

Community Update

February 2011

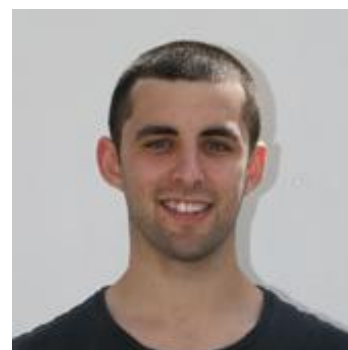


Leeds University Union (LUU)
Volunteering and Community Office

Message from Paul Gold, Community Officer at LUU

Hello everyone,

This month we have been celebrating a success in the ongoing campaign to improve bus services in Leeds. After a Union-organised team of volunteers collected 700 signatures from bus users demanding fairer fares a fortnight ago, we were recently informed of First's intention to change the Headingley to Leeds University Campus journey on the 95 bus route to short-hop status. This reduces the fare to passengers travelling between these points to £1 and is a fantastic result for everyone who joined the campaign.



The Union has also been involved with supporting the Royal Park Community Consortium this month through a series of events. On Monday 14th February an information stall was held in the Union Foyer to inform students about recent developments in the group's campaign. This was followed by a well-attended evening presentation, also held in the Union, which informed those present how to get involved with supporting the Consortium.

In addition, we've just received news of an offer of £10,000 from the Innovation and Social Enterprise Academy from NUS Services Limited to extend the work of the Bardon Grange Project which brings together members of the local community and students to increase local organic food production in Leeds. More information of the project's upcoming work and events can be found below.

We hope you agree that this update reflects a very successful month for our community campaigns and hard-working student volunteers.

Many thanks for all your continued support.

Paul

The Community Skills Project

Linking Community Groups to the Skills They Need

The Community Skills Project has continued to be a great success. So far, over thirty students have volunteered with local community groups as a direct result of the scheme.

Examples of the work which our students are currently undertaking for local groups include designing a logo for a new community project



and teaching English to refugees and asylum seekers.

The service is completely free and we welcome registrations from all local community groups. If you are interested in registering your volunteering opportunities with the scheme, or wish to find out more, please contact Claire Henly on 0113 380 3125 or email her at c.henly@leeds.ac.uk

Leeds RAG (Raise and Give)

The Official Fundraising Body of Leeds University Union

Community Fund

Each year a proportion of RAG's annual fundraising is given in small donations to mainly local charities and organisations in the Leeds community as part of their 'Community Fund' scheme. This year the fund is estimated at around £4000 and applications from small charities and local organisations for grants are welcome



Grants to the value of £100-300 can be applied for and all organisations must have an annual turnover of no more than £150,000. The organisations are also required to explain what a grant from the Community Fund would go towards. Although RAG considers national and international organisations, the Community Fund has a predominantly local focus.

The application form is now available to download at www.leedsrag.org.uk. The deadline for applications is the 14th March. Successful applicants will be notified by the end of March and invited to the annual Presentation Afternoon on May 5th.

General News

The second Speed Dating event of the academic year was held this month - back by overwhelming popular demand – and proved to be a great success once again! The event raised over £520 for the One Voice charity.

The 24th February also sees the return of the annual RAG Fashion Show. Proceeds from the show will be supporting the Yorkshire Cancer Centre's aim of reaching £10million to support the newly-built Bexley Wing at the St James's Institute of Oncology in Leeds. Money raised at the event will also be donated to the Action for Children charity.

The eagerly anticipated 'Battle of the Bands' will also be held this month to raise money for the Children's Cancer and Leukemia Group, in addition to two 'RAG Raids' where student volunteers head to different cities to bucket shake for a variety of charities.

For more information on RAG's activities and the latest news and events, visit <http://www.leedsrag.org.uk/>

Action

Proving students can make a positive contribution to their local communities.



This month, the Action team has been celebrating their fantastic ten nominations at the Regional V Inspired awards. This recognition of the hard work which the Action student volunteers constantly dedicate to volunteering is a testament to a year of fantastic achievements for the team and we are immensely proud of their success.

Older People's Tea Party

The eagerly anticipated Older People's Tea Party was held on the 14th February. The event, which is held annually, sees around 150 older people from the local community invited to LUU for an afternoon of tea, cake and entertainment. This year's event had a Great British theme and featured performances from the LUU Dance Band and the DanceSport society, with older people getting up and joining the students for ballroom dancing. The Lord Mayor also attended the event and a fantastic afternoon was had by all!

Homed

The Homed team were also celebrating this month thanks to a £500 donation from Greg's The Bakers which will allow the project to operate their food kitchen at St. Anne's every Thursday.

The Bardon Grange Project

Bringing together members of the local community and students to increase local organic food production in Leeds.



The Bardon Grange team is hard at work preparing the allotment for the upcoming spring months. If you want to get involved in this fantastic community food growing project, we have a 'Give it a Go' gardening sessions **on Tuesday 22nd February** from 1-5pm which is perfect if you haven't been along before – just in time for the new season! To book, please email Lizzie, the Project Coordinator, at bardongrangeproject@luu.leeds.ac.uk

In addition, we are also working on developing a series of workshops and courses for the project and this year's first session is a fruit tree grafting course for the cost of £15 for the day with one root stock included! The workshop will be held at Bardon Grange with Niels Corfield from Edible Cities on **Saturday 12th March** at 11am - 4.30pm. Booking is also essential for this course and places can again be reserved by emailing Lizzie.

The next usual gardening session at the site will take place on **Wednesday 2nd March** from 2-5pm. The team will be continuing with seed sowing and getting things planted ready for spring.

For more information the project, see our website at <http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/volunteeringandcommunity/bardongrange/>

Leeds University Union

Living in Leeds Website – www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/thegist

January saw the launch of LUU's new guide to students about living in the local community. The site has information and advice on everything from recycling to how to get involved where they live.

As a part of the site, we promote local community events that would be of interest to students living in Leeds. If you have an upcoming event, please get in touch by emailing us at vandccomms@luu.leeds.ac.uk

Student Advice Centre

LUU's first ever House Hunting Fair was held in January and was a huge success in providing over 700 students with transparent advice and tips on house hunting and also living in the community in general. The Student Advice Centre team is also continuing to check contracts throughout the month to ensure that student's don't get caught out when signing for a house.

For more information about how Leeds University Union is helping its students in the local community, please contact Antony on vandccomms@luu.leeds.ac.uk

Leeds Nightline

Nightline has enjoyed a hugely successful January with an amazing 250 applications from students applying for 45 places to volunteer with the scheme! The team was also involved in LUU's recent 'Mind Your Head' campaign and spread the word about the importance of mental health and gained a large amount of interest from students.



If you have any questions or wish to find out more about these projects or other ways which our students are helping in the local community, please do not hesitate to contact us at vandccomms@luu.leeds.ac.uk



Follow us on Twitter for all the latest news throughout the month at @leedsuni_vol!
