

# Communities Zone

12th November  
5-6pm

C.LTB3 / MS TEAMS

## Minutes

- **Welcome**
- **In Attendance**
  - Members Present
    - Vice President Communities, Justine Pédussel (JP)
    - Sustainability Volunteer Officer, Jani Belvalkar (JB)
  - In Attendance
    - 15 Ordinary Members
    - 3 Staff Support
  - Apologies
    - Arts Volunteer Officer, Khushhali Gupta
    - Co-curricular Volunteer Officer, Ben Alker (BA)
    - Media Volunteer Officer, Kyle Bruce (KB)
  - Absent without apologies
    - Housing Volunteer Officer, Toby Wordie (TW)
    - International Volunteer Officer, Nnamdi Igbokwe (NI)
- **Minutes Ratification**
  - Minutes ratified by JP
  - No objections
- **Challenges to Order Paper**
  - None.
- **Dates to Note**
  - Housing Week: 11 – 15 November
  - [Communities Zone Deadline](#): 17 November
  - First Aid Training: 24 November
  - [16 Days of Activism](#): 25 November – 10 December
  - [General Meeting](#): 28 November
  - [International Student Barometer](#): 29 November
  - Scotland's Mental Health First Aid Training: 15th & 16th January
- **Elections**
  - CZEC: No positions filled

- **Reports (the Communities Zone reports can be reviewed in the agenda)**
  - Vice President Communities, Justine Pédussel
    - Housing
      - JP met MPs in London to discuss housing issues faced by students. Housing week is focused on lobbying the government on the Housing Bill 2025 to extend tenant protection to student accommodation.
    - Teams Pronouns
      - JP lets students know they can set pronouns on MS Teams.
    - Society of the Month
      - ACS celebrated for their work during Black History Month in October.
  - Housing Volunteer Officer, Toby Wordie
    - No report provided.
  - Co-curricular Volunteer Officer, Ben Alker
    - No report provided.
  - Sustainability Volunteer Officer, Jani Belvalkar
    - JB recaps Climate Festival events.
    - JB has completed carbon literacy training and signed up for biodiversity and climate anxiety facilitator training.
    - JB has worked with societies, worked on sustainability projects and highlighted their work with global justice to bring free breakfasts back.
  - International Volunteer Officer, Nnamdi Igbokwe
    - No report provided.
  - Media Volunteer Officer, Kyle Bruce
    - No report provided.
  - Arts Volunteer Officer, Khushhali Gupta
    - JP reads report on KG behalf.
    - KG working on new projects that they want student feedback on that are discussed later in meeting. Projects are: Societies Week, highlighting funding gaps and resource needs, developing workshop and guidance, and Art Club Fair for students and local artists.
    - Member asks when the Societies fair will be.
      - JP says no date set yet but will not be this semester.
- **Updates, discussion and decision topics**
  - Applying for funding
    - JP showed how to find the [CZEC grant application](#). Recommends that societies send application to Volunteering and Coordinator before submitting to check over application. JP showed [webpage to submit completed grant application](#).
  - Student skills survey

- JP shows how to find the [survey](#). Asks members to complete survey.
  - Training
    - JP says there are 8 spaces left for SMHFA training in January. The training is now open to year 4 students.
    - JP asks if there is interest for following committee training sessions delivered by Student Support Services:
      - What student support is
      - Accessibility
      - Autism and neurodiversity
      - Money support
      - LGBTQ+
      - Inclusion and diversity
      - Mental health and Look After Your Mate
    - Member feedback:
      - Offers support for sessions.
      - Apprehension about the time commitment of the sessions.
    - Member questions:
      - Asks whether it would be helpful to do one session after semester has started so societies know what skills they need based on their membership for that year.
      - Asks whether it would be helpful to make these sessions mandatory
    - JP asks whether members would like 2 Societies Academy (May and September) like Sports Union?
      - Member says that having online materials or videos of the information would be helpful for committees.
      - STAFF outlines that slides from Societies Academy are online for members to review.
      - Member says they would rather videos of information for committee member is more helpful than having 2 societies academies
    - Summary: Members would like two societies academy for committees as well as videos of both student support services training sessions and committee information available digitally.
  - Arts Officer Projects
    - Proposed projects:
      1. Societies week
      2. Gaps and needs for funding and resources
      3. Workshops and Development
      4. Art Club Fair for students and local artists.
    - Member feedback:

- Support for Gaps and Needs project and Workshops and Development project,
- Member expressed that non-art societies would find it hard to engage with Societies Week.
- Member proposes that the Art Club Fair and Workshop and Development could be a part of Societies Week.
- Member asks whether music could be included in the projects.
- 2025 Awards Ball
  - JP outlines context for changing the venue this year as Golden Lion is not accessible or large enough for the ball. JP proposes hosting the awards ball at MacRoberts because it is our local charity that supports our societies and is big enough to host everyone with space to host a Ceilidh.
  - JP proposes that societies ball will be changed to an Awards Ball to incorporate all volunteers at the Students' Union.
  - Member feedback:
    - Asks whether the format will be the same or will it be more buffet style food?
      - JP answers that Students' Union is exploring making it more buffet style food but schedule for the event will be similar.
    - Members ask whether the space is able to accommodate all societies members and other volunteers?
      - JP answers that MacRoberts is much bigger space and tickets do not sell out immediately so opening it up to others helps that.
    - Member ask how award categories will look.
      - JP answers that the award categories are still in development but will mostly stay the same as before with added categories for volunteers.
    - Members asks whether price will change.
      - Staff answers that if the price changes then they will decrease.
    - Member asks whether it would be helpful to run consult meeting for those who are interested in the topic?
      - JP agrees to consultation sessions.
- **Any Other Business**
  - Discussion about the bus service and ongoing issues with the buses.
- **Date of Next Meeting:** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- **Reserved business**
  - None.

