

Administrative Details For the year ending 31 July 2013

Charitable Status

The University of Plymouth Students' Union is an unincorporated charity established under the Education Act 1994 and registered with the Charity Commission (No 1143614) since 31st August 2011, when Students' Unions connected with the exempt/higher education institutions were removed by section 11(9), Charities Act 2006, from the list of exempt charities in Schedule 2 to the Charities Act 1993.

Principle Office

Students' Union Building
University of Plymouth
Drake Circus
Plymouth
PL4 8AA

Trustees

Executive Officers	2013/14 (From June 2013)	Sarah Bowman Charles Green Stephanie Driscoll Sarah Pook Richard Evans	- President - VP Welfare and Community - VP Education - VP Engagement - VP Societies & Sport
	2012/13 (From July 2012)	Jazz Singh-Khaira Richard Garratt Stephanie Driscoll Sarah Pook David De-Berger	- President - Deputy President - VP Education and Welfare - VP Activities and Communications - VP Sports

Independent Student Trustees
(From June 2013)

Joseph Solaja
Nicholas Shepherd

Independent External Trustees
(From January 2010)

Adrian Bratt
Matthew Horton
Tony Parry

Auditors

Bishop Fleming
Coburg House
Mayflower Street
Plymouth
PL1 1LG

Bankers

HSBC Bank Plc
PO Box 26
4 Old Town Street
Plymouth
PL1 1DD

Solicitors

Bond Dickinson LLP
Ballard House
West Hoe Road
Plymouth
PL1 3AE

The Trustees delegate the day to day management of the charity to the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team. During 2012/2013 the senior managers were as follows:-

Chief Executive
Acting Chief Executive/Director of
Finance & Human Resources
Director of Membership Development
Director of Social Enterprise
Director of Social Enterprise
Director of Marketing

Gregory White (resigned July 2013)
Gina Connelly

Sarah Davey
Robert Gofton (resigned March 2013)
Andrew Mossford (started June 2013)
Vacant (position created May 2013)

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 July 2013

The Executive Committee present their Annual Report for the year ended 31 July 2013, including the administrative information set out on page 1, together with the audited accounts for that year.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The University of Plymouth Students' Union is constituted under the Education Act 1994 as a charity with internal regulations or Rules approved by the governing body of Plymouth University. UPSU's charitable Objects under the Act, to advance the University's educational purposes by providing representation and support for the students of the University, are supplemented by the further Object of helping members to develop their own charitable activities as active participants in civil society.

The trustees of the Union are the five Executive Officer Trustees (President, VP Welfare and Community, VP Education, VP Engagement, VP Societies & Sport), two selected student Trustees and three selected, independent, external Trustees. The Executive Officer Trustees are elected annually by a cross-campus ballot of all student members and are full time remunerated officers, as authorised by the Education Acts. The Executive Officers are only permitted to remain in post for a maximum of two years and receive comprehensive training on appointment. This is organised by a designated staff member with the help of the Union's Senior Management team, the National Union of Students and Plymouth University. Each officer has specific responsibility for aspects of the Union's activities and is supported by permanent staff who are organised in four departments - Membership Development, Social Enterprise, Finance and Human Resources and Marketing and Communications.

Accountability of the Executive Officer Trustees is preformed via our Student Parliament whose members are elected each year in a cross campus ballot for one year only. Parliament meets on average eight times per year and is provided with reports from the Executive Officers and the Chief Executive. The Trustee Board meets four times each year and is responsible for maintaining legal, financial and reputational integrity and for setting strategic direction. The Chair and a designated external Trustee from the Trustee Board has delegated responsibility from the Board to monitor the performance of the Chief Executive and make recommendations to the Board relating to the Chief Executive's annual performance review.

The Board of Trustees is supported by the Finance and Staffing committee which meets monthly and is attended by two Executive Officer Trustees and an external Trustee. The Senior Management team attend the meetings but are not members of the committee. The committee is responsible for scrutinising the financial statements, reviewing the internal control environment, overseeing risk management and recommending the appointment of the external auditors. It is also responsible for advising the Board on the financial health of the Union, financial strategy and financial forecasts. The finances of the Union are also reported to the University OVC Students' Union Advisory Committee which meets termly.

The Executive Officer Trustees and the Senior Management Team meet weekly to discuss on-going operational issues and to provide effective oversight of Union activities. UPSU also employs a number of non-student full time staff to ensure effective management of its many activities and to implement the policy decisions made by the Trustees. There is delegated authority through the Chief Executive for operational decision making and accountability within the departments of the Students' Union in accordance with its organisational structure. When reviewing our objectives and planning our activities, we have given due consideration to the Charity Commission's general and relevant supplementary guidance on public benefit.

Relationship with Plymouth University

The Students' Union receives a block grant from the University and part-occupies a building owned by the University, which also pays for utilities and any structural maintenance. This support is intrinsic to the relationship between the University and the Students' Union and has not been valued. Although the Students' Union continues to generate supplementary funding from various mutual trading activities it will always be dependent on the support of the University.

There is no reason to believe that this support will not continue for the foreseeable future, as the Education Act 1994 imposes a duty on the University to ensure the financial viability of its student representative body. The University therefore requires notification of any changes in the governance of the Union and regular reports on the Union's activities, management and financial situation.

Risk Management

The Union's Trustee Board is responsible for the management of the risks faced by the Union. Detailed considerations of risk are delegated to the heads of each department. Risks are identified, assessed and controls established throughout the year. The Trustees and Senior Management Team have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks faced by UPSU. A comprehensive Risk Register has been established and is reviewed and updated annually.

Budgetary and internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers and participants on all activities organised by the Union. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Through the risk management processes established for the Union, the Union's Trustee Board is satisfied that the major risks identified and reported by the Chief Executive have been adequately mitigated where necessary. It is recognised that systems can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The University of Plymouth Students' Union vision is "to transform lives through experience" with the following long term mission to "to make a positive impact on the lives of all our members, through understanding, empowering and delivering on their needs".

Its objectives are the advancement of education of the students of Plymouth University for the public benefit by:

- To promote for the public benefit the interests and welfare of students at the University during their course of study and to represent, support and advise UPSU members.
- To provide appropriate social, cultural and recreational activities and forums for discussion and debate for the personal development of UPSU members.
- To provide services and facilities for members, including provision of licensed facilities and mutual trading for its members.
- To be the recognised representative channel between students and the University and also in relation to external bodies.

The Trustees confirm that, in exercising their powers and duties, they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission.

How UPSU achieve public benefit

In pursuit of these aims for the public benefit, UPSU will ensure the diversity of its membership is recognised, valued and supported and has established departments and services for use by its members and to support its work with the University and other organisations on behalf of students. These include the UPSU Advice Centre, the UPSU Sports and Societies Department, Volunteering Department and UPSU Bars, Shop and Nightclub. Executive Officers of UPSU sit on all relevant committees of the University and meet regularly with the Local Authority, local Primary Care Trusts and other providers of public services affecting students.

UPSU continues to represent the students of this University on relevant local, national and international issues by maintaining a high proportion of student representatives. Student representatives now sit and contribute on many University committees and academic programme forums which allow the Union to cater effectively to the needs of students.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Students' Union performance against its published objectives for 2012/13:

	Objective	Achievement
1	We will develop a credible live gig space, suitable for 800-1,000 people, in the Davy Main Hall.	Over the last year the Students' Union have held a number of live gigs in the Main Hall. These included Roots Manoeuvre, Jaguar Skills, and a sell-out gig for Mad Dog McCrea and Grammy Award winners Nero, who also achieved number one status in the UK album charts with their hit 'Welcome Reality'.
2	We will substantially enhance the support we give elected officers and representatives, at all levels, by building a strong new Representation Support team.	As part of our restructuring process we have created new roles within our Representation Support team which has been re branded as "Student Voice" to help increase engagement. We have successfully recruited to these roles and have reviewed and enhanced the advice, guidance and support provided to all Elected Officers and representative positions. The portfolios held by Executive Officers have been reviewed and updated with an enhanced training programme provided. In the year 11.4% more School and Course reps have been trained than in the previous year.
3	We will put additional resources into the support of student raising and giving, making RAG an integral part of life as a Plymouth Student.	A new role was created and we have recruited a Raising and Giving Coordinator to support students with their fundraising activities, including linkages with national charities and events. A total of 41 charities have been supported with £106,187 raised throughout the year! When compared to the £6,000 raised in the previous year the impact of the additional resources in this area can be seen. Cultural change has been significant and is continuing. Student fundraising continues to become part of what our students do.
4	We will increase the resources of our Student Advice Centre and further improve its marketing to all students.	This year we have been able to increase the volume of adviser time within the Advice centre and have undertaken new schemes of working, such as later evening opening and taking our Advisers out of the building to help raise the profile of the student advice centre. This has been extremely successful and has meant that the service made contact with an additional 1,222 students. Various methods of marketing have been employed throughout the year and this, combined with specific topic related awareness raising have proved to be a success as our research indicates that the level of awareness amongst students regarding our Advice centre has increased.
5	We will invest significant resources to engage students studying off the main Plymouth campus and other non-involved students.	Our student Experience Outreach Coordinator worked with the Elected Officer to pilot a mobile Students' Union which took elements of the SU out to our Partner College students' across the South West. An increased volume of Plymouth based students engaged with our Partner Colleges with a mini Varsity taking place and increased Student Fundraising. Partner College reps engaged in Parliament and were key to decision making this year. We have also increased the volume of activities for various demographics, including mature students, international students, black and ethnic minority students with an Officer holding focus groups to ensure that what we offer is led by what the students articulate.

6	We will complete the process of writing our new strategic plan and then begin its implementation.	Our Strategic Plan was finalised and approved by our members at the end of 2012 and took effect from January this year. We then began the implementation process which included an organisational restructure in May to ensure we are fit for purpose to deliver on the new plan. We are now embedding the changes and are ensuring that all departments are working towards our new strategic goals. The plan will be continually reviewed to ensure it remains relevant to our members needs and we will also be identifying ways to improve our impact measurement in the coming year.
7	We will develop our catering offer, re- launching the Kitchen as a food court and improving the efficiency of the Lounge.	Over the summer we have concentrated on the kitchen area and transformed it into 'The Quarterdeck', a café style food court. The old system of a cooking line has been replaced with a call-order system. The front of house now has enough tables and chairs for 40 covers and the menu has been redesigned to simple 'pub grub' using local suppliers. The setup in the lounge has also been refreshed to improve efficiency and the food options have been reduced to help improve service times. We also have a new and exciting addition to our catering department "Chunk". We have transformed half of the terrace bar into a "pasty" shop, selling a selection of fresh pasties with the option of expanding to pies as well, at a later date.
8	We will successfully complete the integration of the former University Sport & Active Leisure department into UPSU.	Over the past year we have successfully completed the integration of the sports and leisure facilities into UPSU. This has involved not only a staff restructure but also a refurbishment throughout the leisure centre. We have updated the AV system, given the whole complex a lift through painting, redesigned the reception area to make it more user friendly and approachable and have also installed a new booking system that will allow users to make bookings online. The new system will also allow us to capture more data and therefore gain a better understanding of our members. We have now employed a new intern position to replace an outstanding vacancy for a recreation supervisor which is in keeping with our ethos of continuing training for students after they graduate. A new membership scheme has seen an early increase in the membership sales for the gym and the new system is receiving good feedback from staff and members alike.
9	We will develop our marketing and communications in such a way that more students become more involved with UPSU.	Through the development of digital communication we have increased communication with our members with the launch of an iOS App including the exploration of the SU through gamification. We have shown a 2% increase in web traffic from last year to upsu.com. With the development of a new site from August 2013 we will expect an increase in digital communication and engagement with our members. We continue to have one of the largest Students' Union social networks in the country with our Facebook fan page, providing us valuable feedback and engagement.

10	We will achieve a relative NSS score which is equivalent to or better than that of Plymouth University.	Through the National Student Survey, Question 23 "I am satisfied with the Students' Union at my institution" we increased from 72% to 73% in agreement. This is within the top quartile of HE Institutions and is compared to a sector average of 67%. The University has dropped from 86% to 85% on question 22: "Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of the course".
11	We will develop our systems and processes to make us more efficient and financially sustainable.	We have invested heavily in new systems and processes over the last year such as a brand new website, sports booking system and also the integration of payments from these systems directly into our accounts system. These developments will not only improve our efficiency and the capture of data, but will help with the communication and engagement with our members.
12	We will review the work we do in the community and develop a strategy for our engagement which is consistent with our Mission and Values.	We reviewed all aspects of work carried out within the community and retained the key aspect of this work within our new strategic plan. The review also triggered changes in the portfolios of our Executive Officers with a new VP Welfare and Community role being created. To compliment this development Student Parliament also approved the creation of a new forum focussed on community issues which will start from the coming academic year.

Overview of activities 2013/14

UPSU has very successfully represented the collective interests of the Plymouth University students over the past 12 months, and has worked hard to deliver a first rate student experience for our members. In fact 2012/13 has been a momentous year for UPSU, growing to £5m turnover and delivering brand new services such as the Sports Centre and a new catering offer.

We have developed a new strategy, including a new staffing structure, and our strategy aims to deliver high performance. We have set challenging goals with a view to making a positive impact on the lives of students at Plymouth University. Using additional funding from the University we have further developed staff support for Student Representation, Sports Volunteering and Raising and Giving (RAG).

UPSU has had a fantastic year despite considerable change and we are confident that all of our efforts this year have been duly informed and driven by the opinions and expectations of our membership.

Campaigns

The Elected Officers took on a range of campaigns during 2012/13 which aimed to help students stay safe, be greener, de-stress and live healthier. They improved their engagement, getting involved locally, nationally, championing students and ensuring their voices are heard. Key campaigns included:

- Challenging the University to deliver for students on their proposed redevelopment of accommodation that was due to affect key teaching and sports space. As a result the University agreed to the inclusion of a new space for teaching and sports within proposed building plans.
- Challenging the University to tackle poor academic feedback, with the establishment of a joint working group. This project continues to be a priority for 2013/14.
- A Wellbeing Week that asked students to think about a healthy lifestyle.
- Initial works with the University to ensure unpaid internships are not advertised to our students.
- Community clean-up campaign with a weekly green streets project run by student volunteers.

Volunteering

The Volunteer Department has seen significant change in 2012 with three new members of staff starting in brand new roles at the start of the year. One new position was that of a Sports Volunteer Co-ordinator who was recruited with the aim of increasing the volunteering offer across the spectrum of sports activities and to bring together the current volunteering being carried out by students. The role has enabled the greater promotion of opportunities and in the coming year aims to further increase engagement.

In 2012-13 students have this year participated in over 12,400 volunteering hours within the local community. Value to the community is huge, not just financially (however if multiplied by the national minimum wage it amounts to an amazing £76,756) but also through the skills, time, enthusiasm and effort contributed by the committed volunteers. Although the number of students engaged in volunteering has dropped slightly, the commitment shown by these students has been outstanding with 66 recording over 50 hours each, 28 over 100, and one outstanding student recording 549 hours with the Salvation Army and the Youth Offending Team.

Student volunteer Kirti Ramesh was presented with the Award for Most Enthusiastic Volunteer by Plymouth University's honorary graduate the Bishop of Lynn, the Right Reverend Jonathan Meyrick, in September 2012 for her commitment to environmental volunteering.

Volunteers in Plymouth, the student-led volunteer society, organised and delivered 44 projects this year, working with 164 student volunteers and engaging in 2,280 of voluntary hours. This year the department has recorded the number of hours that students have delivered within Plymouth, amounting to 4,800, and in line with the Strategic Plan we aim to increase this number by 10% next year.

Working with 86 community partners the department has continued to develop the volunteering opportunities available to students, with the goal of increasing the promoting and publicising the impact of students in the community in the coming academic year.

Rag – Raise and Give

A full time RAG (student fundraising coordinator) position was introduced to the Volunteering Department in September 2012 following additional funding from the University. The role has overseen the development of the RAG Society and the support of sport clubs, societies and other groups in charitable fundraising activity. The overarching term for all student-led fundraising being Raise & Give.

On average there was a fundraising event every 1.9 days during 2012/13. 28 Societies engaged with fundraising and 27 individual groups (either Partner Colleges, academic, or friendship groups) put on fundraising activities with sport clubs participating the most with 36 clubs organising charity events.

Through Raise & Give this year, students engaged with UPSU have raised £106,187! We have supported 52 charities, 9 of which are based in Plymouth, 31 national charities with funding restricted to our region, or medical research, and 12 international development charities. £56,000 of this was raised by the RAG Society (in 2011/12 the figure was £6,000).

We are committed to making resources available to develop the scale and profile of student fundraising activities across the whole membership, in-line with our Strategic Plan and Objective 3 set out in our Trustees' Report July 2012; with aspirations to increase the amount raised each year.

Relays: Sports Volunteering

In addition to the new role of Sports Volunteering Co-ordinator the Relays project has continued to provide a programme of linked cultural and sporting opportunities grounded in education and community engagement and delivered through 3 key strands: Sport, Culture and Business.

So far this year (Sept 2012 – June 2013) Relays has engaged with 52 schools and 1,822 young people. A total of 119 Plymouth University students have volunteered through Relays activities contributing 1,745 volunteering hours and 24 Relays events and coaching programmes have been delivered by volunteers.

In July and August Relays will help deliver the Devon Games to Inspire, Devon Summer School Games – 2 major sports and cultural festival for over 2,000 young people from schools across Devon with over 100 volunteering opportunities. Relays will also be running sports sessions as part of the Widening Participation summer programme.

As a result of the reputation of Relays at Plymouth University we are now being asked to partner on events across Devon and Cornwall.

The Relays project has now reached the end of its funding and as such a Legacy Charter was drawn up for the participating HE's. Due to the success of Relays at Plymouth we have, along with Bournemouth and Bristol, been 'gifted' the use of the Relays branding and reputation to use in all our future activities and events - a huge honour. Relays at UPSU will continue to inspire and engage young people and their diverse communities, through new and creative partnerships and approaches.

UPSU will continue to generate a positive legacy following the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, changing young people's lives through raising aspirations, developing knowledge, skills and learning and delivering distinctive events. We will also continue to support the training and development of student volunteers, to grow and diversify the opportunities available to volunteer, to maintain links to events regionally and nationally and enable students to reach their potential to support the provision of sport and activities.

Relays currently receive funding from Active Devon, for 2 days a week, until August 2014 to help deliver 5 major county sports festivals across Devon through the Sport England School Games Programme. These events provide volunteering and training opportunities for Plymouth University students including partner college students.

In addition to this we have secured WP funding for the next academic year to deliver events in Plymouth with the main focus on WP target schools. Events will include; Plymouth Festival of School Sport, Urbanise Festival on the Plymouth University Campus, Mini Varsity, Flames Multi Sport Sessions and Extra-curricular School Sports Clubs. All events will provide opportunities for student volunteers to coach/deliver sessions themselves, assist in cultural and sports sessions, support event co-ordination and work in media roles.

In total Relays will aim to deliver events to approximately 5,700 young people, whilst providing 240 quality volunteering opportunities to Plymouth University students.

Sports & Societies

Our sports clubs and societies are led by students for students and enhance the overall student experience in a number of ways, for example, developing personal skills, increasing community engagement as well as representing Plymouth University on a regional and national level. They are a fantastic way to make friends, continue a particular interest or try something new.

At the start of the year there were 119 different clubs and societies on offer to students which increased to 141 over the year with the clubs and societies signing up over 10,000 members at the Sports and Societies Fair at the start of the year.

There were 33 teams entered into BUCS Weekly Leagues, equivalent to 350 students, plus a further 20+ teams involved in local league and friendly matches, in such sports as Badminton, Basketball, Fencing, Football, Hockey, Netball, Rugby, Squash and Tennis. There were also 35 clubs/societies supported by the Students' Union to take part in National competitions.

There were a number of great achievements and successes during the year:

- 6 teams were promoted in their BUCS leagues, an increase of 2 teams on last year.
- Men's Basketball won Gold medals and Ladies Basketball Silver in the BUCS Conference Cup.
- Squash achieved silver medals in the BUCS trophy.
- BUCS Nationals Gold medals were achieved in Swimming, Silver medals in Surfing and Swimming and Bronze medals in Athletics.
- Plymouth University Sailing also achieved an overall 1st place nationally in BUCS and achieved a total of 89 BUCS points.

In the overall BUCS championships 2012/2013 Plymouth University came 31st out of 154 institutions, a jump of 7 places on the previous year which is a fantastic achievement.

This year also saw students from Plymouth University representing Great Britain internationally – a golfer in Peru at the University Scholarship Championships and a member of Ladies Rugby and an individual swimmer at the World University Games in Russia.

Activate, Motivate, Generate entered its' second year and achieved great results exceeding the projects annual targets. There were 2,942 students actively involved in participating at least one session of sport per week, 77 volunteers taking part in the delivery of the sessions and activities and 93 coaches qualified.

The annual Varsity event took place in February with 13 different sports and involved over 600 students competing from Plymouth University and UCP Marjon. The event also raised money for charity and this year £12,500 was donated to two charities, The Motor Neurone Disease Association and The Chestnut Appeal. There was

an historical win for Ladies Rugby who won their match – the first time in 16 years and the overall Varsity Cup was awarded to Plymouth University who beat Marjon convincingly by 30 points to 16.

To round off the year and to celebrate the achievements of students from both sports clubs and societies two award ceremonies were held this year. Over 200 students attended the Sports Awards where 11 Full Colours and 64 Half Colours were given out, and 100 students attended the Societies & Volunteering Awards where 10 Full Colours and 26 Half Colours were presented to well deserving individuals.

Advice

The number of students that received advice this academic year was 2,523 which is a 12% increase on the previous academic year. The top three issues for advice were student finance, which accounts for 31% of the total number of client issues, followed by academic advice, (23%) and housing (16%).

The number of students seeking academic advice rose by 10%. We had two publicity campaigns around changes to academic regulations and appeals against assessment award board decisions. This has led to a large increase in enquiries in July leading up to the appeal deadline and we anticipate this to continue until the Health Professionals appeal deadline in the middle of August.

A new initiative for the 2012/13 academic year was the birth on 'Advice on Tour' in various locations throughout the University. We engaged with 1,222 students, handing out publicity materials and dealing with pertinent issues such as housing and contract checking in January, a time when various agencies were trying to get students to sign contracts for Sept. 2013. In February the theme was geared to publicising the changes to the 'extenuating circumstances' regulations, followed by 'making an appeal' in March/April leading up to the examination period.

Following on from a meeting with the Coroner's Office we have set up an arrangement to offer support and, if required, accompany students that are required to attend inquests. Information about support from upsu: advice is given to students at the same time that request for attendance is issued.

We have also been involved with the University, in the Office of the Independent Adjudicator Early Resolution Pilots Initiative, working towards early resolution and more effective complaints handling.

Representation

Representation Support has gone through a period of significant change this year due to the increase in staff resource in this crucial area. The year has been focussed on growing the support we can offer whilst looking at how to embed this more systematically into the future.

This year we trained 45% of our 703 course reps, supporting them to get their voice heard at course level. We also trained and supported our 15 School Reps to achieve fantastic improvements at a School level. 100% of School Reps have highlighted the positive relationship they had with UPSU and all of them stated that taking on the position had been a positive experience. Successes include extending access to key facilities for students, achieving positive changes to the curriculum, and improving placement provision for students.

Our SSTAR (Student and Staff, Teaching and Representation) Awards, which recognise the contribution University staff and academic representatives make to enhance the student experience, have had another successful year. We achieved a 30% increase in nominations, taking the number to 376. Increased staff support and a successful bid for financial support from NUS has allowed us to work on some exciting in depth analysis of the qualitative nominations we received.

We changed our election process this year by splitting up our Part Time and Full Time elections in order to focus our message more accurately. This reduced the number of positions available to our students and as a result the number of candidates too. The team foresaw this and increased the support we offered candidates, putting on additional group training sessions and 1-1 campaign planning sessions. This resulted in a voter turnout of 5,914 which equates to 21.4% of the student body. This is a 2% increase on 2012. An in depth review of the elections process is now underway.

The team also successfully supported the organisation's other democratic processes. Parliament increased its focus on the community by creating a Community Engagement Campaigns Chair and Sub-Committee. It also created a Parent and Carer Campaigns Chair and an Against Racism and Fascism Working Group. These new positions will begin working next academic year. The department also supported the referendum that saw the Strategic Plan passed by our members. Additionally, we have begun considering our input into the upcoming governance review by conducting initial research into the effectiveness of our democratic structures.

The support we offer our Executive Officers has also increased this year, with the delivery of in depth briefings, action planning, project support and impact reporting that reflected the diverse student experience. Some

examples include a review of the Executive Officer roles, support with ensuring the student voice fed into the Campus Development project, and UPSU input into the review of OVC Student Experience Group. The department also conducted several research projects for example on mature student induction, attendance, accommodation, and unpaid internships. These findings have, or will, feed into the University's decision making in these areas, ensuring the student experience continues to improve. The department ended the year by delivering a more comprehensive induction process for Executive Officers, ensuring they are best placed to deliver for students over the next year.

Finally, Representation Support has been rebranded to "Student Voice", to better support its engagement with the student body in the coming year. This has coincided with the launch of the new UPSU website, offering a range of new and exciting content to support Student Voice activity in the coming year.

Partner Colleges

This year we have seen another increase in the engagement of off campus students with UPSU and its services. Of the over ten thousand students that study off campus, we have engaged with around six thousand face to face, particularly in our induction period at the start of the year.

We are proud to have trained 100% of our off campus course reps, many of whom received our extended course rep training that looked at values of leadership as well as the necessary skills and responsibilities of the role. Along with our course reps, we have had college reps in our five biggest colleges that have worked part time for UPSU alongside their studies to improve the academic experience of students in their college. The hard work of these college reps has seen the implementation of off campus societies, record NSS & SPQ turnouts, free sports sessions, college-based campaigns and many more successes.

This year we have seen more sports participation than ever from partner colleges, with not only a good number of students competing for Plymouth University in regional, national and varsity competitions, but the huge success that was the inaugural partner college varsity, where dozens of sports competitors and hundreds of spectators enjoyed some toughly fought exhibition matches between the colleges. We have also seen a large increase in off campus student volunteering, using the advice centre, providing content for our media outlets and fundraising that has contributed to the total of UPSU raising and giving.

Research

Throughout December 2012 we wanted to hear from our members about the entertainment and events we offer here at UPSU. Our "Let Us Entertain You" survey was completed by 1,045 students and asked for suggestions for improvement in the entertainment and event services that we provide. A key result of the survey was that 94% of respondents said that they would recommend a UPSU event / gig / club night to a friend.

At the start of the second term we also carried out our "Student Opinion" survey. The survey was solely based online on www.upsu.com and was completed by 1,346 students. We conducted this survey to ascertain whether the services and activities we offered met our members' needs and to also check that we are representing students on the issues that matter most to them. 95% of respondents said that they would recommend UPSU to a friend.

This year we also launched a form of social media feedback called "Dislike your SU" which involved posting on Facebook and asking our members to comment and feedback. We asked:

"UPSU is a charity led by students, for students. We want to make sure that we are giving you the very best service possible. What do you dislike about the services UPSU offer? Please comment on this picture telling us what's wrong with UPSU and what needs improving. Give us a grumble."

We received over 40 feedback comments on a range of issues, allowing us to myth bust and address issues that were otherwise unknown.

Website statistics

Over the last 12 months upsu.com had 308,121 visits (+2.53% on last year), by 148,637 unique people (-3.92% on last year), generating over 1,082,860 page views (-2.77% on last year).

This year we broke the record for most visits in a single day to the site with 5,461 visiting when Summer Ball tickets were released online, an increase of 41% on the previous record of 3,665 visits.

The facts:

- Desktop / Laptop visits: 254,168.
- Mobile visits: 53,954
- 43,977 visits to the Elections page
- 29,734 visits to the Events page
- 17,570 visits the Sports page
- 13,838 visits to the Societies page
- Visitors from 186 different countries
- Top 5 countries visiting:
 - UK: 277,053
 - USA: 7,946
 - France: 2,059
 - Germany: 1,319
 - India: 1,099
- Source referrals
 - Facebook: 54,138 (44.24% of traffic)
 - Google: 17,612 (14.39% of traffic)
 - University website: 9,208 (7.52% of traffic)
 - Twitter: 6,917 (5.65% of traffic)
- Nearly 9,000,000 emails were also sent when communicating with members.

Our Impact and Net Promoter Score

Student Opinion Survey:

- 95% of students said they would recommend the SU to friends
- Our Net Promoter Score is +90
- 79% of students feel that their students' union has elected offices that make decisions on behalf of students.
- 88% of students feel that their views are taken into account on decisions that are made at the students' union.
- 62% of students felt that UPSU was value for money focused.

National Student Survey:

Across all our campuses and partner colleges, UPSU has improved from a 72% satisfaction in 2012 to 73% in 2013. This is within the top quartile of HE Institutions and is compared to a sector average of 67%.

Q23: I am satisfied with the Students' Union", with PU scoring 73% compared to 67% in the sector.

Facebook, Twitter & social media

Facebook Fan page - facebook.com/upsunion: 17,274 Followers (+35% on last year)

Twitter - @upsu: 6,430 followers (+63% on last year), Tweets sent: 8,592

Youtube:

157 videos uploaded to date

Channel views: 63,949 to date, 21,848 views this year (+56.36%)

26,554 minutes watched this year

Videos viewed in 103 different countries

The SU App

The SU app was launched on Wednesday 6th March 2013 on Apple iPhone iOS. With 1048 downloads.

The facts:

- 7,296 sessions
- 27,763 screen views
- downloaded in 34 different countries
- top 5 areas visited within app:
 - news: 3331
 - events: 3233
 - info: 1834
 - volunteering: 1833
 - accommodation: 1752

Social enterprise

We employ on average over 200 student staff across our social enterprise areas which fits in with our aim to transform lives by giving real work experience which will enhance employability skills and assist graduates from Plymouth University securing a position in the labour market.

The bar has once again faced a tough financial year and has seen a drop in turnover of 9.9% on the previous year. There is a continued trend towards the students coming out later and with a limited budget. Over the year we have tried various tactics to try to increase footfall through the venue and have noticed that an improvement in early evening trade has developed which we aim to capitalise on in the coming academic year. The bar ended on a high though with an increase of 6.8% on bar sales at the summer ball, giving us a record take of £62k for the event.

We have once again been awarded the NUS Best Bar None Gold award, being one of only 7 Students' Unions out of over 80 competitors to achieve this standard. We have also been awarded Plymouth Best Bar None Best Student Venue and Best Late Night Venue. Both of these Best Bar None programmes are designed to recognise venues that follow best practice and have excellent customer service skills.

Over the summer we have concentrated on The Kitchen area and transformed it into 'The Quarterdeck', a café style food court. The old system of a cooking line has been replaced with a call-order system. The front of house now has enough tables and chairs for 40 covers. The menu has been redesigned and has been kept as simple 'pub grub' using local suppliers. For example our fish is from Plymouth's Barbican and our burgers are from a butcher less than 1 mile away. All meals have been kept under £4.50 to cater to a students' budget.

The setup in The Lounge has also been refreshed and processes changed to increase efficiency. The food options have been limited to help improve service times with some options such as wraps being handmade by the kitchen behind The Quarterdeck.

We have a new and exciting addition to our catering department, "The Chunk". We have transformed half of the terrace bar into a "Pasty shop", with the option of expanding to pies as well, at a later date. With the offer of pasties nowhere else on campus we expect this to be popular choice for our students.

NUS card sales

This year UPSU continue to be one of the top sellers for NUS cards in the country, achieving over 9,602 card sales which was slightly down on last year's record total of 10,112.

It is estimated by the NUS that each student will save over £500 a year with an NUS Extra card, this would mean that UPSU will have saved Plymouth University students just under £5 million this year.

Sustainability

We were really pleased to again receive a Gold Award in the national Green Impact Students' Unions accreditation scheme. This recognises our continued efforts to embed environmental responsibility and sustainability into all that we do and is a testament to the commitment of both officers and staff to making UPSU a sustainable union. We have continued to work in partnership with the University over the last year, with building work to improve our heat efficiency recently completed. We will continue to embed best practice into our operation and engage with students regarding sustainability and environmental issues. The refreshed Environmental and Sustainability Student Forum will form a key vehicle for campaigns and projects over the coming year.

Future Plans

UPSU plans to build upon the achievements we made in 2012/13 in order to ensure that we are at the heart of the students' experience at Plymouth University. We will continue to strengthen our financial position further with an aim to continue to build reserves in line with our reserves policy and supply services to students and their community at the very best level of quality that can be afforded.

We will work in partnership with the University to work towards our strategic goals and also embed the organisational changes we made during this academic year.

Objectives for 2013/14:

The Students' Union will be seeking to achieve the following objectives in 2013/14:

1. To embrace the capabilities of our new website and sports booker systems.
2. We will further embed the new Student Voice Team within UPSU and Plymouth University, creating a more systematic method of supporting our student representatives, improving the quality and quantity of our research.
3. We will broaden the reach of all Membership Development activities to increase engagement amongst our members, building on the success of good practice such as Advice on Tour and Faculty links.
4. We will focus on a strong representation structure and utilise this as a forefront of our outreach methods to enhance the HE community in our students studying off campus.
5. We will set up a new Limited Company as a vehicle for our proposed new revenue streams.
6. We will undertake a full Governance and Constitutional review.
7. To work towards our Investors in People accreditation with the aim to achieve the Gold standard.
8. Continue to develop our catering offer and aim to increase the surplus generated.
9. To offer a wider range of Entertainments and Events to reflect our diverse membership.
10. To increase participation of all sports including our facilities at the Nancy Astor Sports Centre.
11. We will develop and implement an online volunteer registration and contact management system in order to make us more efficient and user friendly for all students undertaking volunteering and fundraising activities.
12. To develop robust systems of measuring and reporting our Impact and embedding this within the culture of UPSU.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Union's financial strategy is to finance its current range of activities and also generate a sufficient surplus to finance expenditure required to enable expansion and improvement of our existing facilities and services. We also aim to provide for the future depreciation of fixed assets, at the time the Union becomes committed to acquiring them, and are currently building our reserves to cover a number of possible contingencies. We remain on target to achieve this and we continue to benefit from the recognition and excellent support from the University and received a Block Grant in 2012/13 of £1,743,878. There was quite a significant increase in our grant compared to the previous year mainly due to the transfer of Sport and Active Leisure over to the Students' Union in August 2012. We also received additional funding for some necessary capital works, the development of our Student Voice and Marketing departments and also a two year project to develop Raising and Giving.

Our gross income from all sources this year totalled £5,526,817. Total expenditure of £5,145,422 on the wide-ranging student benefits we provide as well as our other revenue-generating activities, left an operating surplus of £13,692, after a net transfer of £xxxx into reserves. Our operating surplus was less than predicted this year mainly due to the reduced surplus generated from our Bar which is a cause of some concern. We are doing all we can to generate alternative income streams which will hopefully compensate for the increasing loss of revenue each year from the Bar.

Our liquidity remained healthy throughout the year and despite low interest rates the investment income earned increased again this year by £2,545 to £10,056. We constantly review the return on our investments and spread our cash over several institutions to maximise our return.

Our income and expenditure reserves now stand at £xxxx and have increased from £33,280 since July 2009. This is an exceptional achievement for the Union in the current economic climate and has ensured that we are on track to achieve our target level of reserves and an improved more secure financial position.

Reserves policy

The Union has long believed that it would be prudent to build reserves to cover a number of possible contingencies, and intend to build up the following:

- to cover the acquisition of new fixed assets, estimated at £50,000.
- to cover the overheads should there be an unexpected downturn in funding or additional calls on our resources without immediately curtailing activities, estimated at between 1 and 3 months overhead costs of between £100,000 and £300,000.
- to cover staff redundancies and exceptional staff related costs, estimated at £100,000.
- to cover the unexpected cost of the upkeep of the fabric of the building estimated at £100,000.

Therefore the aim is to build up designated reserves of between £350,000 and £550,000, at today's prices, in the future from the first available free reserves generated by the Union. It is our intention to build our designated free reserves up to the desired levels within the next five years.

Future funding

The Executive Committee confirms that the Union has sufficient funds to meet all of its obligations. The Block Grant for 2013/14 has been agreed at £1,686,140 and our commercial activities are expected to generate significant funds.

We are also in discussions with the University about additional funding for three one-off capital projects that we are hoping to complete in partnership with the University, this academic year.

Investment Policy

The Executive Committee have implemented an Investment Policy in February 2011, which is reviewed annually by the Trustee Board.

FUNDS HELD AS CUSTODIAN TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

The Union actively fosters the activities of clubs and societies organised by the students themselves. In order to be recognised, a club or society has to comply with the objectives of the Union and follow administrative rules set up to protect the interests of its members and the Union. As well as direct financial support from the Union, clubs and societies are encouraged to collect and spend their own money for activities. Sums collected in this way are kept for safekeeping by the Union. On 31 July 2012 the Union held £150,020 under this arrangement. This sum is identified as belonging to the members of the clubs and societies and not the Union.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the union and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the union for that year. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993 and the Charity (Accounts and reports) Regulations 2008. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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President and Chair of the board of Trustees

Dated:.....