



CHRIST CHURCH
STUDENTS'
UNION



YOUR UNION PLAN

2019-22



INTRODUCTION FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



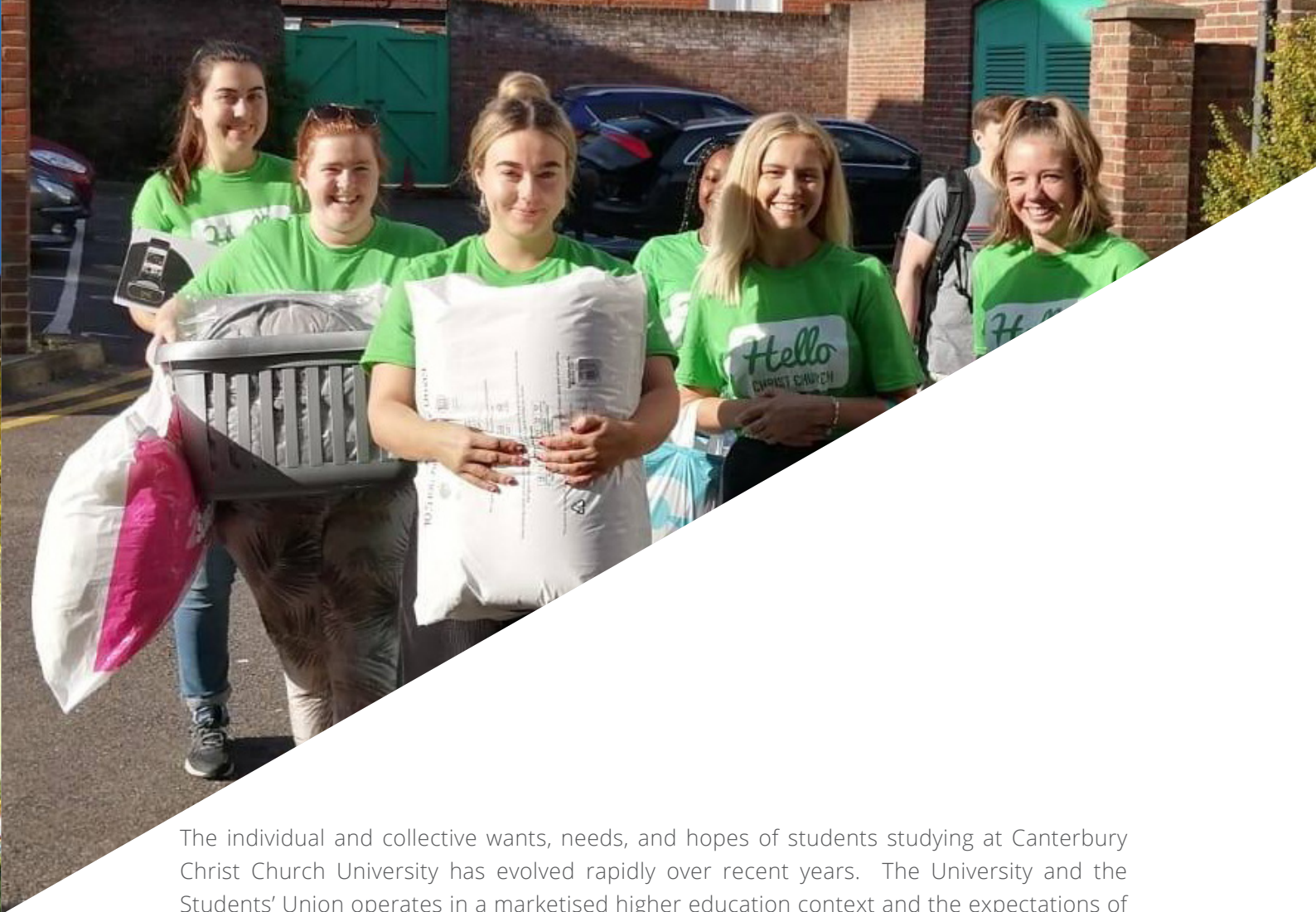
PHIL KLOPPENBORG

Students' Union
President and Chair of
the Board of Trustees
2019/20



BEN MACPHEE

Chief Executive Officer



The individual and collective wants, needs, and hopes of students studying at Canterbury Christ Church University has evolved rapidly over recent years. The University and the Students' Union operates in a marketised higher education context and the expectations of students concerning their university life are, rightly so, ever increasing and becoming more demanding.

Christ Church Students' Union exists solely to provide representation and student-led and support services to the 17,000 students studying at Canterbury Christ Church University. Building upon the strategic work started in 2015, Your Union Plan 2019-22 considered this objective in one question - how can your students' union evolve to better serve and represent you?

Your Union Plan 2019-22 has been thoroughly researched in consultation with students and stakeholders, and has been devised to ensure it is a future-proof and flexible as possible to adapt to the dynamic landscape we operate in.

The future may be uncertain, but we are excited about the possibilities ahead of us under this Plan, because we are proud to be the home of our student community at Christ Church. Being student-led makes us different by design and this founding principle hasn't changed since the Union was founded in 1962, and will never change. We are run by students, for students, and over the next three years we promise to continue with one ethos- to do nothing for you, but everything with you.

Phil Kloppenborg

Ben MacPhee



OUR MISSION

"to better student life and enrich students' experiences"

OUR VISION

"to empower, encourage, and support every student"

OUR AMBITION

is to play a central role in the lives of students through comprehensive support and facilitating student-led representation and opportunities; both to improve students' experiences and help ensure graduates are highly employable

OUR VALUES



STUDENT-LED & DEMOCRATIC

We are run by students, for students, and believe in the power of democratic student-led decision making.



INCLUSIVE

We value the diversity of our student body and the communities we live in. This, together with a commitment to equality of opportunity and actively removing barriers to participation, ensures we have an accessible, inclusive, and cohesive culture.



DEPENDABLE & PROFESSIONAL

We pride ourselves on being a Union that students and stakeholders can trust and rely upon, and being an organisation that staff and volunteers want to be a part of.



SUPPORTIVE

The foundation of us as a union is to be there for our Members throughout their journey as a student.



PARTNERSHIP

We have a belief in collectivism and recognise we do not stand alone in our communities. To achieve the best outcomes for our Members we will work with others to achieve our mission and make a bigger impact.



RESPECT

We are respectful of our Members, partners, stakeholders and our team. We welcome and respect diverse views and recognise their importance in creating a vibrant student community.



FUN!

Student experiences should be safe, fun, and memorable, and we will engage with our Members on this basis and ensure fun is reflected in all we do.



OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY

Our shared mission is to pursue excellence in higher education: transforming individuals, creating knowledge, enriching communities and building a sustainable future. This is formalised in the Student and University Partnership Agreement, developed between Canterbury Christ Church University, Christ Church Students' Union, and students.

We have this approach as we firmly believe that students' best interests are served by working in close partnership with the University, and we are proud of this. This does not mean that we always agree, but instead that we have an equal and respectful relationship where we can and always will ensure that students' interests and views are being heard and prioritised.





OUR KEY PRIORITIES

Christ Church Students' Union is here for you all, from the most involved to those that have never heard of us. The 2019/20 Sabbatical Leadership Team Manifesto is a collation of ambitious activity that we believe will positively effect change for every student at Christ Church, and above all else, the Sabbatical Leadership Team and the Union will focus on.

BACK ON CAMPUS

In Canterbury the Students' Union isn't very visible due to our physical location. In fact, we can't think of any other SU that isn't on the main university campus. Moving the Union's Office and people back onto the North Holmes Road Campus will enable us to better hear your voice, support your wellbeing, and empower you to make change.

MORE FUNDING AND BETTER FACILITIES FOR COMPETITIVE SPORT

You have told us the negative impact of recent cuts to sports funding, and that the facilities at Christ Church fall below comparable universities. We will lobby Christ Church Sport and University to address these concerns.

ACCESSIBLE CHILDCARE

You have told us that childcare is a big issue. We believe that every student parent should be able to have peace of mind whilst studying because they have access to on-site, affordable, high-quality childcare. We will work with the University to research how this need can be met.

OUT OF HOURS WELLBEING SUPPORT

our wellbeing is our primary concern. Student life isn't as simple as 9-5, which is why many University services now operate extended hours, and wellbeing support services should be also. We will lobby the University for extended face-to-face out of hours support provision.



DOMESTIC ABUSE HUB

Supporting the University in the establishment of a new domestic abuse research and support hub.

BAME ATTAINMENT

Canterbury Christ Church University has the worst black attainment gap in the country, but also a commitment to eradicate this by 2030. This is a shared responsibility for all of us and the Union commits to championing this work with the University and students, and critically reviewing our own structures and activity to ascertain our impact.

INCREASE REVENUE

We currently get about £51 per student in funding from the University, which is less than many of our comparator SU's. We will continue to lobby for more direct funding so we can meet your expectations, better amplify your voice, and support your wellbeing. In addition, 90% of our income comes from the University, which is too much, so we will actively explore how we can diversify our income to ensure financial sustainability and fund our core purpose- representing and supporting you.

INCREASE AND DIVERSIFY ENGAGEMENT

The Union engages with a significant percentage of students, in some form, with more than 2,000 students being involved with sports and societies alone. However, the Union does seem to struggle with wider engagement, or engagement of those students who do not belong to sports, societies, course reps, etc.

EMPLOYABILITY

Increase and strengthen internal and external communication between the Union and University to improve employability awareness and upskilling of all students.



OUR IMPACTS

STUDENT VOICE

Representing you is our number one priority. It is why we exist. We will enhance our reach, depth, and impact in this by listening to, and really hearing, your academic and non-academic wants, needs, and concerns. Then, with you, doing something about them by driving change at Christ Church, locally, and nationally.

Our student voice activities and outputs- over the next three years we will:

- Strive to engage with all students and extend the visibility of the Sabbatical Leadership Team by going to where you are with regular **Union on Tour** events at your campus.
- Ensure the Union is the **champion of your views** and rights.
- Be **bolder and braver** with student-led campaigns and holding the University to account.
- Abolish presence as a prerequisite to participation by **enabling all students to have a say and drive change**.
- **Reinvent Union Council**, moving to representation by who you are and what you believe, not just by what you do.
- Working in partnership with the University, review and relaunch the **Course Rep system** to improve academic voice.
- Broaden our reach by **developing engagement strategies for currently under-engaged student groups**.

SUPPORT AND WELLBEING

We will strive to ensure you are healthy, happy, and safe, but also informed and empowered to make your own choices. As a Union we will be there for you and work with others to provide support, as well as creating student-led peer support networks to do the same.

Our support and wellbeing activities and outputs- over the next three years we will:

- Continue to provide **free, impartial, academic advice**.
- Provide **proactive advice sessions** that address what you told us are your main worries- housing and money.
- Clearly and actively signpost** to where students can get support, internally or externally.
- Empower students to **co-produce University policies** that impact your living and learning..
- Continue our focus on **student mental wellbeing** and student safety.
- Conduct research to understand the **unique challenges faced by students on placement and commuting students**, and work to support you with the challenges identified.
- Actively reach out to all students to **combat isolation**, to help to build confidence, resilience, and raise aspirations.

OPPORTUNITIES AND EMPLOYABILITY

University is so much more than a degree. We will enable you to fulfil your potential and enrich your experiences in a way that is fun, memorable, and student-led, all the while enabling you to develop new skills and enhance your employability.

Our opportunities and employability activities and outputs- over the next three years we will:

- Commit to working with you to deliver independently assessed **high-quality Opportunities**.
- Deliver extensive **training, development, and ongoing support for elected volunteer leaders** in sports clubs, societies, and student media.
- Continue to **develop the Volunteering partnership** with the University and work towards **Investor In Volunteers** accreditation.
- Implement an aspirational quality mark for sports clubs and societies to **empower student volunteer leaders and drive quality**.
- Further develop Opportunities to make direct links to **employability, skills development, and graduate attributes**.
- Proactively create and support academic societies** as student-led learning communities.
- Implement an enhanced student volunteer and leader **reward and recognition** scheme.

BELONGING AND INCLUSION

We are here to help you discover who you are and find your friendship groups. We commit to breaking down barriers, creating and supporting safe spaces, tackling isolation, and to actively celebrate the diversity of Christ Church and the communities we are a part of.

Our belonging and inclusion activities and outputs- over the next three years we will:

- Work with the University on creating **inclusive campuses**.
- Proactively engage with you and the University on addressing the **BAME attainment gap**.
- Research and develop **engagement supporting strategies for harder to reach student groups**.
- Research and develop a comprehensive **vision for the Medway Campus**.
- **Proactively tackle isolation** outside the traditional sports and societies networks.
- Ensure a **greater number of alcohol-free, daytime, and smaller pop-up events** that appeal to the broad student demographic.
- **Move the Students' Union office onto the Canterbury Campus** and extend our presence in Rowan Williams Court in Medway.

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

As a membership organisation we need to be effective at two-way communication with you to ensure we are relevant to your student life. This means ensuring you know what we do, why we do it, and to communicate this boldly in your spaces to your preference.

Our communication and transparency activities and outputs- over the next three years we will:

- Be **bolder and clearer in our communication** with you- proudly shouting about what we do and why we do it, and celebrating our 'wins for students'.
- Ensure you **know the difference between the Union and University**, and understand the roles of each.
- Create more avenues for you to hold elected officers to account, and elected officers to **hold the Union to account**.
- **Tailor how we communicate** with you so the updates from us are targeted and of interest to you.
- Continue our focus on **value for money**, understanding what this means for students.
- Ensure we are a **highly transparent** organisation, and you know how decisions are made and by who, and close the feedback loop.
- Publish **annual benefits statements** for all Opportunities members.





STRATEGIC ENABLERS

To ensure success we have to have a solid foundation, and we consider these to be critical to our future success. Over the next three years we will:

“ **be sustainable**

We need to **be sustainable**, both in terms of finance and the environment.

- Ensure financial sustainability by agreeing a **long-term funding arrangement** with the University.
- Be, and be seen to be, **excellent value for money** and deliver a great return on investment.
- Investigate **new areas of income generation** to enable greater investment in representation and campaigns.
- Have achieved 'Very Good' in the **NUS Quality Students' Unions** framework.
- Lead in the response to the impending **Climate Emergency**.

“ **develop our people**

Develop our people and extend our **positive, innovative culture**.

- Be explicit about our purpose of **creating student leaders** in Voice and Opportunities.
- Continue on our journey of **greater structural independence** from the University.
- Devise a comprehensive **behaviours framework for staff and elected officers**, aligned to our values, that will extend our positive culture.
- Agree a **formal decision making criteria** that always puts students at the heart of our thinking and activity.
- Develop **formal service standards** for Opportunities to support our ambition of enabling outstanding, student-led, activity.



PASSION LED US HERE

“ **know our members**

Know our members by having **comprehensive insight**.

- Move from just knowing you, to **understanding you**, by smarter use of existing insight and new research and listening activity and using this to inform all our activity.
- Become a **trusted source of information** on student life and trends at Christ Church.
- Conduct a **student segmentation** exercise.
- **Use insight from our Advice Centre to understand the causality of issues** and to utilise this in positive change via campaigning activity and policy advancement.
- Collate a sound **evidence base to demonstrate the Union's impact**.

“ **utilise new and existing technology**

Utilise new and existing **technology** to engage with and represent our members.

- Create a true **digital, mass, democracy** that abolishes the concept of presence as a prerequisite to participation.
- Enable all students, not just those who are elected, have the **opportunity to effect change**.
- Make **time and space for innovation** within our culture and work.

“ **develop effective partnerships**

Develop effective **partnerships** with others to further our Mission and Vision.

- Keep building upon our **effective strategic relationship with the University** to achieve our Mission and support students, but always ensuring we are a critical friend.
- Work with our fellow students' unions in the locality to **proactively identify common interests in voice and campaigns**, and deliver these in partnership.
- **Work with GK Unions** on joint events, opportunities, and campaigns in Medway.
- Work with Kent Union for the provision of tailored representation, opportunities, and support for **Kent and Medway Medical School** students.



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