

Imperial College Union  
President's Report - *A note by Ashley Brown*

### Phase 3

A lot of progress has been made on Phase 3 since the previous Council, with the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November agreeing that the project could go ahead, subject to a revision in the financing. By the time of this meeting we should have approval of our revised plan, which will actually work better for us in the long term.

Project meetings have already started, as the timescale is quite tight. We're currently looking to start work in June, with the venue open for freshers' week. I am sure the DPFS will have more to say about the consultation we have been conducting.

We may have some concept designs for the next Council.

For those who haven't seen, the work includes:

- New fire exit and light refurbishment of the UDH
- Light refurbishment of the UCH
- Reconstruction of dB's (and hopefully a new name!)
- Refurbishment and possible reconstruction of da Vinci's
- Minor remedial works to the Union Bar
- Reconstruction of kitchens in da Vinci's, UDH

### Blackwell's Bookshop

I have discussed the site of the Blackwell's bookshop with the College. Under the Code of Practice, this area is ICU space, which we previously rented to STA in a joint agreement with the College. This was an excellent source of income, but the new deal with Blackwell's provides us with essentially nothing. We therefore have the opportunity to take that space back, if we would like to use it for something else. Rental agreements etc. mean we cannot have it immediately, but it is an area worth thinking about. What would you put there, or is a bookshop still a good thing to have?

### QAA Audit/Student Written Submission

The Student Written Submission continued to absorb my time for a week or so after the last Council, as I worked with the Deputy President (Education) to finish off the document and prepare it for submission. Thanks to everyone who helped!

The QAA audit pre-briefing visit will take place on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of January, with a meeting between the auditors and students on the 6<sup>th</sup>. We're looking for people who can come to that and talk to the auditors about their academic experiences at the College, please email me if you are willing and able to come.

### Higher Education Funding & Student Finance Review

The HE funding review, chaired by Lord Browne, launched its first call for evidence last week at a round-table discussion at London South Bank University. I was invited, along with a number of other students' union presidents.

We received very little notice of the event (I got the phone call on Thursday, many of the others on Friday), but it was still a reasonable turnout. Representatives from UCL, King's, LSE, Birkbeck, SOAS, Goldsmiths, ULU, London Met and London South Bank University all came along for the discussion. We covered topics ranging from the impact of fees on university choices to views on the proposed "food labelling" system for university quality.

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14<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Although it was a very brief session, we were told that there would be many other opportunities to provide evidence to the review, something we'll be making use of. I am currently following the line in our current HE policy, which expires in June 2011.

### **Postgraduate Review**

There was some confusion over the government's postgraduate review, as their deadline of 18<sup>th</sup> December was originally billed as being for suggestions on what the review should review, but it turns out it was the deadline for final submissions. We still intend to put something together, but it looks like they will rush this review so it does not trip over the other HE review which is taking place.

### **External Affairs**

By the time of this Council meeting I will also have attended a meeting of the Aldwych Group<sup>1</sup>, with the DPW. The topic was Research and Teaching, something I hope we will have been able to learn a lot from and contribute a lot to. The meeting was in Belfast, but due to our environmental policy we were unable to fly. Instead we took a minibus to Liverpool and then a ferry, also taking representatives from LSE, UCL and Cambridge. Total round-trip journey time: 28 hours.

### **Vandalism**

The incidence of vandalism appears to have dropped after our appeals both in Felix and to sports clubs via the ACC chair. Thanks to those who have taken steps to stop it, I hope we have no further problems during the year. Please keep on the look-out for anyone causing damage and yell at them or find a steward.

### **Commercial Services**

We have introduced some meal deals during the week, as a "Christmas Present":

- **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:** Drink and a burger or drink and fish & chips.
- **Wednesday:** Beer and pasta.
- **Saturday:** Large pizza & a pitcher

We've tried to tailor these to the customers likely to be in the building at the time. We intend to revise the available offers throughout the rest of the year, so look out for our January sale!

We've also set the end-of-term Christmas Ball price at £5 online, we hope it will be a good, fun night to end the term.

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<sup>1</sup> The students' unions of the Russell Group