



Annual Report 2025 - 2026



SURREY
STUDENTS'
UNION

Introduction

Welcome to the Union's Annual Report for the Academic Year 2025-26

This report summarises the work of the Students' Union over the past year. The entire team of *Sabbatical Officers* and Union staff have worked tirelessly to deliver the best experience for students during their time at Surrey. The work of Surrey Union has never been more important – taking place amidst times of political uncertainty and rising costs of living for students. Our *Union Priorities* have focused on addressing the issues that matter most to students, working in partnership with the University to make the changes students want to see.

This year marked the second year of delivering on the goals set out in our *2024-2027 Strategic Plan*, which has seen the Union work towards making the changes that will benefit current and future Surrey students.

Some notable highlights from this year have included the expansion of our *Surrey Belonging* programme, tackling the cost of living by offering free and low-cost events to connect students together and to give them the opportunities to try new things.

Our *Student Equality Networks* have also had a great year – introducing an annual schedule of awareness campaigns to celebrate diversity and lived experience.

Destination Success launched this year to provide students with free personal and professional development workshops, led by specially trained students.

This year, we've also introduced a new *Part-time Officer* structure, electing our first group of new Officers to start from September 2026. These roles are more focused, with clearer titles and remits, and for the first time ever, will be paid.

Our *Peer Support* volunteers have supported your wellbeing all year, and we've trained even more students to support you when you need it.

This year we've also partnered with more clubs and societies to make Rubix truly feel like your nightclub. Manor Park Social also saw a new schedule of daily events and new deals on food and drink to make socialising more affordable.

I want to thank everyone at the *Students' Union* for their support in making all these things happen. I've been a student at Surrey since 2019 and the Union has always been central to my student life - by enabling the *Clubs and Societies* to which I've been an avid member, employing me as part-time staff, and encouraging me to run for election.

Still, the most important part of the Union is our members

- the students. The student community is at the heart of what we do here at the Union. I'd encourage any students who want to get involved more deeply in Surrey life to do so. It's been the experience of a lifetime and I'd recommend it to anyone. After seven years at Surrey, it's going to be difficult to move on, as the Union will always have a fond place in my heart. I look forward to seeing what your new team of *Sabbatical Officers* achieve next year.



Matt Aikin
Union President 2025-26

Matt Aikin



YOUR EDUCATION

503 COURSE REPS
AND HEAD REPS

REP AWARDS

6 BRONZE
7 SILVER
19 GOLD

120
NOMINATIONS ACROSS
7 CATEGORIES FOR
STAG AWARDS

12 REPS OF THE
YEAR AWARDED

A Year In Numbers

Every number reflects the impact we've had on your Surrey Life. Behind every number is a student who got involved, found their community, discovered their voice, developed new skills, or received support when they needed it most. Together, these numbers tell the story of another incredible year at Surrey Students' Union.

A huge thank you to every student who participated, spoke up, volunteered, represented their peers, attended our events, and helped make it all happen.

YOUR WELLBEING

687 STUDENTS
ATTENDED DOG
THERAPY EVENTS

250

Wellbeing Champions Trained

780 Students Attended
our Don't Worry
Surrey Events

2,729

Students Supported
with Housing Advice **332**

STUDENTS SUPPORTED
WITH ACADEMIC ADVICE

YOUR BELONGING

65 CLUB NIGHTS
IN RUBIX

4,272

TICKETS SOLD FOR
BELONGING EVENTS

26,362 VK'S SOLD
AT RUBIX

15,707

MEMBERSHIPS PURCHASED
ACROSS CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

129 BELONGING EVENTS
RUN

780 Students Attended
our Don't Worry
Surrey Events

YOUR VOICE

424 ATTENDEES ACROSS
THREE STUDENT
VOICE FORUMS

1,853 SPEAK WEEK CHANGE
SUGGESTIONS

3,524

VOTERS TOOK PART
IN SURREY DECIDES

19,802

BALLOTS CAST IN
SURREY DECIDES

356

STUDENT EQUALITY
NETWORK MEMBERS

YOUR UNION

16

UNION TRIPS
THIS YEAR

934

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
FROM STUDENTS TO
WORK WITH US THIS YEAR

173

Students Employed
at the Union

595

TICKETS SOLD
FOR OUR
UNION TRIPS

25

ROLES AT THE
UNION FOR
STUDENTS

YOUR FUTURE

134 CANDIDATE NOMINATIONS
IN SURREY DECIDES

698 CANDIDATE NOMINATIONS IN
THE CLUB & SOCIETY
ANNUAL ELECTION

18

INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS
DELIVERED THROUGH
DESTINATION SUCCESS

19

Student-led
Recommendations
for Change Submitted
in Student Voice
Reports

32

STUDENTS
ATTENDED A
DESTINATION
SUCCESS
WORKSHOP

AWARDS

25
COLOURS
BALL

15
UNION
BALL



Central Zone



Matt Aikin
Union President

Central Zone

Union Priorities

Our Union Priorities are formed by the officer team at the start of the academic year, setting out a commitment to our objectives throughout the year. These are formed from a combination of the officer's manifestos and the Union Priorities, as well as current issues facing students. The document is regularly presented and updated at the University Students' Union Committee (USUC). Here, we partner with members of the University's Executive Board to collaborate and tackle the biggest issues impacting our students.

This year's focus was on the following themes: Academic Influence and Engagement, High-Quality Campus Experience, A Student-Led Sense of Belonging and Wellbeing, and Impactful Representation and Advocacy. This year we split these themes

into a Union Priority, a University Priority, and a Partnership Priority, of which are updated at USUC meetings.

To improve *"Academic Influence and Engagement"*, we have worked both internally with our *Course Reps* and in collaboration with the University. We have targeted specific schools and liaised with their *Course Reps* and *Head Reps* to improve NSS completion rates and bring up their scores in historic areas of low satisfaction, including GSA, Health Sciences, and Mechanical Engineering Sciences.

The University also worked with us and committed to improving assessment feedback times, and the gaps between assessments so this feedback can be absorbed by the students fully. Specific focus is being given to ensuring that the first assignment is returned before the second is due. To help close the feedback

loop we have increased our social media presence and our news articles on our website to highlight what was said and what was done to make improvements and how we and the University implemented these.

"A High-Quality Campus Experience" covers a range of different improvements to the student experience. A varied and vibrant social experience has been achieved by introducing new forms of social activity. We have expanded our *Belonging Events*, hosting multiple each week, giving students an alternative option of social events that do not always involve



alcohol. We also expanded the range of evening events at Manor Park Social. We have been working with the University to improve campus infrastructure, including opening Hillside Food Court for breakfast and dinner, providing students a dinner option on Stag Hill all year round. The University has also reduced the cost of meals across their different priced options, and we have also continued to push the University to invest in the Students' Union building to ensure it is fit for the future, with a full masterplan of how to best utilise the space and accessibility improvements.

A *"Student-led Sense of Belonging and Wellbeing"* is all about promoting the feeling of belonging to a wider community at Surrey. We have been supporting our student-led communities to increase their memberships through improved promotion



on our website, and there have been multiple opportunities throughout the year for students to try something new through *Freshers' Week*, *Refreshers' Week* and *Belonging Week*. The peer supporters project, which this year has redefined personal tutoring, will be expanded next year following a successful pilot. Our *Student Equality Networks* have been expanded this year, providing students with the space to discuss issues, share their views, and help the Union best support students through their time at university. The networks have increased collaborations across the Union, which allows them to engage with a wider group of students, and helps push forward issues in platforms such as *Student Voice Forum* and *Union Forum*.

We have been working on our **"Impactful Representation and Advocacy"** to ensure we deliver long-lasting change that will positively impact the student community in years to come. A focus this year has been on improving the maintenance loan for students living in Guildford

as prices rival those in London, where students receive higher loans. The Union President, Matt, has been meeting with the local MP, Zöe Franklin, to make sure this issue is highlighted on a national level, and it has been taken forward to be discussed in parliament.

The Union has also been pushing the University to improve its student accommodation options, especially with a lack of affordable housing outside of the University campuses. The University has committed to reopen Guildford Court and has begun work on the next phase of Manor Park, helping pace with increasing student numbers. We have also been formally recognising and crediting the contributions of student leaders through our *Course Rep awards*, *Union Ball awards*, and *Colours Ball awards*.

Union Strategy

We are currently in the second year of delivering our Union Strategy 2024–27, centred around our core mission – making sure our students have the best Surrey Life. Our work continues to be guided by six fundamental pillars: Your Education, Your Wellbeing, Your Belonging, Your Voice, Your Future, and Your Union. Despite an evolving national political landscape, this strategy ensures that the student interest remains at the heart of all organisational planning, commercial operations, and representational structures.



[View our Strategic Plan online](#)

See our progress on the strategy at surreyunion.org/strategy

University Changes

The University celebrated the arrival and official installation of its new Vice-Chancellor this academic year, Professor Stephen Jarvis. The Union established a collaborative relationship early on, hosting the Vice-Chancellor at the Students' Union during his first week to meet the team, and later that semester hosting a Q&A event in Rubix with the Sabbatical Officers for all students. The Union President later spoke on behalf of the student body at the Vice-Chancellors formal installation ceremony at Guildford Cathedral. This period of leadership evolution extended into the final semester, with the Union actively embedded in the recruitment process for the new Provost, and new Pro Vice-Chancellor Education.

The Union was also involved in the process of recruiting an architect for the Campus Masterplan project and appointing a design agency for the University rebrand. Both



projects continue to work closely with the Students' Union to develop them further. The Sabbatical Officer team continued to provide direct student insight at the University Council away day and the SSP board strategy day, while also joining the University Operations Committee to maintain a proactive, collaborative role in managing campus incidents and long-term operational planning.

National Representation

The Union President has been in regular contact with the local MP Zöe Franklin to discuss any issues that should be raised in parliament, such as the cost of living for students and the inequality in maintenance loans for Surrey students compared to those in London. Students at the University are not being given sufficient financial funding, whereas students at other universities in Surrey receive increased funding.

Manifesto

When Matt was elected Union President, he committed to a student-first agenda focused on tangible improvements to the daily Surrey student experience. On the academic and support fronts, Matt worked with the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education to build in a semester one reading week, aiming to provide a much-needed break during intense periods of study. He also secured a major victory for late-night academic flexibility by successfully working with the Chief Student Officer to officially reopen the main University library building 24/7 during term time. To complement this, the Union prioritised expanding its localised in-person outreach throughout semester two, bringing advice and support networks directly into more spaces across campus where students live and work.

Navigating campus infrastructure presented both operational challenges and opportunities for long-term progress

this year. While securing immediate commitments from the University's campus services team for permanent, large multi-use event venues proved structurally difficult, Matt pivoted to find suitable interim gaps. He successfully collaborated with the University to plan for future suitable multi-faith prayer spaces on campus and championed student commercial interests by ensuring a premium student experience at the new University campus pub.

Matt also actively lobbied University leadership to systematically increase funding for student sports Clubs and Societies to ease transport costs, while personally driving the student minibus to transport student groups on regional day trips. Campus life was further enriched by a major expansion of regular entertainment events, especially on the Manor Park campus, including highly successful refreshers quiz nights at Rubix and Hari's Bar, which culminated in the delivery of a massively popular Lake Quiz during the final semester!



Finally, leveraging his background in sustainable development, Matt delivered a major environmental milestone by officially launching the Cauli Cups reusable coffee cup scheme across all major campus outlets. This initiative fulfilled a long-standing strategic commitment to eliminate single-use waste from daily campus operations, embedding environmental responsibility directly into the fabric of everyday Surrey life.

Through these efforts in student advocacy, sustainability, and community building, the Sabbatical team has driven meaningful change across the University.



Voice Zone



Luana Vasconcelos
VP Voice

Course Reps

This year, we transitioned Rep elections onto our new elections platform, streamlining the process and making it more accessible to students to put themselves forward. In total, we had over 500 Reps this year, which is our highest number of Reps since pre-covid. In October, we re-introduced in-person training for over 200 Reps. We also re-launched our Rep Wins form to help us celebrate and share the successes of our Reps, with 173 wins submitted so far. These wins directly contributed to our *Reps of the Month* and *Rep Award* processes. We also improved our promotion of the *Rep of the Month* scheme, by introducing news stories

to share their successes with students.

We held our highest number of *Course Rep* socials yet, welcoming up to 80 Reps to each of our six Rep socials. In May, we held our annual *Course Rep Awards*, at which we were joined by Vice-Chancellor Professor Stephen Jarvis and the interim PVCE Professor Annika Bautz to award 55 of our highest achieving Reps. Next year, we will continue to celebrate Rep successes, work with the University to develop SSLCs, and enhance relationships between Reps and academic staff.

Head Reps

Over the last year we have had 15 *Head Reps* working hard to provide support to *Course Reps* in each school. The *Head Reps* provided vital insight into the feedback emerging from each School through their updates and regular meetings. In our second update meeting we were also joined by senior members of staff from the University, giving them the chance to hear feedback from the Reps and answer any questions directly. The *Head Reps* also assisted with *Course Rep* training and several Rep socials.

questions. Topics discussed included *Teaching & Learning*, *Student Spaces*, *Assessment & Feedback*, *Inclusive Campus and Support*, *Academic Experience*, and *Academic and Personal Support*. All minutes and questions answered by the panel after the Forum were uploaded to the website.



Union Forum

We supported the Union Chair to deliver three *Union Forums* across the year. This enabled students to engage directly with elected officers and discuss key issues impacting their experience. Forum themes included Library Opening Hours, Accommodation and University Community. These discussions directly contributed to the return of

Student Voice Forum

This year, we ran three *Student Voice Forums* to give students the opportunity to ask questions directly to our panel comprised of members from the *University's Executive Board* led by the VP Voice. Across the academic year, over 424 students attended and submitted more than 156



24-hour library access and a University accommodation review. To improve engagement, we introduced a presentation format and ended the year with a hybrid forum/social. We are currently completing a formal review of *Union Forum* to strengthen its role and function.

Surrey Decides

In October, we ran our *Bye-Election* in which we received 29 nominations across eight positions. There were 1,427 votes cast and all positions were filled. The *Bye-Election* gave us a vital opportunity to trial our new website election platform,

and we were thrilled to see strong engagement from our candidates.

Our main elections, *Surrey Decides*, took place in February. This was the first time we elected students into our new Part-time Officer roles, and our first main Officer election on our bespoke elections portal. 5,395 recommendations were sent to potential nominees, an increase of over 3,000 from last year! Nominations outreach was a success with dedicated Zone outreach stalls and enhanced communications. We received 134 nominations across our 13 available positions - the highest number since 2016. *Question*

Time (QT) was attended by 40 candidates. Attendance was particularly strong on the second night of QT, with many candidates bringing friends to support them. 3,524 voters took part, casting a total of 19,802 ballots. This marks our highest turnout in three years. Voting outreach was supported by part-time staff and Events Assistants, and 392 cupcakes were given out. There was a brilliant atmosphere amongst candidates. We also relocated our results announcement to *Manor Park Social* to offer candidates a relaxed place to wait for the results.

Surrey Decides was a great success and we are particularly thankful to all voters and everyone who helped make the election a success.

Club and Society Elections

This year, all *Club and Society Elections* were delivered on our new elections portal. This led to increased engagement from voters and candidates, and a reduction in dormancies at the end of the year. In the annual elections held in semester two, we received 698 total nominations – an increase of 177 - and a significant increase in voter turnout with 2,293 unique voters casting 10,630 votes during the election.

Vacant positions following the election were automatically entered into a bye-election period at the end of semester two. 124 candidates submitted themselves for election, and 464 unique voters cast 1,291 votes across all the available contests. This marked another strong increase in voter turnout, with over 600 additional votes cast compared to last year.



Speak Week

We ran two *Speak Week* campaigns in November and April to give students the opportunity to provide feedback about their University experience and suggest changes. Across both campaigns, we received 1,853 change suggestions via our in-person and online ballot as well as a Beads & Bun event, Student Voice Forums and outreach stalls to gather feedback. In April, we organised more engaging outreach - giving out 795 cupcakes with help from across the Zones. We also hosted five focus groups with 30 students in attendance. Next year we aim to improve the impact our Speak Week insight has on important decisions across the University.

STAG Awards

The *Surrey Teaching and Greatness (STAG) Awards* launched this year to celebrate staff who make an outstanding contribution to the student experience. We introduced seven award categories which highlight the teaching practices that students value most in their education at Surrey, while helping the Union promote excellence in teaching. We received over 120 nominations from students reflecting the significant impact of staff across the University. We presented our awards at an intimate ceremony for winners. The response from the University community was extremely positive, and we look forward to expanding the awards next year.



Student Equality Network

This year, we improved the recruitment process for Network leaders, resulting in 176 applications. Leaders received onboarding and regular 1/1 support to deliver meetings and campaigns.

To improve visibility and attendance, we increased promotion through social media, Freshers Fairs and collaborative events. Membership grew to 356 students, a 236% increase on last year and our Instagram gained over 120 followers. We hosted/supported 32+ events and created 11 My Lived Experience pieces, including podcasts, interviews and blogs. For next year, our priorities are to restructure around three themes - connecting people, celebrating diversity and making change. We are also undertaking a Network rebrand, introducing a formal funding process for student-led ideas and better utilising the Union Website.

Disability & Neurodiversity Subnetwork

This Subnetwork grew to 52 members and saw great discussions, particularly around accessibility and employability, which contributed to Union decision-making and University initiatives like University staff training. We led activities for *Neurodiversity Celebration Week*, *Autism Acceptance Month* and *Disability & Neurodiversity Awareness Month* in collaboration with the *Library*, *AutiSoc*, *Stag Radio*, *Film Soc* and more. Activities included a workshop led by our Subnetwork Leader on the late diagnosis of ADHD which had 25 attendees, alongside events like an SSP adapted tennis session, a Café & Film Night and supporting a Disability Insight Careers Panel. We also hosted a focus group with the University and AccessAble to review campus access guides. The Subnetwork Leader's impact was recognised and awarded

with the Justice, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award at Union Ball. Next year, we'll be working to increase student input to ensure our activities best reflect student needs, to strengthen collaboration, and to improve feedback processes to the University.



International Student Subnetwork

The *International Students Subnetwork* has 122 students and is our largest Subnetwork. The Employability themed meeting was most popular and was attended by 35 students. Subnetwork feedback contributed to the creation of the University's International Student

Experience Subcommittee and informed SVF agenda. The Subnetwork delivered several events throughout the year, including a *Postcard Event* with the *International Engagement* team attended by over 60 students. It also led University-wide *International Students Day* celebrations in collaboration with *International Advice, Engagement* and the *Support Zone*. Next year, we're focused on gathering more student input in meetings, and are planning more collaborations with the Employability team and Belonging team following student feedback.



Race Equality Subnetwork

The *Race Equality Subnetwork* has 43 members. A key achievement this year was the delivery of the *#MyNames* campaign, which generated conversations around identity and inclusion, and led to strong engagement through interactive stalls, poster displays, social media and *My Lived Experience* content. The Subnetwork Leader represented student perspectives at the *Race Equality Charter Meeting* and contributed to discussions on race equality and staff training frameworks. We also hosted three "Let's Talk About Race" craft and chat events. We were also pleased to feature strong contributions in our meetings from staff speakers including *SEED* representatives, *Personal Tutors* and the *Wellbeing* team. We aim to increase engagement, continue our campaigns, and increase collaboration.

University Projects & Committees

The VP Voice has made significant contributions to the student experience through their membership of several *University Committees* and working groups. During regular meetings with the Pro-Vice Chancellor Education, Luana escalated concerns raised by *Reps* about attendance policies, exams, lecture recording and AI in education. She also presented two student voice reports with recommendations for change at the *Student Experience Subcommittee* and worked with the Chief Student Officer to improve the committee's effectiveness and student-led focus for next year.

VP Voice led Union awareness campaigns this year; collaborating across the University community to celebrate *Black History Month*, *Disability & Neurodivergence Awareness Month*, *LGBTQ+ History Month*, *Women's History Month* and *Neurodiversity Week*.

This included student-curated projects celebrating diversity and lived experience. Next year, we aim to expand our calendar of events and campaigns to champion inclusivity.



Zone Officers

Our *Part-time Officers* (PTOs) have worked hard throughout the year to represent students, progressing their manifestos and supporting Zone and Union initiatives. Luana played a key role in supporting the PTOs, organising and hosting several socials that helped bring the team together.

JJ championed the creation of our *Course Reps* Teams Channel to better connect *Reps* across faculties. They also supported

with hosting *Course Rep Training* and *Course Rep Socials*; and lobbied for lecture recording and captioning to be consistently applied across the University.

Matt has passionately advocated for commuter students, by raising feedback in important meetings including *Student Voice Forum*, and organising a commuters social. He also sought student feedback on condensed timetabling in the Business School to inform the University's wider implementation of condensed timetabling across faculties.

Despite being on placement, Heer has actively advocated for more student spaces, particularly in accommodation blocks, and has informed the *Student Voice Forum* agenda on this topic. She also escalated student feedback about systemic issues with Health Sciences placements, leading to a recommendation for the University to review this.

Following the *Bye-Election*, we were joined by Faiz, who was

passionate about improving communication especially surrounding *Course Reps*. He helped inform and shape *Speak Week* outreach and was great at connecting with students and presenting feedback.

Alfred has been consistently present at our *Course Rep Socials* this year, and attended *Union Forum* to connect with other Officers. He's been a dedicated *Course Rep* alongside his studies.

All PTOs provided support for the *Bye-Election*, *Speak Week* and *Surrey Decides*, and have also helped promote the *Course Rep* scheme – highlighting elections, nominating *Reps of the Month* and supporting *Rep Socials*. They also helped review and shortlist nominees for *Colours Ball*, *Union Ball*, and *STAG Awards*. We are incredibly proud of their dedication to the student community & student voice.

Activity Zone



Kade De Gannes
VP Activity

Colours Ball & Union Ball

Building on the success of last year's *Union Ball* and *Colours Ball* in University Hall, we were delighted to host both events there again this year. The balls were a tremendous success, with *Colours Ball* selling out within moments and *Union Ball* welcoming 160 guests. These flagship celebrations are a highlight of the year, bringing students together to recognise and celebrate the remarkable achievements of our *Sports Clubs, Societies*, and individuals whose dedication, talent, and commitment have made a lasting impact on student life at Surrey.



Varsity

In March 2026, we returned to Royal Holloway for our 15th annual *Varsity* fixture. Despite competing away from home, more than 900 Surrey students made the journey by coach to show their support – our highest-ever attendance for a *Varsity* held outside of Surrey. The incredible support helped drive another memorable performance, as Surrey once again emerged victorious and brought the *Varsity* trophy back where it belongs.



Destination Success

Destination Success is a Union employability and skills development programme

designed to help students build the transferable skills employers increasingly value alongside academic achievement. Following research with Gardner Training and Consultancy, the programme was developed around the key themes self-awareness, teamwork, and productivity. It was delivered through six interactive workshops covering leadership, communication, teamwork, decision-making, and productivity. During 2025/26, a working group oversaw programme development, student trainers completed a Train the Trainer course, and a student-led delivery model was introduced. Across Semester 2, 18 workshops were delivered, attracting 62 attendances from 32 students, with strong repeat participation demonstrating sustained engagement and interest in developing employability skills.

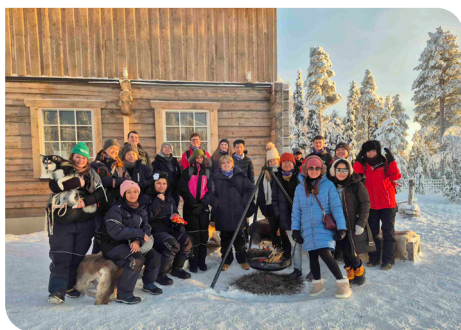
The pilot showed that a peer-led approach created an accessible and supportive learning environment while also providing valuable leadership experience for

student trainers. Workshops on leadership and communication proved most popular, and the programme contributed to students' confidence, personal development, sense of belonging, and career readiness, particularly benefiting international students through opportunities to build connections. Based on the pilot, future plans include expanding the student trainer model, continuing employability recognition through certificates and digital badges, strengthening collaboration with university partners, delivering workshops throughout the academic year and increasing promotion to reach a wider range of students.



Trips & Off Campus Activity

This year, we expanded our programme of off-campus activities, delivering 16 trips and selling a total of 595 tickets. Students enjoyed a diverse range of experiences, from popular day trips to Brighton and Cambridge to action-packed visits to Mercedes-Benz World and paintballing events. We also offered two international trips: a festive pre-Christmas visit to Disneyland Paris and an unforgettable journey to Finland in January, where students experienced the magic of the Arctic winter. These trips helped to form unique and memorable experiences for our students.



Black Sport Collective

One of the key initiatives launched this year was the *Black Sport Collective* (BSC), developed in partnership with *Team Surrey*. The initiative was created to improve engagement, belonging, participation, and employability opportunities for Black students through sport and community-building activities.

The BSC officially launched in November with an event that brought together students, alumni, and staff. Alumni speakers shared their experiences of university life, career journeys, and life after Surrey, providing valuable insight and inspiration for current students. The event also included interactive activities and a collaboration with Black Tennis Mentors, who created a unique tennis experience by setting up a tennis net within the lecture theatre, allowing students to participate and engage with the sport in a relaxed environment.

Following the launch, the BSC delivered a range of activities designed to encourage participation in sport and strengthen community connections. Students were given opportunities to participate in tennis and padel sessions throughout the year, helping to introduce new sports and increase engagement among students who may not have previously participated.

During semester two, two BSC football tournaments were delivered, providing students with opportunities to connect through sport in a fun and inclusive environment. The tournaments were supported through a collaboration with Motion Sportwear UK, who provided prizes for participants and helped enhance the overall student experience.

The initiative also expanded beyond sport through a careers and employability workshop delivered in partnership with the *Association for Black and Ethnic Minority Engineers* (AFBE). The workshop provided

students with valuable advice on CVs, cover letters, interview preparation, and career development, while creating opportunities to engage directly with professionals and industry representatives.

The BSC has established strong foundations during its first year, demonstrating the value of combining sport, community, and employability to support student success. The initiative has created opportunities for students to build networks, develop confidence, engage with new activities, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the University community.



Team Surrey Highlights

This year saw a number of outstanding achievements across *Team Surrey*, both individually and collectively. Two Surrey students were shortlisted for prestigious *BUCS Awards*, recognising their exceptional contributions to university sport. Ella Cromack (Women's Rugby) was shortlisted for *BUCS Sportswoman of the Year*, while Charlotte Ray (Tennis) was shortlisted for *BUCS Volunteer of the Year*, highlighting the incredible talent and dedication within our sporting community.

The Dance Club's Behind the Curtain campaign also made a significant impact by promoting wellbeing through physical activity and community. The initiative encouraged members to use dance as a positive outlet, providing a welcoming space for students to stay active, connect with others, and take a break from the pressures of academic life.

Team Surrey also celebrated strong performances on the national stage, with *Women's Rugby*, *Men's Football*, *Women's Squash*, and *Men's Basketball* all qualifying for *Big BUCS Wednesday*. A particular highlight was *Men's Basketball* being crowned *National Trophy Champions*, bringing home silverware in an outstanding achievement for the Club.



Participation in sport and physical activity continued to grow, with *Surrey Moves* recording a record-breaking 8,164 participants throughout the year. This milestone reflects the continued success of efforts to encourage students to stay active and engaged across the University community.

Women's Rugby also achieved promotion to *Women's BUCS Super Rugby (WBSR)*, marking a significant milestone for the Club and cementing its position amongst the top university rugby programmes in the country.



We have 12,000 unique participants who have engaged with *Team Surrey* since the start of the academic year, which means we have met our strategy target for the number of students we have engaged with.

Club and Society Memberships

Student engagement across our *Clubs and Societies* continued to thrive this year, with a total of 15,707 memberships purchased across our *Clubs and Societies* programme. This included 12,708 Society memberships and 2,999 Club memberships, highlighting the wide range and appeal of opportunities available to students outside of their academic studies.

Particularly encouraging was the level of individual participation, with 7,486 unique students joining at least one *Club or Society* during the year. This means that thousands of students chose to engage with our community, develop new skills, pursue their interests, and build lasting friendships through extracurricular involvement.

These figures demonstrate the vital role that *Clubs and Societies* play in enhancing the student experience, creating opportunities for personal

development, fostering a sense of belonging, and helping students make the most of their time at university. The continued growth and popularity of our activities programme is a testament to the dedication of our student leaders, volunteers, and members who bring these communities to life.

Club and Society Elections

This year, all elections were run through our new online voting platform, which made the process much easier. As a result, we were able to hold multiple election periods for *Clubs and Societies*. For our annual *Club and Society* election in March, we had 698 candidates running across 578 positions. Overall, we saw 10,630 ballots cast amongst 2,293 unique voters, which was amazing to see!

Club and Society Standings

This year saw the introduction of a new approach to *Club and Society Standings*, bringing both groups together into a single meeting for the first time. The aim was to encourage greater collaboration between *Clubs and Societies*, create opportunities for shared learning, and ensure that key information was communicated consistently across all student groups. Previously, *Clubs and Societies* received many of the same updates through separate meetings, which often resulted in duplication. By combining the meetings, we were able to streamline communication, improve efficiency, and create a more connected community. The format of the meetings was designed to provide important updates from the Students' Union and the University before moving into *Club and Society* ratifications.



Forever Surrey Fund

Team Surrey representatives from Surrey Sports Park (SSP), the Students' Union, and the VP Activity worked in partnership with the *University Advancement* team as part of a funding panel, helping to allocate financial support to *Clubs and Societies* across the programme.

Nine Clubs and eight Societies received funding and a total of £65,000 was awarded. This funding provides *Clubs and Societies* with the resources needed to develop ambitious projects, enhance the student experience, and build sustainable structures that support their long-term success and development.

Employability

Throughout the year, efforts were made to strengthen the relationship between student activity and employability, ensuring students could better recognise and articulate the skills gained through their involvement in *Clubs, Societies*, and wider extracurricular opportunities.

Following discussions at *Society Standing* meetings in March and April, there was strong interest in the introduction of *Employability Representatives* within student groups. This initiative is expected to be developed further and rolled out during the next academic year alongside a termly *Student Employability Forum* delivered in partnership with the *Student Employability Team*. These forums will provide opportunities for students to engage directly with employability initiatives, share feedback, and explore career development opportunities.

In February 2026, the *Unstoppable* campaign was launched to promote employability services and opportunities available across the University. The campaign aimed to increase awareness of the support available to students and encourage greater engagement with employability activities. Looking ahead, the promotion of the Students' Union *Destination Success* programme will also be incorporated into future communications and campaigns during the next academic year.

To further celebrate student achievement and career development, a proposal

has been developed for an annual *Employability Awards Ceremony*, with the intention of launching the initiative during the next academic year. The awards would recognise students, student leaders, *Clubs, Societies*, and staff who have made significant contributions to employability, skills development, and career readiness across the University community.

Looking forward, there is also an ambition to strengthen collaboration between the Students' Union, the Student Employability Team, and the Vice-President Activity portfolio through increased visibility of

employability opportunities. This includes collaborative campaigns, student blogs, social media content, website updates, and targeted communications designed to improve awareness and engagement with employability activities across the student population.



Support Zone

**Sam Buss
VP Support**

Advice and Regulations

This year, the advice team have worked with 2,729 students including 332 *Housing Advice* queries, a notable increase on last year, aligning with our aim to broaden our scope of support for students needing housing advice. With our growing team of advisors, we have also expanded our provision to support our PGR students, bringing more dedicated advice to this student community who deserve specialised support. We also established a regular drop-in service at Manor Park Social to try and connect with our medical, vet and Manor Park-based students. Our aim is to continue expanding our outreach across both campuses next year.



This year, another focus has been to update the regulations that sit within the Doctoral College, with our Zone being able to consult on proposed changes to the Admissions, Progression, and Examinations Committee Request Evaluation Criteria. This was agreed upon, and approved by the University, with the aim to support our PGR community appropriately. Our aim for next year is to continue our ongoing review of the PGR UAP Process and Research Integrity regulations alongside the Doctoral College, with a proposal to bring them in line with broader student regulations where appropriate.

We also consulted and supported a proposal by OSCAR to update the Academic Misconduct process regarding third offences to make it clearer to students, and we look forward to seeing the impact of this change next year.

Our advice team continue to sit on various OSCAR Disciplinary, Fitness to Practice

and Academic Misconduct Panels. This year, we supported 260 students with Academic Misconduct allegations, with the vast majority regarding the use of AI. This continues to outnumber other types of misconduct allegation, so as a result we have amended our outgoing advice to support students with this.

Housing Advice

This year the Support Zone has been working hard to improve *Housing Advice* services, to ensure students don't feel alone when facing housing and accommodation challenges. On 1 May 2026, the new Renters' Rights Act was introduced, which directly impacts students privately renting in lots of (positive!) ways. To prepare for the changes and to better support our students, our Advisors undertook specialist training and worked closely with Hoods Residential.

This year, we also introduced our *Digital Housing Board*, allowing

students to advertise rooms and connect with housemates on the Surrey Students' Union website. We also worked closely with the digital platform Roome, helping better support students find accommodation and housemates.

Sexual Harassment Training and Awareness

This year, we have worked closely with the University to help deliver their E6 Harassment & Sexual Misconduct training. There have been challenges to this training, but we have helped identify further avenues to ensure all students complete the training when they come to the University. We will continue to help educate students on why it is important to complete this training.

Supporting LGBTQIA+ Students

We supported and attended *International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia* (IDAHOBIT) with the Chaplaincy, ran a *Trans Day of Remembrance Vigil*, and strengthened our work with the LGBTQIA+ Society to make Surrey more inclusive for all identities. We're proud to create spaces where students feel seen, respected, and celebrated. We will also be assisting another trans vigil in June, in response to Juniper Blessing, a transgender student who was stabbed in a laundry room by the University of Washington.

University Mental Health Charter

We have been working closely with teams across the University on the *University Mental Health Charter*, which has the goal of ensuring universities embed a whole-university approach to mental health on campus and wellbeing. The VP Support has

attended promotional events and written the student piece on the project. In this, Sam reflected on what works well in the University and where there are actionable areas for improvement. This has been passed on to the leaders of the project and will be a part of achieving the University Mental Health Charter Award.

Nightline

This year, *Nightline* made the decision to open Monday, Wednesday and Friday to provide students with a more reliable and consistent service. It has been a successful year with a total of 139 logged individual listener shifts, alongside welfare calls and training. We've noticed an increase in instant messaging, reflecting student changes in communication style, with 19 calls and 45 messages in total.

40% of our volunteer's engagement with students last for 30 minutes or more, and so while the reduced hours have impacted total numbers, the

time and support given overall is still significant.

In total, we have trained 30 new listening volunteers this year, with a hope that the training re-vamp will allow for larger cohorts of volunteers to be trained in future cycles, ensuring long-term stability for the service.

We are especially proud of our committee this year, with members acknowledged for their hard work at Union Ball, taking away the Outstanding Contribution to Union Support Service and the John Hoborough Award for Volunteer of the Year awards.

Welfare Watch

This year, we have seen a keen student appetite and appreciation of this service. Next year, working alongside the Community Zone, we are undertaking a re-work and re-launch of the service, with an aim to be more pro-active in support and harm reduction.

Talk Together

Talk Together is now in its second year, offering a unique mental health support service, where students can talk to another trained student about anything that's on their mind. During the semester, twice weekly 1:1 sessions are held in the Union and are open to any student.

This year, we have focused on the promotion of this service to ensure students are aware of the support they can receive from their trained peers. In semester one, the service built a large volunteer base of 20 students and kicked off the year with an incredibly successful and engaging training session.

The coordinators and volunteers have held promotional meetings, collaborated with other Societies, hosted events and a *Wellbeing Week* as part of the Support Zone's *Don't Worry Surrey* campaign. The service also has an exciting new mascot – our capybara!

Postgraduate Support Hub

Although PGR cases are less frequent for Support Coordinators, when they do arise, they are typically complex, particularly when navigating PGR specific procedures and supervisory issues. As one of our new Support Coordinators has a PhD and a passion for improving things for PGRs, they were tasked with building a project dedicated to them and their experience.

As a result, the *PGR Support Hub* will be launched next year, and act as a 'one stop shop' for PGR advice. This will include signposting to important advice pages that already exist, but also new content, specifically developed to aid them in navigating issues that directly impact them. The response to this has been positive, with the Doctoral College in agreement that this will be a great resource and their assurance that it will be promoted to new PGRs as part of their induction.

Once launched there will be opportunities to develop the hub, with student led PGR content and scope for potential collaborations on events and initiatives with Belonging, Voice, and Community.

Wellbeing Champions

This year, we have trained over 250 *Wellbeing Champions* across our Clubs and Societies who have been more engaged and active than ever.

We've seen over 150 responses, allowing early engagement and awareness of plans. There has been an increase in logbook reports, meaning we now have a far greater awareness the experiences of our *Wellbeing*



Champions and the support they provide their peers.

Some of the issues faced by our *Wellbeing Champions* include suicide, self-harm, ongoing mental-health difficulties, inter-committee disagreements and complex group issues. Through the *Wellbeing Champions*, both the Support and Activity Zone have been able to collaborate in supporting several issues we may not have known about otherwise.

We were also recognised and awarded our first ever award of *Wellbeing Champion of the Year* at Union Ball.

Wellbeing Week

This year, we ran one *Wellbeing Week* which we moved to week three instead of week five. This meant we were able to better support incoming students and those who may have been struggling with the adjustment of living away from home. The campaign was a success with several events including

the annual Wellfair, two self-defence workshops, Dog Therapy and Kitten Yoga, which was requested by students previously.



Don't Worry Surrey

We ran two *Don't Worry Surrey* campaigns this year to support students in the January and May Assessment periods. Collectively, we supported 251 students with their *Extenuating Circumstances* queries and any other issues with their assessments, including 66 online queries and in-person, drop-in queries. We ran various events including Dog and Cat Therapy, Goat Yoga, Wellbeing Walks, Crafternoons, Sound Baths, Movie Nights and online competitions to support student wellbeing. The feedback across

all the events was well received, with students wanting even more next year!



VP Support Manifesto Moments

- Started rolling out Mental Health First Aid to our Support Zone Part-time Officers, with the hope to expand it to targeted groups, like the Student Equality Network, before launching more widespread amongst students.
- Worked on a written proposal with the Voice Zone to introduce Wellbeing Champions within the Student Equality Network next academic year.
- Seen an increase in wellbeing-related rooms, with the refurbishment of the Centre for Wellbeing bringing sensory lights and fidgets. We've had external companies visit to help with our current infrastructure with the Stag Hill sensory room, with the hope to next year expand over to Manor Park as well.
- As part of Destination Success, we hoped to introduce British Sign Language within the Union as the programme with initially terminated. However, there are now BSL classes on the weekend, with staff in favour of increasing these.
- Launched a Gender Empowerment Campaign, with a focus on transgender support and gender-based safety. This is a continuous project for us with support from the Voice Zone and related Societies.
- Ran the 'Light Up the Night' event, to speak up for survivors of sexual violence and signpost support. We are in an amazing position to have Sexual Violence Liaison Officers on campus, and we also have personal safety

alarms for students and staff.

- Began work on an International Peer Support programme, which is yet to officially launch. This involved working closely with other teams and ensuring International Student Experience is a core focus.

Zone Officers

Jenny has worked hard to launch a new initiative called Surrey Weekenders, giving Clubs and Societies the opportunity to offer low-cost or free events over the weekends, for students who may not be able to go home or are looking to meet new people. We're very excited to see it develop in the next academic year and have already had great uptake.

Julia ran a very successful panel in semester two called Access to Success, with key speakers discussing their careers, their lived experiences of disability and how this shaped their professional journeys.

Chris held an online mindfulness event during our Don't Worry Surrey campaign, championing wellbeing and offering a space for students to wind down where they could during exams.

Zara led our Talk Together service, generating engaging content, coming up with new ideas to grow the service and supporting the pool of volunteers who facilitate sessions.

Lexi has planned the choreography for a dance therapy workshop and created designs to promote this. We had challenges with workload and room bookings, but she is ready to launch this in the upcoming year.



Community Zone

Amber Dobrzanski
VP Community

Freshers' Week

Our September 2025 *Freshers' Week*, was a great way to welcome new and returning students to university life, offering a jam-packed schedule of events. We organised a range of nightlife events but also worked hard to ensure there were plenty of fun and exciting, non-drinking activities available to maximise inclusivity.

We started the week with our *Moving-In Festival*, a free event at the Marquee featuring live music, DJs and a friendly, lively atmosphere. This event was the perfect way for students to meet new people and settle into their new campus life.

Throughout the week, we ran a variety of free events, including quiz nights, bingo, arts and crafts, and socials, ensuring there were opportunities for everyone to enjoy *Freshers' Week* in their own way. These events provided a relaxed and welcoming environment for students to connect, whether

they were living on campus or commuting from further away.

In total, we ran and organised seven incredible nightlife events and three evening events during *Freshers' Week* to give you the best welcome week we possibly could! We saw Dick & Dom put on a DJ set at Future on the Friday night, and our *Freshers' Week* closing party with Issey Cross ended the week with a bang on Saturday night. Of all the events across the week, six were completely sold out.

Our main goal with *Freshers' Week* is to create a sense of belonging from day one, and this year's line-up truly reflected that mission.



Refreshers Week

During *Refreshers Week*, the Community Zone delivered two headline events – Citrus: Switch Disco and an R&B Night, selling a total of 2,447 tickets. The team also worked closely with the Activity Zone to support the planning and delivery of the *Refreshers' Fair*, helping new and returning students connect with *Clubs*, *Societies* and wider opportunities available through the Union.

Commercial Activity Rubix

We started the year with six sold out *Freshers' Week* events, helping to set the tone for a successful year of student nightlife.

Our weekly club night Citrus continues to go from strength to strength. Hosting several major events, including Boos and Booze for Halloween, the Buzzball takeover, and a sold-out Citrus Varsity celebration,

attended by 1,550 students returning to campus following our 15th Varsity win in a row!



Alongside our core programme, we continued to support *Society Club Nights* throughout the year and strengthened our ongoing partnership with Powercut for Friday nights. In semester two we saw the relaunch of our weekly quiz night every Tuesday in *Haris' Bar* – with the view to adding more regular events across the week next year.

We also delivered a range of successful one-off events including Oktoberfest, Bingo Lingo and a Super Bowl screening, helping to diversify the student entertainment across campus.

Manor Park Social

At *Manor Park Social*, we continued to grow activity and engagement throughout the year. During semester one, our Manor Park Quiz Night continued to be a huge success, and we began screening live Sky Sports fixtures, including Formula 1, Premier League, Championship, and Women's Super League matches.

In February, we introduced a refreshed programme of regular events including Union Creates, Bingo, Karaoke, and Games Night, alongside our existing Quiz Night and weekend sports screenings. We also launched an updated menu and introduced new food and beverage offers across the week to enhance the overall student experience.



The Lake Bar

In April, we saw the return of *The Lake Bar*, which achieved record engagement across the term thanks to the fantastic weather and strong student attendance on campus.

To encourage more students to attend and to offer other events at *The Lake Bar*, Hari's weekly Quiz Night was relocated to the Lake, while a new partnership with *Stag Radio* introduced live music every Wednesday afternoon, helping to create a vibrant and social atmosphere throughout the term.



Venue & Society Bookings

During semester two, we increased our focus on supporting *Club and Society* activity within the Students' Union. Following a student survey conducted over the winter period, students rated venue availability, affordability, and accessibility highly, while communication and equipment availability were identified as key areas for improvement.

In response, we introduced a new target of responding to booking enquiries within 48 hours and recruited an Administrative Assistant to help improve support and communication. We also repurposed *The Front Room* from a late-night bar into a dedicated bookable space during the evenings for *Clubs and Societies*.

These changes contributed to a doubling of bookings at the *Students' Union* between semester one and semester two. Further improvements are

planned for the next academic year, including a new booking system, improved equipment hire processes, and the introduction of venue booking packages.

Volunteering

Volunteering remained one of the main focuses of Surrey's student community this year, with hundreds of students dedicating their time to make a difference both on and off campus. From our *Freshers' Angels* helping new arrivals settle in, to Society committees and peer support services like *Nightline*, our volunteers play a vital role in shaping the overall Surrey experience.



This year saw incredible achievements across volunteering projects, with students contributing their skills and energy to everything from campus litter picks to large-scale events. Their efforts not only benefited the community but also helped them develop valuable skills and experiences that will stay with them long after graduation.

Our Volunteering opportunities allow students to build connections, learn new skills, and offer their time in a way that helps the local community.

One World Week

Every year we celebrate *One World Week*, bringing together students from all backgrounds to have and experience the diversity of our community. The aim of the week is to celebrate and showcase the many cultures, traditions, and global perspectives that make Surrey such a unique and inclusive place to live and study.

Throughout the week, students had the chance to attend workshops, discussions, and cultural showcases, all designed to foster understanding and celebrate the unique perspectives that make Surrey such a vibrant place to study.

The week always ends with our *One World Gala*, which featured 16 incredible performances with a total of 225 performers each showcasing music, dance and cultural traditions from around the world. The Gala was a powerful reminder of the talent and diversity within our student body and created a sense of pride across campus.



Community Hub

The *Community Hub* continued to be a huge success for students this year, offering affordable items to help ease the financial pressures of university life. As a campus charity shop, it provides everything from clothing and kitchenware to vet uniforms at reduced prices, making it an invaluable resource for students managing the cost of living.

The hub has become the go to place for international students, providing them with the practical items they need to feel at home. It's also a convenient destination for students looking to donate during a declutter or when moving out of accommodation, ensuring items find a second life within the Surrey community.



Belonging Events

This year marked the full launch of *Surrey Belonging*, a programme designed to help students build connection and community on campus and across Guildford through fun, dynamic, and affordable activities. Across the year, we delivered 129 events, sold 4,272 tickets, and engaged 1,793 unique students, around ten per cent of the student population. *Belonging* reached a broad range of students, with 44% international students and 36% postgraduates engaging with the programme, showing its value in supporting different communities across Surrey.

Our events programme offered something for everyone, from high-energy socials to more relaxed opportunities to meet people and try something new. Flagship highlights included Spooky Laser Tag, Bubble Zorb Arena, Themed Cocktail Classes, and Festive events. We also introduced Union Creates at Manor Park Social as a weekly

session, giving students a new space to unwind and learn new skills.

In semester two, we strengthened the programme further by launching our strands of *Belonging: Screens, Creates, Active, and Connects*. This helped students find events that matched their interests, whether that meant getting active, being creative, or simply meeting new people in a warm and inclusive setting.

Working closely with our other zones, *Surrey Belonging* also extended our activities into out-of-term time to support students who remained on

campus during the holidays and exam periods, with events such as Snow Globe Making, Badge Making, and regular movie screenings. This ensured that we continued to bring energy, support, and community to campus during quieter periods.

