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THE LONDON SCHOOL  
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# Residential and Catering Services Division

Annual Report 2020-2021

## Look after yourself. Look after others.



Wear a mask



Wash or sanitise  
hands regularly



Keep a safe distance and  
follow advice on campus



Cover coughs  
and sneezes



Use learning  
spaces safely



Let LSE know if  
you feel unwell

## Do you have symptoms?



High temperature, fever  
shaking or chills



Loss of sense of smell, taste,  
or breathing difficulties



Dry cough

**Get a COVID-19 test, DO NOT go out  
and you MUST self-isolate for ten days.**



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Campus safety, testing information and more: [lse.ac.uk/coronavirus](https://lse.ac.uk/coronavirus)

# Contents

- 2 Introduction from Ian Spencer, Director of Residential and Catering Services Division**
- 3 Residential and Catering Services Strategic Plan 2020-25**
- 4 Creating a sustainable LSE**
  - 4 Applications, Offers and Allocations 2020/21
  - 4 Student Accommodation Booking System
  - 5 LSE Accommodation Bursary
  - 5 Summer School and LSE Vacations
  - 5 Refurbishment
  - 7 Financial sustainability
  - 8 Developing plans for additional bed spaces
  - 9 Procurement
  - 9 Opening of new catering outlets
  - 11 Environmental sustainability in RCSD
- 14 Creating an inclusive home for learning**
  - 14 Annual student accommodation satisfaction survey
  - 15 Halls cup
  - 16 Customer feedback
- 17 Investing in our community**
  - 18 Onboarding programme for staff
  - 18 Working during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - 18 Professional Organisations
  - 18 Customer First Reaccreditation
  - 20 Values in Practice awards



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## Introduction from Ian Spencer, Director of Residential and Catering Services Division



Despite the continued challenges that Residential and Catering Services faced during the covid pandemic, our staff teams continued to work incredibly hard to support our students who remained in halls.

Even with the many restrictions placed on us all by government guidelines, 84 per cent of students in LSE managed halls said they would recommend their hall to other students.

This annual report shows some of our successes throughout the year. I am particularly proud to see that volunteering and fundraising efforts by our students continued. As did our staff teams work on sustainability issues, with RCSD being nominated and winning in several categories.

During the year Residences and Catering each received their reaccreditation for the Customer First standard. The assessor's comments perfectly sum up the division and the people who work in it:

"The strong direction and leadership, together with a shared passion and drive for continuous improvement will, the assessor has no doubt, ensure the organisation will continue to grow and achieve its strategic goals, regardless of what the future holds."

**Ian Spencer, Director of Residential and Catering Services Division**





## Residential and Catering Services Strategic Plan 2020-25

The [Residential and Catering Services Division's Strategic Plan 2020-25](#) supports the [LSE 2030 Strategy](#). Our vision is:

"As a provider of residential and catering services, we will position ourselves to be a leading and exemplary service provider, a model of good practice and a significant contributor to the student and staff experience at LSE.

Our aim is to make our services the destinations of choice by providing an inclusive and exciting range of accommodation and food offerings that fulfil the diverse needs of our students and staff. We will be leaders in residential and catering services in the UK, providing a professional, distinctive, contemporary and innovative customer focused service".

**For the duration of the strategic plan, the division will focus on three objectives:**

- Creating a sustainable LSE
- Creating an inclusive home for learning
- Investing in our community





## Creating a sustainable LSE

We are committed to providing a world class campus for our community.

### Applications, Offers and Allocations 2020/21

7,432 students created an accommodation account and searched for available bed spaces. We accommodated 3,396 students in our halls which equates to 32 per cent of registered students.

Student type	New accommodation accounts created	Students accommodated in halls	Students registered at LSE	% of registered students accommodated
First year undergraduate	2,047 (2,485)	1,491 (1,387)	2,131 (1,695)	70% (82%)
New postgraduate	3,412 (3,527)	1,437 (2,177)	5,691 (4,794)	25% (45%)
Continuing students	1,728 (1,137)	617 (541)	3,492 (3,590)	18% (87%)
General Course	245 (327)	45 (285)	81 (326)	56% (94%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,432 (7,476)</b>	<b>3,590 (4,390)</b>	<b>11,395 (10,367)</b>	<b>32% (42%)</b>

Table 1: New accommodation accounts created and students accommodated in 2020/21 (previous year in Italics)

The covid pandemic affected the number of students registering for accommodation compared to previous years. At the start of term in September 2020, our halls were 80 per cent occupied. Occupancy levels dropped to 70 per cent by December 2020 due to students returning home for covid related reasons.

In January 2021, the UK government announced a return to lockdown. For the second year running, we took a flexible approach to accommodation fees by releasing from contract any students who had travelled home for Christmas and were unable to return to LSE. Accommodation fees were postponed for the lockdown period for students who were away at Christmas but who sought to return once the lockdown was lifted. By the end of the lockdown period, occupancy levels had dropped to 44 per cent.

### Student Accommodation Booking System

In 2020/21, we continued with our project to improve our Accommodation Booking system. After moving to a self-selection booking system in February 2020 for the start of the academic year, we delivered the following additional features:

- Self-service booking for mid-year bookings.
- Self-service booking for summer vacation bookings.
- Improved systems integration with SITS (the School's central student record system).
- Custom reporting tool to enable more efficient analysis of accommodation data.



This work was a key step towards more efficient use of systems in RCSD, both for our students, and for our staff, which is a key strategic objective for the division. We hope to continue this work in 2021/22 by completing the final phase of upgrades to the Student Accommodation Booking System.

### **LSE Accommodation Bursary**

In the academic year 2020/2021, we awarded a total of £229,621.90 in accommodation bursaries to students from lower income households.

Awards of between £400 and £2,500 were made to 126 students (up from 96 student in the previous year) in LSE halls to assist them during their stay and to help them to fulfil their academic potential.

In 2021/22 we will be continuing with the Accommodation Bursary scheme as providing financial support for students from lower income households remains one of our key strategic objectives.

### **Summer School and LSE Vacations**

During Summer 2020, Summer School and LSE Vacations business was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Commercial visitor trading during Winter 2020 and Easter 2021 was also closed. Commercial guests who chose to cancel were provided with a full refund with the LSE Vacations team meeting our target of processing refunds within 28 days.

### **Refurbishment**

#### **Ongoing long term maintenance works (including fire doors)**

During the year we took the opportunity to bring forward some of our long-term maintenance projects, one of which was replacing fire doors in Bankside House.

#### **Completion of Rosebery Hall refurbishment**

The final stage of the refurbishment programme in the Rosebery Wing of Rosebery Hall began in March 2021. The scope of this work was to refurbish the ground, first, and second floors in Rosebery Wing, including 51 student bedrooms, all corridors and the reception area. The work is scheduled to be completed in September 2021 and marks a significant step towards our objective of improving student facilities in our halls to create a sustainable LSE.





Single room Rosebery Hall after refurbishment



Single room Rosebery Hall before refurbishment



Single room Rosebery Hall before refurbishment



Single room Rosebery Hall after refurbishment





## Financial sustainability

### Residential Services 2020/21 Income

The total income generated by LSE Residential Services in 2020/21 dropped significantly by 26 per cent to £16.7m, a decrease of just over £9m on 2019/20. This decrease was attributable to our halls operating at a reduced capacity due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which has significantly impacted the income generated for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

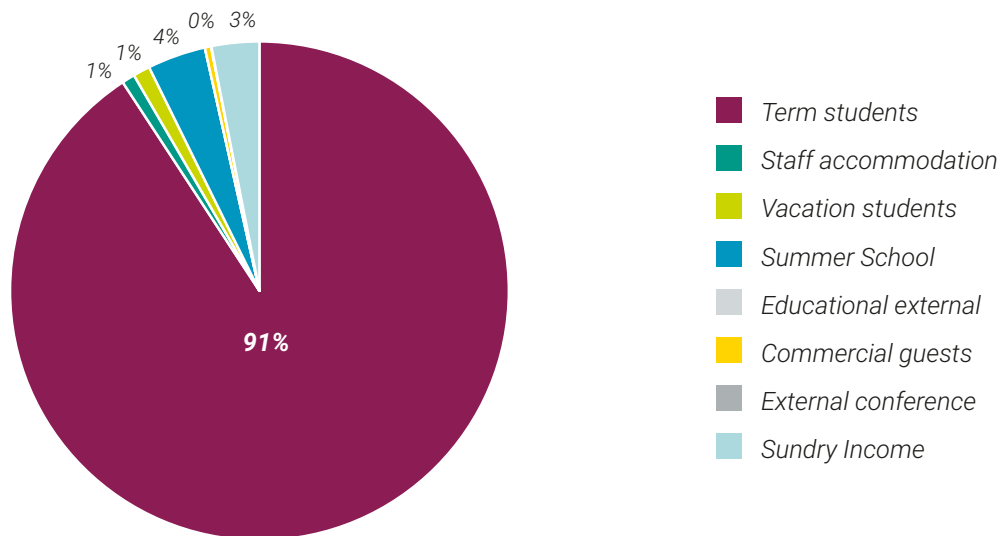


Figure 1: Residential Services income by type 2020/21

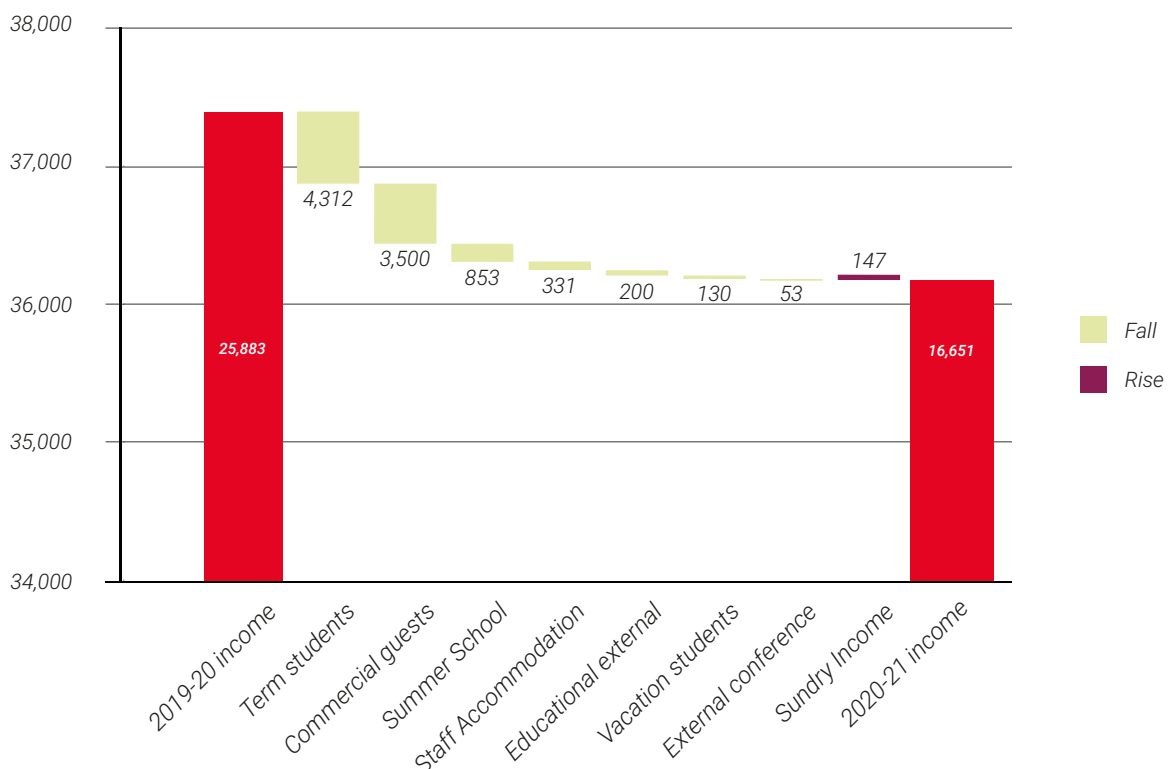


Figure 2: Residential Services movement in income by category 2020/21



## LSE Catering Services 2020/21 Income

The total income generated by LSE Catering Services in 2020/21 dropped by 77 per cent to £0.9m, a decrease of £3.2m on 2019/20. This decrease was driven by the temporary closure of many of our Catering Outlets due to the pandemic.

LSE Central Catering	2019/20	% Total Income	2020/21	% Total Income	% Current Year Vs Previous Year
Retail Outlets	£2,206,520	53%	£537,898	57%	-76%
Hospitality Services	£1,375,639	33%	£124,641	13%	-91%
General Store (Inc online)	£552,371	13%	£280,135	30%	-49%
Total Income	£4,134,530	100%	£942,674	100%	-77%

Table 2: Catering outlets and hospitality income in 2020/21

## Developing plans for additional bed spaces

### Northumberland House

In June 2020 we had to say goodbye to Northumberland House, which had been in our portfolio since 2007. The Northumberland House lease ended, and we handed the property back to the Wellcome Trust.



Front of House Managers of Northumberland House, Roberto Del-Monte and Davinder Ratra, with Business Development Manager Fiona Tomasi



## **New accommodation – Burgess Park, Southwark**

In July 2020 we were excited when Southwark Council granted planning permission for a new student hall of residence in Burgess Park. The site looks directly onto the park and will accommodate 676 graduate students at affordable rents. Within the development is a commercial creative centre, planned to be operated by LSE Generate, along with a community café.

The team are now working on the development proposals, which we hope will be finalised during Michaelmas term 2021. If all goes to plan, the building will open to students in September 2024.

## **Redevelopment of Bankside House**

Bankside House currently accommodates c600 students, however, the site could potentially be redeveloped to accommodate up to 2,000 students. Plans are being considered for redevelopment and during the year the School contributed to the Examination in Public for the New Southwark Plan (NSP). The consultation ended in September 2021 after which the School will consider options for the future redevelopment of Bankside House.

## **Procurement**

### **Laundry**

In May 2021, we signed a contract with a new laundry provider, Washstation. The selection panel were impressed with Washstation's prioritisation of the student experience, innovative technologies and commitment to supporting RCSD to meet our green sustainability objectives. We are looking forward to working in partnership with Washstation in 2021/22 to deliver a refreshed, efficient and environmentally friendly laundry service for our residents, with improved student satisfaction results.

## **Opening of new catering outlets**

### **Beavers Brew**

During 2020/21 work progressed well on our newest cafe, the Beavers Brew. The café will be located on the ground floor of the state-of-the-art new Marshall Building. The handover is anticipated to be in Michaelmas Term 2021 with full opening in January 2022. The café was named after a competition was held for staff and students to suggest a name, with two lucky winners receiving a bottle of champagne for choosing to name the café after the popular school mascot the Beaver.











## Environmental sustainability in RCSD

Creating a sustainable LSE is one of the three strategic objectives in our divisional Strategic Plan 2020-2025. Here are some of our many achievements in 2020/21:

### Reduce the Juice 'Connect'

In collaboration with the University of London, we adapted and moved online with "Reduce the Juice Connect" programme, adding a Global Sustainability Perspective. This delivered behavioural change initiatives, along with delivering Sustainability Ambassador training to 26 Reduce the Juice Ambassadors. 12 varied sustainability themed global webinars were run, with competitions, in total engaging 300 LSE staff and students. Reduce the Juice ran 7 Challenge prize competitions with 24 LSE entries: with an LSE student Sebastian Zambrano winning the water scarcity competition challenge. In total 5 (out of 45 globally) LSE Sustainability Advocacy Awards were won, for attending webinars and completing sustainability challenges.

### British Heart Foundation

We continued a successful partnership with the British Heart Foundation (BHF) giving new homes to unwanted items. The 'Relove' campaign has so far resulted in 551 bags of items worth £7,714 being donated to the BHF. The equivalent of 4.4 tonnes of items were diverted from waste and 44,860kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e gas emissions saved. We further supported BHF with collections of furniture and fridges, raising an additional £357, taking the total raised to June 2021 to £7,371. The British Heart Foundation really appreciates the LSE support in what has been another challenging year for the charity and those it supports.

### TRAID clothing donations

TRAID collected 6724 Kgs of clothing and shoes, saving 63.9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e greenhouse gas emissions from August 2020 to July 2021. This is the equivalent to a water saving of 10,758 m<sup>3</sup> or 4.3 Olympic Size swimming pools! This amounts to approximately 23,500 garments being diverted from landfill and either recycled or reused: with Residences supporting a Circular Economy approach.



## Green Impact

We contributed many teams to the Green Impact initiative, with High Holborn, Northumberland House, Passfield Hall, Carr-Saunders achieving Gold, Rosebery Hall achieving Silver and Butler's Wharf achieving Bronze. The LSE Centre Building Catering team were proud to receive a Platinum award in 2021 for their sustainability efforts and introduction of a coffee grounds recycling scheme in their area. Thanks to the fantastic efforts from all the Green Impact teams in Residential and Catering Services during 2020/21.



*Platinum Green Impact 2020/21 awarded to LSE Centre Buildings Catering team*

## Reduction in Single Use Plastics

LSE Catering has removed plastic bottled water from hospitality functions and now provides on-site filtered tap water in reusable LSE bottles where possible, alternatively offering bottled mineral water in glass bottles or glass jugs of tap water.

To further encourage our customers to use a reusable cup for their daily beverage, a levy of 25p was introduced on single use cups in our cafes and restaurants. This initiative will continue in 2021/22 as our efforts continue to focus on further increasing the adoption of reusable cups. Currently 40 per cent of hot drinks sold on campus are in reusable cups.





*Christina Mihailescu, Beveridge Cafe*

During Green week in November 2020 LSE Catering worked with LSESU RAG to donate 50p for every hot beverage sold to go to worthy causes. This raised £1,162 which went directly to The Felix Project, Good Food for Good Causes. The Felix Project is a food redistribution charity, rescuing fresh, nutritious food which would otherwise go to waste, to deliver it to charities, shelters, Covid food hubs, schools and more.

## Carbon Impact

To encourage the uptake of plant-based foods and reduce the consumption of meat to help lessen our customers' carbon footprint, we have developed a carbon labelling traffic light system for our hot meals. This was developed at our catering sustainability meetings with input from the LSE Sustainability Team, students, academics and interested parties in the LSE including a PhD student in the Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science at LSE specialising in ethical consumption and climate change. This is being piloted in our four catered halls and Garrick Restaurant to give customers an informed choice. We are aiming to achieve plant-based meal sales of 60 per cent to help contribute to LSE 2030 Strategy by changing customer food choices.

## Green Gown

LSE Catering was a finalist in the Green Gown Awards in 2020 for Campus Health Food and Drink for nudges to plant-based options. You can see more details here:

[sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk/green\\_gown\\_awards](https://sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk/green_gown_awards)



## Creating an inclusive home for learning

**We will continue to embrace diversity and foster belonging among our student body.**

### **Annual student accommodation satisfaction survey**

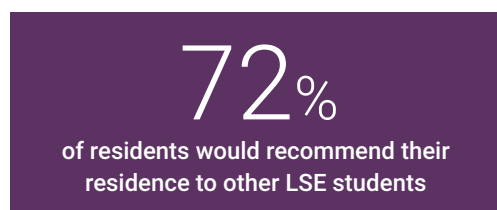
Each Lent Term, we run a survey to ask student residents what they think about living in halls. The feedback helps us to shape and improve our services. In 2020/21 the survey was adapted to make the questions more targeted to the service provision during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In our 2020/21 annual satisfaction survey, 84 per cent of students living in LSE managed halls said they would recommend their residence to other LSE students. Overall participation went down by six percentage points to 48 per cent. When we included halls that are managed by 3rd party providers, the overall numbers saying they would recommend their hall was 72 per cent.

We were particularly pleased that our halls catering scores improved significantly in the year – especially as so many students were relying on food being delivered to their rooms or served in our restaurants. 83 per cent of students said they were satisfied with the catering provision – up from 67 per cent in 2019. 81 per cent said they were satisfied with the responsiveness of staff – up from 75 per cent last year.

A special mention to the catering staff team at Rosebery Hall where 84 per cent of students told us they were satisfied with catering provision and 90 per cent said they were satisfied with the responsiveness of staff.

- **Across all halls, including those managed by third-party providers:**



- **In LSE managed halls we saw that:**



For the full report and set of statistics see: [lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents](https://lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents)



## What students say about our service

"It is very friendly, and it is easy to meet people and make new friends, I feel like I am never alone."

### **BSc in Geography with Economics, Rosebery Hall**

"The community is great, the social life was still quite solid even with Covid-19. The staff was really kind and tried their best to help in these unprecedented times."

### **BSc in Sociology, Bankside House**

"Great community. great and helpful staff. It's really an amazing place and that's why I've stayed for the past three years here."

### **BSc in Management, Passfield Hall**

"It is less expensive compared to other halls, with a great location."

### **MSc in Social and Cultural Psychology, Butler's Wharf Residence**

## Halls cup

LSE Halls Cup is LSE's friendly inter-hall competition and this year again our students showed great competitive and community spirit in the Halls Cup with Carr-Saunders Hall winning the competition for the first time. This year's competition resulted in many achievements with our students raising £617, contributing over 117 hours to volunteering and attending 228 wonderfully diverse events hosted across halls in the Michaelmas and Lent terms.

*Halls Cup logo*







## Customer feedback

As part of our commitment to a leading and exemplary service provider, we take customer feedback seriously and we act on customer feedback. We received a total of 596 complaints in 2020/21 compared to 493 in 2020/21, which was a slight increase. The highest proportion of all recorded complaints were facilities-related (26 per cent).

Within catering, due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, many of the outlets remained closed, however for those that remained open, several positive compliments about staff and service were received.

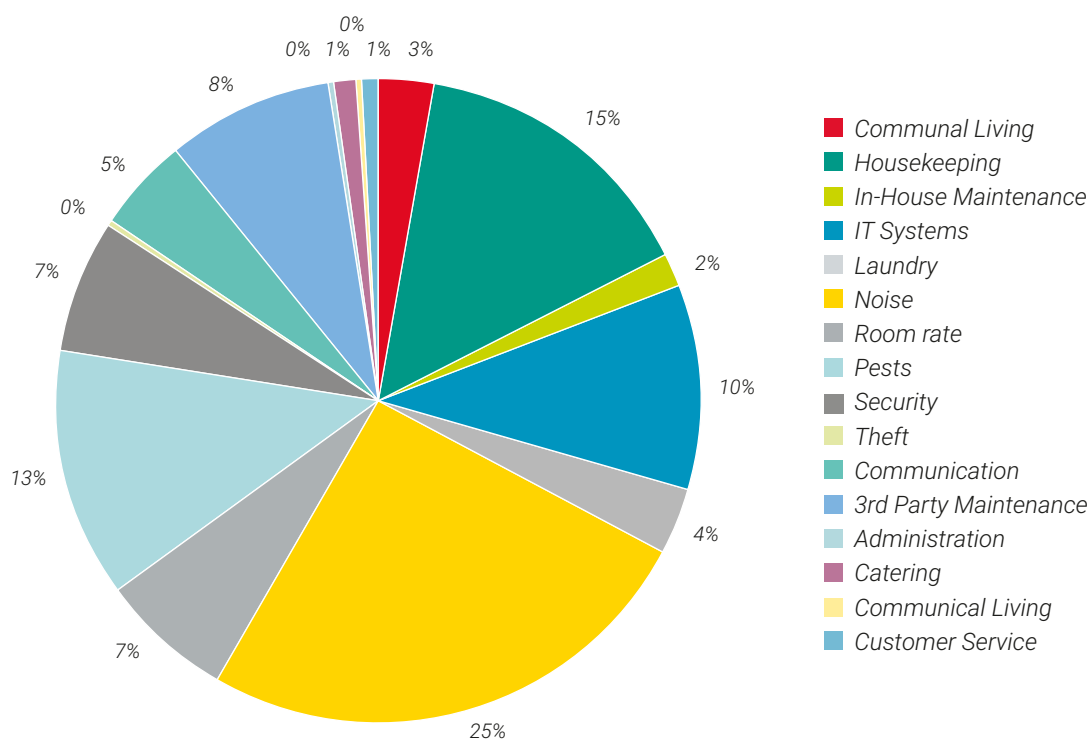


Figure 3: Residential Services complaints 2020/21

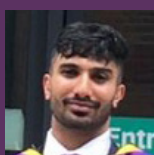


## Investing in our community

**We will invest in supporting and developing all our staff.**

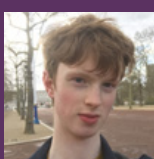
- Investing in our community and supporting and developing our staff is one of our key strategic objectives.
- 247 staff were employed in Residences and Catering, including LSE students.
- Employing LSE students to work with us enables them to work part-time whilst studying and share their knowledge of living in halls and studying at LSE with us.

### What our student assistants think about working in RSCD



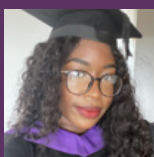
"Having worked at Bankside for over two years whilst studying at LSE, I have definitively enhanced my university experience. Not only has it allowed me to cope with the London prices as a student (!), but I have had an amazing time meeting students from a whole range of backgrounds. It has given me much exposure to new friends and building relationships with people who I may otherwise never have met, especially during COVID times. I have thoroughly enjoyed working at LSE Bankside House, and only have positive things to say about my experience."

**Anshuman Sood, LLB graduated in 2021**



"Working at Rosebery was a fun and engaging experience. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn so many new skills and meet some great people. Rosebery's friendly staff made working in the hall enjoyable even as we overcame the challenges of Covid-19."

**Joseph Davy, BSc Economics**



"My favourite part about working at High Holborn is, without a doubt, engaging with the term-time students. As an LSE student myself, I know how reassuring it feels to see a friendly and familiar face when you walk in at reception. I think it's paramountly important to make students feel comfortable and welcome during the academic year as they undertake their studies, and I feel privileged to be able to play a part in that."

**Mayline Amegan, BSc Politics & International Relations**



## **Onboarding programme for staff**

As part of our key objective “Investing in our community” we completed the first draft of a standard on-boarding process for new employees in the division. The process is now in a pilot stage and is being completed for all new starters, with a review after 12 months.

## **Working during the COVID-19 pandemic**

During the pandemic, many staff within the division worked flexibly – some travelling into work daily whilst others worked from home. In all, our staff responded incredibly well to new challenges and new ways of working. In 2021 staff within central residences moved to blended working arrangements.

## **Professional Organisations**

In 2020/21 we continued to network with peers in professional associations for university accommodation and catering staff. During the pandemic this was key in sharing knowledge and experiences across the industry.

**CUBO** College and University Business Officers

**TUCO** The University Caterers Organisation

**ACUHO-I** The Association of College and University Housing Officers – International

**ASRA** The Association Student Residential Accommodation

**AMOSSHE** The Student Services Organisation

## **Customer First Reaccreditation**

Residences and Catering were both re-accredited with the Customer First standard in April 2021. An external assessor interviewed staff over two days assessing evidence, in order to determine whether we continued to reach the standard required for Customer First re-accreditation.

The Standard focused on three pillars of business planning that look at the strategic, tactical and operational delivery of the department:

- Building Customer Relationships
- Maximising Market Awareness
- Developing your People



Kerry Hunn, the Customer First assessor, wrote the following in his final reports regarding the assessment:

*"It was an absolute pleasure to conduct another Customer First assessment with LSE Catering Services, and to speak with the dedicated staff who work there. The undisputed commitment to ensuring the best possible experience for customers is commendable and a real sense of community has been created for customers and staff alike."*

*"Having first assessed LSE Residential Services in May 2019, it was a pleasure to conduct a further assessment and see the developments and excellent work that continues to be carried out. The past year has certainly presented Residential Services with many challenges. Despite this, the needs of the students have remained the absolute priority, and Residential Services has proved itself to be sufficiently adaptable and responsive, allowing it to continue to meet those needs."*

*"The strong direction and leadership, together with a shared passion and drive for continuous improvement will, the assessor has no doubt, ensure the organisation will continue to grow and achieve its strategic goals, regardless of what the future holds."*



Orlando Terran and Jakub Krejcik, LSE Catering





## Values in Practice awards

Staff in the Residential and Catering Services Division had multiple nominations across several categories for the 2021 awards, including Valuing People, Creative Innovator, EDI Champion, Outstanding Collegiality, Exceptional Team Member, Excellent Manager and Inspirational Leadership.

The Centre Buildings Catering, Halls Catering, High Holborn, Northumberland House and Warden teams were all nominated for Team of the Year.

The Inspirational Leadership award this year was presented to Victoria Frost, our Head of Residential Life until May 2021. Victoria played a key role in managing the Division's response to pandemic. Victoria said of receiving her award:

*"...what I am most proud of is that we kept going. We made it through the end of last year and this year as a team. We dealt with what came up, we worked incredibly hard, through incredibly difficult (and uncertain, or often changing) times. I am very honoured to have been nominated (and to have won) a VIP award, and hope that it reflects on the wider Residences team."*



Victoria Frost, Inspirational Leadership award winner 2021

## Recruiting experienced staff

In 2021, Victoria Frost took up a new role in the School, as Deputy Head of Student Services (Wellbeing). Victoria was replaced by James Greenwood who joined us from the University of the Arts London as our new Head of Residential Life. James is well known in the Residential Life sector nationally having contributed in many ways to the development of residential life programmes. We wish Victoria well in her new role and proudly welcome James as part of our team.



## Thank you

Our thanks go to everyone who contributed to our successes in the division in 2020/21, staff, Student Union, Residences and Catering User Groups and our student community.



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We have made every effort to ensure that the information provided in this handbook is accurate and up to date at the time of print. However, the possibility of subsequent changes to our circumstances or procedures mean that we offer no warranties and accept no legal responsibility for the accuracy of the content. For information that is revised throughout the year, please refer to our website at **[lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents](https://lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents)**

The information in this publication can be made available in alternative formats.  
If required please email **[residences.admin@lse.ac.uk](mailto:residences.admin@lse.ac.uk)**

Design: LSE Design Unit (**[lse.ac.uk/designunit](https://lse.ac.uk/designunit)**)

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**[lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents](https://lse.ac.uk/currenthallresidents)**