

No space for Space Bar in new building

Eirill Dalan

KINGSTON'S new £55m Town House building is set to contain a bigger library and more social space, but no student bar.

Last week, the University revealed that the building structure will focus on flexibility, sustainability and student engagement. Completion is expected in late 2017.

Julia Bond, director of estates development, said: "It is not a building just for today, it needs to be here for 50, maybe 100 years or more, so it needs to support the needs of today but evolve more over the years to come. The building needs to adapt to that."

Bond hopes to obtain planning permission for a building as big as 11,500 square metres. To compare, John Galsworthy building is 9,000 square metres.

Only two per cent of the new Town House will be allocated to staff members, who will be working directly with students.

Almost 40 per cent will be taken up by a new LRC. However, plans for a new Space Bar and parking space are yet to be resolved.

"There's a separate project looking at the relocation of the Students' Union and its functions. The SU bar will not be in this building," said Bond.

According to Clarissa Wilks, the dean for learning and teaching, the new Town House will contain 900 learning seats.

"This is a really important improvement in the way those spaces are designed so they are comfortable, generous and can really create a great experience for students," said Wilks.

"We don't want to replace what we already have in abundance, which are traditional classrooms."

Other investments include the new campus main entrance, which will contain a reception, a café, social spaces, and a 300-seat multimedia auditorium, which will be used to showcase students' work.

The design of the new building will be revealed next week on January 28 from 1pm to 5pm in TH 102.

Alleged KU rape victim left too scared to talk to police

Camilla Huuse

A KU STUDENT said she was raped at a hotel over Christmas but decided not to report it to the police in fear of not being believed.

The second-year student, 21, said that she was blaming herself and "a too short dress" for what happened.

"I would have reported it, but I am terrified of not being believed," she said. "I am still trying to search for a reason. Why me?

"You hear a lot of stories from court where they take the guy's side and I feel that the police often are male-orientated."

This comes only days after new crime statistics show 49 per cent of people (2,324 offenders) convicted for sexual assault, did not receive a custodial sentence.

Elizabeth Carse, KUSU VP life, said: "I was horrified when I heard about this. KUSU and the KU Student Wellbeing team offer advice

and support for students in need. We urge all students who need support to seek it."

On a trip to Manchester with her friend, some men started to talk to them in a club.

"I don't usually drink but the one time I do, it happened."

"I should have seen the signs," she said and explained how the man who allegedly assaulted her had constantly bought her alcohol.

The student said that she agreed to go back to the man's hotel with her friend because she didn't want to be alone in an unfamiliar city.

When they arrived at the hotel, her friend disappeared and the man followed the student into the reception toilet.

She said: "Because I was feeling ill, he brought me over to the sink to drink water. As I was bending over, he ripped my dress and slammed into me."

Because she was scared of not

finding her friend, she accompanied the man, who claimed he would leave her alone, upstairs.

"All I wanted was to find my friend and go home," she said. "I was hurt, afraid and without a phone." She claimed that the man raped her again upstairs.

Her friend later found his room and got her back to their hotel. She said: "I had heard the advice of not showering after a rape, but I just wanted to get him off me."

She said that she regretted keeping silent about it when blood tests proved that she had been torn, but that she felt it was "too late".

"Every day it affects me. I can't stop thinking about it, I avoid social situations and my boyfriend sees me cry a lot."

The police encourages sexual assault victims to contact support organisations such as the Victim Support line under 0845 3030 900 even if the crime remains unreported.

'I feel so helpless'

Lithuanian student fears suspension after student loan was frozen due to loss of migrant worker status

Raiani Sibien Sa R Vieira

A THIRD-YEAR Lithuanian student is to be suspended from university in a few weeks after learning she was no longer entitled to financial support.

Egle Laucinskaite, 23, a film, culture and media student, found herself almost penniless and under the threat of losing her place at Kingston after KU Student Finance notified her that she had lost her European migrant worker status.

"This is absolutely outrageous and I am so disappointed!" she said. "I found out I lost my status on December 20. By that time, I already received a letter from the University saying I am going to be suspended if I don't pay the fees."

"I felt helpless and miserable. I thought that was it and I would have to leave so close to finishing my degree. It is a difficult time because I was counting on the loan and now I spent all my savings and have no money to pay rent."

The European migrant worker status allows students to receive loans and grants to cover tuition fees and maintenance costs, provided that the student has a job.

Laucinskaite had two jobs but de-

cided to drop one of them because she was not able to cope with the workload in her final year at Kingston.

Student Finance then said that she was no longer eligible for a loan or grant, even though she still had one job at the Knights Park bar.

According to Laucinskaite, Student Finance did not approve her job at the bar as sufficient and claimed it was a marginal job.

"They say if I was not studying here, I wouldn't be working there either," she said.

Elizabeth Carse, KUSU Vice President Student Life, said: "We don't know why the job isn't being recognised as one yet but we are looking into the possibility of it being tax-related."

Laucinskaite said that her financial problems and the threat of being suspended were beginning to affect her studies. She is appealing to Student Finance to reassess her case so she can complete her degree.

"I truly hope Student Finance will reconsider my case," she said. "I love studying at Kingston and I would be devastated if I couldn't finish my course."

Student Finance was not available for comment.



Laucinskaite working in Knights Park Bar RAIANI SIBIEN SA R VIEIRA