

Accountability report: Ross Griffiths, Llywydd UMCB

When campaigning, my manifesto consisted of four main points including fairness (referring to ensuring that Welsh students have access to or are more aware of, the facilities that are available to them), advertising of Welsh services in the University and of UMCB to ensure the future of UMCB and the Welsh community on campus, social networking and working with local schools, University departments and societies to raise awareness of UMCB and to promote the Welsh language and culture on campus.

Since being elected and working with members of the Undeb staff and alongside the University staff, I have identified the following priorities/goals:

- Increase the number of students aware of and using the opportunities provided by UMCB, which in turn should increase the 'active' Welsh community.
- Increase the number of students living in Neuadd JMJ to secure its future.
- Develop and continue UMCB's efforts to engage with Welsh learners.
- Increase UMCB's presence on campus by advertising the UMCB community, its purpose and its understanding.

To reach these goals, I started a campaign called 'Dangos Diwylliant' to improve the presence of UMCB and Welsh culture on campus. This will be done through developing our volunteering project 'Ffrind Cymraeg' to provide a useful and welcoming environment for Welsh learners to practice their Welsh skills, better advertisement of Welsh facilities in the University for students and staff to use, utilising social media to our advantage to advertise our events and opportunities to engage with present and future students, being open to change and suggestions to support students to express their 'Welshness' in all aspects, developing UMCB's sub-societies' relationships with other societies to be able to showcase our talents, ensuring translation is available everywhere to aid Welsh students but also learners, 'Can yr Wythnos' (song of the week), to show that there is a Welsh music scene as a subtle method of promoting Welsh culture and to celebrate Welsh students and national achievements.

Furthermore, regarding developing efforts to engage with Welsh learners, conversations have been undertaken with staff from Canolfan Bedwyr, Dysgu Cymraeg Bangor, North Wales Medical School and the School of Education about how UMCB and Ffrind Cymraeg can collaborate with them

and provide them with a space to practice their Welsh skills alongside their existing Welsh lessons during their course. To date, I have had productive conversations with Canolfan Bedwyr, Dysgu Cymraeg Bangor, and North Wales Medical School; however, I have not yet received a response from the School of Education, but I am looking into contacting the relevant staff members. Moreover, a change in social attitudes among the UMCB committee members, expressed in our meeting, has confirmed the need to be more welcoming and inviting to learners, which would benefit the wider Welsh student community, not just learners.

The situation in Neuadd JMJ is unsettling because we are struggling to fill the building to even 50% of its capacity. However, by the end of next year, I am very optimistic that I can do everything I can to increase the number of students living in Neuadd JMJ to 70%. To do this, I plan to work closely with the recruitment department, marketing, and the Halls Office to advertise the hall more effectively and put in place provisions that will help fill rooms. These include alcohol-free flats based on changing student demographics; encouraging Welsh nurses to live in JMJ; significantly improving hall advertising to Welsh learners; and making its status as a Welsh medium and **LEARNERS** hall better known. Alongside this is the idea of 3rd years living in Neuadd JMJ. Although this is an existing option, awareness of this option is almost non-existent among students. Therefore, with help from student staff, I created a survey to gather students' opinions and their awareness of this option.

Discussions are also underway to instate the Llywydd JMJ role as a mentor for the university halls to ensure a Welsh-language mentor each year, given that the Llywydd JMJ role covers mentoring responsibilities, minus kitchen and welfare checks; it is voluntary. In addition, I wish to instate our inclusion officer as the Welsh student wellbeing ambassador. Both roles would ensure Welsh students have familiar, trusted members of the student body as representatives and a support network, and that UMCB has clear links to the university and student support.

Finally, I promise to do my utmost to ensure progress with my priorities and goals; some of my goals and ideas will take time and effort throughout the year. So, progress may appear slow, but please be assured that as your Llywydd UMCB, I am working diligently to deliver positive change.