



# The Big Plan 2017-20

Greenwich Students' Union  
Empower you to change the world  
Make sure you have a great time at  
Greenwich!





## A word from our SU Presidents, past & present.

The Students' Union is at such a great point in time as we are launching our Big Plan for the next 3 years! We've spoken to loads of students and based on what they've said our two main goals are, that you're equipped to make change in the world and that you have a great time at Uni! It's that simple really and you can help us to achieve those goals as we'll be asking you how we're doing...so don't be shy and tell us what you think, we want to hear it and make sure we get it right!



**Meike Imberg**  
SU President 2017-19

Greenwich Students' Union set out its mission three years ago to empower students to change the world and have a great time at university. We still truly believe in these principles and aim to keep these at the heart of everything we do. As a Students' Union we run by our members, for our members and The Big Plan was created by students to guide our activity. Getting involved with GSU can enrich your time while you are studying and can help you meet friends for life. We welcome everyone to come and get involved, we hope to see you soon!

**Henry Setter**  
SU President 2019/20



## A word from our Chief Executive

I'm extremely proud of the passion and drive in our Students' Union. Our existing relationship with the University of Greenwich is strong and we support their own vision; Making Greenwich Great.

We've invested heavily in consultation and developing this strategy for the next three years. We worked with the National Union of Students to assess our current membership offer and to find out what our members want. We also worked with our evaluation partner

Icarus to help us shape our strategy and detail the way we will assess our impact.

We asked our members, stakeholders and selves "What change do we want to see?" The answers to this question gave us two goals. The first is that our members report that they have affected change and the second is that our members report that they have had a positive student experience.

This result has reinforced our vision, in full recognition of our diverse student population, that all students make the most of their journey at Greenwich.

To realise this, we have set a series of activities that have been informed, not by what we have done in the past but by what the future should look like. It's a future in which we have empowered students to have life changing experiences that have helped them shape their futures and the world around them.

As a team we live and breathe our values. We are empowering, we are courageous, we are dedicated, we are trusted and we are approachable. This strategy holds these values at its heart and we know you will recognise this in our work as we move forward together, guided by the Big Plan.

**John Schless**  
Chief Executive



Our Vision

**With you to make the  
most of your journey  
at Greenwich.**



# greenwich students' union





Our Mission

**We empower students  
to have life changing  
experiences, which  
help them shape  
their futures and the  
world around them.**



Our Values

**Our values inform our thoughts, our work and our actions. They influence and shape everything that we do.**



## Approachable

We will be as approachable as possible, promoting diversity in our teams and creating open and welcoming spaces. Our activities will be joined up, effectively communicated by visible champions and always centred by our customers.

## Dedicated

We are dedicated to listening to our members, aiming always to improve our services. We will ensure an equality of representation and will work hard to develop and care for ourselves, our teams and our members.

## Courageous

We will be courageous in our endeavours, facing down any challenge with pro-active innovation. We will take risks, accept and learn from our mistakes, striving always to improve and grow.

## Trusted

We will earn trust by living our values as a democratic body. We will put Fairtrade, ethics and sustainability at the centre of our work as a not-for-profit organisation. We will provide responsive advice and care to a membership that will come to rely on the strength of our word.

## Empowering

We will seek to empower our members and ourselves, ensuring we all increase our capacity to live well and find enrichment in our work. We will ensure all diverse voices are liberated, that students and their needs lead our organisation and that we celebrate our successes together.

## Big Plan's Student Leaders 2017-20

Meike Imberg, Louis Hale, Vivian van Lent, Luke Ellis



2017/18

Jono Smith, Meike Imberg, Alessio Papa, Henry Setter



2018/19

Jono Smith, Mayo Femi-Obalemo, Bilal Ijaz, Henry Setter



2019/20

The student representation involved in our Big Plan has changed each year through our annual leadership elections. The Full-time Officers of the past three years have personified our goals in their own individual way.



Our Goals

**Empower you to  
change the world.**

**Make sure you  
have a great time  
at Greenwich!**

That's it, simple as.

What that will look like is a little more complicated, but we've broken it down into eight areas. This gives you an idea of how we'll reach our goals.



## Representing You

We will speak for every one of you, learning what it is you need then empowering you and your student leadership team to deliver it.

Our independent member research showed that many of our members don't consider themselves to be 'Typical Students'.

We get that, Greenwich has commuting students, students with caring responsibilities, disabled students, diverse sexual orientation, age, ethnicity and gender. We are proud of our diversity.

We also learned we must do more to promote our role as a representative body.

There are so many challenges to achieving success at university. We want to be sure that these challenges are overcome and that students and their needs are at the heart of decision and change making at the University. Our staff and Trustees all agreed and wanted to ensure that time and effort would go into learning as much about who our members are, and what they need, as possible.

## Activities

- Do a full democratic review of the SU.
- Promote, empower, and equip our Student Leaders and train their support teams.
- Understand who our members are and their needs on each campus.
- Understand student needs with the costs of studying and living in London.







## Influencing the University

We will work in partnership with the University of Greenwich, becoming a trusted source of information on what you need from them to make the most of your journey at Greenwich.

With measures like the Teaching Excellence Framework and National Student Survey now defining the quality of education, you have consistently mentioned a concern over the quality of teaching at Greenwich for the £9,000 annual fee you pay. In a way, the one defining characteristic that all students here share is the desire for a good degree.

We are here to ensure that the University is aware of your needs and are meeting their obligations. We are dedicated to developing

the existing Programme Representative network and see building a strong partnership with the University as key.

We also believe that being a trusted source of information on what students need is the best way to evidence the benefits of good change.

## Activities

- Develop an informed and strong Academic Representation network, helping students have their voices heard.
- Build our relationship, at multiple levels, with the University.
- Build our credibility with key University stakeholders.
- Equip our student leaders to influence effectively.
- Be the trusted source of information on student trends in Greenwich.
- Showcase the work of the SU and the change we make.





## Giving You a Wider Influence

We will work with you to ensure that your voice is heard on the local, London and National stages, putting your SU at the heart of the student movement.

Demanding quality from the University might be the unifying factor for all our members at Greenwich but that does not mean your time here is only influenced by the University. What happens locally, in London and on National stages has longer, broader impacts on student life.

Fees, costs of living, teaching quality and the potential marketisation of your degree are all wider issues that you need to have a voice in shaping. Our ability to represent you and influence the University goes beyond Greenwich campuses.

## Activities

- Support our members to influence the National Union of Students policy and leadership.
- Build the brand of SU Greenwich.
- Build relationships with key local businesses and charities.
- Promote, empower and equip students as leaders and representatives.









## Your Health and Wellbeing

You know you need to take care of yourself at University. We can help with advice services, healthy food & drink options and by making it easier to keep fit with our Sports Clubs and activities. You can also have fun in our Societies.

Being a student is a whole lot of fun, but we know it's important to have a steady study/social life balance. In support of this Mind UK state that mental wellbeing is currently the biggest challenge facing students, leading to some resitting exams and even dropping out.

Further consultation with students and staff has given us a number of ways of ensuring that the SU continues to design its activities, services, campaigns and student spaces to provide a platform for our members' happiness. We believe that healthy bodies lead to healthy minds and this is all the impetus we need to keep up our investment in competitive and participatory sport

## Activities

- Deliver a proactive SU run student advice service.
- Support student-led groups to provide activities that improve member health and wellbeing.
- Protect and strengthen the health and wellbeing of student leaders.
- Ensure we offer healthy food options across our services.
- Explore the need for an SU counselling service.
- Play a role in the halls of residence ResLife programme.



## Your Employability

You have told us that you want a degree at Greenwich to get the best job and future. We'll ensure that you can recognise how getting involved in your SU will make you stand out from the crowd and be more employable.

Career and employability are the two key areas impacting your decision to come to Greenwich. While the SU continues to be a major employer of students, we saw that there is a need to emphasise that every level of engagement in the SU contributes towards member employability.

The experiences gathered in being a member of a Society and/or Sports club, in representing a programme or Faculty or in volunteering, give graduates a competitive edge in the job market. Couple these existing programmes with investment in further, broader training for students and staff and we believe we'll be able to help increase employability.

## Activities

- Make our SU volunteer offer accessible to all our members.
- Help our members to better communicate their skills to employers.
- Promote that taking part in SU activity contributes to employability across all sectors.
- Explore the setting up of an SU job shop.
- Work closely with the University careers team.
- Explore the need for a dedicated SU training and development programme.

“

The experiences gathered in being a member of a Society and/or Sports club, in representing a programme or Faculty or in volunteering, give graduates a competitive edge in the job market.



## Your Community

We will continue to develop safe spaces that support you in having fun, working comfortably, getting help and making change.

The main reason given by those of you that have considered leaving university is a feeling of not belonging. Add this to the desire for a balanced study/social life and it becomes clear that we should be aiming to create a positive community, in which you can work, have fun, relax and make change. We believe that developing a strong community should be the foundation of everything we do here.

## Activities

- Develop SU spaces that support social learning and fun.
- Offer safe and fun physical and digital spaces for students to connect together in.
- Equip our student staff to become ambassadors of the SU.
- Create opportunities for members to share experiences.





## Managing Your Money

When you're a student you invest a lot more than just your time, so we'll help you make money, save money and learn how to manage the money you have.

You told us that Finance is one of your biggest concerns and there is plenty of evidence on the national scene that money matters most to students.

We're a not-for-profit organisation, meaning any profit we make, we invest back into student services. We aim to put as much money back into student pockets as possible and to be transparent in that process. This is so we can provide positive examples of how best to manage finances. We will further invest in our Advice Service, helping our members manage their money matters.

## Activities

- Set up a dedicated financial planning/ advice offer within the SU.
- Be transparent with SU finances from an organisational to group level.
- Offer good quality paid SU jobs to students.
- Outline how the SU has saved money for students.

“

We're a not-for-profit organisation, meaning any profit we make, we invest back into student services.





## Your Local Community

Students are the life blood of Greenwich, Avery Hill and Medway campuses, we will ensure that this is celebrated through a healthy, productive partnership with the local community.

Our power to develop a great student experience extends beyond our buildings, services and campuses. We have a responsibility to reinforce the positive role students play in the local community. Developing productive partnerships with the local community leads to increased opportunities for our members.

## Activities

- Build strong partnerships with local community leaders.
- Provide great venues that local community groups want to hire.
- Utilise volunteer opportunities in the community for our members.
- Influence the London student agenda.
- Build a strategic partnership with Charlton Athletic and Partner Colleges.



## Our Measures

We will have only achieved our two goals when we know for sure that you feel like you've affected change and had a great time.




To understand this we'll run surveys, host focus groups, chat to you on campus and adapt when we learn, continuously.

### **We'll know we've succeeded when:**

- Our current level of student satisfaction with the SU is over 80% (currently 67%)
- The move to Dreadnought, our new SU building in the heart of Greenwich campus, is a success
- We make more money, to put back into the services we provide you and back into student pockets
- You know that your SU represents you and your academic interests well.

We know the questions we have to ask, and we are committed to finding out directly from our members how we are getting on. So don't be shy, tell us what we need to hear.

Contact us at [suwebsite@gre.ac.uk](mailto:suwebsite@gre.ac.uk)

 @greenwichsu  
 @greenwichsu  
 @greenwichstudentstunion

Find out how we are doing:  
[greenwichsu.co.uk/bigplan/impact](https://greenwichsu.co.uk/bigplan/impact)





greenwich  
students.  
union

[greenwichsu.co.uk/bigplan](https://greenwichsu.co.uk/bigplan)

To see our impact, visit  
[greenwichsu.co.uk/impact](https://greenwichsu.co.uk/impact)