



## Olivia Reed

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### Area of work: University & Community Liaison

| Sabbatical Plan Goal  | Details  |
|---|--|
| <p>Goal 1</p> <p>Ensure that campus is as safe and fun as possible for student return.</p>                                  | <p>Work since last report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This has been an ongoing project over the last 12 months navigating various lockdowns. I have worked with the University and within SUSU to help coordinate phased student return to activity.</li> <li>This has particularly involved feeding into the University's active campus groups and gold command group on the practical issues facing student return such as testing, transport.</li> <li>Lobbied UEB and the VC to support international students who may face difficulties returning to Southampton for summer term teaching. (More info in other section at end of report)</li> <li>I have also been working with the SUSU events team to plan a series of events in June. This includes a PGT welcome week, Summer Festival and Lost events week (a week to host larger missed events once allowed after June 24<sup>th</sup>)</li> </ul> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Host a series of in person events in June. (Fingers crossed!!)</p> |
| <p>Goal 2</p> <p>Work to keep positive student and SUSU relations with the community, particularly around the pandemic.</p> | <p>Work since last report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoken on additional local radio and Tv about students views and the positive work being done by students to in the community.</li> <li>Worked with the University Engaged Steering group to look at long term community projects.</li> <li>Attended the local <a href="#">Youth forum</a> to discuss youth engagement in the city, including election promotion, young people's handling of covid and new Young Adults Employment Hub.</li> </ul> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further work planned in June</li> </ul>  |

### Area of work: Sites & Halls

| Sabbatical Plan Goal  | Details  |
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| <p>Goal 1</p> <p>Online Sabb presence</p>                   | <p>Work since last report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Filmed weekly update videos to summaries weekly activities. - <a href="https://www.susu.org/whats-on/updates.html">https://www.susu.org/whats-on/updates.html</a></li> <li>- Hosted open online drop ins, events and Q&amp;A sessions.</li> <li>- Welcomed and explained SUSU role during virtual introduction sessions to January starters.</li> </ul> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to meet and engage with students online in June but also interact with students in person as covid restrictions are lifted.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Goal 2</p> <p>Long term sites goals</p>                  | <p>Work since last report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begun re-exploring how SUSU engages with sites as part of feeding to the developing 2021 SUSU strategy. Current thinking is centred around switching focus to student communities as student feedback suggests they have higher affinity to their faculty's and student groups rather than buildings/sites themselves.</li> <li>- This area has had less development this year due to the nature of a light year in terms of physical student presence at sites.</li> <li>- Fed into University long term site development at University Council and Estates Program Board.</li> </ul> <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feed into the ongoing discussions on this topic.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Goal 3</p> <p>Ensure effective Halls representation.</p> | <p>Work since last report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted monthly Halls Forums to highlight student concerns. This will not happen in May due to exams however past halls forums have explored further concerns around halls rebates, maintenance issues, and upcoming events.</li> <li>• Worked with halls teams to discuss and work through student concerns over partial halls closures at Gower and Mayflower due to long term maintenance work.</li> <li>• Joined forces with Solent Student's Union and Winchester Student Union to write a letter to local landlords and private halls providers. We worked with closely with the University to jointly contact local private halls providers and SASSH landlords asking them to show flexibility with students in recognition of the exceptional and very difficult circumstances.</li> <li>• Wrote to local MPs to raise student concerns over accommodation and ask them to support the early 2021 APPG recommendations - <a href="https://www.paulblomfield.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/210128-APPG-Students-Inquiry-Report-final-website.pdf">210128-APPG-Students-Inquiry-Report-final-website.pdf (paulblomfield.co.uk)</a></li> <li>• We were also supported by the University to deliver 2000 free support packs to students in halls, which were co-funded by SUSU and the University.</li> </ul> |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobbied the university to continue halls rebates until in person teaching resumes.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Create content to better publicise SUSU work in halls on the SUSU website, and share in one place existing content, e.g. Paddys video summarising halls forum updates.</p>   |
| Area of work: Sustainability                                 |  |
| Sabbatical Plan Goal   | Details  |
| Goal 1   | Work since last report:  |
| Work with the University to create a Sustainability Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After working with the Universities' Sustainability Strategy Group and the Nous Group consultants to produce a Green Paper over the summer and subsequently Sustainability Strategy - <a href="https://blogs.susu.org/blog/2020/10/28/our-sustainability-strategy-2020/">https://blogs.susu.org/blog/2020/10/28/our-sustainability-strategy-2020/</a>;... The focus is now on Implementation &amp; Communication. I have continued working on the Sustainability Implementation Group and am directly leading on Goals 2 discussing tier 3.</li> <li>As well as working through the goal plan in the strategy the board is taking feedback of work done so far via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <a href="#">structured discussion board</a> – not anonymous: accessible to University staff and students only (login using usual user id &amp; password and please read our <a href="#">guidance on how to contribute</a>)</li> <li>A <a href="#">padlet</a> – a public but anonymous unstructured note-posting and commenting tool</li> </ul> </li> <li>The University recently published an update on goal 6 which can be found here- <a href="#">Fossilfuelstatement2021.pdf (southampton.ac.uk)</a></li> </ul> |
|  | <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Significant work to still do on implementation however work is progressing well. This is an ongoing project for many years.</p>  |
| Goal 2   | Work since last report:  |
| Work to develop unions sustainability.                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SUSU is putting in a bid to the University for a full-time manager to sit on the SUSU staff team to oversee the implementation of the sustainability strategy and coordinate work on sustainability projects.</li> <li>Worked with SUSU SLT to establish a tie in with SUSU spaces and values. The plan is to focus the SUSU shop more closely around sustainable products and output.</li> </ul>   |
|  | <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Support the bid for a full-time staff member to focus on sustainability.</p>   |
| Goal 3   | Work since last report:  |

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| Host a series of Sustainability events                                | Coordinated with SUSU and University colleges to discuss short term sustainability work and program. Lottie, Corin and our student groups have worked to put together a <a href="#">mammal challenge</a> , <a href="#">Earth Day</a> and reading list.   |
|   | <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Working with the Freshers planning group on a planning a sustainable focus to the week.</p>  |
| Area of work: Leading the Union                                       |  |
| Sabbatical Plan Goal  | Details  |
| Goal 1:<br><br>Support the development of a new SUSU Strategy         | <p>Work since last report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following development of an interim strategy to get us through until September 2021, we are now working on a longer-term organisational strategy to last until 2025. We have appointed consultants to help with this work, which is currently underway.</li> <li>- Supported development work on underpinning strategies including digital, finance, commercial, people and EDI. (We are in the process of appointing external consultants to assist with the EDI work and separately with the wider SUSU strategy.)</li> <li>-</li> </ul> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Continue to engage with consultants on the SUSU strategy development.</p> |
| Goal 2<br><br>Campaign for investment and development in Building 42. | <p>Work since last report:</p> <p>In February I wrote to the Vice-Chancellor to request clarity of the B42 project. The University reassured their commitment to the project but want to reassess the budget envelope. We are now holding regular meetings with the University Estates Team to review this and discuss next steps. The building is due to go to Council for discussion in November next year.</p> <p>Next steps:</p> <p>Feed into upcoming council and estates meetings around the needs and wants list of B42.</p>  |

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| <b>Other</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with the University on long term planning of projects — e.g. Engaged University Steering Group, Campaign Leadership Group, EDI strategy, Widening Participation Strategy, Estates Programme Board, Tackling Harassment Board.</li> <li>- Work with Student services, the University Student Experience Board and Heart of Campus Steering Group to develop facilities and operational plans around Student hubs, the Nuffield theatre and Jubilee Sports</li> </ul> |  |

Centre.

- Supported and lead the sabbatical officer team, through weekly 1 to 1s, team meetings ect.
- Sat on the Union and Universities governing bodies- focus this year on the challenge to ensure their financial and reputational stability, while also focusing on student safety and wellbeing.
- Spoke to over 1000 potential students at University Open Day talks
- Supported the development of the Below Deck bar

### **SUSU Overall update (For interest)**

During Term Two we ran several student focused campaigns. These included:

Welcome 2021 - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/welcome-2021>

In January the University welcomed a new cohort of PGT students. To support their start and induction we ran a series of online events and activities.

Sustainability - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/sustainability>

In January we ran a focused week looking at Sustainability. Whilst current student voice has focused on immediate issues, Sustainability remains a top concern for our student body. In our recent commercial survey, 4 in 5 respondents said sustainability should be a top priority for SUSU. They also gave our commercial venues an average score of 6.2 out of 10 for how sustainable they were. We have also supported the second Southampton Science and Engineering Festival.

LGBT+ History Month - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/lgbtplus-history-month>

In February's LGBT+ History Month SUSU, the University, and our LGBTQ+ Society worked to put on a series of events and information along the national theme: Body, Mind, Spirit; to educate out prejudice and make LGBT+ people, in all their rich diversity, visible.

RAG Morale Week - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/rag>

This year's Raise And Giving week took place online. [Southampton RAG](#) hosted a week of fun, uplifting activities to provide support, boost morale and raise money for charity! The RAG total raised currently stands at £94,697.12

We Are Listening Week - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/susu-listening>

In We Are Listening Week we took time to remind students that we're listening to feedback, ideas and concerns. We also highlighted our change platforms such as You Make Change and ran daily Q&A sessions with the sabbatical officers.

Housing Week - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/campaigns>

As part of Housing week, we hosted moving advice for students looking for accommodation. We also ran virtual Housemate Meet-Ups for students, giving an opportunity to chat to potential housemates in a virtual environment.

WSA Careers Week - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/wsa-careers-week.html>

In February we worked in partnership with the University's Careers and Employability team to bring students a series events, workshops and webinars for students based at the Winchester School of Arts.

You Are More Than - <https://www.susu.org/whats-on/you-are-more-than>

During the exam period we relaunched our You Are More Than Your Studies campaign, with videos and activities. This aimed to remind students to make sure that alongside studying and revision they took time to relax, do

something they enjoy and check-in on their mental health and wellbeing. This was supported by free online exercise and sports with Sport and Wellbeing - available to all Southampton students.

### Women In Sport & Culture Week

In March we led a highlighted week on [Women In Sport](#) to tie in with [International Women's Day](#). We also hosted a series of events with our societies as part of 2021's Culture Festival such as a virtual Latin carnival party, Mexican cuisine online event, Capoeira free class etc..

### **Budget:**

We have approved a revised budget for 20-21. This increased our projected deficit from £108k to £113k for the year which we believe is sustainable. We had previously defined a maximum deficit of £150k so remain comfortable with our current forecasts. We are assessing the impact of the roadmap out of lockdown on our commercial areas and overall activity and hope this will allow for an improved outcome during the summer term.

### **Tuition Fees**

At the start of February, SUSU received a petition request for us to lobby the University to reduce international students' tuition fees. This was signed by 490 students, which then led straight into an All Student Vote. A total of 4,832 students voted, with 98% of voters backing the idea that international students should be given a tuition fee rebate. There is strong demand at a national level, echoed in feedback we receive at a local level, that all students receive a rebate against their tuition fees for this year. Students are demanding fee compensation in recognition of the fact that the experience they have received does not match what they reasonably expected to be paying for.

As a result of this, on Friday 26 March we sent a letter to the University asking them to consider and reply to our [four requests](#) on behalf of the student body. This included requesting tuition fee refunds for our student body. The Vice-Chancellor replied that the University are not planning on offering refunds of fees to students and highlighted the University complaints procedure as fairest approach as each individual will have been affected in very different ways, and it also allows for an independent perspective. We are still requesting that the University publish and demonstrate students the lobbying to government for student support, that they are involved in at a sector level.

We have also written to local members of parliament and government around this issue.

### **Free Speech**

Free Speech has become a hot topic in the Higher Education sector in the past few months. We have begun discussing with the University a review our practises and exploring the possibility of consigning a new Code for students' unions and universities on freedom of speech and political diversity.

### **Aldwych Group**

Since January we have begun to have regular conversations with other Russell Group Student Unions and hope to formally restart the Aldwych Group. So far we have joined together to write a joint statement to our universities on assessments and met Tim Bradshaw to discuss student experiences and concerns.

### **Being able to study online**

The university has decided to reintroduce in campus teaching for the third term. Overall we welcome the fact that the University is keen to reintroduce face to face teaching and educational experience, which a huge amount of our students are desperately keen for. However, for some students returning to campus will be extremely challenging, and the University pressuring these students to do so is unhelpful and unfair.

We wrote to the Vice-Chancellor to request that Students who cannot or do not wish to return to campus from 8th March or 12th April should receive an equivalent learning experience (with the exception of those students

who are required to attend a face-to-face component of their course in order to progress/graduate). Those students not wishing to return should not be disadvantaged as a result. After a long discussion the University have agreed to be as flexible as possible and students will be invited to complete a form to discuss circumstances with the University.