

2022/23 – A Year in Review

A summary of our main achievements and successes this year

Officer Trustees

The Officers' new location in the Atrium space has ensured the officers are more visible. As a result of the office space they have helped hundreds of students by offering support, advice, or signposting them to the relevant department or teams.

Led by the President, the Union established a **Student Safety Area** during both Freshers Fair and Refreshers. The area hosted stands for external organisations, all of which aim to educate students on best practices for their safety and the support channels to utilise should they require it. The engagement from students was positive, with hundreds of students actively talking to staff and taking handfuls of freebies which included tools to keep people safe, such as personal safety alarms, bottle stoppers, Drinksafe covers, torches etc. Officers have worked in collaboration with the

University to see the *launch of the Safe Zone app*, designed specifically to support the safety of students. The app is set to be used by students in the academic year 2023/24.

In collaboration with Russ Lewis, Head of Student Engagement, the Union has been instrumental in strengthening the relationship with Derby City Council (DCC) to highlight and address student safety issues across the city. University Student Safety and Security meetings have enabled the President to share progress with colleagues across the institution and external stakeholders in relation to the work carried out with DCC. Initiatives introduced ensure nights out are safer for students, these have included targeting Wednesday student affiliated nights with *increased CCTV and Taxi Rank provision*.

The Union President has focused his support from last year to help get Derby re-accredited with the **Purple Flag Accreditation**, allowing for funding support with Drinksafe covers which are a preventative measure to getting spiked. We now have 20,000 units within our Stonegate venues for student nights.

In response to the Cost-of-Living crisis the Union, in collaboration with the University, created a **Cost-of-Living task and finish group**. This brought together key staff members across both the Union and University to explore ideas and create opportunities to support students experiencing financial difficulties. One of the Union's initiatives was to purchase pasta, cereal, rice, and washing powder, to give away to students. Since December the Union has hosted various stands, and has given away over 600 bags of dried food and detergent.



In April the Union, in collaboration with the University, hosted a *Less Worry, More Money Fair*. The event was part of the *Destressifestival Week*, providing students with freebies, information, support, and guidance in relation to managing money. Other Cost of Living activity includes:

- *BLC Boost is now open at the Buxton campus, giving students access to free clothes*



- *Hosting regular free tea, coffee, biscuits etc.*
- *Increased provision of microwaves in 'Heat and Eat'*
- *Energy Bills Support Scheme letter: A supporting letter for students to use as a new law has been passed. It grants £400 for households that are considered 'all inclusive' - this is for the landlords to pay directly to the occupants*
- *Estates' support with community kitchen at Britannia Mill*
- *Budget menu for Union catering offering cheaper alternatives like jacket potatoes, toast etc.*
- *There is currently a working document that is set to be completed and approved by the University to offer further support for students. Some of the main elements are around educating*



students and increasing awareness of hardship funding.

With a focus on belonging and creating welcoming environments for students the Officer Team created and supported social events – recognising the additional support needed for international students due to the disconnect with a community they are not familiar with. The following events were a great success, creating good attendance and positive student feedback on the event:

- *Global Gathering*
- *Festive Feast*
- *Student-led - Ethnic Diversity Event*
- *International Fish and Chips*
- *The Meeting Place - collaborative international social*



A Halls programme was launched to engage students with sports and physical activity who wouldn't traditionally have become involved, as well as improve the Halls of residency offering. To date we have delivered, *Football, Dodgeball, Rounders, Athletics, Ultimate Frisbee and laser quest* as Halls sport events which have engaged students across the Halls programme.

The Union held their first ever, *Inclusive Sports Fortnight* - The Union and the Vice President (Activities) worked with the Sports and Activities Team at the University of Derby to plan two weeks of inclusive sports available to all students.

The Union increased student training opportunities by creating and launching *a new platform on the Union website* which students can use to get direct information from National Governing Bodies about coaching and officiating

opportunities. In addition, the Union's Vice President (Activities) has worked with the Sports Coordinator, supporting work which has *re-established the coaching bursary*, ensuring it is easier for students to get partially funded qualifications.

Go Green Week - the Union delivered and supported a series of events and activities across the week including a *Go Green Fair*, student volunteer litter picks, and worked with students to build bug hotels and hedgehog houses.

The Union co-delivered a *Responsible Futures webinar*, to over 50 attendees across various Unions and Universities, highlighting the work the Union has done in relation to its sustainability work with a focus on nature connectedness.

This year's *Education Awards* has seen the Union secure the most sponsorship compared to any previous years, standing at just *over £3,000 in total*. This is an

amazing achievement from the Vice President (Education) and will fund the catering and decorations at the event.

Since the opening of the new office in the Atrium, the Officer Team has managed to help hundreds of students by offering support, advice, or signposting them to the relevant department or teams.

This year's Vice President (Education) has managed to get **over 2,000 votes** (and verbal feedback from students) on her **Open Book Exam** manifesto, which is looking into modernising the examination system and making it more accessible. Over 1,800 of the votes were in favour of the open book exams, while only around 300 votes were negative.



Activities

Sports Pass Numbers – 1044

Society Pass Numbers – 642

As part of the two-day *Freshers Fair* in September, the Activities Team coordinated two large marquees that held **over 65 student group stalls** all promoting their offers for the year to interested students. This included 34 sports clubs ranging from American Football to Weightlifting, 28 societies including Art and the Indian society, and our three Student-Led Services (RAG, Phantom Media, and Enactus).



Sport

The Union is thrilled with the current place of *41st in the British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS) table*. This sees Derby climb five places in comparison to last year's position. Next year, will see the introduction of the *University Sports Strategy*, an exciting time for the Union as we hope this will further support the development of our clubs, enabling us to improve our place on the table to surpass our previous highest ranking of 40th.

This year 36 clubs have completed a development plan, meaning over 100 committee members worked together to create their vision for the year. The *Club Development Plan* has been shown to support what our clubs are looking to achieve throughout the year. The guidance that it provides, along with the ongoing staff support, means that our club committees will gain the confidence and transferable skills to support them once they leave the University of Derby. The development plans are currently undergoing a review, with the Union in student consultation, to explore how to improve the plans whilst also ensuring



Men's Futsal 1st
(Midlands Tier 1) into
Premier League Play-off
game vs Liverpool 1st



Women's Futsal
(Midlands Tier 2) who
have been promoted to
Midlands Tier 1



Women's Basketball
(Midlands Tier 3) who
have been promoted to
Midlands Tier 2



Men's & Women's
Dodgeball teams
became Championship
winners

they support the University Sports Strategy. To support this direction, the Union is making some changes to one of its roles to ensure the development of clubs gets additional resource and focus to help both the Union and University achieve their strategic aims.

Following a successful Varsity event hosted by Derby in 2022, *over 310 of our students travelled to the University of Hertfordshire* to compete in 21 sports. No concerns were raised on the day, with students representing the Union and University impeccably, and achieving some stand out wins. The Union looks forward to hosting Hertfordshire on our home turf in 2024.

The Union proudly presents three BUCS league winners this includes:

- *Men's Futsal 1st (Midlands Tier 1) into Premier League Play-off game vs Liverpool 1st*
- *Women's Futsal (Midlands Tier 2) who have been promoted to Midlands Tier 1*
- *Women's Basketball (Midlands Tier 3) who have been promoted to Midlands Tier 2*

We also congratulate our BUCS Cup Winners; both Derby Women's and Men's Dodgeball teams became Championship winners

This year's BUCS Individuals Medals include:

- *8-Ball Pool – Jake Elmhirst – Men's Singles Gold*
- *8-Ball Pool – Men's Team Gold*
- *9-Ball Pool – Greg Pitchley – Men's Singles Silver*
- *9-Ball Pool – Mixed Team Gold*
- *Badminton – Abbie Smith & Jess Allen – Women's Doubles Bronze*

- *Cycling – Tristan Pilling – Men's Points Race Silver*
- *Cycling – Dan Cooper – Men's Sprint Race Bronze*
- *Cycling – Jodie Taylor – Women's Sprint Race Bronze*
- *Cycling Overall Men's team 3rd*
- *Snooker – Team Trophy Gold*

Societies

20 societies have applied for financial support from the Union’s *Society Funding Allocation*. This has funded events which have included trips all around the UK, space and tech hire for our performance-based societies, and guest speaker travel expenses for our academic societies. This year multiple societies have members with additional access requirements, therefore additional funding has been provided for *accessible transport to ensure inclusivity and accessibility* for all members.

Throughout the year the Union has been working to grow the offer for academic societies, working with lecturers from Fashion, Business, Occupational Therapy, Publishing, and Policing based courses to explore what an academic society could look like for their students. In addition to these five societies, we have also had committees come forward to reinstate the Nursing Society, Social Work Society and Accounting and Finance Society.

The Societies Team hosted events for students with the aim of creating new societies. These included Needlework, Vegetarian/Vegan, British Sign Language, Trivia and Disney. All of these were free to attend for students and feedback has been positive; with additional sessions of Needlework and British Sign Language planned and students showing interest in starting to lead them themselves.

How has the Union had an impact on you? Here’s what our members say

As Treasurer for a brand new society, Midwifery Rocks, I have been involved in plans to set up and launch the society. Although, this involved a very steep learning curve, I have benefitted so much from the process. The Students’ Union have been so supportive, and I don’t believe I would have engaged with them nearly as much or at all if not for this role. I have met and collaboratively worked with some amazing groups and individuals. I feel like great connections have been made which have and will benefit my student experience, such as our

society being nominated for and winning awards and achieving recognition for the hard work involved. This is all alongside having the opportunity to plan and implement events that have a positive impact on society members.



Through the support from the Union, I was able to fulfil the role of Events Manager of Phantom Radio alongside being Secretary of Climbing society. Through my work presenting at open days, experience as events manager and secretary alongside my degree in SLLET, I was able to get a graduate job with ON Events Productions upon graduating. My roles on committee have not only benefitted my student experience, but they have also provided transferable skills for my career.



For me, the Union of Students has had a hugely positive impact on my time at university. After joining a sport club in my first year, I felt that running for a committee role within the club would be a good move for me and one that I would enjoy as well as helping me develop in both a personal and professional manner. After four years now serving on the committee, as well as in multiple Rep and part-time Officer roles, I can say that I've loved every minute, and this is down to the support and guidance that the Union have offered not just to me but every committee member across the board. Whether it be personal, committee or club issues, the Union have always been there to help address and rectify when needed. I have seen through my time here the impact the Union have had on fellow committee members throughout my time here too and that is something I'm sure we'll all be forever thankful for! Joining a sports club and being a big part of what they do has been one of my favourite things about being a university student and I'll certainly miss that when I (eventually) leave.



Student Opportunities

The Union have established a link with the journalism course which has created a partnership that offers vital real-life experience. The journalism students are able to work with Union clubs to generate content that is then **recognised as part of their official course work**. On BUCS Wednesdays they provide match reports, interviews and photos that are then utilised for not only their academic requirements, but also for raising awareness of our clubs via social media and Phantom Media. There have typically been 50 active journalism students throughout the season supporting our BUCS teams weekly.

The Union has worked with the Sports Therapy and Rehabilitation course. Students from the course offer a First Aid provision on BUCS Wednesdays, enabling key experiences that will help them throughout their course whilst helping to ensure the safety of Union sports students. There are around 30 students that have been able to offer this support, with the Union working to increase this number next season.

The new Union allotment space is now open for students to use and grow their own fruits and vegetables. There are four different student groups starting to grow in the space, and the new greenhouses purchased by the Union will be open for business soon. In the meantime, we are working with the biodiversity technician staff to start the seedlings until they are ready to be planted.

The Union launched new Volunteering projects including **Post Pals**, a small charity who ask the public to send cards and letters to sick children. This project has already engaged 56 students who may not have engaged with the Union before.

Enactus made it to the final eight in the Enactus UK finals competitions with their **Plastic Fantastic** project.

The Union launched a volunteering project to encourage sustainable living, taking 30 students on a litter pick in October. The first event was titled **Fish 'n' Picks**, 35 students attended, the Volunteering team bought everyone who took part fish and chips. The students who attended asked the Union to plan further events.

Fish & Picks
Litter-pick No.1



The Union subsequently offered further opportunities which included, a **Coffee & Clean Up** and the **Pickup & Pizza**. The litter picks then became student-led, with the student group planning and executing three further litter picks – with an average of seven students attending each time.

This is the first year that student-led services have had a membership offering and have engaged 68 students across the five services.

Phantom Radio have hosted ten shows a week this year, engaging over 30 students as show hosts every week and have held multiple Give It A Go (GIAG) studio tours for students to observe the space and recruit new members.





Puppy Yoga
Part of RAG Week 2023

RAG have raised over £7,000 for various charities through events such as the *colour run*, *puppy yoga* and *club nights*.

The Union held a *Community FUNdraising Day*, with the intention to boost engagement with new students and the community charity partners. Initial interest from charities was high, with eight paying to attend on the day. To make the event stand out from other charity fairs that we have run in the past we asked all charities to run a game or activity that students could engage in. This encouraged students to engage with the stalls, allowing the charities to talk to them about their work and opportunities.



Community FUNdraising Day
Alongside the Advice Tea Party



Case Study – Keiran Hall

When did you get involved in the Union of Students?

I've been around the Union for a while, through friends in the Volleyball Club, but I never got directly involved until my Master's year when someone came into my course induction to present Enactus Derby.

In what capacity are you involved with the Union?

I'm the current Head of Marketing for Enactus Derby. The opportunity to apply my academic learning to a matter which is close to my heart (sustainability) was too good to pass up.

What impact has being involved in the Union had on you at the University of Derby?

The largest impact is on my professional development. Broadening my understanding of marketing and learning important lessons around leadership in a business environment.

How do you feel it has helped with your personal development?

It's taught me that I know how to apply my studies in a practical setting and given me the confidence to do so. I think that's a result of the supportive and encouraging culture fostered by everyone involved in Enactus Derby, particularly Alex and the advisors. It's also helped me learn how to juggle numerous important project sand use my time more effectively. Most importantly, though, it allowed me to develop my leadership skills, learning more about myself and the type of leader I want to be.

Do you think being involved in the Union is helping you on your course?

Everyone goes through that stage in class, you sit there, staring blankly at the lecturer, wondering "How is this relevant to me?" Being in a position where I can practically apply my studies has taught me that it's all relevant no matter how small it is, you'll recall it when you need to. I guess what I'm saying is, it's taught me to value everything being taught in class and not just the parts I enjoy because I never know when I going to call on them lessons in the future.

Do you think being involved in the Union is helping you prepare for life after university?

Being a part of and holding a position in the Union has allowed me to apply my learning over the past four years to a passionate social topic of mine and given me a platform to learn from my mistakes and avoid making them in the workplace when there is significantly more at risk. And again, my leadership style has evolved dramatically.

Would you recommend that other students get involved in the Union?

Absolutely! Even if you're not joining Enactus (which you 100% should), I highly recommend joining any aspect of the Union, whether it's a sports club, society, or SLS, it's worth the investments you make and unlocks doors that were previously closed.



Varsity 2022
Derby vs Hertfordshire

Union of Students' Vision

To have a positive
impact on every student

Advice

Since the 1st of September 2022, the Union Advice Team has supported students in receiving £50,075. This financial gain has been in the form of compensation and tuition fee refunds.

The service has seen an increase of 12% in the number of students accessing it in comparison to last year.

The Advice team has supported eight students (seven undergraduate students and one postgraduate student) to be reinstated onto the course following withdrawals for reasons including: attendance issues, failed modules, and mental health issues. In effect saving the University £77,250 per academic year that the students remained studying (based on undergraduate courses costing £9,250 per year and master’s courses costing £12,500 per year).

95 students have registered with the C-Scheme, a free NHS condom scheme to help improve the sexual health and wellbeing for residents across Derbyshire and Derby City.



There are currently three trained Sexual Violence Liaison Officers (SVLOs) at the Union. Students can access the service directly, or may be referred by Wellbeing after disclosing an incident of sexual violence. The SVLO service has built strong relationships with SV2 which is an organisation in Derby who support victims of sexual violence, as well as Derby’s Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). As a result, the SARC has also began to refer University members to the Union’s SVLO service for support.

20 students have accessed the SVLO service for support during this academic year.

The Advice Team, working with the Officer Trustees, prepared the sports members ahead of Sports Tour by delivering three consent workshops for 110 students. The workshop covered information such as, what consent is and isn’t, the impact of sexual violence on victims, the repercussions of sexual violence on perpetrators, how students can report sexual violence to the University/Union and where they can seek support. All students were given a workbook to



complete with information on supportive services. Following this training session, two students have since accessed the SVLO service after realising that they have been victims of sexual violence in the past.

External Partnerships

Extending the Union’s advice service offer; partners include, Cease, University of Derby Legal triage, SV2, 1625 Outreach. These services cover topics such as domestic abuse, sexual assault, drug use and legal concerns.



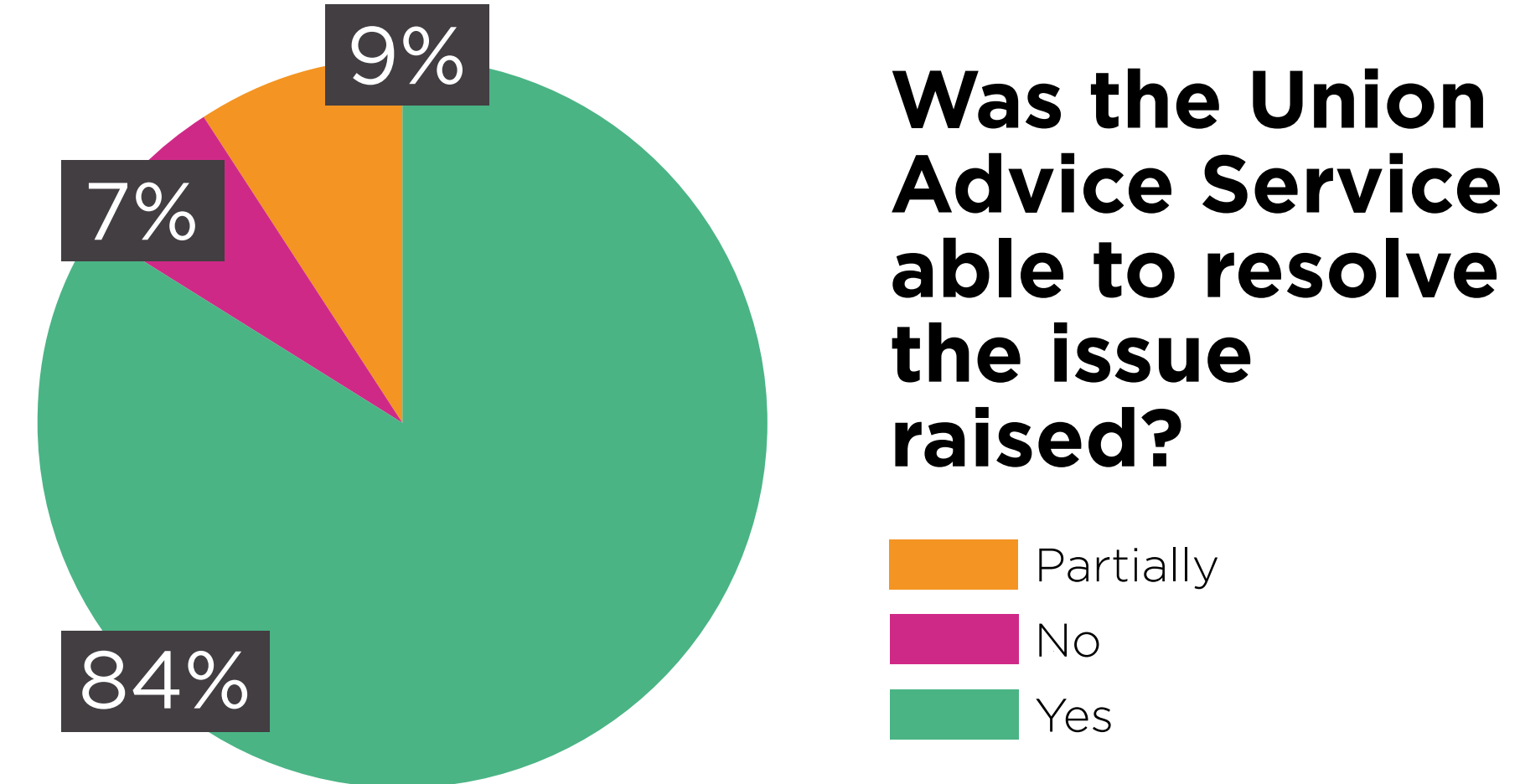
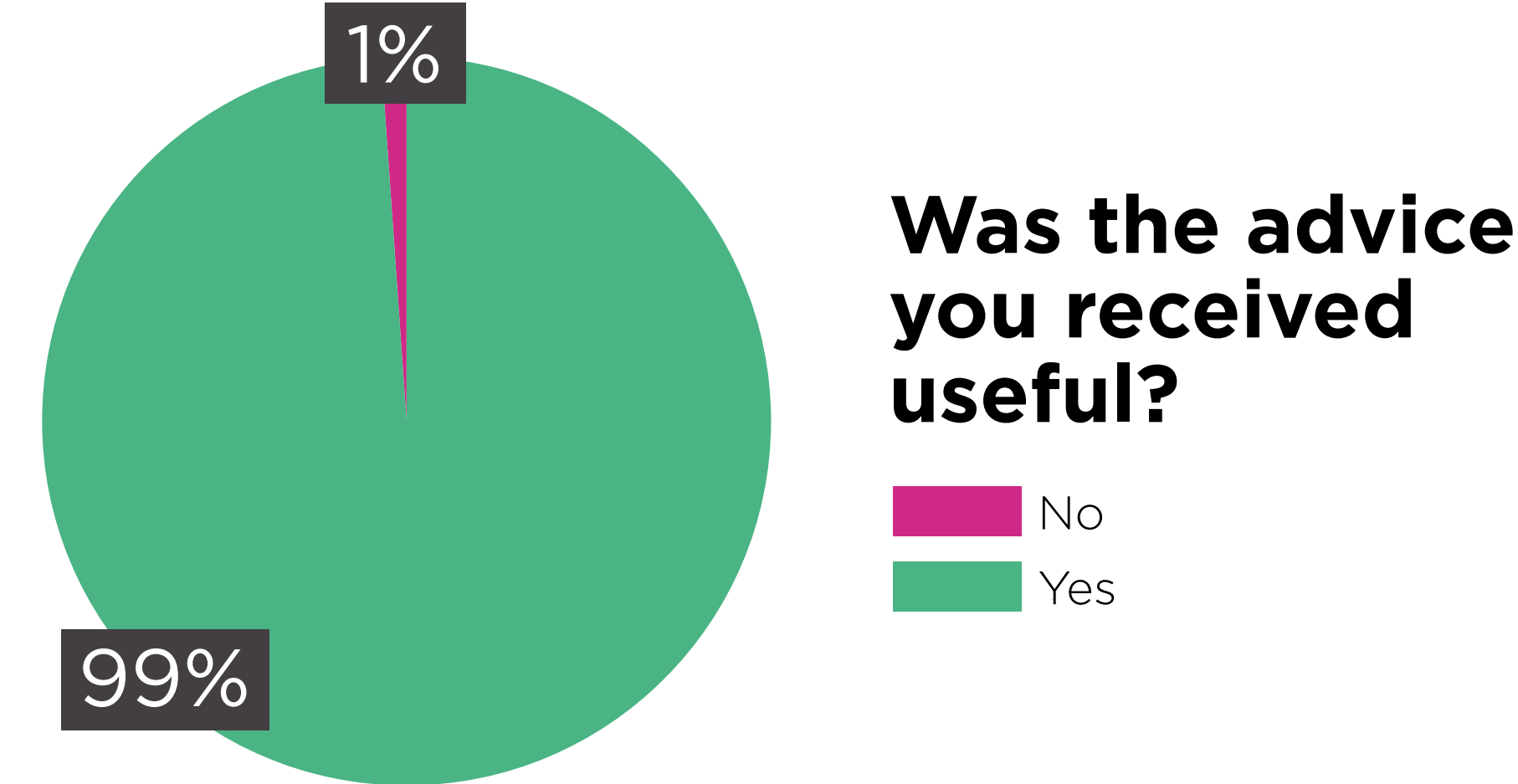
REMEDI have been delivering a free monthly on campus face-to-face specialist course called **CEASE Educational**. The course specialises in identifying and safeguarding abusive and controlling relationships. The aim of the programme is to help educate and recognise the subtle indications of an abusive relationship, and the options available to those should they encounter or witness such behaviour. Each session can accommodate up to 15 students. The programme is also recognised by Local Authorities and, therefore, it is a great opportunity to *add something extra* to student CVs.



The **Law Clinic** have provided a Legal Triage Service at the Union of Students, exclusively for University of Derby students. The **Triage Service** has supported students predominantly with private housing contracts with two students receiving money back from their rent. 30 students since have accessed this service since September.



The impact of the Advice Team



Student Feedback

Just a big thank you to my advisor who made time to listen and assist when it felt like no one else wanted to help me in the university as I wanted to make a complaint.

What I have to say is that their advice is most useful.

The student advisors go above and beyond, the service is brilliant as it stands.

US

I think the service was excellent.

My advisor was brilliant, I'd been sent all over Kedleston by different departments and she was great and managed to sort all the issues I had been having.

My advisor was extremely helpful and calmed my nerves. She was insightful and followed up with me the next day.

Student Experience One

In 2022, I was advised to visit the Students' Union after my PhD account was put on hold due to non-payment of fees. I sought the help of an advisor from the Student Union. Initially, I was in a panic, and was unable to express what had happened. I found it difficult to put things in chronological order, but they took the time to sit with me in the library, and we were able to compile a timeline of events based on communication and account information obtained. I found I was constantly in touch with the advisor seeking reassurance and understanding of the process. They always found the time to get back to me, even if not immediately. The advisor showed extensive wisdom in the operations of the University. They made me feel I was important, and I had a voice, whilst also caring about my wellbeing and understanding how these events were taking focus away from my studies. Without the Students' Union granting me the opportunity to present my case, I would have been at a serious disadvantage. Had it not been for Students' Union support I would have, sought remedy through the courts. They are not only a support service for students, but a safety net for the University. Ultimately, I won my case. None of this would have been possible without the

Students' Union. I have a lot of respect for the time and effort they apply to students. We often approach them as a last resort or when we are very anxious about our future prospects. They are aware of their responsibility and commit themselves to nurture students ensuring their mental wellbeing is healthy at the same time as providing a voice and a friendly face in times of difficulty. I understand my case set precedence and continue to appreciate and value the team. An acknowledgement and special thanks will be entered into my thesis when completed and made into a book in thanks to my Union advisor, as without her I would have ended my studies.





Student Experience Two

The Union of Students have been very supportive and helped in representing me on a few occasions. I felt that my Union rep was very experienced, supporting me by providing the correct guidance and talked me through each process and was realistic on what to expect, which then empowered me to make my own decisions. I appreciated the honesty and commitment I was given; they support students but are also honest with students if they are or have done wrong. Regarding communication; emails and calls are always answered – if not they are always returned in a short and decent time frame (including Teams meetings) I felt that the Union helped me make wise

decisions and stay positive at a time when I was under a lot of pressure, my voice was represented throughout meetings, and as a mature student, I felt that they do actually genuinely care and will support you the best way they can. I also felt that my Union rep was patient and took into consideration my disabilities which made me feel more at ease and more confident, this is one area of support that was important for me, sometimes being disabled can affect speech production and expressions. Putting words to what you are experiencing can be difficult at times. I felt that my Union rep had picked up on this and she interacted at times I felt was difficult. When I started university, I never really understood much about the Union of Students or what they do, but I am so glad that I accessed this support, I would have been lost without it, it certainly had a positive impact on my well-being, and I'm very grateful for all their help. I would advise anyone to always speak or email them in any situation, even if you are at fault and don't know which way to turn, they are great listeners and will always take into consideration your best interests on any issues you might face. Can't thank them enough!



Staff Feedback

Alan Williams Academic Lead - Nursing

The Union of Students provide a vital and excellent service for all students at the University of Derby. Over the four years I have worked at the University my interactions with staff and voluntary officers of the Union have always been positive and constructive, with all working towards achieving a fair outcome for all students. As Academic Lead for the online nursing and health portfolio, and since August 2022 following restructuring at the University now leading the professional doctorate in the College of Health, Psychology and Social Care I signpost students experiencing difficulties to Union advisors. Whilst of course I believe I provide unbiased advice and outline options to students, Union advisors have that extra benefit of being seen as truly independent, essential for students to know. When students have been required to attend a formal meeting with me, Union Advisors listen to the discussion and support the student in a very effective manner, following up discussion after a meeting. Invariably we both agree what support is necessary and how a student can overcome difficulties, whether that is because of an academic offence or other matters that have affected their ability to effectively engage with their studies. Ultimately, we all want students to succeed, and the Union of Students are integral in this process.



*Vanessa Patrick-Wood
Assistant Programme Lead
BSC Hons Child Family Health
and Well Being & Stage One
Coordinator*

We always invite the support of the Students' Union for any students we suspect may have committed academic misconduct. We have found the Students' Union staff to be helpful and supportive and keen to commit to the best student experience in their role supporting the students who we signpost to them. We have worked together as a Union and academic staff team to get the best possible outcome for our students.

Nicola Hindmarch Assistant Head of Discipline, Mental Health & Learning Disability Nursing

I would strongly recommend to any student involved in an appeal, suspected academic offence or as part of the Professional Conduct and Professional Suitability process to involve the Union Advisors. This service is really useful for students and staff to ensure that meetings are helpful and supportive but also that students are receiving clear advice about the options which sometimes can be tricky particularly when people are upset and stressed as often is the case when facing these processes. I have found having Union Advisors present has been useful in coming to decisions particularly where disclosures from students have been sought and help prevent issues from escalating or taking longer than necessary which would interrupt a student's academic journey.

Liz Eate Intermin Head of Discipline Social and Community Studies

Working with the advice team at the Union of Students Derby, has never been anything but a positive experience for me. I have chaired complaint and disciplinary meetings both with and without the Union present and the meetings always run more smoothly with an Advisor present.

The Advisors work with the students to offer practical and emotional support through often difficult conversations and are able to help the students articulate better their concerns, and responses to any concerns we may have.

Without the Union involved many students find the formal meeting environment challenging and the advisors lessen this challenge ensuring the student voice is heard. They also encourage both staff and students to work towards positive solutions wherever this is possible.

When the student needs to hear that their complaint is not supported by regulations, or when the student has to have action taken through the PCPS process, the Advisors articulate this in a compassionate way, again supporting the student's understanding and helping them to move forwards.

It is my pleasure to work with the Union in these cases and I always recommend that students discuss any worries, concerns, or disciplinary processes with them and bring an Advisor to each meeting.

Campaigns

Our Advice Service has delivered three campaigns *LoveSHaC*, *Academic Misconduct* and *WhatsAppening in your WhatsApp Group*.



LoveSHaC

The three main goals of the campaign are to:

- Educate on the importance of sexual health and consent
- Start conversations about what a healthy sexual relationship looks like and break the stigmas surrounding sex and consent
- Raise awareness of what support is available for anyone who’s experienced sexual violence or are in abusive relationships

To engage with as many students as possible, the campaign team ensured they have been present across sites including at One Friar Gate Square, Buxton, Kedleston Road and Markeaton Street. At each site, approximately 15 students engaged.



At Kedleston Road, the team put on a ‘LoveSHaC Fair’ where there was a free cake and hot drink stall, music, an Advice and SVLO stand and external stalls from SV2, Remedi and 1625 Outreach. The Art Society got involved by creating a pledge sheet and asked students to draw their handprint to pledge to always get consent. Approximately 75 students engaged with the SVLOs, conversations were meaningful around the importance of consent and the importance of safe sex.

The Union Advice service have organised for SV2 to deliver two consent workshops during May, to a maximum of 50 students per workshop.



Academic Misconduct

Advisors worked with the Marketing Team to create an animation explaining the types of academic misconduct, tips on how to avoid academic misconduct and a promotion of the Advice Service. This is available on the Union of Students website with the aim to have this available on Blackboard for all students to see.



WhatsAppening in your WhatsApp Group

As part of the WhatsAppening campaign, Advisors have put together a PCPS package for students which includes information on the Advice Service, information on the PCPS procedure and business cards with examples of inappropriate WhatsApp conversations. These will be distributed to Heads of Departments to give to Module Leaders with the aim that they will be shared with each cohort. The campaign webpage has information on how to use social media appropriately. Whilst the page doesn't officially launch until May; 27 students have engaged with it so far.



Student Voice

504 Reps are registered

Over 990 pieces of feedback submitted through the Student Voice Portal

An average of 43 pieces of feedback submitted a week throughout March

70% of students reported their engagement with the PAL scheme as having been useful

97% of students said they would recommend the PAL scheme to others

The Voice Team hit the ground running with the Redbrick Research responding to the need to get out and speak to students, explaining who the Union Voice Team are and how students can get involved with the representation roles available. *Between September and March the Union spoke to over 1,000 students* at stalls across all sites.

The Voice Team hosted elections awareness events, the first took place in December prior to nominations opening. Refreshments, snacks, and activities were offered to students, allowing us to engage with over 60 students at this event.

The Union developed *a new elections marketing campaign*, designed to be eye-catching and bold, with the intention to be used during all election's periods for the next three years, to create recognition and ensure students associate the branding with elections. This also supports our sustainability aims as we can re-use the marketing materials produced.

The *TEF Submission* allowed us to reflect on the positive relationship that exists between the Union and the University. Highlight's reflected in the TEF include the collaborative work during the

pandemic, how effectively student voice is represented throughout the governance meetings and the Peer Assisted Learning scheme.

Our *Annual General Meeting* was held on February 28th this year which was earlier than previous years. Overall physical attendance was 69 students which ensured quorum was reached.

Marketing produced live Instagram stories of the AGM event, proposals, and results. 48 stories were shared, with a consistent number of stable viewers. Viewer numbers ranged from 320 to 530 which suggests *320 viewers were following along* as the results were announced. The marketing evaluation also showed that users who looked at the AGM page on the website spent longer on the page than the previous year, indicating that they took more time to read the content and proposals.

The Voice Team have secured more nominations for *Educations Awards* than have been received in the last four years of Education Awards with a total of 450 students and staff submitting nominations this year.



Case Study – Pieter van Ellewee

When did you get involved in the Union of Students?

I got involved with the Union of Students when I became a Student Rep for my course.

In what capacity are you involved with the Union?

Joining as an PGCE student I became a Student Rep for my cohort where I was able to resolve student issues, advocate for student rights and bring about positive changes on the course. This experience motivated me to take up the position of the Education Chair student officer role where I continued to work on initiatives that improved the academic and social experience of students.

What impact has being involved in the Union had on you at the University?

Through my involvement I have met new people, made amazing friends and developed my leadership, communication and networking skills. Most importantly I am now studying my Master's in education, largely due to the support and encouragement I have received from the Union of Students.

Do you think being involved in the Union is helping you prepare for life after university?

Overall, my involvement in the Union has been the highlight of my time at Derby and I am grateful for the opportunities and experiences it has afforded me with my studies and life after university.

Developing Knowledge and practice

The Student Voice Manager and Vice President (Welfare) joined *Wonkhe's Scandinavian Tour* in January 2023 to visit six Students' Unions across Sweden and Denmark. They presented their learning to the Union Trustee Board and have given presentations at Union departments' strategic planning meetings, which have led to valuable 'blue sky thinking' discussions about the future of our delivery.

Our Student Voice Manager, Stephanie, delivered training for new Sabbatical Officers at the NUS Lead and Change Conference in August 2022. Stephanie led a group of 16 first-time Sabbatical Officers through three days of training and networking, giving them a head start in their new roles. This also enabled Stephanie to gain a greater understanding of NUS which has been useful with regards to *NUS Affiliation discussions* with students, and preparations for an *NUS referendum*.

Regional receptions – The Voice Team have hosted Nottingham Students' Union and developed good working relationships

with their voice team. This has developed further into the Union creating a *Student Voice Action Learning Group*, with 21 staff members from eight Unions signed up and in contact via a Teams site we have created. This has already led to us sharing work that other Unions would like to implement, such as the *Student Voice Portal*.

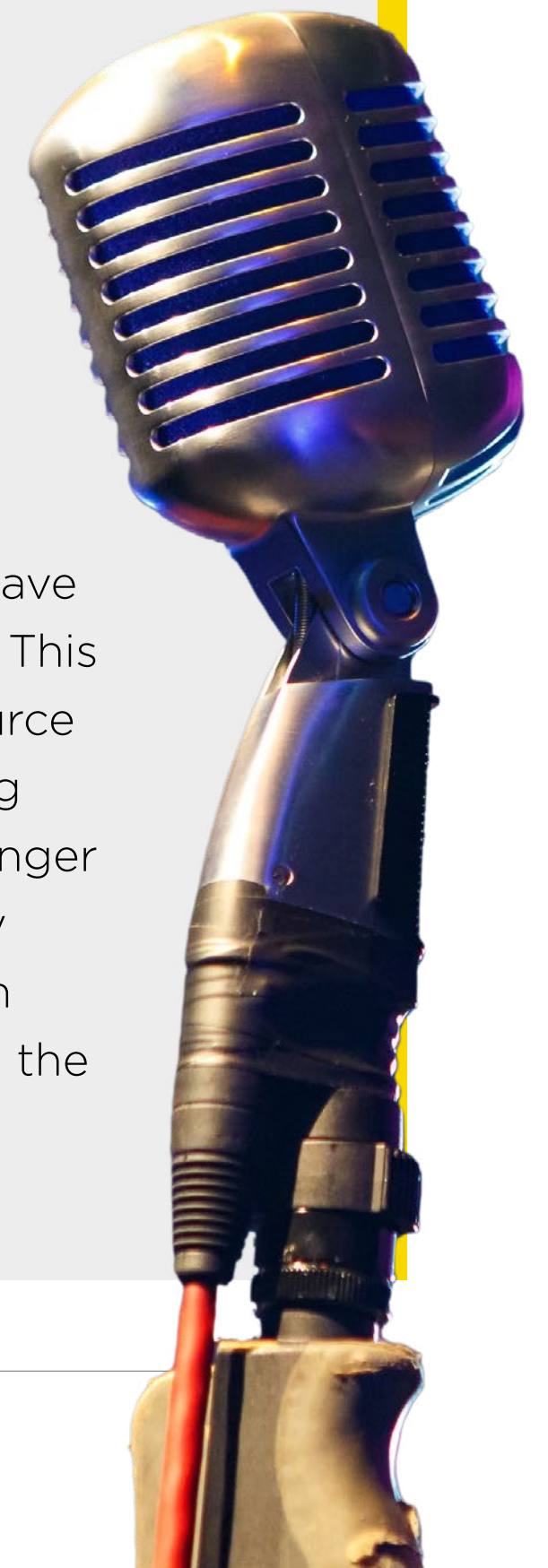
Union staff attended the *Wonkhe Secret Life of Students Conference*, exploring topic such as, the impact of generative AI, the importance of collecting student data and feedback in the year and consent. The Union's Disability Officer was invited to join a panel which discussed the impact of Cost of Living on students.



Student Asking Questions
Student Voice Unleashed Panel

Coming Up...

The Union are excited to announce, production has begun for a Podcast targeted at Reps, which will serve as a valuable tool for keeping our Reps updated on events at the University and providing them with a better understanding of what the Union does for them. The Podcast also serves as an opportunity for our staff and Reps to introduce who they are and what they have done/what they do. This will be a great resource for our Reps, helping them to build a stronger sense of community and connection with each other and with the Union.



What our Reps Say

Putting myself forward as a Student Rep in the first year was a huge worry at first, especially as I was the only candidate in a cohort of strangers. I am glad I did though as it has brought me closer to the students in our smaller cohort than I could have imagined. Being a mature student, it was difficult to build friendships, but I feel the Rep role has helped me to break the ice, get to know people's concerns and use my experience to help put people at ease and become an effective and trustworthy voice for the year group. I have been supported by the Union and the lovely office staff in times of confusion and would like to see the programme develop more training for the 'on the ground' members of the team. The training was easy to follow, and the resources will help me as I progress on my course and build experience worth adding to my CV. The Student Rep role is rewarding when fully utilised and the scope to empower real change and support for students is essential to navigating the University Journey.

– Emma Allez, 42, BSc (Hons) Nursing (Child)

My positive experience with the Union can be boiled down into three core points: **representation**, **opportunity** and **confidence**. In terms of representation, I became the Student Representative for my course at the start of my second year after we experienced some issues with a member of staff in the first year. The training given to me throughout this time assisted greatly when we had major problems on the course. I can vouch for the fact that student grades were positively impacted by the feedback we gave – not only for our year but for the subsequent years also. Having the opportunity to reflect on my course and provide constructive feedback helped me to get where I am today. Furthermore, there were many opportunities outside of representation that were presented by the Union. These include Societies, Student-Led Services and Sports Teams. While I didn't choose to engage with all of these, engaging with the Golf Club gave me the chance to play some great golf courses and meet some great people. Societies were more my bag though and I had a great time starting up the Computing Society, being a committee member for the eSports Society

and finally becoming the Societies Council Chair. The skills provided in the training sessions for these roles were of great benefit to my professional development and my ability to build relationships. My engagement on these two points led to great improvements in my overall confidence. Coming into University, I was very anxious and struggled to speak to anyone I didn't know. However, engaging with the various parts of the Union that I did helped me overcome this. This confidence is something that I will be able to carry forward for a significant portion of my life. Overall, the impact that the Union has had on me and my experience is profound. I've made some life-long friends through the societies that I have engaged with, not to mention how the Union has allowed me to grow personally and professionally. It's safe to say that without the Union, my experience at Derby would have been profoundly different.

– Societies Council Chair

The Union has really positively impacted upon my personal and academic experience since beginning my degree in September. The team is absolutely fantastic. They are always available for support, whether this be through teams or in the offices. Everyone has been very helpful, and my multiple questions have always been answered fully. Whether this be the person I have spoken to or directed to a colleague for more advice. I have always left feeling confident and listened to. I have been encouraged to go further, rising to challenges and new experiences, and I am so pleased I have! I am proud to be part of the Union of Students and encourage colleagues from my cohort to participate in upcoming events and roles. Keep being brilliant team!

– Student Rep and Mental Health Awareness Officer

PAL

22 out of a total 29 PAL leader vacancies were filled, with our newly appointed PAL Assistant covering the role of the vacant seven. The number of vacancies currently filled is **a 9% increase from the same time last year.**

An average of 23.71% of all first and foundation year students have been actively engaged in their PAL site. This is up 8.71% from February 2022.

Last year engagement was consistently measured at 15%, therefore we have seen **an increase of 8.71% in engagement** compared to last year.

This year the Union has also **worked with the Head of Digital Learning**, and their team, to embed an automatic enrolment system of first and foundation year students onto their respective PAL team's site. This will ensure that every student has the opportunity to access PAL at their earliest convenience.

PAL Participant Feedback

My PAL Leader has provided me with so much useful information, both when I have asked and also just things they think might help myself and my cohort. They have so much provided inspiration and motivation through all their encouraging updates on the Teams app.



I might have left uni before Christmas without the PAL Leaders input and reassurance in my first few weeks! They have made a massive difference to me



I have contacted the PAL Leader a few times, and each time they have responded positively, quickly and with more support and motivation than I could expect. They have always acted professionally and politely, advocating university life and getting involved.





Buxton and Leek College

The Union is proud of the work delivered across the Buxton and Leek sites for our Further Education members. Attendance in the social spaces has been high, with an average of 30 students attending over the lunch period daily. This year, the Union has *launched an LGBTQ+ society*, which has seen 22 members register. Facilitated by the FE Engagement Coordinator in a safe and comfortable environment, the students meet weekly to socialise and participate in an activity.

Monthly, the Union has successfully hosted a series of awareness events – these have included *Student Safety, International Women’s Day, Destresstival, and Disability Awareness Month*, engagement with these events has seen on average 50–60 students attending.

In collaboration with Buxton and Leek College, we launched a *Wellbeing Ambassador Initiative*. Student volunteers are trained to deliver peer-on-peer support to students who are experiencing low-level wellbeing issues, offering a listening ear and signposting where necessary.

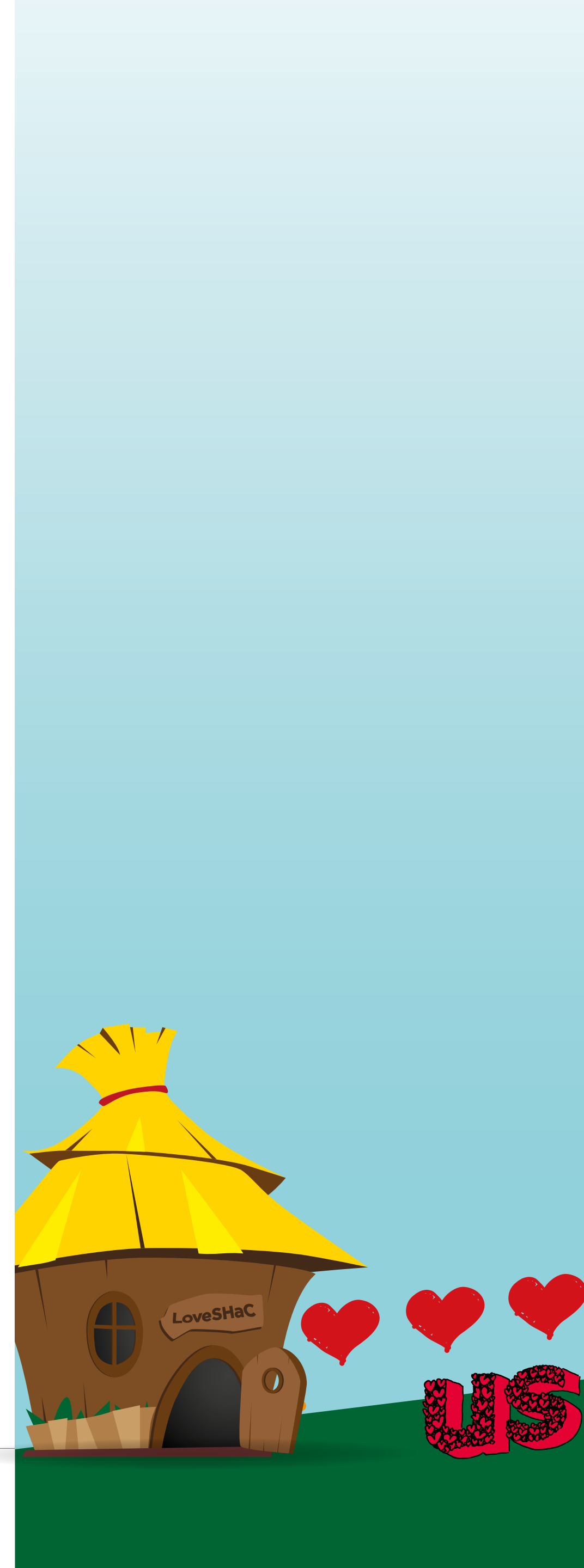


The Union has launched a monthly newsletter and students are invited to submit articles to be included. Each month the newsletter highlights Union activity and aims to share information related to the monthly awareness themes. The newsletter is displayed on digital screens, Union notice board, and shared directly to students via the progress coaches.

Marketing

In 2022/23 we have worked on over 20 campaigns including:

- The launch of a brand new elections theme, with a long-term plan to build this theme over the next three years. This included new banners, t-shirts, roller banners, window clings, basecamp table toppers, and posters. A highlight of this campaign was that the Basecamp table tents were used for the first time and over 90 sessions launched through the QR code
- Supporting the Advice Team's LoveSHaC campaign, the Marketing Team created a LoveSHaC motif to help to brand the campaign. The motif was featured on gazebo covers, condom stickers, social media content, and flyers. The LoveSHaC campaign page gained 114 page views between December and March
- Working with Student Officers on liberation months. LGBT+ social media content performed well with an average of 124 likes on Instagram



Disability History Month 16th November — 16th December
Black History Month October
Mental Health Awareness Month May
Faith & Belief Month April
Women's History Month March
LGBT+ History Month February



Clapperboard Candles Winter Market

Enhancing the Student Experience

In the 22/23 academic year, the Union welcomed:

- 22 new market traders
- 8 returning market traders

The Union proudly hosted the first **Winter Market** event in 10 years. Over 200 hot drinks were given out and 100 freebie bags taken. With it attended by four new market traders, and eight returning traders, the Union reports the event as successful and are looking to build on this success for the next academic year.

Varsity Sponsorship

The Union's Marketing Team worked in collaboration with the Activities Team to **secure £1200 + VAT**, allowing us to reduce the cost of travel for students attending the event in Hertfordshire.



Refreshers Fair Misfit and Dr. Pepper Freebies

Refreshers 2023

This year the Union introduced a **Student Safety Zone**, located in the smaller area of the Lower Atrium, this feature supported the President's manifesto point of focusing on student safety during the night-time economy. The Fair hosted 36 stalls, with student engagement of approximately 1,432 people.

Throughout the event free cans of Dr Pepper Zero and Misfit Health protein bars were given away. In addition, Monster Energy and Coke Zero were brought in and they **gave out over 3,000 free product samples to students**.

The Student Voice team kept a tally of all the students that engaged with their stalls during the fair. They engaged with 50 students, which is the number they usually expect to engage with at the larger

Freshers Fair in September.



Commercial

- Between August 2022 and March 2023, a total of 12,008 hours of work had been given to student employees at a cost of £123,682. This money, direct into student pockets (less tax) helps support a pool of 51 student employees through university, including four international students who rely on this income to study.
- Union catering infrastructure was utilised to support Welcomefest, Freshers, Format Festival, Open Days and student showcases at Markeaton Street.
 - Handed out 5,500+ drinks at Open Days
 - Sold 2,000+ items from Campus Kitchen
 - Held two Global Gathering events for international students
- Over 12,000 students have attended Union of Students affiliate events and activities.
- Blends cup levy has funded sustainability projects across campus including:
 - The Union of Students' beehives provided fresh honey for sale which the Union sold out of within three weeks.
 - Perennial plants and 100sq meters of wildflower seeds have been purchased for campus.
 - Hedgehog houses and bug hotels have been purchased and installed.
- 1,333 Hoodies sold
- Over 90,000 customers served across our Blends outlets so far.
- 204,379 customers served across our retail outlets so far.



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