



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Department  
Of  
Physics &  
Astronomy.

## Minutes Meeting of STAFF STUDENT COMMITTEE

**Date:** 18-02-08

**Present:** Nicola Surr (1), Marcus Hyett (2), Evelyn Johnston (2), Simon Lewis (2), David Holliman (3), Chris Ince (3), Will Davies (4& Chair), Doug Needham (4), Claire Elliott (pg), Dr Richardson, Dr de Grijs, Prof Mowbray, Dr Daw

**Secretary:** Tracy Duncan

**Apologies:**

**In Attendance:** Mr Alan Bateman

Action by

1. **Apologies for absence:**  
NA

2. **Minutes from Last meeting**

Will Davies – We are the best Physics Society, rather than the best Physics Committee.

**Ashtrays**

Alan Bateman - A few phone calls were made to estates regarding this matter. Estates are intending to put in a new ashtray outside the Hicks building which will be better signposted. However, there are no funds for a CCTV camera for the side of the building.

Students are legally allowed to stand at the bottom of the entrance stairs to smoke if they wish; although we do not encourage this, another ashtray at the front of the building may encourage them to smoke there.

Claire Elliott – Pleased that we are getting a better ashtray, however, the problem still remains that people do not like to stand in the ally when it is dark.

Will Davies – Standing outside the Hicks building after dark will not cause much of a problem as the building will be very quiet.

Alan Bateman – Unfortunately there is no shelter for the smokers.

Richard de Grijs – They could go under the little bridge at the side of the building.

David Mowbray – We will keep in touch with safety services and keep staff and students informed.

3. **Student Common Room**

Alan Bateman – we have had the décor completely redone including a new floor and pin board on the walls. We have had another mains socket installed and the Coke machine has been moved to make the entrance less congested. The water supply has been temporarily capped, so if water is needed for an auto-fill boiler this can be re-connected.

Temporary signage has been put on the door which will eventually be replaced with the standard Hicks signage. In the near future all the light fittings will be replaced with new. This will be jointly funded by Physics and Maths.

Alan Bateman - To have a self filling water heater there would be considerable cost, £524 for the heater and an unknown amount for all the plumbing and draining alterations which will be needed. A vending machine would be another option.

Will Davies- The University has a franchise for vending machines, but they are extortionate, charging over £1 for a cup of tea.

It was decided that a vending machine was not an option and neither was a water heater. Physoc will purchase a kettle and see how long it lasts in the room.

### **PHYSOC TO BUY A KETTLE FOR THE STUDENT STUDY ROOM.**

Overall the students feel that the room is still very echoey, with no warmth and not very welcoming. The plastic chairs and tables do not make a nice environment. WD

Alan Bateman - carpet would be a bad idea, food will be trodden in. We know this from the Austin Room carpet which needs cleaning twice a year.

The students wanted somewhere to work and to eat their food; this is what we have tried to create.

David Mowbray – Maybe more notice boards will soak up some of the sound and make it a little more welcoming? Funds are limited but we can look into what we can do to make this room better.

Alan Bateman – the common rooms on G floor are for all Hicks students, not just maths students, these rooms have comfy chairs and are very nice. Although it is not encouraged that students eat in there, they quite often do and no one stops them.

Marcus Hyett – the room would greatly benefit from having both comfy chairs for people to relax on and plastic tables and chairs for students to work at.

Alan Bateman – We will look into getting some comfy chairs, we are generally informed when other departments are getting rid of furniture so if something comes along we can get it.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR ROOM- COMFY CHAIRS MORE NOTICE BOARDS CARPET TILES FOR THE WALLS? KETTLE (TO BE BOUGHT BY PHYSOC)**

#### **4. National Student Survey (NSS) and the Sheffield Student Survey (SSS)**

David Mowbray – all final year students should have received an email about the NSS. It is very important that this is filled in as the results are published. Failure to complete this questionnaire looks bad on the department, and if not enough people fill in the questionnaire no results will be published at all.

5. The SSS is a Sheffield only questionnaire and it is also important that this be filled in.

Will Davies – the questionnaires are far too long, sometimes taking up to 45 mins of your time. Maybe two smaller questionnaires would be better.

David Mowbray – the questionnaire is an external one so we have no control over its format etc.

Doug Needham – we get so many questionnaires, and other non work related emails that this one did not really stand out, I think I have deleted it.

David Mowbray – you will probably receive another email from the NSS, they are very keen for all students to fill in the questionnaire.

6. **Timing of the postgraduate 'sales' day**

Will Davies – this happened far too late to be useful, most application deadlines are before Christmas, especially for banks. This must be thought about much earlier in the semester to be of any use.

David Mowbray – We did this at the same time as the University.

Will Davies – the University holds two PGR open days, one much earlier in semester one.

David Mowbray – we were not aware of this.

**WILL DAVIES TO SEND PROF MOWBRAY INFORMATION REGARDING THIS MATTER.**

7. **Any Other Business**

*Sheffield Astronomy Society*

Evelyn Johnston – Does the Astro Society still exist?

Doug Needham – There used to be an Astrosoc, but it merged with Physoc.

Will Davies – Our first astro talk is on Wednesday (20<sup>th</sup> Feb).

Evelyn Johnston – Maybe we could join forces with the Sheffield Astronomy Society, they have lots of open talks and are very good.

Will Davies – If you need funding for a speaker from the Sheffield Astronomy Society then speak to Doug Needham, he works closely with the Union to gain funding.

Doug Needham – maybe in future years there should be a dedicated Astronomy member of Physoc, responsible for all the astronomy activities.

*Hicks Ball*

Will Davies – we have a cash short fall. The IOP were prepared to give us £300, however, we have not heard anything back regarding this money.

Richard de Grijs – I am on the IOP board, we had a meeting last week and it was decided that there were no justification for the money. If we had full justification for where the cash would be spent, then we would look again.

Will Davies – I sent a full spread sheet of all the costings to Prof Crowther.

Richard de Grijs – we will look into this further, recently York received money for a ball, so you stand a good chance.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING ALL 12.00 MEETINGS ROOM (E28)

6<sup>th</sup> May 2008