

The University of Surrey Students' Union Impact Report 2011



The University of Surrey
Students' Union



introduction

“Welcome to our Impact Report for the 2010-11 academic year. At the Students’ Union we are intensely proud of our achievements this year and this report represents a brief guide to what your Union has been doing, for you, throughout the year.

All students are members of the Students’ Union; our purpose is to represent all of you. We aim for our members to create and lead the purpose of the Union. This year we have made some huge steps forward in reaching that goal. Leading a membership-led organisation has its challenges, however, and in this report we also want to be honest about the aspects which haven’t gone so well – we can, and will, do better.

Our new strategic plan will be published alongside this Impact Report. We are proud to say that our members have led the formulation of our new strategy. We wanted to create a strategy which was realistic, but ambitious and forward thinking in areas where we hope to excel. Most of all, we needed a strategy which suited our members, and which will remain current in the long term. Therefore, our new strategy was created by student feedback and will be continually reviewed to make sure our future direction still fits your needs.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm for your Students’ Union. I’ve had a fantastic year as your Union President.

Thank you for your feedback”

Malcolm Hunt
President

This year we asked you twice if the Union has a positive impact on your lives as a student at Surrey. At the beginning of the year 67% of you said ‘yes’. Last month 85% of you said ‘yes’.



our best bits

A lot can happen in a year at the Union, so we have picked out some of our key highlights. Membership Services is the area of the Union which provides student services such as representation, societies, sports clubs, trips, activities, volunteering, training and more.

Volunteering:

Two of our students, Becky Robinson and Francesca Oh won national Volunteering Awards. Our Sports Relief fundraising total was announced – over £43,000 and the biggest local mile. Student volunteering week was another success, with the 'Big V Bus' visiting the Union.

"The Big Vbus was really cool! Through the workshops I learnt a lot about how to organise an awesome charity event."

Welcome week:

Our Welcome Week activities were a great success this year, our huge team of Freshers' Angels successfully introduced all new students to their accommodation and even torrential rain couldn't dampen their spirits. Surrey has now been named 'best overall welcome' in the Student Barometer survey.

Social Media:

#USSU24 was our 24 hour Twitter campaign, held from 8am to 8am on February 23rd. The Union tweeted absolutely everything that happened in 24 hours. We were re-tweeted by NUS and Universities UK as well as other Unions around the country. We have the largest Facebook fan following of any Students' Union in the country.

Community:

Our student volunteers are more involved in the local community than ever before – taking part in gardening projects, community quizzes and even standing in local elections. Congratulations to Christian Gilliam, recently voted onto Westborough's Council and Michael Vivona voted in, in Tadworth and Walton, both of which are Surrey Students.

Union Training:

649 students have taken part in Union Training Sessions from across the Union. Our training is delivered by a combination of students and professionals from business and industry. Our barstaff are offered the opportunity of undergoing BII personal license training, which we deliver in-house. The quality of our training is going from strength to strength – satisfaction this year was over 93%.

"It provided useful tips and was very well delivered. I learnt a lot from the feedback I was given"

Sports Clubs:

This year's sporting highlights include Surrey's organisation of this year's Varsity day with Kingston University Students' Union. Surrey were winners on the day which saw 260 students taking part. This year we have had 10 BUCS league winning clubs – congratulations to everyone who has been involved.

"(Varsity) was a great day, everyone had a good time and we will be working closer with Kingston over the year now as well"

Quick Facts

£43,000 raised for Sport Relief

260 people too part in Varsity

649 students took training sessions

3800 attended the trips and activities organised this year

Trips, Activities and Societies:

Over 3800 students have got involved in our trips and activities throughout the year. This includes our Refreshers' Fayre, International Festival and our student trip to Amsterdam. Our diverse trips and activities have included a Ghost Tour of Guildford, a trip to Cardiff, speed dating, cake decorating, mug painting and a trip to see Les Miserables.

"All in all we are just too happy for words for a well-planned and organised trip to Amsterdam."

'International Societies really pulled out all the stops, with amazing performances/stalls and events throughout the festival – really showed the cultural diversity on campus!'

Room for improvement:

- 57% of inactive student volunteers are looking for a role within walking distance from campus, we are working on finding these roles for you.
- The biggest issue with Union Training is students signing up for courses but not attending.
- 47% of students believe we are doing enough to inform you about our activities.
- 16% of Surrey Students do not feel welcomed by the Guildford Community.

representation

The primary role of the Students' Union is to represent the student membership. This can be achieved on various levels inside and outside the Union building. We represent individuals to the University, and the whole student population in the community and on a national level.

Individuals

The Union represents individual students who are facing problems at University. Most commonly, we support students who are making an academic appeal. The Union support office also assists students who are having a personal problem or want to make a complaint.

"I really liked the online videos and I really hope that everyone watches them. Using the election videos has made the whole system less of a popularity contest than previous years which is fantastic."

Quick facts:

15 candidates and 3099 votes cast in our Sabbatical elections. (over 20% turnout)
3062 individual views of Sabbatical question-time online videos.

The University

Each year you elect 5 student Sabbatical officers and a large proportion of their time is used to represent you to the University, and make sure you have the best possible time here at Surrey.

Room for improvement:

0.4% of students have attended our 'Student Forum' this year to share their views.
Candidate numbers were down 50% in the Sabbatical elections.
42% of students believe that their Union has a strong influence over University decision making.
50% of students believe their Union is 'easy to understand.'

Quick facts:

219 academic representatives trained in the skills they need to represent their peers. That's just over 50% of the academic representatives on campus. Last year we trained 22%.

Quick Fact:

4 Academic Rep Assemblies held – directly questioning the Vice Chancellor on examinations, assessment and feedback and U-learn.

Nationally

2010/11 has seen students taking more political action than in recent memory. Surrey students took the opportunity to have their say on the new student fee proposals.

- 230 students answered our HE funding poll – to tell us their view on the fees situation
- 143 Surrey Students attended the NUS fees demonstration in London
- 7 NUS National Conference candidates for the Union's delegation
- BBCNews24 spent a day filming on campus, interviewing Union officers and academics about the funding cuts.

Quick facts:

Over 100 student cases seen.
January saw a 400% increase in student cases.
Academic misconduct cases are up 30% on last year.

"For the first time it seemed someone was showing me the way, fighting for me and with me for natural justice. It's at times like this that I wish all students knew exactly what work USSU do to keep dreams alive."

"Whilst it will not affect me directly, not only will it affect my younger brothers and sisters (aged between 10-12) but also the future generation."

Your views on funding cuts:

'Education should be free. It is the one of the most important investments a country can make.'
'It will be a shame if very gifted students from poorer backgrounds don't realise their potential, but overall I think people need to learn that in order to get the best out of their time at university, they will have to put something in.'

Funding: The future

The University recently announced its decision on fees and will be charging fees of up to £9,000 a year.

This was the Students' Union response on the fee increase:

'Whilst it is disappointing to know that future Surrey students will have to pay almost 3 times the level of fees of students today, it has not come as a great shock. Huge government cuts to University funding and new regulations on how Universities use their fees have led to a system that firmly encourages the maximum fee to be charged across institutions

It is now the responsibility of the Students' Union and the University to work together in order to ensure Surrey offers an ever improving quality of education and student experience while remaining accessible to students from a wide range of backgrounds.'

"The increase of the limit to start repayments will help a lot of individuals. I also think that the increase in fees will lead to only the people that genuinely want to go to university and learn going into higher education rather than those who go just because they can and it's easy to do."

"I really enjoyed the meeting with the Academic Reps and I found it very useful – I hope to do this regularly. I am working on the points raised."

Professor Christopher Snowden, Vice Chancellor.



you said, we did

You Said	We Did
<p>“Students get far too many emails. We want to be able to opt-in and out of the communications we receive.” (Communications Research, 2010)</p>	<p>We conducted a communication research project through an external company, ‘Bunnyfoot’, and the result is our brand new website, coming soon.</p>
<p>“Academic regulations need to be fair, applied consistently, and easy to understand.” (Academic Focus groups, 2009/10)</p>	<p>Focus groups were conducted last year as the University began re-working its academic regulations. This work will finish in July 2011. We have used your comments throughout this work to influence the changes.</p>
<p>The Students’ Union should be: Value for money (43%), fun (41%), and a community (39%). (Students’ Union Annual Survey, 2010).</p>	<p>We have used these key words to form the basis of our new long term strategic plan, available soon to view and download.</p>
<p>68% of students asked for ‘a Marquee, funfair, headline DJ in Rubix, and covers band’ for Grad Ball 2011. (Grad Ball Election 2011)</p>	<p>We will be hosting a Grad Ball which meets this specification. Tickets will be £40 each. The cost of hosting the event for the Union will be £37,500.</p>
<p>“We HATE the Burger Buns in Chancellors, because they always fall apart!” (numerous Facebook comments, March 2011).</p>	<p>We have changed the burger buns in Chancellors – to a different, less crumbly, supplier.</p>



Our Plans	How to give your feedback
<p>Our new website is central to our plans for the next few years. We want it to be a student led site, which reflects your interests and needs. Look out for further information at www.ussu.co.uk</p>	<p>Please contact ussu.information@surrey.ac.uk to provide your feedback on our new website.</p>
<p>We are currently commenting on the final drafts and will report on the outcome over the summer months.</p>	<p>Feedback on our regulations work should be sent to ussu.education@surrey.ac.uk</p>
<p>Our new strategic plan will continually be reviewed to make sure it still fulfils the needs of our members.</p>	<p>Feedback on our strategy should be addressed to ussu.president@surrey.ac.uk</p>
<p>The Union will continue to offer students opportunities to choose events and provide their feedback.</p>	<p>Feedback on the Grad Ball vote should be sent to ussu.events@surrey.ac.uk</p>
<p>We will always react to customer feedback in our commercial areas.</p>	<p>Feedback on Chancellors menus should be sent to ussu.information@surrey.ac.uk</p>

student media

"As the elected Communications Officer for 2010/11 I have had the pleasure of working with three enthusiastic, dedicated and growing student media teams as their Editor-in-Chief, giving them a presence within the Union Executive." - **Chris Whitehead** - **Communications Officer 2010/11**

MAD TV

Starting the year with a Freshers' welcome video with 3000+ hits MAD TV have focused on quality and frequency of their outputs. Monthly news bulletins, a cooking series and live broadcasts from iGala and the Sabbatical Elections are particular highlights. This year MAD TV have developed from having a small campus following, to being a national award winning station- solely down to their infectious creativity and commitment.

The Stag

The Stag

A new look and approach was taken by The Stag this year as they looked to give the paper a crisp professional appearance. All front page headline articles were relevant to Surrey students, from national news regarding fees and funding changes to election results and University housing stories. The Stag is also relied upon for events planners, sports results and comments from Sabbatical Officers and reported first hand from the National Demo and NUS Conference 2011.



GU2 Radio

Celebrating their 10th year of providing music, news and talk to Surrey GU2 Radio continue to hold a presence within the University. Strong interest at Freshers' Fayre coupled with increased has ensured that the Station still holds firm respect as a student media outlet. Their ability to get news out fast has been recognised, with announcements for Union events and live interviews from the National Demo.



The Stag

E: ussu.thestag@surrey.ac.uk
W: www.thestagsurrey.co.uk

GU2 Radio 1350AM

E: manager@gu2.co.uk
W : www.gu2.co.uk
T : 01483 681350

MADTV

E: MAD_TV@live.co.uk
W: www.madtv.surrey.co.uk

surrey in the press

“Rowing Tie-Up will be win-win says Hodge”

Surrey Advertiser, October 2010

A Link-up between Molesey Boat club and Surrey University is pooling facilities and expertise. Surrey Students' Union Director, Bob Anderson visited Molesey to launch the agreement with the clubs captain, Andre Hodge.

“Awards honour volunteers”

Surrey Advertiser, November 2010

Becky Robinson and Francesca Oh are named as the winners in the Vinspired Regional Volunteering Awards 2010



“Surrey Students Make a Difference”

Grassroots Community Newsletter

Students from the University of Surrey went out into the community to have a go at gardening for local residents and within the local area. The Students Union, working alongside Guildford Borough Council and surrey Vinvolved helped arrange the day which was a success.

“Student life cap

A social media experiment captured 24 hours

“Students praise university for its support”

Getsurrey, March 2011

The institution came out on top in a recent survey of graduates across the UK, with home students awarding it top marks for overall satisfaction with their arrival experience.



“It’s a French Connection for the Jailbreak Coalition Party!”

Surrey Advertiser, March 2011

Former Surrey student and Walton Tory councillor Rowan Cole, teamed up with former Surrey student and Guildford Lib Dem councillor Chris Ward and Olly Deed of the University of Surrey’s Labour party to take part in a ‘Jailbreak’ challenge raising £500 for Help for Heroes.

“Featured on social media”

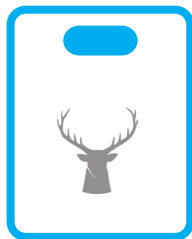
Surrey Advertiser, February 2010

Students in the life of the University of Surrey Students’ Union using Twitter.



commercial activities

The Students' Union is committed to providing some of the best commercial services on campus. The venues that are run by the Union cover two restaurants, bars, a 1600 capacity nightclub and two shops. The Union also contracts an after hours fast food outlet and a computer repair shop.



400 Freshers' merchandise bags were sold in Freshers Week 2010

£425,575

A turnover of

has been credited and debited

The Union venues cater for thousands of students every week, and all profits go back into the Students' Union to ensure it remains price competitive, safe, cutting edge and overall FUN for our membership.

NUS EXTRA

1320

Students bought an NUS extra card

End of Year tickets sold out in a record **1 hour 20 minutes** last year

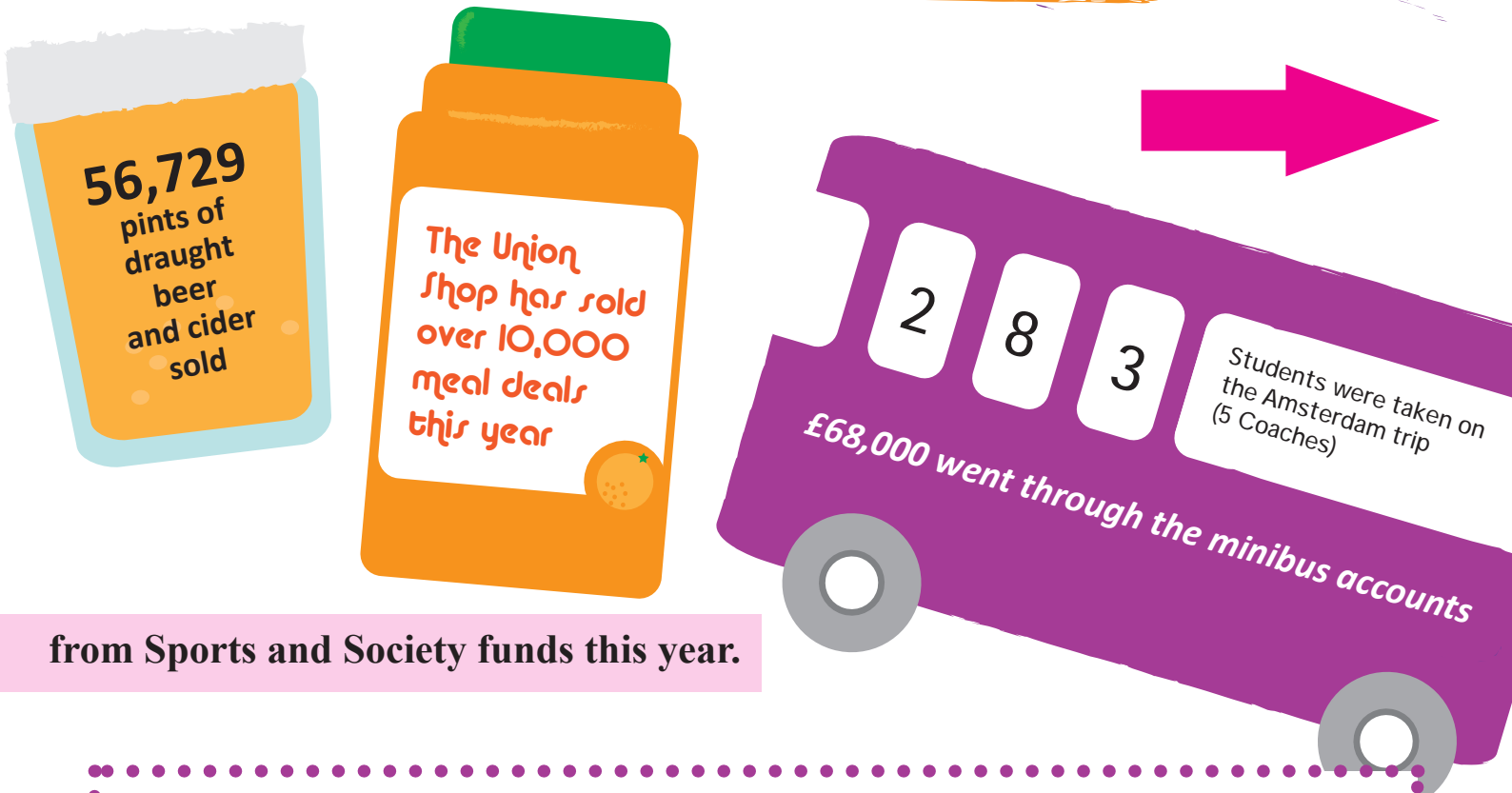
End of Year tickets sold out in a record **1 hour 20 minutes** last year



80 462 meals were served



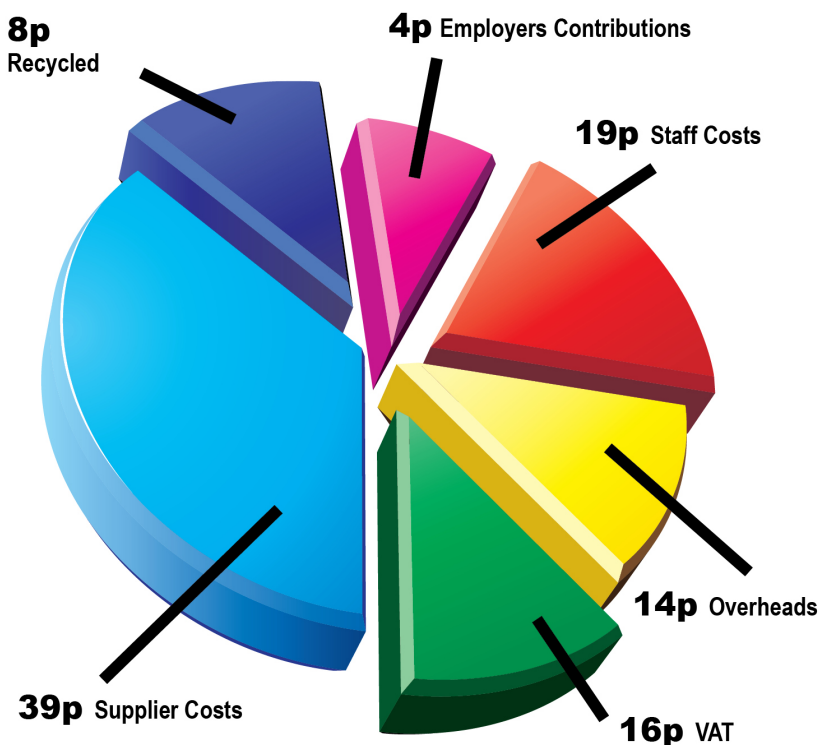
Tinie Tempah performed live at Rubix whilst celebrating a mid week no.1!



from Sports and Society funds this year.

Where does the money go?

(This pie chart shows the average breakdown of every £1 spent by a student at the Union venues including The Union shop, Rubix, Chancellors and our other outlets run on behalf of the students.)



The Breakdown

- 39p Suppliers** - 39p is paid to a wide range of suppliers for goods and services bought, this includes food, drink, merchandise, entertainments and attractions. Interesting fact: This year over £300,000 will be paid to Carlsberg for their supply of drinks.
- 14p Overheads** - 14p is the cost of building rental, utilities (such as lighting and heating), insurance and cleaning / disposables. Interesting fact: 8000 plastic cups were used in Fresher's week alone this year.
- 16p VAT** - All prices are inclusive of 20% VAT, therefore the Net receipt to the Union is 84p.
- 19p Staff Costs** - 19p goes towards Union full time members of staff and part-time student members of staff, who all help to run the Union on a daily basis. Interesting fact: This year the Union has employed 316 part-time student members of staff.
- 4p Employers Contributions (N.I. and Pensions)** - 4p covers employers National Insurance and Pension contributions.
- 8p Recycled Back** - This is the amount that remains after the above costs have been deducted from the £1 which the Union receives. This is an operating surplus which is recycled back. This goes towards the costs of minibuses, grants, clubs and societies.

commercial activities

There is always room for improvements in terms of savings, embracing new technologies and higher efficiency levels. It is imperative that the Union continues to remain competitive on all levels and provide our students with the best venues on campus twinned with a great experience that is value for money.



20% of the students and staff surveyed said that customer service was 'poor' in Chancellors.

Merchandise sales are slightly down on last year, however a feedback survey is currently examining new products for new stock next year.



"I like Chancellors. The food is good and the pricing is fair. Sometimes the music in Chancellors is way too loud which makes it impossible to talk to people" - Student

EXIT



157 people have been refused service in Chancellors due to bad conduct.

22%

of students and staff surveyed in April 2011 visit Chancellors 'very rarely'



The Union continues to build their external partnerships to secure future prosperity and sustainability. Fundamentals for the future lie in building more professional affiliations and understanding the private sector more and how they adapt to nationwide trends in commercial and economic hard times.



The Students' Union will be venturing into running Flirt! nationwide soon

The Union were instrumental in helping the University gain 73.05% response rate for the NSS this year. This compares favourably with the national average of 66%.

NSS

“One of the best nights I’ve ever had in the Union. Fun, different and even a minor, but credible, celebs thrown into the mix.”
Student

‘Loving the Meal Deal, great that you have a light meal deal with Weight Watchers’ - Student

£100k
The Union Marketing Dept. has worked with several nationwide brands and companies this year to secure an overall sales and income total of just over £100k.

All Union venues gain a lot of feedback from the membership that plugs into how things are decided upon and developed for the future. Commercial staff strive to make changes that are sustainable and realistic especially when price points are concerned.

Our biggest commercial challenge, now and in the future, is the increased pressure on the student pound. We need to make sure we always provide you with value for money so that the Union remains sustainable for future students.

the union as an employer

The Union is proud of all the staff it employs and does everything it can to provide staff with development and training opportunities. We recruit a variety of both full time and part time roles throughout the year, holding specialised recruitment events for part time student staff each semester. Part time staff can develop their roles and become supervisors in our commercial areas. We also have part time opportunities for staff to support administration within Membership Services. The Union holds Investors In People accreditation and will shortly be reassessed in this area for the third time.

33
Full time staff including sabbaticals

96

*Staff achieving BII
(British Institute
of Innkeepers)
certification*



RAISING STANDARDS IN LICENSED RETAIL

£15,
Union staff deve

35
Part time supervisors

Just Over

100

Full and Part Time Jobs Advertised

313 Part Time Staff

600
job
applications

000

Development and training budget



accreditation

Your Union is currently working towards a range of awards which will give us accreditation.

Best Bar None

The Union has recently been awarded a Silver Best Bar None award, which means we are officially a safe and socially responsible entertainment venue. Many of our commercial staff now take on training by the British Institute of Innkeepers, which we teach in-house as an accredited training centre. As a result they are working towards personal licenses. We will continue to invest in our staff.



Investors In People

The Union will soon be reassessed for Investors In People, an award we have attained for the last 3 years. This is a prestigious award which recognises the views of Union staff and whether the Union has clear aims which staff can contribute towards.



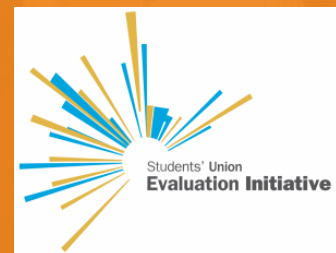
Investors in Volunteers

The Union has recently entered the 'IIV' scheme which accredits the measures we have in place to encourage and protect student volunteers who work in the local community, and manage their own project teams.



SUEI

In February 2012, the Union will be assessed by the 'Students' Union Evaluation Initiative' to establish whether we are a high performing Students' Union, giving you as members the high quality experience you deserve. We hope to achieve a SUEI award and 'the mark of a good Students' Union'.



future investment

Continuing challenges and changes

The sustainability of the Students' Union is totally dependant upon the University's subvention annual grant and the commercial services trading and marketing income streams. These fundamental income streams ensure the running of all Student Union services, membership and commercial.

This financial year has again been a difficult year in terms of trying to provide a well rounded student experience, whilst keeping a watch full eye on budgets and costs. It has been challenging due to rising costs and higher VAT. However, budgeting and financial planning is at the forefront to ensure good capital investment and develop a sustainable framework for our future students.

Shops and bars

Nationally, Student Unions' commercial incomes continue to fall, especially the sales of alcohol which means we have to think differently to entice student interaction and footfall into all services we provide. The Union's commercial outlets have continued to work hard, reduce costs and staff to keep overheads down.

The changing environment in 2010-2011 has presented our biggest challenge yet, as we aim to maintain the successful services we offer to all of our students,

whilst ensuring budgets and deficits are kept to a minimum. It is essential that we keep an eye on investing into the right areas and in turn, help drive down prices and support our membership.

An 8 pence surplus is recycled from every pound spent by students in the Union and goes back into all areas such as minibuses costs, grants committee, clubs and societies.

University Support

The Union continues to have a very good support structure for our students, and the recognition from the University of Surrey justifies this with their block grants support for this academic year which was £914,783 for 2010-2011; This equals approximately £56 per student.

The block grant request for 2011-2012 has reduced by £12,222.

Investing for students and the future

The core costs of the Students' Union have risen. Obviously, there is impact from external forces, as competition rises and food and drink process becomes more competitive.

However, the balance sheets remain healthy and despite uncertainty of future years, it is the Union's priority to sustain good commercial and membership practices in line with a healthy financial plan and strategy for the next 5 years. A large amount of money has been spent in recent years on refurbishment of The Living Room (formerly known as The Helyn Rose Bar) as well as a well needed facelift for Chancellors. The latest venture of a new website using Microsoft Sharepoint (Skynet) has also contributed to a major cost of £100k for this year.

All of these expensive projects have been initiated and completed based on student feedback and have formed a solid future for a better environment and communication hub. Other areas for change, is a possible extension of the Union Shop, due to the current lines in the Bookshop being retracted back to the Union in August 2011. This development area is in line with other retail renowned national Students' Union leaders, but is however uncertain.

“The University of Surrey Students’ Union would like to thank the University first and foremost for their continued support, as well as all of our third party suppliers and affiliations during 2010- 2011. ”



