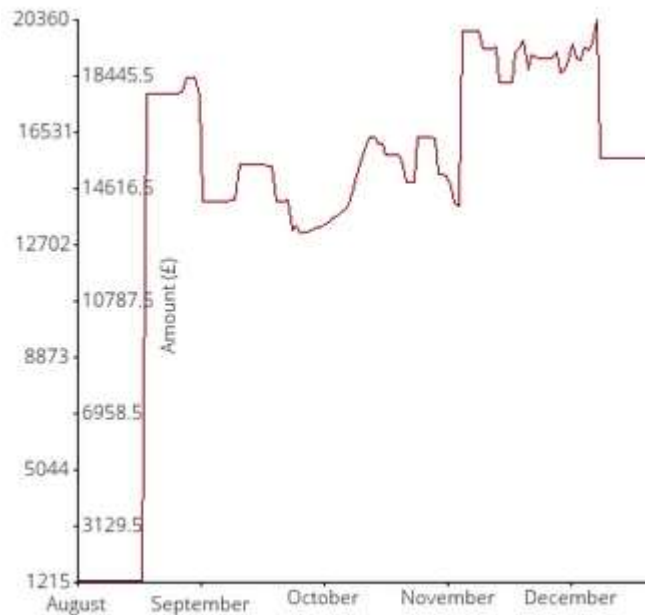
Looking forward, we will be finalising changes in the new website, planning our Welfare Week (while making sure it does not overlap unnecessarily with an ICU Welfare week), and continue work on the Science Challenge. The Launch took place on December 1st, and our focus now is to ensure we get as many entries as possible over the coming months from students in all Faculties, and school children from around the UK.

This said, there are always things to work on and improve, and I think it is definitely feasible to implement changes within the RCSU before the end of the year.

We will be holding a General Committee meeting before the end of term as well as presenting a student survey to receive their feedback on RCSU services and events.

## Finances

*Prepared by James Badman – RCSU Honorary Junior Treasurer*



Above: Graph showing our total account balance over time.

At the beginning of this year, we were left with very little room for errors or indeed money to spend at all! However, after securing £7700 in sponsorship (including £5000 from Winton Capital) and £15000 from the Faculty of Natural Sciences (FoNS), we are currently in a much healthier position. As of the 10<sup>th</sup> December, the balance of our accounts sits at £17452.13, with approximately £1000 owed to us from the deposit for winter ball. We have already earmarked a lot of this money for various purposes, including a large amount for Science Challenge (granted to us from FoNS for this specific purpose or obtained through sponsorship) and also a pot of money set aside for Departmental Societies and sports.

We do not run events at a profit intentionally, which means inevitably our balance will fall overtime. However, so far this year the RCSU has only made a small loss on the two balls, and has even made a small profit on the Tri-Union Bar Night. We also have held some events such as our tea party and Science Challenge Launch where we have run them at a loss intentionally from the funding that FoNS has given us.

So far this year we have only spent a small amount of our grant (our stationary grant), however the rest of it has been earmarked for use

throughout the rest of the year. This includes on travel costs for judges, an issue of broadsheet and partial funding for the Science Challenge Final.

We are currently investigating further sponsorship and also are hoping to receive at least £1500 from the RCSA in due course. By the end of the year, it is hoped that our SGI will be up from approximately £1600 at the start of the year to at least £3-4000, which should provide us with a suitable contingency fund for ourselves and DepSocs and also to give next year's committee a head start.

## Operations

*Prepared by Nas Andriopoulos – RCSU Vice-President (Operations)*

It has been a strong term for Operations Board, in what can only be called testing conditions, having functioned without the overview of an active VPO until a bye-election was held in November. As such the Executive Committee took on the responsibilities of the VPO, whilst the members of the Operations Board went about their duties in diligent fashion.

Progress was made by Zoe, the Academic Affairs Officer, in the rolling out of Panopto services across the Faculty, as well as by Jonas, Web and Communications Officer, who is in the process of launching a new RCSU website.

Another notable activity has been the production of Broadsheet, which has undergone a minor adjustment of direction and now seeks to "bring science, society and the arts together". This term's issue has now gone to print and will also be made available online.

Science Challenge was launched at the beginning of December, which featured the judges unveiling their questions to an engaged audience with myriad scientific demonstrations providing the evening's entertainment. The attendance was not as strong as previous years, which could have been due to a combination of the reduced prize pot or the absence of a VPO during the beginning of term. Nevertheless we are confident that the competition will attract many fine entries and look forward to the final next term.

Sponsorship, the chief responsibility of VPO, was handled by the President and Treasurer who secured a total of £7,700 over the summer. Pursuing additional sponsorship will be a priority of the VPO in the coming term.

Another important annual event for Ops Board is the RCSU Welfare Week. We are currently investigating the possibility of combining this with the ICU's own welfare week next term.

Additionally, Ops Board will be organising a careers networking event for the spring term, which will help connect our members with the variety of careers available for a Natural Scientist.

## Entertainments

*Prepared by Philip Kent – RCSU Honorary Secretary*

The RCSU has had a busy term in our entertainments division. Entertainments Board is concerned with organising our formal Balls, as well newer events, smaller events, as well as RAG and Sport activities.

Our three main events so far this term include our Autumn Ball, which was once again a sell-out, and our Winter Ball joint with CGCU. Both events were huge successes with many happy customers, with the latter event also featuring a photo booth for all attendees to enjoy. We also experimented with a free pitcher promotion.

Our main new event this term was the Tri-Union Bar Night, run in cooperation with the RSM and CGCU. This event was a huge success, filling Metric to capacity and doing a not-bad job of filling up the other bars and the Quad.

This tri-union event is hoping to be the first of many, and we are looking to work much closer with the CGCU and RSM this year, strengthening inter-CU relations. The bar night has shown there is a demand for working closer together as three Unions each with our own identities and we hope to build upon this to better serve our members.

During the RCSU Freshers' Fortnight, we held our regular Freshers' bar night, which was popular and successful despite the arrival of the Links clubs later on in the evening; a reasonable number of guests left at this point. We also had our Pub Crawl, which this year was re-routed towards Hammersmith and not Chelsea as this was felt to be more affordable for guests (not to mention cheaper!).

Concerning non-alcohol focused events; we ran the Science Challenge launch, which was mentioned previously, as well as our Tea Party, which was both bigger and more popular than last year. The RCSU is eternally grateful to Deputy President (Welfare), Chris Kaye, for helping us set up our event and lifting heavy boxes – especially as both lifts were out of use in the building that day. Rebecca Coxhead also paid a much-appreciated part in helping set up and we are very grateful for the time both of these lovely people gave to us.

We are looking to arrange additional non-alcohol focused events later in the year, such as a Jazz Night, Comedy Night, and potentially a Tri-Union sports day.

A trip to Germany was sadly abandoned due to lack of interest from the Board in organising it.

One interesting technological advancement in our events was use of the new eActivities Swipecard Entry System, which uses the magnetic strip on swipe cards and RFID to check people's attendance on the guest list. Despite the initial expected teething issues with a new system, once settled in, it worked

incredibly well. Our thanks and congratulations to everyone who made this happen and we look forward to using it more in the future. This system has been used for events such as the Tri-Union Bar Night and BioChemSoc and BioSoc's Halloween Party.

We highly recommend anyone running a large event to use this system, it definitely sped up the process of ticketing people off at the bar night! We would like to use this technology for a RCSU Ball in the future, however some outstanding procedural issues still require resolution before we are able to do this.

## **Clubs and Activities**

*Prepared by Philip Kent – RCSU Honorary Secretary and James Badman – RCSU Honorary Junior Treasurer*

The Clubs and Activities Committee manages the Union's clubs and societies. At present, these consist of five departmental societies; BioChemSoc, BioSoc, ChemSoc, MathSoc, and PhySoc. It is the Union's intention to expand this list to include non-departmental societies in the future.

The membership of the Committee consists of:

- The President (in the chair)
- The Honorary Junior Treasurer
- The Chair/President and Treasurer of each and every club or society under the Union's stewardship (although each club or society only has one vote)

The Honorary Secretary is the Permanent Observer to the Committee.

This is the first year of a new structure for the Committee. In previous years, the Committee was chaired by the Vice-President (Operations), however it was felt poor for the Chair, who makes decisions regarding and advises on financial matters, to not hold financial responsibility. Therefore, as part of a change to the Constitution last year, the Chair has passed to the President, with the Treasurer overseeing day-to-day management of the DepSocs.

The Committee meets monthly to receive reports from each club or society, pass any constitutions, and provide advance warning of potential financial or administrative issues.

Each of the clubs and societies under our stewardship has been asked to fill out a short evaluation form, the results of which are attached to the end of the report. Highlights include:

- A wide variety of Life Sciences events, some joined
- An excellent sponsorship round for ChemSoc
- PhySoc's trip to a nuclear reactor
- A continuing successful round of UG Colloquiums from MathSoc

- A planned inter-depsoc event from BioSoc

With these submissions we have spoken to clubs and societies where we feel there are issues with require resolution, and have made a note to check up on major future developments that our clubs and societies have notified us about.

The RCSU also requires all of our clubs and societies to submit their club committee minutes and agendas to either the RCSU or via the online form on eActivities. We use these to keep a tab on our clubs and societies and obtain early warning of potential issues.

The reports from each of our clubs and societies follows.

## Departmental Society Reports

<b>What depsoc is this for?</b>	Biosoc
<b>What is your name and position?</b>	Alice Weightman, Secretary
<b>How have you spent your Union grant so far this term?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchasing food for mum's and dad's events</li> <li>• Hiring metric for Halloween event</li> <li>• Subsidising tickets for events and for dinner</li> </ul>
<b>Have you secured any sponsorship? Are you working towards any?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None secured so far. One company offered to come and do a careers talk but didn't offer sponsorship.</li> <li>• Still trying to contact places who are willing to provide sponsorship.</li> </ul>
<b>What events have you run this term?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have run a mum's and dad's quiz with pizza.</li> <li>• We had a mum's and dad's tour of campus.</li> <li>• Noah's ark fancy dress bar crawl.</li> <li>• Speed dating event with recent graduates to discuss their current jobs and possible careers.</li> <li>• We did an ice skating evening at the Natural History Museum.</li> <li>• A joint Halloween party with Biochem took place at Metric.</li> <li>• A restaurant has been booked for a Christmas Dinner in the last week of term and tickets are on sale now.</li> </ul>
<b>What events are you planning to run across the rest of the year?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mum's and Dad's event in the last week of term to talk about the January exams.</li> <li>• Organise a final year leavers dinner.</li> <li>• Joint union event with 5 societies.</li> <li>• Biology students invited to attend a Science museum and Natural History Museum Lates.</li> <li>• Need to discuss further events for next term.</li> </ul>
<b>Have you had any problems? Give details if so.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in securing sponsorship.</li> </ul>
<b>Are you planning any major trips or tours? Give details if so.</b>	No
<b>Please give your club a rating from 1 (awful) to 10 (best thing ever).</b>	6
<b>Any other comments?</b>	



<b>What depsoc is this for?</b>	BioChemSoc
<b>What is your name and position?</b>	Hannah Maude, Chair
<b>How have you spent your Union grant so far this term?</b>	Freshers treasure hunt prize, Catering for freshers/Mum and dads lunch.
<b>Have you secured any sponsorship? Are you working towards any?</b>	£500 from Balpharma (Pharmaceuticals).  We also hope to gain sponsorship for an Annual Dinner
<b>What events have you run this term?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Freshers Buddies Quiz - Great turnout, over 200 attendees. Second annual occasion. Funded by the department with money spent on food/drink/prizes/games and props.</li> <li>2. Freshers treasure hunt - Freshers only, hosted around the University campus. Funded by the SGI with money for prizes. Also repeated from last year and very popular.</li> <li>3. Biochem Buddies lunch. Hosted in the Union dining hall with an attendance over 100.</li> <li>4. Joint pub crawl with Physics Society around the Circle tube line. Smaller turnout than hoped from Biochemistry students.</li> <li>5. Joint Halloween Party with Biology, ICU RAG and ICSM RAG. 260 tickets sold. Funded by ticket sales, hosted at Metric and was very successful. We hope to make an annual event and run the event until later next year! Fancy dress competition was well received and so was the whole theme.</li> <li>6. Careers presentation with Procter &amp; Gamble with Biology. Funded by sponsorship and had 40 attendees, some of whom made applications following the event. A full meal was provided for everyone.</li> <li>7. Christmas Secret Santa Social (occurring this week)</li> </ol>
<b>What events are you planning to run across the rest of the year?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charity auction with BioEngSoc to be hosted in Metric. Auction will involve donations from businesses and all profits will go to Meningitis foundation (2nd term).</li> <li>• Inter-departmental Metric Bash with 5 societies. To be funded by ticket sales (2nd term).</li> <li>• Annual Biochemistry Quiz (details to be planned).</li> <li>• Trip to Diamond light source in Oxford with Physics.</li> <li>• Annual dinner (details to be planned).</li> </ul>
<b>Have you had any problems? Give details if so.</b>	N/A
<b>Are you planning any major trips or tours? Give details if so.</b>	No major tours, but possible trip to Oxford by coach.
<b>Please give your club a rating from 1 (awful) to 10 (best thing ever).</b>	8
<b>Any other comments?</b>	

<b>What deprec is this for?</b>	Mathsoc
<b>What is your name and position?</b>	Rafael T. Sanchez - President
<b>How have you spent your Union grant so far this term?</b>	We are yet to spend our grant this year.
<b>Have you secured any sponsorship? Are you working towards any?</b>	We are working towards 1000 pound sponsorship from Barclays.
<b>What events have you run this term?</b>	<p>We ran the Start of the Year Party, in the Huxley Building. This was funded jointly by MathSoc and the Department of Mathematics. We had around 80 attendees.</p> <p>We are running the Christmas Dinner, in the Foundation Bar. This was funded jointly by MathSoc and the Department of Mathematics. We will have 120 attendees.</p> <p>We ran two events to distribute the MathSoc hoodies, in the Huxley Building. There was no funding required.</p> <p>We ran a Shoreditch pubcrawl. There was no funding required.</p> <p>We have run the Undergraduate Colloquium. This is a regular event that runs in the Huxley Building. This event is funded directly by the Department of Mathematics.</p>
<b>What events are you planning to run across the rest of the year?</b>	<p>We intend to run another pubcrawl next term.</p> <p>We expect to run an End of Year Party in the Summer term, possibly in the Union. We expect to fund this jointly with the Department of Mathematics.</p>
<b>Have you had any problems? Give details if so.</b>	N/A
<b>Are you planning any major trips or tours? Give details if so.</b>	N/A
<b>Please give your club a rating from 1 (awful) to 10 (best thing ever).</b>	7
<b>Any other comments?</b>	

<b>What deprec is this for?</b>	Physoc
<b>What is your name and position?</b>	Jake Phillips - President
<b>How have you spent your Union grant so far this term?</b>	<p>Our Union Grant this term has been spent on the Mums and Dads Mixer and Treasure Hunt (following on from the Departmental Freshers Tea) and on subsidising the PhySoc Trip to watch Interstellar at the Science Museum IMAX.</p> <p>Both these events were incredibly popular, necessitating expenditure of £30 and £120 respectively.</p>
<b>Have you secured any sponsorship? Are you working towards any?</b>	<p>So far this academic year, PhySoc has secured new sponsorships to a value of £750. These have been from:</p> <p>(a) FTI Consulting (£250): Contract Signed, Event held. As yet to be invoiced.</p> <p>(b) Bird &amp; Bird LLP (£500): Contract signed. Event(s) held. Invoiced, but not yet paid.</p> <p>Further we are in advanced negotiations for sponsorship from TeachFirst for a sponsorship package for £250 with an additional £250 for event costs.</p>
<b>What events have you run this term?</b>	<p>The Mums &amp; Dads Welcome followed by Treasure Hunt: this was the first opportunity for academic families to meet. The event consisted of light food, soft drinks and music.</p> <p>Joint Circle Line Pub Crawl with BioChemSoc. This event was 'spiced up' by having photo challenges at selected pubs for people to get involved with.</p> <p>Financial Consulting technical workshop with FTI Consulting; this was a 90 minute hands-on workshop where students were given an opportunity to get involved with issues/problems that arise in a case study relevant to the field.</p> <p>Tour of Dungeness B Nuclear Power station, managed to secure minibuses and drivers had great interest sold out really quickly.</p> <p>PhySoc trip to see Interstellar at the Science Museum IMAX. This was one of the most successful events of the term, selling a total of 105 tickets! Followed by a social in the union.</p> <p>Matlab presentation; presentation from the Mathworks team on how Matlab + Simulink can be used effectively for UROP projects.</p>
<b>What events are you planning to run across the rest of the year?</b>	<p>Further we are going to run an informal networking event with TeachFirst (provided they sign the contract in</p>

	<p>time....) dubbed a “Jingle &amp; Mingle”; this is a Christmas themed networking event where there will be a short presentation followed by networking over mince pies &amp; mulled wine.</p>
<p><b>Have you had any problems? Give details if so.</b></p>	<p>There is a severe lack of general preparedness/committee functionality; when assigned simple tasks &amp; reasonable deadlines, the vast majority of the committee either fail to meet this or require being “hand-held” through it. Further, there is a distinct lack of communication within the committee leading to unnecessary complications, which frequently become incredibly time consuming. Several attempts have been made to try and improve this situation, but alas, to no avail.</p> <p>Furthermore, there have been major issues with securing sponsorship this year despite the vast amount of hours put in! This has had a snowball effect on the rest of the year.</p> <p>In addition, there has been “issues” with the department regarding several matters ranging from the Mums &amp; Dads Scheme to sponsorship. Thankfully, the former appears to be sorted now.</p>
<p><b>Are you planning any major trips or tours? Give details if so.</b></p>	<p>PhySoc is deep in the process of organising a tour to the West Coast of America to visit several of the world’s leading research institutions. We have secured private access for up to 40 students to the National Ignition Facility (which is run by the Department of Defence, and therefore incredibly exclusive) and the Stanford Linear Accelerator. Further, we are looking into securing tours of the Jet Propulsion Laboratories &amp; the Mount Wilson Observatory.</p>
<p><b>Please give your club a rating from 1 (awful) to 10 (best thing ever).</b></p>	<p>6</p>
<p><b>Any other comments?</b></p>	<p>Despite the issues within the committee, events run have seemingly gone okay - despite the chaos that has led up to them. This led to a club rating of 6, rather than lower.</p>

<b>What deprec is this for?</b>	Chemsoc
<b>What is your name and position?</b>	Nas Andriopoulos Chemistry Captain and Kelsey Mills Secretary
<b>How have you spent your Union grant so far this term?</b>	Since there had been a substantial increase in the number of first year students, which we matched by and increase in "parents", the lunch was prepared for 280 students in total. This is event is crucial for the success of the welfare scheme, however it was hindered by the shoestring budget.
<b>Have you secured any sponsorship? Are you working towards any?</b>	<p>P&amp;G £350, Shell £200, RSC £400 (perhaps with more to follow later on in the year) and a £1000 donation from GSK.</p> <p>We are currently in talks with Sigma Aldrich for £1000, Syngenta, Perkin Elmer and Fuller's. INEOS are still considering getting more involved with the society. We were in advanced talks with FTI Consultancy, when I suggested we hold a joint event with Physoc - Physoc then proceeded to steal the sponsor.</p>
<b>What events have you run this term?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The annual freshers' presentation and mums &amp; dads lunch was on the first day of term (06/10/14). ChemSoc purchased the food, although supplies ran short. The presentations and family allocations ran smoothly. Funding from grant and remnant SGI from last year</li> <li>· Simon Singh seminar (09/10/14): The seminar took place in SAF G16 followed by a reception in the Flowers building. Students were taken from the reception to join the RCSU pub-crawl. The event was funded by the department and the RSC. There was a turn out of 220 students. The seminar marked the beginning of our seminar series, which aims to educate, inform and entertain, as well as highlighting the role of science in the wider world.</li> <li>· Pub crawl (21/10/14): The annual pub crawl through Soho and ending at Roxy was well-attended, although clash with with an IcaParty event meant not many first years were there. Despite this, the third, second and forth year attendance was stronger than previous years. No funding was required.</li> <li>· Booksales (23/10/14 and 31/10/14): ChemSoc acted as a broker, selling secondhand textbooks to new students on behalf of alumni. Almost all the books were sold, worth around £1000. No funding was required.</li> <li>· P&amp;G Talk (23/10/14): R&amp;D recruitment at Proctor and Gamble gave a talk in RCS1 followed by refreshments in the Chemistry Café.</li> <li>· Chemistry Career's Fair (30/10/14): The following companies attended:</li> </ul>

- o Shell
- o Hexcel
- o P&G
- o GSK
- o Perkin Elmer
- o RSC
- o PA consulting
- o Syngenta

We recorded our highest attendance yet for the annual event, peak at 150 attendees.

- Tom Welton seminar (06/11/14): Seminar by our Head of Department and the Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences elect, followed by refreshments in the Chemistry Café. Chemsoc funded the event through SGI. 70 attendees
- Quiz Night (13/11/14): The quiz takes place annually in first term in the Chemistry Café. Tickets are four pounds and include pizza, snacks and drinks and are open to the whole department. Undergraduate turnout was good, but only two staff members attended (due to unforeseen circumstances in the department) We received a huge amount of positive feedback from attendees. It was nice to see teams from all years and pleasing to see some chemistry families forming teams. Around 80 attendees. Chemsoc funded the event.
- Year group photos (19-21/11/14): Photos were taken of each year group on the steps of Queen's Tower at lunchtime. This has not taken place in previous years, but the idea was very well received and the committee has decided the event should henceforth take place annually.
- Gabrielle Walker seminar (20/11/14): Seminar by a world expert on climate change and energy in the Pippard lecture theatre, followed by a reception in the Chemistry Café provided by college catering. The Chemistry department and the RSC funded the event. Around 120 attendees, including members of Environmental Society who were invited to attend.
- Christmas party (15/11/14): The event will be taking place for the first time, at the Millennium Gloucester

	<p>Hotel. Tickets are £27.50 and open to the whole department. 244 attendees, making this the biggest Chemsoc event in living memory. The event is primarily subsidised by Chemsoc, however the department (about £2000) and the PG Committee (£240) will contribute. The Party is providing a crucial role in helping integrate PGs, UGs and staff, which has been a major aim of both the department and Chemsoc. It has been noted that this approach is desirable in a department where so many UGs go onto enter research.</p>
<p><b>What events are you planning to run across the rest of the year?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of Seminar Series (Prof Martyn Poliakoff Jan 22nd SAF, Prof. Ed Tate of the department and one other external speaker- probably from industry). We expect 200 attendees for Martyn and 100 for the other two. This will be funded by Chemsoc, hopefully with sponsorship from Sigma Aldrich.</li> <li>• Buddies Dinner- Reading week, 70 attendees, a restaurant tbd. Subsidised by Chemsoc SGI.</li> <li>• Field Trip to Syngenta - Late March, 50 attendees. Paid for by Syngenta.</li> <li>• Field Trip to National Physics Laboratory Teddington. Summer term. 40 attendees. Chemsoc pay for transport.</li> <li>• Spring quiz, tbd. 90 Attendees. Chemsoc subsidise food again.</li> <li>• Careers event with Fullers'. Possibly at Hereford Arms Gloucester Road. Fullers' will pay.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Have you had any problems? Give details if so.</b></p>	<p>Not enough food at buddies welcome dinner. Very difficult to feed 280 people on less than £500. There needs to be more money to support these welfare services. Also a few financial issues, but largely sorted out as we get used to eActivities.</p>
<p><b>Are you planning any major trips or tours? Give details if so.</b></p>	<p>Only day trips as stated above. There is the possibility of a trip to the University of Leiden, but it is unlikely this will be settled upon this year.</p>
<p><b>Please give your club a rating from 1 (awful) to 10 (best thing ever).</b></p>	<p>8</p>
<p><b>Any other comments?</b></p>	<p>ChemSoc- better than sliced bread (6), not quite as good as Oreo flavoured milkshake (definitely a 9.5).</p>