

Charles 4 DoES

The Full Manifesto

A.K.A five-and-a-half-thousand words on how I'm going to fill
the Pablo-shaped hole in all our hearts

Introduction

Hi, I'm Charles, and I'm delighted to be running in this election for Director of Events and Services. I truly believe I'm the best candidate for the job, and I've crafted this manifesto to hopefully convince you that too!

I'm a recent graduate of the School of Geography and Sustainable Development, and have been in St Andrews (and Dundee!) since 2016. In my time here, I've experienced the great work that the Union does with regards to student advocacy and representation, as well as experienced *more-than-a-few* of the unforgettable events around town. Whether it's a Saturday Night at Sounds of Sandy's, an improv show hosted by Blind Mirth in the Barron Theatre, or even last week's Pub Quiz - you've probably seen me out and about!

Throughout my university career, I have gained integral experience in the safe handling and running of events. I was responsible for performers and set up at the Vic's Pride Night whilst employed there, and have over a year's experience catering in five star events at the Old Course Hotel. I know first-hand the effort and hard work it takes to put on any event, let alone large-scale ones, and I'm ready to work to make the Union the best place it can be for its long-awaited return.

My manifesto is quite the read, and comprehensively covers all parts of the wide-ranging remit for Director of Events and Services. Some of the points I'm most proud to share include:

- **Improved Collaboration for Events:** The way things are structured now, almost all the power when it comes to event planning goes to the DoES. I want to create a new event planning sub-committee to sit underneath the Ents Crew, so more students can get involved with the events which are hosted at the Union, and a wider number of voices from the student body can be directly heard and catered to.
- **Consulting students about Friday nights:** The pandemic hit the UK just as the sitting DoES was about to make some real changes to Friday nights. I will start a new consultation into what you want to see from your Fridays – as well as review the results of the previous consultation – with a promise that if you say you want the BOP to be consigned to history, so it will be done.
- **Re-advertising all the Union does and provides:** Whether it's training to become a DJ or the ability to develop your own photos, there's so many opportunities which the Union has, does, and provides for students. However, we've been away from the building for 18 months now, so we need to remind everyone just what enriching things the Union can do for them.

Once again, thanks for taking the time to read my manifesto. I hope you enjoy leafing through it and, of course, I hope you **vote for Charles for Director of Events and Services!**

Improving Collaborative Efforts Within and Around the DoES Remit

The role of the DoES is one which, first and foremost, involves people-managing and collaboration. I look forward to working with various members of staff, as well as members of the sub-committees and our 170+ societies, to continue to strengthen the relationships which make this role possible. It is more vital than ever this year to have a DoES who is collaborative and a team player. Here's how I plan to do this:

Expanding Ents: Creating a New Sub-committee

- The current event planning system in the Union is difficult to follow, and at present the majority of the power regarding events lies in the hands of one person - the DoES. Aside from the Ents committee, there is little to no consultation for major event ideas, and implementing what the student body wants to see. This new sub-committee would aim to provide **increased direct input from students** to aid the DoES with providing events and services that the student body wants to see.
- I have been in consultation with the Ents Crew to discuss creating a new role to assist in event planning. Ideally, this role will serve as a liaison between the Ents Crew and a new Event Planning Team (name TBD), which they will manage. This new team will assist in planning events for:
 - Whole building events
 - Halloween
 - Winter Wonderland
 - St. Patrick's Day
 - Freshers week
 - Refreshers week
 - Graduation Ball
- The creation of this new team will **shift event planning at the Union towards a more committee-style approach**, placing it back in the hands of students, which will help in many ways including:
 - Encouraging more student input on event planning.
 - Balancing the workload between the DoES, Ents Crew, Union staff members, and other volunteers that help keep the Union afloat.
 - More hands on deck means bigger and better events for everyone to enjoy.

Fixing Fridays: Getting Your Input

- It's no secret that plenty of previous DoESes have pledged to 'fix', 'revolutionise,' or 'reinvent' Friday nights but have struggled with following up on their promises.
- A consultation on Friday nights was started back in March 2020 - however, it wasn't able to be implemented for obvious reasons. The extended break we have had, along with the reopening of Scotland's night-time economy, provides a real opportunity to finally change things up.

- The original consultation provides a useful basis to start making meaningful and successful changes to Friday nights, but it must be remembered that it occurred well over a year ago now - most students going into fourth year will have been second years when it was conducted. Thus, it seems appropriate to **re-consult students to ask and see what your ideal restriction-free Friday nights look like moving forward.**
- There is not a one-stop solution to improving Fridays. To successfully change the BOP and enhance student experience on these nights out, Union staff and elected sabbatical candidates need to be daring enough to consistently try new things as well as improving the feedback loop. Ideally, we'll be consulting students consistently throughout the semester for more streamlined feedback - by doing this, we can begin to properly understand what does and doesn't work, and test out new solutions until we get the formula right.

Events

Expanding Themed and Non-themed nights

Having themed events every night has improved footfall in the Union, as well as the overall image of nightlife in St Andrews. However, I believe that we can do much more with the venues that the Union provides. I want to expand these recurring events, with the aim of furthering progress made by previous DoESes.

- **Mondays - Society Monday**
 - Before COVID, Mondays were designated game nights. This evening rarely saw high footfall, if any. The games are always behind the bar, and can be given out on any night of the week. This begs the question: why should we dedicate a whole night on something that could become an everyday service?
 - I want to create a 'Society Monday' - which will promise **a diverse range of events** that can be held in person in any one of the Union's bar spaces, or virtually if necessary.
 - This Monday night slot would be flexible and could potentially act as an opportunity for societies to host taster events for students (among other things), similar to the ones which run in Freshers week.
 - By dedicating a specific night for societies to run events in the Union for all, it is hoped that **the work of societies can be better highlighted** by the Union as well as improving engagement for societies.
- **Tuesdays - Beats N' Bargains**
 - Beats N' Bargains replaced the old 'Twosdays,' which previously did not see much footfall at all (likely because of the student body overwhelmingly rejecting a £2 cover charge for entry into the building).
 - The rebranding of Tuesday nights as 'Beats N' Bargains,' as well as the removal of said cover charge, proved successful in re-attracting students to the Union building on a Tuesday night.
 - I pledge to keep Beats N' Bargains, especially as an opportunity for student DJs who get the chance to perform in Sandy's Bar. This is a great option for all DJs who want to test their skills and gain more confidence, especially before they may 'graduate' onto larger venues and nights such as Fridays in 601.
 - DJ opportunities can also be extended to those with more niche-tastes, whose styles and genres aren't necessarily welcomed by the Union currently. This would further support diverse interests in the student body.
 - I want to expand our drinks range whilst keeping prices low on Tuesdays, as well as integrating a little bit of the spirit of Beats N' Bargains into every day. I will create a Drink of the Month, which will be a discounted special to ensure we offer better prices every night of the week, rather than just on Tuesdays.

- **Wednesdays - Sinners and Free Club Nights**
 - Sinners will continue to happen a few times a semester, as it does currently. However, I want to push the boat out further by integrating **one whole-building Sinners a semester**. This can run in a similar way to Sinners in Freshers Week, where a certain number of tickets are still allocated to sports teams, but a remainder are sold through both the Union website and ticket office. By doing this, those who may not be part of a sports society are given more opportunities to engage with sports clubs.
 - When Sinners isn't happening, I want to make sure **Wednesday club nights become a regular occurrence** - 601 is too grand a venue to be stuck hosting just one regularly-scheduled club night per week.
 - I believe it is vital to keep this night **free of charge**, as previous attempts to kickstart a Wednesday club night have only shown success when there is no cover charge.
 - Furthermore, a Wednesday club night will work better if the barrier between Main Bar and Club 601 is left open, allowing free movement between the two. This is only feasible if 1) there is a cover charge to enter the entire building, Main Bar included or 2) there is no cover charge for any of the venues. The experience of 'Twosdays' shows that students overwhelmingly reject a fee to enter the building unless the Union is hosting a specific all-building event (such as during Halloween), thereby strengthening the case to keep any potential Wednesday club night free entry.
- **Thursdays - Society Thursdays**
 - In a similar vein to Society Mondays, I will champion Thursday nights as a way for societies to promote their work and host events.
 - Some societies, such as RockSoc (in Sandy's Bar) and Jazzworks (in Main Bar) already use Thursdays for regularly scheduled and recurring events. If possible, I'd love to expand these into Beacon Bar as well, ensuring Thursdays continue to provide an entertaining and varied experience from week-to-week as well as further highlighting some of the great work which societies work hard to put on.
- **Fridays - The BOP - or Not?**
 - Due to time constraints, as well as the fact that the new DoES will only take office at the start of the semester (thus not having the usual summer period to work on things), it is likely that the BOP will return in a similar shape and form to how it was pre-pandemic. However, I pledge to - from Day One - take a deep look into the BOP consultation conducted in March 2020 as well as immediately start work on being able to re-consult students about what they want to see for their Friday nights as soon as possible.
 - By looking at the results of the March 2020 consultation, as well as starting work on a re-consultation, it is hoped that the BOP will be able to be refined into something more satisfying for all during semester one.
 - As soon as this re-consultation and review has concluded - and the Union is *hopefully* back to as close to normal as is possible - I will endeavour to put what I have heard from the student body into action. Whether this means **restructuring** the BOP into something new, or **completely tearing down the institution and building Friday nights again from the ground up**, I am not afraid to fight for the best Fridays possible. For too long, St Andrews

students have put up with subpar themes, dated playlists, and so. much. ABBA. 2021/2022 provides the best opportunity to finally listen to what students want and, more importantly, follow through with making those wishes come true.

- **Saturdays - Live Music Saturdays**
 - St Andrews has, somewhat surprisingly, been blessed with a thriving small independent music scene which has especially flourished over the past few years. This is not least due to the work of small groups independent from the Union over previous years. In 2019, the Union tapped into this scene by collaborating with STAR to host Sounds of Sandy's, which saw several local bands take over the bar and turn it into a somewhat sweaty but nonetheless very entertaining mess.
 - Events of this calibre were previously seen as infeasible or unrealistic by management, but Sounds of Sandys proved that **live music can be a success**. Sounds of Sandys should be continued and expanded to include more live music, potentially with larger live music events on the StAge as well as multi-venue events. Further, hosting a greater number of events would lead to an increasing range and style of bands and groups hosted, better catering to the ever-diverse taste of students here.
 - Increasing the size and scope of Sounds of Sandys into potentially multi-venue 'Live Music Saturday' events would increase workload for all involved. Therefore, I would encourage it to become a more collaborative effort between STAR and the Music Fund so it does not become overwhelming for one specific society.
 - A wider-ranging Live Music Saturday will also make it easier for any student music group or society who may want to host live-music events to do so.
- **Sundays - Pub Quiz and Games Night**
 - I want to combine the Pub Quiz with the aforementioned Games Night to create a Sunday which can become more than just a two-hour trip to the Union. When the Pub Quiz ends, the Union normally empties very quickly, so integrating the two may go some way to keep patrons in the Union for longer.
 - The Union can bring the board games out as well as purchase oversized board games (like the two connect-fours they already have) for a more novel experience. This means that the merrymaking won't have to stop when the quiz does.

Record Fayres, Kilo Sales, and other Pop-Ups

- These have been proven to be able to run under COVID restrictions, and they're great - COVID or not - so let's not lose them.
- I want to find more small businesses around Fife who would be willing to host day-time pop-up shops in the Union, whether in 601 or the Piazza, to **offer things that St Andrews doesn't usually have access to**.
- These pop-ups are often frequented by local townspeople as well as students, attracting those who otherwise wouldn't interact with the Union.

Graduation Balls

- I will seek to guarantee that **all three cohorts of students now celebrating their graduations in-person in June 2022 will also have a Graduation Ball**. Plans will, of course, have to be refined over the course of the year, but graduating students (as well as those who have already virtually graduated in 2020 and 2021) need to know that there are firm plans being made to accommodate everyone who wants to celebrate.
 - If (God forbid) COVID forces our hand yet again and makes the usual Graduation Ball celebrations impossible next year, then I will work with the Union and the University to **create a plan more robust than just ‘we’ll postpone everything for another year’** - it is clear that this strategy is not sustainable for much longer.

Revamping the Booking System

- Any booking system which still involves annotated papers is outdated and desperately needs bringing into the 21st century, and quickly.
 - I will work with management and the university to ensure **a new web-based room booking system** is implemented, with the aim of improving ease-of-use for all as well as reducing the workload for those that work behind-the-scenes to keep things up and running.
 - A new system has been promised to the Union by the University since the beginning of 2019, yet it has still not been delivered. Whether or not we outsource this programme or build our own, the current system needs to change as soon as is feasible.
- Clearer and more defined dates and deadlines for booking events need to be instated. Events should not have to be postponed or cancelled because it was unclear about event requirements or deadlines, especially as this can lead to finger-pointing on all sides which is undesirable. We can make this system much better by doing things such as:
 - Setting up and sending automated emails when submitting a booking request for confirmation, as well as reminders for deadlines.
 - Login portals to check the status of an event and details such as bar requirements, catering requests, and tech support.
 - A working calendar (preferably one that shows the right day when looking at it) of when venues are booked.
 - Improving communication between parties involved in booking by allowing different departments to view requirements and notes shared on the event booking.
- An overhaul of the booking system will lead to **a new and updated Events and Booking Guide**. Training for subcommittees, societies, and other groups who wish to use the Union’s spaces may also need to be given in order to make the transition to this new system as smooth as possible.

Developing DJ Talent

- A large number of the usual Union DJs have graduated since the Union (and especially Club 601) was last fully open. I will work with the Ents DJ and Acts Coordinator, as well as other collectives, to not only **improve the list of DJs** we have to offer but also **offer opportunities for new and aspiring DJs to learn and perform**.
 - I want to create and refine a system similar to that of DUSA's (Dundee Union Students' Association), where all DJs are in a group and requests for DJs can be posted on the page. This can allow us to reach out to more DJs, including those outside St Andrews and the student body, and encourage more opportunities for a diversified music taste to be offered in the Union.
 - I will put a particular focus on advertising the DJ classes run by the Ents in an attempt to avoid the issue of a DJ-less 601 in the following years.
 - I'd love to create a system which would allow you the ability to let us at the Union know which DJs you liked, so we can bring them back.

The Building

Beautifying the Building

- The interior of the building still feels a little lifeless. Measures such as the search for student artwork to decorate spaces with will go some way into rectifying this, but I want to go further.
 - I will add **further lighting options**, such as RGB LED strips, to add a pop of fun and colour to Main Bar, Sandy's, and Beacon Bar. This will go some way into allowing us to move away from using the oppressive overhead lights in certain scenarios, as well as adding flexibility and variety to spaces.
 - Societies will be able to request a specific colour scheme if they choose to use these new flexible lighting solutions, a simple way to make each event feel individualised, unique, and even that little bit more special.
- Create an exhaustive list of all the decorations and props the Union has on hand. This will make decorating easier for societies when they are hosting themed events.
 - Further, I will ensure fire retardant is always on hand so most (if not all) decorations can be fireproofed easily and thus suitable for use.
- The outside of the building can be improved and its spaces better utilised:
 - The Piazza needs to work not only as an attractive entrance to the building, but also as a space for deliveries. It currently manages to achieve one of two of these goals; aside from the flowers and off-coloured lights, the Piazza is an empty lot (with some new seating arrangements for COVID, mentioned elsewhere). I will work with management to continue to improve the existing plans to **revitalise the Piazza** and create a more effective and useable space for the Union
 - Festoons (aka Love Island Lights) are frequently hired for events. We should look at the logistics of purchasing them rather than renting them: the Union currently pays £99 each time they rent them, but they have been quoted at approximately £260 to purchase. We should buy these lights as a way to both save money as well as enable us to be able to offer them at more Union events.

Better Utilizing Outdoor Spaces

- The Union has offered some outdoor seating options recently due to COVID restrictions. I would work to make these fixtures permanent - or at the very least, available over the warmer months.
 - This may be tough due to the notoriously iron fist that Fife Council rules with when it comes to the Union's licensing laws, but I want to see whether students' collective love of an outdoor pint in mediocre weather conditions can overturn that fist.
 - The response of Fife Council, and whether they'd be willing to extend the outdoor license for the foreseeable future, would determine just how we decorate and use the Piazza. On December the 7th, 2020, the Council granted us an outdoor alcohol license which lasts until 11pm, but it is unknown how long this will stay in place going forward, or if/when it will be retracted ([source](#)). If the Council is willing to let us keep the outdoor alcohol licence, then the Piazza could be transformed into a

quite **beautiful flexible outdoor dining space** with a bit of money and imagination thrown at it.

- I'd like to introduce a shed-covered area into the back part of the Piazza lot so activities can be planned and not reliant on clear weather and no wind. This could act as a space for bake sales, night-time food service, or even live music outdoors.

Services

The Barron

- The loss of the Barron is a significant one for our student body. It provided a range of services and facilities including:
 - A workshop with power tools which could be booked by anyone.
 - A space where more artistic and creative events could happen (paint cannot be used in the Union but could there, for example).
 - An easily accessible place for props and costumes, which could be used not only for theatre productions but also for independent student use.
- The current plan is that the facilities that were available at the Barron will be transferred to the Byre. There are still finer details to work out with this, and I want to ensure that discussions between the University, the Byre, and Mermaids are addressing all concerns and that suitable compromises can be reached. The Performing Arts are valuable to a significant number of students here, and it is vital that future provisions to address the loss of the Barron are appropriate.

Design Team

- I believe that this university severely lacks in offering extra-curricular activities surrounding the arts - this is why groups like the Design Team are so integral to our student body. However, we should be doing so much more to offer these services to all students.
 - I want to lobby the University to **include Adobe products in AppsAnywhere**. Currently, Adobe is only offered on the 6 computers found in the Design Suite, which is absolutely not adequate for our student body of nearly 10,000 persons.
 - Adobe offers university schemes to provide wider student licensing at a cheaper cost. This is something that the University really needs to consider, especially as the Adobe Suite of programmes is used widely across many sectors of employment, and every student would benefit from access to them.
- The Design Team has worked very hard over the years to incorporate training into their mission - but the University can do more to support them with this. The IT department has previously explored opportunities for LinkedIn classes for students, and this idea should be revisited. Groups such as the Design Team, as well as the student body at-large, would no doubt benefit from access to the professional virtual classes that LinkedIn has to offer.

Supporting the Ents Crew

- The hard work of the Ents Crew underpins the success of the events that take place within the Union - they are an essential part of ensuring students receive the best experience possible. Therefore, they should be receiving as much support as necessary – and then some - to ensure the range of events we offer can continue to expand and maintain their high quality.
 - I will continue to maintain and improve the ever-important relationship between the Ents Crew and the DoES, including supporting them in recruitment (which is especially vital this academic year) and advertising, to make sure that they receive the deserved exposure for their work within the Union.

- Training is a key aspect of becoming an Ent, and I want to continue to support and develop the training they offer to other students and encourage external training to improve the quality of events in the Union.
- Through establishing new positions and subcommittees, I want to introduce **further opportunities for students to gain a wider scope of experience** in event management as well as technology. This will open up new avenues for participation within the behind-the-scenes work at the Union, and allow more people to get involved.

Equipment Rental

- For the past few years - even prior to COVID - renting equipment from the Union has been incredibly difficult. This was a service that had been on offer previously under the remit of Music is Love / the Music Fund. However, there have been logistical difficulties and issues which have led to services like these terminating.
- Many of the barriers which have affected these services have simple solutions, such as including rental waivers and small deposit fees. Furthermore, the Music Fund now has a more clearly defined mission statement than in years prior, and I will work with the elected Music Officer to bring this service back and allow students to rent music equipment at an accessible cost.

Advertisement of Services

- After nearly 18 months of little face-to-face contact with the Union, many of the services offered will have been forgotten. Come Freshers Week, we will have two years worth of new students who have never had the opportunity to engage with spaces such as the Dark Room or Design Suite (and still more may not even know that they exist). **Now, more than ever, we need to (re)introduce everything that the Union offers to the student body at large.**
- I anticipate a deficit in the number of volunteers required to run the Union successfully. This is partially due to the fact that outreach has been minimal over the past year (for obvious reasons), and partially due to many volunteers graduating since the Union was last fully functional.
 - I will endeavour to work with subcommittees and volunteer groups, including the SVS Volunteering Officer and the DoSDA, to enhance advertising campaigns and recruitment of new volunteers, providing any support I can to ensure that as many people as possible can get involved. Volunteer positions grant students unmatched levels of experience and training in a wide range of topics and positions, and I want to ensure that all students know what's available and how to get involved.

Discipline and Safety

A lesser-known part of the remit for DoES, they act as the convenor on the disciplinary board as well as the head of health and safety at the Union.

Improving Safety

- I want to develop a safety scheme for better and safer nights out in the Union. This will include more intensive and comprehensive safety training for members of security and bar staff.
- The Director of Wellbeing has been looking into the logistics of introducing a 'quiet room' in the Union for those who may be too drunk, uncomfortable, or otherwise unsafe. I am keen to work with them to make this happen for those who may need space away from crowds or loud music.

Improving the Reporting Scheme

- The Union, as an entity, is there to act to represent students. Because of this, it *needs* to be a place where everyone feels welcome and safe. We have seen, particularly via accounts through St Andrews Survivors, that sexual assault and harrassment claims are still not dealt with adequately and appropriately. We need to work harder to improve this system, to ensure reports are handled sensitively and with dignity.
 - The DoES remit does not specifically cover things such as the reporting scheme itself, but I am eager to work with other Sabbaticals to see through much needed improvements in this.
- Too often, students do not know where or how to report misconduct, and further some may prefer to remain anonymous. I want to work with the DoWell and the University to improve our safety responses and reporting scheme.
 - The time it takes to get a meeting with the University to report an instance of sexual assault can take up to three weeks - this is completely unacceptable. Students have been wronged in this sense, and I will pressure the University to change their strategies for the better.
- The University also needs to provide better support for those who have experienced any sort of sexual and / or violent assault, especially during the difficult process of reporting and investigating.

The Extra Bits

A More Sustainable Menu, with Increased Choice for All

- I would like to further **expand the vegetarian and vegan options on offer** at the Union, as well as actively encourage and promote them as a more sustainable option.
- The menu should also support an increased range of dietary requirements.
- Kitchen hours in the Union were extended until 9pm when it briefly reopened during Semester One of the 2020/2021 academic year. However, the kitchen has been closed since the building reopened in May this year. I would like to see the Union offer food options as soon as possible, as well as keeping the extended dining hours that were offered in Semester One into the next academic year.
- I will add chicken poppers to the side menu, as there's *nothing* better than poppers in the Union.
 - Vegetarian and Vegan options will also be available - that seitan chicken trend that went around TikTok recently(ish) proves that this will be possible.
 - Alternatively, jalapeño poppers could also be a vegetarian choice with a kick!

Public Transit

- I am a firm believer in encouraging the use of sustainable public transit, and giving students more options
 - Before COVID, students who lived in areas like Dundee relied on a transit system which concluded service at approximately 11pm Sunday-Thursday. Since COVID, Stagecoach have abolished the N99 service which ran until approximately 3am on Friday and Saturday nights.
 - I will work with the Association President to explore the options of lobbying Stagecoach into extending the time of the last bus later into the night, as well as investigate the return of the N99 service. With increasing numbers of students commuting in by bus - and especially with the University offering a number of students accommodation outside St Andrews over the past two years - the last-bus departure is a severe limiting factor in those students' enjoyment of late-night activities at their Union.

These Points Didn't Fit Anywhere Else

- Explore the possibility of using Yoyo points to pay for all food options, instead of only being able to redeem specific items.
- Make phone chargers available for borrowing, at least during the daytime.
- Explore the option to pre-order takeout from Main Bar - like ordering for collection from Deliveroo or Eco-Eats.
- Pay Mika back for her drums - it has *still* not been done.
- Balance accessibility for website design for students and contributors.
 - Not everyone knows how to code, so updates can be difficult for future Sabbs and other student representatives.
- Locate and reopen the hidden tunnels in the Union Basement - maybe they could make for an interesting new venue?

- Personally ensure that Charli XCX's 2016 track *Vroom Vroom* is played at least once in 601 during my tenure. *At LEAST* once.
- Year-round Fablos - why are non-alcoholic options only available during special occasions?
- Seasonal Pablos, which could potentially be tied-in to the All Building Events the Union hosts for Halloween, Christmas, and St. Patrick's Day. These do already happen for some events and holidays, but usually for only one day - I will extend their availability for at least a couple of weeks.

If you've managed to read this far then my God, thank you so much for your time! Thanks for reading my manifesto and showing interest in my campaign – it really, really means a lot, and countless hours were put into writing and refining it. My final, final point is this: GO VOTE! The portal opens at 00:01 on Thursday, the 26th of August and closes at 18:00 on Friday, the 27th.

Cheers again!

-Charles