

# Together, we will ensure that you love your time in Leeds.



**In February 2009 we asked over 4000 students what they wanted from their Union. We listened carefully to what you said and have made a plan to guide the Union's work to 2014. Our plan is based on 9 areas of work which will help us to achieve our vision of ensuring that you love your time in Leeds.**

We have focused on these 9 areas following feedback from over 4000 students in February 2009. Within each of the 9 areas of work we have identified 4 big ideas to work on.

This summary goes through each of the 4 big ideas under each of these 9 themes.

## **1. Making it easy for you to improve your skills and enjoy new experiences. (Page 3)**

Our proposals in this area include providing space in the Union and on our website for you to grow your skills and get access to advice, support and opportunities so that you graduate with a great CV.

## **2. Helping you to get the support you need to make your life easier. (Page 5)**

You asked us to make your money go further, so we're finding ways to help you with money saving ideas and advice on managing your money.

## **3. Giving you more for your membership and more for your money. (Page 7)**

We will continue to be a not for profit organisation. We will be completely transparent in how we recycle the money that you spend in the Union to support our activities so that you love your time in Leeds.

## **4. Working together for change on the issues that affect you. (Page 9)**

We will help you campaign on issues that affect you during your time in Leeds. Together we will prove that change is possible when you believe that it is.

We'd love to hear what you think about our plan, tell us online at [www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/yourcomments/](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/yourcomments/)

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**5. Making your membership fun and exciting.  
(Page 12)**

Proposals here include investing in technology in our shops and bars so that we can offer you a loyalty card, giving you discounts on products that interest you and rewarding you for getting involved in the Union.

**6. Creating a strong work culture that helps our staff help you.  
(Page 14)**

We will make sure that the Union recruits and develops the best staff to ensure that you love your time in Leeds.

**7. Being sustainable in every way. (Page 16)**

We are going to be innovative and creative in how we use new technologies and systems that benefit the lives of our members and make us truly sustainable. This theme also covers the changes that we need to make as a result of the Charities Act 2006. You can find out more about what this legislation means for LUU online at [www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/faqs/#charity](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/faqs/#charity)

**8. Creating a vibrant space for you to meet other people.  
(Page 19)**

We are going to create a better Union building with more seating areas and social spaces for members. We will also continue to improve our websites to give you access to all of the Union's support, advice and representation services online whenever you need them.

**9. Building a community for all of our members.  
(Page 21)**

We want to make sure that we connect with members who have specific needs from their Union, making sure that they receive the information that they want about our services and activities.

**The summary of the proposals for each area of work can be found in the following pages. The plan will go to the November Referendum for students to vote on. At least 1500 students are required to vote with a majority 'Yes' vote for the plan to be adopted.**

**If the plan is voted in, Union trustees, officers and staff will prepare the action plan and develop ways in which to deliver the initiatives that are described within this document. The new plan will begin in August 2010 and will be reviewed continuously until July 2014, when we will begin the Review process again.**

**It is vital that you let us know what you think about the Union's vision and plan for 2014. We want to ensure that every student loves their time in Leeds, and we would love to hear from you. Please make sure that you have your say on the Union's vision and plan by voting in the November Referendum.**

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## **Make it easy for you to get the support needed to make student life easier**

Our proposals in this area include providing space in the Union and on our website for you to grow your skills and get access to advice, support and opportunities so that you graduate with a great CV.

### **1. We will provide somewhere that consolidates all the advice, support and opportunities that are available to members who want to grow their skills and experiences**

We know there are many activities already available to students at Leeds which offer the opportunity to grow skills and experience which will help in the employment market. LUU will seek to make it easier for students to access these opportunities by developing a space for information and learning. As with all our services, any physical development – most likely in the form of an opportunities centre in the style of Joblink – will also be reflected on the web to maximise the access to members.

Our partnership working with the University of Leeds Careers Centre and the Leeds for Life project will also be an important feature of this work. We will lead our staff to develop new ideas and easy routes for students to switch between our activities and support from the University Careers support. With a true partnership our aim will be to improve the quality of the University work as we assist with communications and feedback from students.



### **2. We will support students and graduates who want to gain more skills and experience before entering the world of work**

We can specifically help in this area by supporting other parts of the University who share our goal. We have a close relationship with our members and listen to them through various forms of feedback. We can use our strengths to build a support package for members who are seeking to enhance their skills. We know through our volunteers involved in clubs and societies that time management and balancing working and studying are areas our members need support. These are the basis for skills which will help in the workplace as well as make University life easier to manage. Helping our members gain life skills can come through both the experiences our activity programmes can offer and also from workshops and learning activities. We will look to tailor both to suit the diversity our student community now reflects.

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### **3. We will ensure Leeds University Union's part time staff can compete well in their chosen future path**

LUU employs over 200 students every academic year as weekly-paid staff across all of its services. This alone makes a contribution to helping with the costs of University life. We also want to recognise the responsibility we have to not only create as many part-time jobs as possible for students, but to make this experience a key part of the evidence those students can use to help in future employment. One way we can help is to design a skills portfolio for student staff to evidence their experience and training.

A further way we can help our student staff develop their career potential is mentoring and development through internal opportunities in LUU. We will work with our managers to enable student staff to access vocational training opportunities and develop skills in other departments of the Union or University through work experience. We will build a profile of our former student staff Alumni, so they can be used as case studies to inspire current and new staff.

### **4. We will push the skills message to members from day one**

Our members have many messages thrust in front of them when they arrive at University, it is hard to prioritise with so many choices. What LUU can do to help is make it easy to hear the important messages about building your skills and experiences whilst at University. Our new high profile opportunities centre can be a focal point for this message. We need to be able to respond to the needs of our members - to balance academic study with building their skills and experiences, enjoy extra-curricular activities and undertake part-time work if necessary.

We will begin to feature a Skills Week within our regular programme of activity. Through this format we can promote the relevant graduate skills which will enhance your employment prospects and how to get them in a fun and engaging way. Our partnership with the University of Leeds Careers Centre and development of Leeds for Life are critical to making this work for students. We will use our influence within the University to make these messages relevant to the first year experience as much as for those closer to graduation.

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## **Helping you to get the support you need to make your life easier.**

You asked us to make your money go further, so we're finding ways to help you with money saving ideas and advice on managing your money.

### **1. We will make sure that it is easy to find help**

It sounds an obvious course of action to follow, but we are proposing to put considerable work into making access to help as easy as possible. We believe students can find it difficult to navigate the various departments and services on campus which are there to support them. The University of Leeds is large and can be a complicated structure to get around for many students; the Union is included in this. We need to create easy routes for students to access all the support services on campus whether physical or via the web. This will require a close partnership with the University student support managers to develop a single brand for "help".

Further to the planning and communication which will be required to achieve the above, we also believe there are some direct changes to make within LUU. Members should be able to enter LUU and whatever their need get the right answer first time and be directed to the right place to help them. In order to achieve this we will develop a central point to co-ordinate this in the best way. To get the message over to students we also suggest the development of a Welfare Day each term to bring all of the services together under one roof and promote the range of help available. This is not necessarily limited to just LUU services and could incorporate

invitations to external organisations. At the same time we should look to extend our information outside the Union Building and build upon the previous drop-in sessions we have done in halls of residences and faculties around campus.



### **2. We will help members to make their money go further**

Money remains a specific area of concern for our members and therefore will be a priority for us too. Our SKINT brand has been developed with success over the past 2 years as a way to combine advice with direct discounts around our own shops. This has been a great channel for communicating simple financial guidance and we

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seek to continue this development. We will introduce more resources such as cooking tips and regular shopping advice. The focus will also be on money saving ideas and on practical money management. Internally we will organise a SKINT development group to develop the brand, agree a set of guidelines for sales that come under the brand, and monitor on an ongoing basis.

### **3. We will develop a new academic support service**

Our members have identified that LUU should be undertaking more direct academic support work. We have always supported students through academic representation – through Course Reps and Union Academic Reps - and advocacy when there are problems or students just want to give some feedback to the University. What we can start to do now is identify how we might provide a more productive level of support to aid the student academic experience. We will undertake work with Union Academic Reps and Course Reps to determine if our outline ideas would be helpful or relevant and of use to members. One of the particular initiatives we are developing is to create an academic support hub within the Union. Once we have outlined the ideas from our members further and we can identify a suitable space in the Union building, we would seek to develop a facility which can bring a variety of academic support together.

### **4. We will support our members in the community**

We first launched a co-ordinated plan for our community-related work in 2007. Since then we have been challenged to continually

do more. In talking to local organisations around LS6 we have received feedback and developed a new plan which will be launched to cover 2009-2011.



During this academic year we will be working on extending the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in areas where students live and building upon positive work with West Yorkshire Police over the past few years. Our Volunteering and Community Office has become a hub of student volunteering and community relations and we want to see this focal point grow further.

Whether it is work on crime and safety, housing, volunteering or environmental action we will seek to develop activity ourselves and in partnerships which serve our members needs and the local community. As part of our new strategy for 2010-14 we will commit to a new community plan to be developed in spring/summer 2011.

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## **Giving you more for your membership and more for your money.**

We will continue to be a not for profit organisation. We will be completely transparent in how we recycle the money that you spend in the Union to support our activities so that you love your time in Leeds.

### **1. We will create a new, more direct and transparent way of communicating profit recycling that occurs within LUU (how we spend our members' money)**

"*Not For Profit Just For Students*" has been a key campaign for LUU over the past 5 years. It started out as a simple way to show members how money spent in our bars and shops, is used to fund the clubs and societies, volunteering, Student Advice Centre and other non-commercial services. This message has developed into a brand in itself which sets our services apart from the high street. As with all campaigns, it goes in a cycle which must now be revitalised in a new way. We will use our profit recycling message to create more openness about the way the Union is run and how all members have a stake in the Union.

There are a number of ways in which we can refresh the profit recycling message. We will make things simple by explaining to members in easier terms what we spend the money that they spend in the Union on. It is really important to link this message across all our services in the building and the web-site. A simple suggestion has been to use a 'price tag' poster in each area of the building that communicates what we have spent in this area and what you get for your money.



### **2. We will develop and monitor a culture of excellent customer service through innovative and inspiring methods**

We need to work through our people to improve our customer service culture. Naturally we will involve members - as customers - in helping formulate ideas that can add to the training and communication we do with our teams. Two specific programmes of work are currently proposed. Firstly, staff training and reviews based upon interactions with students and other customers. Secondly, staff training and reviews based upon interactions internally between our departments and between people who work in the Union.

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Both programmes will be underpinned by our recruitment, development and performance management approaches. As we seek to improve our culture we will celebrate successes and challenge ourselves when we do not reach our new standards. Feedback from members in a variety of ways (including comments and suggestions) will be vitally important to ensure we are going in the right direction.

### **3. We will empower Department Managers to take ownership of their designated space and maintain the physical standards of that space.**

Our building is vitally important to the way our members and all our customers view LUU. There are days during the year when our footfall exceeds 20,000 people! We will establish a new attitude to the ways in which we present our spaces which will continually improve standards. Our philosophy should be to keep everything "as new".

We will achieve this by an extensive building maintenance and improvement programme which will cover the simple things like repairs and cleaning standards. It is important that this also prioritises the areas such as toilets and the external areas to our building. Social spaces will be just as important as those areas which generate sales. We will give support internally to give ownership to department managers and the relevant student groups who can identify how to keep their space looking "as new".

### **4. We will treat our members like stakeholders, creating a culture of transparency relating to our spaces and developments**

It is important that our members understand how decisions are being taken to generate a new attitude towards Quality and Value. We will find new ways for our members have a say in how we spend Union money. We will consider where and how major spending decisions are being made to ensure transparency. Members will be given a stake in the decisions made in the Union.

The building is a crucial factor in the interaction we have with members and other customers. As we develop our building we will ensure we have a cost / benefit pledge for new works. This will allow our members to challenge us if we over promise and under deliver and increase accountability in our major plans.

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## Working together for change on the issues that affect you.

We will help you campaign on issues that affect you during your time in Leeds. Together we will prove that change is possible when you believe that it is.

### **1. We will create change through engagement**

During this academic year we have started trialling some changes to the Course Rep structures in the Faculty of Earth and Environment. From this pilot we expect to learn more about what can work to create a closer relationship between students and the decisions which affect their learning/course delivery. A significant part of this learning is around the role of the Course Rep and how that can feed up to a School Rep who can influence decisions made in the University at that level. Whilst this potentially requires much greater resource, we will seek to support this investment if we can create a greater impact for students across the whole University.

We propose to use the learning from the pilot project to instigate changes to our work under the new strategic plan. We will build upon principles of partnership with the University to create change, whilst maintaining a distinguishable, independent voice for students. Extending our work from these principles, we will work with the University to build a communications campaign to change the expectations and behaviour of staff with regards to student engagement. Use of the University Virtual Learning Environment will be key to this development. We will also consult with the University in order to agree a code of conduct on student engagement.



### **2. We will create change through participation**

Participation in our democratic activity has risen over the past few years, but not enough to satisfy our ambitions. In our referenda and elections we want to significantly raise the level of participation: 6,000 students taking part should be our expected level, with 10,000 our aspiration.

We don't believe we have the right answers to achieve this yet. We will evaluate the democratic system that we have, re-examining the functionality of all of our representative bodies to ensure that they are performing 3 key functions;

- 1) Communicating and coordinating all student viewpoints
- 2) Holding decision makers and implementers to account
- 3) Providing an accessible forum for discussing, making and implementing changes.

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We anticipate bringing a new model before the Referendum in March 2010, which can then be launched in line with our full strategic plan from July 2010.

### **3. We will create change through campaigning**

We have a good tradition of member-led campaigning activity in the Union. This has covered housing issues, liberation, environmental and ethical issues, alongside tuition fees and change in the University. It is clear from the Review that we need to keep it our priority to support campaigning activity which is close to University activity and local to Leeds. We will make sure that we measure the outcomes of our campaigning has so that we concentrate on areas where we can have real impact for students.

Our membership will lead our campaigning agenda more effectively, through close work with the student executive and Campaign and Democracy Support team. We will look for ways to campaign on the issues identified by our research so that we are able to campaign effectively on the issues which matter most to the membership. We propose to find new ways to inspire our members to get involved and monitor how members are involved to increase participation. We will look to integrate web-based technology to help create new campaign activity and improve communications in this area. We will also look to find synergy between LUUs campaign agenda with the activity of our political and campaigning societies so that those leading campaigns get more support from LUU. A specific new development will also be a central database to identify potential campaigns, logging student concerns identified through

the Student Advice Centre, our various Course Rep schemes and the LUU Exec.



### **4. We will create change through conviction**

We want to create a conviction in the minds of our members that it is possible to change the world around you. Without the conviction and belief that individuals can make a difference we don't think members will get involved. Therefore we want to help students acknowledge what they can do within the processes around the University and LUU. We will give students the opportunity to make more decisions concerning the Union in simple ways. We can also help students to devise policies which really make a difference to

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the lives of students at the University of Leeds. We will build a tipping point in our members' belief in their ability to affect the world around them.

During 2009 we are supporting a piece of academic research in efficacy within the general student population and including our members. It is our plan that through this research we will be able to extract new recommendations for this work. We will aim to build these conclusions into our approach to participation through conviction, leading to 10,000 students voting in elections and referenda.

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## **Making your membership fun and exciting.**

Proposals here include investing in technology in our shops and bars so that we can offer you a loyalty card, giving you discounts on products that interest you and rewarding you for getting involved in the Union.

### **1. We will encourage greater involvement of students in societies through the use of new media**

We want to reward students who get really involved in the Union. In order to do this we need to develop a database linked to the website that shows members how involved in the Union they are (e.g. member of a club or society, voting in elections, regularly using the shops or bars). The more involved that students get, the more benefits there will be. Our website will allow students to see how many other students are using the Union like them. It will also inspire other students to get more involved with what the Union does.

### **2. We will build a fun community within LUU that integrates all of our activities and encourages our staff and students to be part of that community**

It can be difficult to feel part of something that is so big, but we want to make sure that you feel right at home here at the Union. We are proposing that we get students and Union staff to work far more closely. To do this we need to make sure that students know the staff in the Union and what they do. We can do this via our websites and in society briefings. If we develop better relations between staff and students then students will know who to talk to and how to get

the most out of their Union. Staff will be motivated when we ask students to vote on their favourite member of staff to create a "People's Choice Award".



### **3. We will refresh the profit recycling message and place it back at the heart of our activities**

For every £1 spent in the Union, 13p goes straight back to funding clubs and societies, support, representation and the other services that the Union offers. We want to show students the direct benefits of being a not for profit organisation, and how this benefits their particular life in Leeds. We'll communicate how the money that is spent in the Union improves their personal life in Leeds, for example;

*"Every week Fruity raises enough money to pay for 3 dance classes for our ballet group. Thanks for that!"*

*"You buy pick and mix which means we can buy footballs"*

*"We sold enough sandwiches this week to pay for Art Society for a year..."*

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We want to do this because it will show students how shopping in the Union is better for them than shopping in a supermarket or shop where the profits go to shareholders, not students. This crosses over with the plan to improve how we deliver quality and value in the Union.

#### **4. We will introduce a membership card based on the student card to reward our members for their involvement with LUU**

We want to reward students who use the shops, bars and venues in the Union. After all, the money spent in the Union's retail outlets goes straight back to funding clubs and societies, support, representation and the other services that the Union offers. Students will receive points for every pound that they spend which can be redeemed or cashed in the Union exactly like a Tesco or Boots style card. Students will get points for special purchases throughout the year, for

example members of RocSoc will get more points for buying magazines like Kerrang and members of Horse Riding Society could get points for buying Horse and Hound magazine! We will reward students who get involved with the Union, for example you could get a one off points reward for voting in a Referendum or Exec elections. It will also be possible for clubs and societies to fundraise by using the points system, with the possibility of points going back to the club or society rather than an individual student. Students will also be able to collect points for involvement in other activities, such as Give it a Go or volunteering.

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## **Creating a strong work culture that helps our staff help you.**

We will make sure that the Union recruits and develops the best staff to ensure that you love your time in Leeds.

### **1. We will be One Union, One Family**

We particularly want to bring our people together and make staff, members or visitors feel they are in a distinctive and welcoming environment. We need to build a single identity around what it means to work in LUU across our whole staff team. We will create opportunities for LUU staff to spend more time together through events hosted by LUU. The social time you spend with those you work with reinforces bonds and helps build our culture. We will make a very practical change and commit to creating a space for LUU staff to spend more time together in a single staff room. The space our members use should always come first, but the way we treat our staff will naturally improve the way our members are dealt with too.

### **2. We will show you what LUU does for you**

There are times during the year when we employ over 500 people. It is vital that our people get the best we can offer in benefits and really love their time working at LUU. A number of practical things we can do will improve the work environment. We will ensure that we clearly define what LUU offers as an employer and communicate to staff so that it is more transparent, accessible and understood by all. We will find new ways to enhance the wellbeing at work of all staff. We will create a brand to promote the LUU way of working to prospective and existing employees.



### **3. We will find and grow LUU People**

We are privileged in LUU to have so many great people working for us. We believe we have a strong culture that retains lots of people and helps others flourish in their roles. LUU should be a place where our people grow and develop constantly. This should be a great selling point to prospective employees and we will promote this

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culture so that the right people apply to work here. We will establish a new training programme and encourage the development of transferable skills, making staff aware of progression within the whole organization. We will link this training to effective performance management so that all our people feel supported and able to deliver their very best for our members.

#### **4. We will improve employee engagement**

In the same way that we will be stronger through the participation of our members, we know we will be better at delivering a great Union if more staff are involved in determining how their area runs. We are always looking for more ways to engage our staff, but we believe if we really prioritise this under the new plan then we can achieve much more. We will work out how to define different levels of employee engagement and try to measure them. Once we have done this we will be able to target different activities for different groups of staff just as we have done in the past with our member involvement.

We will go beyond simply assessing how to involve people in decisions and ideas. Every member of our staff team will make a difference and contribute to our vision. We will develop ways to ensure our staff are aware of their impact for students. One way we can do this is through internal staff celebration events and developing storytelling and within departments and right across LUU.



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## **Being sustainable in every way.**

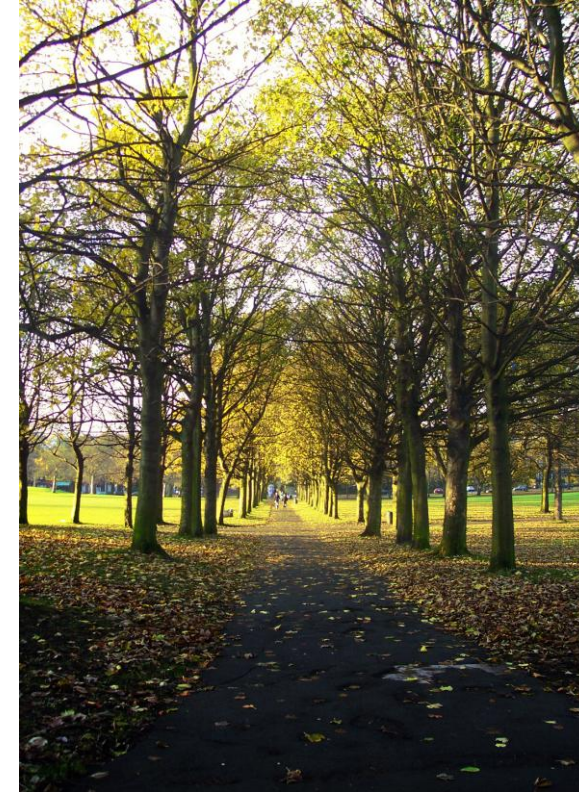
We are going to be innovative and creative in how we use new technologies and systems that benefit the lives of our members and make us truly sustainable. This theme also covers the changes that we need to make as a result of the Charities Act 2006. You can find out more about what this legislation means for LUU online at [www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/faqs/#charity](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/faqs/#charity)

### **1. We will measure and manage our impact on the environment. Improve the positive and reduce the negative. We will have an ethical approach to what we do**

Over the past 4 years we have done much to save energy, recycle and minimise waste. We are recognised within students' unions as one of the best in this area and our students have a strong history of campaigning on environmental issues. However, we know we can achieve more and we know our staff and members expect us to constantly be finding ways to improve, especially in relation to radically reducing our own carbon emissions. A fully developed Environmental Management System for LUU will enable us to raise our performance in energy and waste management. Our carbon footprint needs to be managed carefully and appropriate targets set and achieved so that year by year we are improving. We will continue to assist the University in their work too, providing ideas and being a test-bed for new initiatives around our building.

As the expectations for what we can deliver in terms of environmental management are raised, we also need to keep watch of our decision-making from an ethical perspective. This

constant balance between the views of a range of stakeholders is the key question of sustainability for LUU. Our values are important to us and our practices will be informed by them. As we work with a



variety of organisations and suppliers of goods and services to students, we will continue to promote the best ethical choices. As we develop our own building we will do this against an ethical procurement policy and the best guidelines on sustainability. We will

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educate and communicate this to our staff so that they become ambassadors for this with our customers, and away from LUU too.

## **2. We will make sure we have enough money to provide the services our members want and make sure we're here in the future**

We are constantly being asked to make financial decisions which affect the long term viability of our services. It is crucial that we think long term and ensure that the future students will also love their time at Leeds because of what LUU does. In order to deliver what our members need we will implement a financial strategy that directly links in to longer term plans for development of our building and services. Our financial strategy will be led by prudent budgeting, but releasing financial resources into the areas prioritised by our Strategic Review for development.

Over the past few years we have successfully diversified our funding streams away from simply the University and our commercial services. We know we need to do more of this and that means working on an effective fundraising strategy beyond our traditional model. We will look to alumni more and we will look to external funders who share our goals. This will mean being ready to respond when opportunities arise whilst actively seeking partnerships to deliver great services for students in Leeds.

## **3. We will ensure our governance structure is fit for purpose and relevant to the organisation.**

The governance structures of LUU may seem complicated to people outside students' unions, but they ensure that we are fit for purpose

and the right people are making the right decisions. Since the Charities Act of 2006, all students' unions in England are required to register with the Charities Commission. This will mean a slight change in legal status for LUU. Registering as an organisation limited by guarantee will put the Union in the best position financially with regards to taxation. This will need our members to accept a new governing document for LUU called our Memorandum and Articles which are based on a model for all students' unions. Importantly, our main objects remain unchanged and should not affect our democratic processes or the central role elected officers play in our Union. The full detail of the new Memorandum and Articles can be found at [www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/governanceandtrustees](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/governanceandtrustees).



As our structures develop we also must be open to ideas for improvement. In order to remain relevant and adaptable to best practice, we will commit to conduct a governance review as part of our new strategic plan. We will also adopt an effective benchmarking system that will challenge us to maintain a high performing board which serves the needs of LUU best.

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#### **4. We will be a flexible and adaptable organisation that strives to be innovative and creative**

Our final area for development under this theme of sustainability should protect us from stagnation and complacency in terms of our development. We are proposing that improvement and creativity should be priority areas which will keep good ideas and innovation flowing throughout our new Plan. We will encourage and financially support innovative thinking and new ideas. This will be assessed by how innovative approaches create positive outcomes for our members and generate new income. We will invest in innovative and leading technology which is relevant to our members needs to keep us at the cutting edge of the services we provide.



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## **Creating a vibrant space for you to meet other people.**

We are going to create a better Union building with more seating areas and social spaces for members. We will also continue to improve our websites to give you access to all of the Union's support, advice and representation services online whenever you need them.

### **1. We will make a better Union building**

The Union building is one of the busiest and most exciting spaces on campus. It is used by students for a whole host of activities, including getting advice and support, buying lunch, socialising, dancing or performing in our theatre spaces. Many of our spaces are currently underused or badly laid out. There is a lot of dead space in the building that could be brought back to life. We will get the most out of the Union building by planning a phased approach to investment and maintenance. This will ensure that we have the funds to pay for developing our building. A Building Masterplan will detail what improvements to the Union building need to be made. The Building Masterplan will be written in consultation with members. We want the Union to feel like the best building on campus to be in.

### **2. We will talk with each other more clearly**

We will develop better ways of talking and listening to students and stakeholders. Students will be able to find the information that they want and will only receive the information that is relevant to them

about the Union. Our websites will allow students to join in with the activities that they are interested in and meet new friends online. We will also make better use of emerging technologies to help us listen to students.



It is the Union's role of listening to students that will make our building and websites feel distinctive to other places on campus. They will be places to find help, try new things and create new connections.

### **3. We will create better spaces for us to get together in**

We are going to put seating and social spaces at the heart of the Union. There will be more areas to meet friends, relax, get online and quiet areas to work. The Union building is a hub of activity and can have over 20 000 visitors per day. The Union is often open from 8.30 am all the way through to 5am the next morning! Our spaces need to be multifunctional and well managed, to ensure that

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students get the most out of our building. The use of the building changes radically depending on the time of year, week in term or even by the hour of the day! By having multifunctional spaces we will be able to cater for every type of activity.

#### **4. We will create spaces that students want to be in**

We will celebrate our students' personalities and the vibrancy of what they do in the Union by making the building more colourful and enjoyable to be in. We will use design and lighting to encourage and inspire students and visitors to use the Union spaces day and night. We will invest in our amenities. This will see huge improvement in our toilets, baby change facilities and work spaces. We will create a building that students and other visitors want to spend time in, so that they love their time in Leeds.



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## **Building a community for all of our members.**

We want to make sure that we connect with members who have specific needs from their Union, making sure that they receive the information that they want about our services and activities.

### **1. We will give all students a great start to University life**

Loving your time at Leeds will start with a great introduction to University life. We've worked hard to improve the intro experience for diverse groups rather than traditional freshers. We know we could do more both as a Union and influencing the whole University to improve. Individual orientation programmes are really important to maintain, but we need to build a single, great Intro Week which encourages a single community from the start of University. We want to facilitate all students to mix, not separate although there will naturally be a need to still sustain some activity for individual groups of students. Making "Intro" a strategic priority will focus LUU on building a community for all from the starting point of entering University.

### **2. We will build a global community on campus**

The student community at Leeds is a unique body of people from across the globe. We want to reflect this international diversity in our activities and rather than set up special activities for "international" students, consider all students part of the same global community on campus. We can do this by nurturing students from different countries mixing in existing societies and clubs. We will expand our International Cultural festival and grow involvement from both home and non-UK students. We will adopt the NUS Internationalizing

Students' Union framework as a way of generating further ideas and leading this development.



### **3. We will connect with our hard to reach groups**

There are a number of students in our membership who are "hard to reach" by virtue of being part-time, having dependents or just not being very interested in many of our current activities and services. We would propose finding new ways to reach these students and find connections with them through new activities or information which serves their individual needs. Our membership database will be developed to promote relevant services to each group. We can track preferences for communication and activity and hope to learn new ways of working which will support these students better. We

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also need to develop welcoming space within the Union building so that lounge areas are tailored to meet the needs of students with young children, signage easier to follow for international students and our services reflect the flexible study patterns of part-time students.

#### **4. We will develop the right processes within LUU**

If we are to build the community for all students which is our vision, we know that LUU needs to change the way we work. We have achieved mark of Investors in Diversity, accredited in 2008. However we want to improve on this and develop better processes to ensure our communications, our activities and our services are as relevant to the whole community of members as possible. We will engage more with members in this area of work, using focus groups and continually asking members to find out their response to what we are doing. We will prioritise different groups each year and develop an action plan for improvements so that we do our part to nurture the whole community. We will respond to what we see by building a culture through staff training where equality is fully embedded as a core value and diversity is second nature in our thinking.

**Thank you for taking the time to read through the Union's proposed plan. The plan will help the Union to deliver its vision for students, 'Together, we will ensure that you love your time in Leeds'. You will be able to vote on the plan when it goes to Referendum in November 2008.**

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