

Impact Report

Union of Students' Impact Report for
the year 2023/24

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Union of Students' Mission Statement

*To be relevant to every student,
ensuring that they know the Union
offers something for them*

2023/24 – A Year in Review

A summary of our main achievements and successes this year

Officer Trustees

Dominic White: Union President

Reflecting on the past year, the Union’s President proudly presents an update on the progress and the steps taken to enhance student life across various domains. Efforts have been many-sided, aiming to provide better facilities, improve the experience for student, create more quiet spaces, offer more cost-of-living support, increase accessibility and inclusion, and strengthen Union presence across campuses.



One of the President’s primary goals was to enhance the spectator and sports performance experience. The Union successfully lobbied for the installation of dual spectator and performance cameras across key sports locations, significantly improving academic analysis capabilities for students. In addition, the President has been working with the Estates Team on the creation of more prayer and baby nursing rooms on campuses, feeding into ongoing work around the redistribution of students to other sites. Most

recently, he has been working with the Director of Estates to address student concerns and improve the safety of the zebra crossing at the campus entrance.

The Union made significant strides in improving the visibility and quality of nursing rooms across campuses. Meetings with key stakeholders, like the Interim Assistant Director of Estates and Head of Student Services, has been instrumental in assessing current policies and identifying areas for improvement. Although not all buildings have nursing rooms yet, plans are in place to introduce new signage and improve visibility at the campuses that have the facilities.

Creating quiet spaces has been another focus area. Initial meetings with key stakeholders have led to discussions about repurposing existing spaces, such as the library and underused classroom spaces. This initiative is now part of broader space prioritisation efforts.

In response to the rising cost of living, the Union has worked to improve awareness of available support programs. Collaborations with the Union’s Advice Manager and the Union Marketing Team have led to updated website links and promotional efforts. Initiatives like filming a “Too Good to



Go” episode have helped raise awareness about cost-saving opportunities. Although meetings about free black and white printing faced scheduling challenges, the Union remains committed to pursuing this goal. The President continues to pursue an idea on the creation of a Union graduate bursary to support student struggling with the costs of graduation and interview attire.

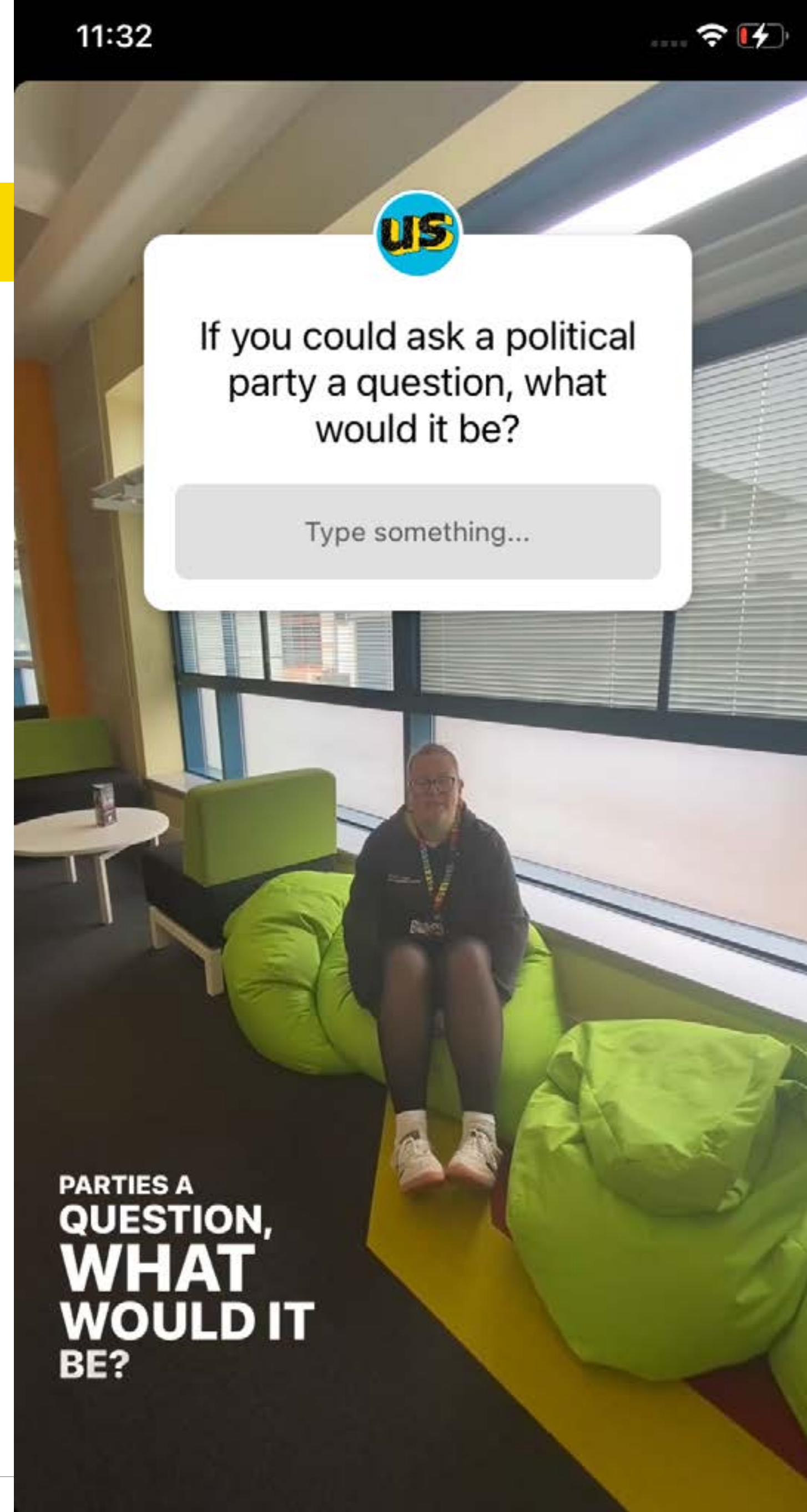
Expanding the parasports offering and developing the Halls Sport program have been key achievements. The successful

continuation of Inclusive Sports Fortnight highlights the Union's commitment to inclusive sports that are accessible to all students. Additionally, efforts to enhance the Buxton & Leek College sports offerings and engage international students through initiatives like Global Café have been met with positive feedback and high engagement.

Increasing the Union's presence at other campuses has been a priority. The Union has implemented a "Let's Get Visible" plan and a working rota for satellite campuses, ensuring regular support and visibility. This has included facilitating NSA Rep Meetings and providing advice services from the iHub facility.

Work carried out on accessible education has evolved into the creation of principles which hopefully will serve as benchmarks for the university. Regular meetings with the Deputy Provost of Learning and Teaching have been established to push these principles forward. The aim is to present a draft paper to the Student Affairs Committee in July, ensuring a smooth handover and continuation of efforts.

Efforts to improve voter registration and re-establish Citizen ID Cards for students have been ongoing and have



culminated as work on the General Election. The President and colleagues will be hosting registration centres at Halls, as well as the Student Hub and the Library.

This year has been one of progress and learning. While challenges remain, the foundations laid and the collaborative efforts with various stakeholders have set the stage for continued improvements. The President looks forward to seeing these successes continue with the 24/25 Officer Team, ensuring that initiatives this year continue to positively impact student life across all campuses. Together, the Union are creating a more inclusive, supportive, and enriching university experience.



Holly Lloyd: Vice President (Education)

Reflecting on the past year, there has been significant growth, challenges, and persistence from both the Vice President (Education) and the Executive Officer Team. The Union’s primary focus is always on our students, ensuring they have a voice. This year began with three manifesto points, focusing on improving the visibility and presence of the Union of Students and the Officer Team, addressing the Vice President (Education)’s University experience of feeling a disconnect between the Union and the Students.

Efforts were made to engage with all campuses, including the installation of feedback boxes to collect feedback from students across all locations. The Vice President (Education) led the “Thursday Thoughts” initiative on Instagram, where officers asked five-six questions each week to gather feedback, share information, increase awareness, and hear



student opinions on various topics. This platform saw a significant increase in student engagement, with 40-80 students participating each week. Collaborations with various university departments, such as Careers and Employability, helped identify the types of workshops and work-based skills students wanted to see offered.

Throughout the year, the Vice President (Education) organised numerous engaging events. Free pancakes were offered on Shrove Tuesday in the Atrium, encouraging students to follow the Union’s social media accounts, and providing an opportunity to gather feedback through conversations. For Women’s History Month, the “Sip and Paint” event brought together staff and students to celebrate womanhood, with music, snacks, and goodie bags. The success of this event led to two similar events for Mental Health Awareness Month at the Buxton and Leek campuses, featuring free hot chocolates



and mugs to paint. These events were well-received and helped the Vice President (Education) build rapport with students.

During Mental Health Awareness Month, a Big Union Picnic was held, inviting both staff and students to enjoy the fresh air and take a break. This successful event saw around 90 attendees enjoying free snacks, informative leaflets from the Union Advice Service, and various games and activities.

The Vice President (Education) also participated in and supported events such as Rep-con, where workshops and fun activities were offered to student representatives, and the Academic Showcase, which highlighted the work of the Union and developed collaboration with academic staff. The Global Gathering event welcomed international students, showcasing activities and offering international food and music. Additionally, the Global Café sessions provided a space for international students to come together, creating a sense of belonging.

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At this year's Varsity, the Vice President (Education) facilitated the "Guess the Bear's Name" activity, offering prizes and increasing student participation and engagement. Collaboration with Nursing lecturers at Chesterfield led to the "Coffee and Cake" campaign during Mental Health Awareness Month, providing a comfortable environment for nursing students to share experiences and take a break. This initiative will continue as a legacy for future officers.

The Officer Team worked collaboratively on a variety of events, including Disability History Month Fair, Officer LGBTQ+ Quiz, LGBTQ+ Month Fair, Just Play (basketball), volunteering to help move Christmas trees, and several other activities. They were also involved in events like the LGBTQ+ Flag Raising, Chesterfield Freshers, Union Voice's Chinese New Year Atrium event, and more.

Being present at events and on campuses to offer engaging opportunities has increased student involvement with the Union and provided valuable support and feedback.



One of the most successful events projects managed by the Vice President (Education) was the Big Union Jam. This event, aimed at celebrating students finishing exams or assignments, included live music, free hotdogs and ice cream, boozy and non-alcoholic slushies, an activities corner, and plenty of space to relax and socialise. Despite weather concerns necessitating an indoor location, the event saw around 155 students participate.

Providing inclusive opportunities and activities has been a priority, especially during the cost of living crisis and challenging times for students' mental health. The Union aims to offer not only academic support but also a safe space for fun and personal growth, a mission that will continue into the next role as Union President.

Gabriela Gretkowska :
Vice President
(Activities)

This year the Union’s Vice President (Activities) focused on three manifesto points, providing greater support and opportunities, to increase accessibility and inclusivity of the activities offer and to increase social media presence to all sports, societies and student-led services.

At the beginning of the academic year, they hosted two social media workshops for sports and societies, to help support them with growing their social media following and increase their social media engagement. Over 70 people attended the training, with many finding it useful and helping them plan their social media posting for their upcoming events.

Throughout the academic year with the Societies Council, eight societies were awarded ‘society of the month’ to recognise the amazing work they’ve been doing within their societies. In February, the Union hosted a Societies Social to increase the sense of community and belonging between the Union societies, the Societies Council and union staff. Over 75 members attended and enjoyed free food, and seven different societies hosted rounds of the quiz. The feedback received after the event was very positive, with many societies asking



for more events to engage with one another leading to a more cohesive and active community among students.

In April, the Union hosted a successful Community Awards evening to celebrate all of the wonderful societies and their work. After a review of last year’s feedback, the Vice President (Education) introduced new awards, with more inclusive criteria, to encourage more societies to nominate themselves and celebrate their successes and achievements.

Throughout the academic year, with the support of societies council Vice President (Activities) approved 13 new societies to hopefully increase the community and belonging of students at the University by giving them more opportunities to engage with others of similar interests. Additionally, Vice President (Activities) approved over £8k worth of funding applications to support society activities, such as end of year balls and trips.

Through the academic year, Vice President (Activities) supported with the planning and organising of the home Varsity against Hertfordshire including 24 of our sports clubs with the inclusion of the football journalism course. To promote the event, the Marketing Team held a captain’s photoshoot, created a promotional video and countdown posts on social media to increase the excitement and engagement with the event. The Union’s Activities Team worked closely with the Sport and Physical Activity Team to improve spectator experience. After a very successful day



Derby Union of Students lifted the trophy for the first time after securing a 39-27 win.

Vice President (Activities) organised and hosted two parasports events throughout the year, first in November for Disability History Month which included activities such as para-cheer, blind football, inclusive climbing and visually impaired tennis. The second was held in April with activities such as boccia and inclusive swimming. The event was supported by the occupational therapy course as part of the leisure module undertaken by 3rd year students. By hosting



these events, the Union was able to raise awareness about the importance of parasports and the positive effects that participating in physical activity have on mental health.

In a collaboration between Vice President (Activities) and Vice President (Education), there has been a connection with the Nuclear Skills apprentices to create an activity offering for them. Following a survey with some suggestions of activities, they visited the Rolls Royce Sporting Facilities, and are starting to plan activities for the apprentices to take part in.

Working closely with the University’s Sport and Physical Activity Team, the Vice President (Activities) created a timetable of free active activities for the BRIT challenge to raise awareness about the benefits of physical activity for mental health. The timetable included sports such as lacrosse and squash, who have struggled with members this academic year, to support with engagement and hopefully help recruit more members.

The weekly BUCS takeover on the Union’s social media has been a massive success. Over the year the Union has increased the engagement with students watching and participating in sports, which has received positive feedback

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and a high demand to continue to do this on a weekly basis. The takeovers consist of a combination of different stories, such as interviews with spectators, interviews with players and captains and action shots from games. The increase in social media presence and promotion has increased the support that sports clubs receive on a Wednesday.

As part of the discussions on the new sports strategy, which aims to enhance performance sports and increase their number within the University, feedback was received highlighting the gap between performance and non-performance sports. In response, the Sports Council and Vice President (Activities) collaborated with Ollie Shearer and Simon Law to develop a criterion allowing sports clubs to apply for development sports status. This status serves as an intermediate step between performance and non-performance sports, supporting teams that aspire to improve and potentially achieve performance status in the future. By implementing this strategy and enhancing sports at the University, the Union aims to attract more students and improve our ranking in BUCS points.

Vice President (Activities) supported with the planning of the annual Union Sports Awards; they managed to secure a new venue which has never been used before and successfully helped to secure £1,850 in sponsorship, due to the links

and connections of the Sports Council. The event was very successful with very positive feedback from the night.

The Vice President (Activities) is excited to continue working on enhancing sports, societies, and student-led services with several exciting plans for the upcoming year. The focus will be on three key manifesto points: developing a more inclusive environment for sports, societies, and student-led services; increasing student engagement with the Union through these activities; and enhancing marketing strategies for these groups.

Throughout the year, the Vice President (Activities) will prioritise promoting inclusivity and accessibility, aiming to increase memberships and ensure that all members can participate regardless of their background, ability, or identity. Resources and guidance will be provided to support the growth and development of existing sports, societies, and student-led services. Workshops and seminars on topics relevant to the needs of these groups will be organised to help members feel supported throughout their time at the University and to encourage more students to join as volunteers.

Events will be organised to help members connect and foster a sense of community and belonging at the University. The Vice President (Activities) will collaborate with student officers to create student communities and increase Union engagement with hard-to-reach groups such as mature students, student parents, and commuting students.

Continuing the social media efforts from this year, the Vice President (Activities) plans to create engaging multimedia content, such as videos and graphics, to highlight the dynamic culture and diverse offerings of Union sports, societies, and student-led services, promoting a sense of excitement and community among students.



Jack McGuinness: Vice President (Welfare)

This year has seen phenomenal efforts for student safety by the Vice President (Welfare), starting with the collaboration efforts with the University of Derby Security. Safezone, the student safety app, released over the 2023 summer, with a hard launch at Freshers' Fair for students in September. Safezone commented on the joint efforts for the marketing of the app, saying that over the Freshers period, there was over 630 downloads, and that the organisation was delighted that the Vice President (Welfare) and the Union were brought into it.

The safety of students doesn't stop being a concern when they leave University sites; with this in mind, the Vice President (Welfare) put forward for their 2023-24 manifesto to work with the City Council on student safety in Derby.

Over the year, this effort for student safety has seen the Vice President (Welfare) been invited to represent the Union of Students across a variety of different high-profile meetings, the first of which being the Police and Crime Commission Roundtable. Discussions from this meeting were brought back onto University of Derby sites, bringing forward the student voice for matters on CCTV in taxis, which students



were overwhelmingly supportive of. Having been at the Police and Crime Commission Roundtable, the Derbyshire North MP, Amanda Solloway, invited the Vice President (Welfare) to a residents' meeting along with the Head of Student Services, Russell Lewis, to represent students in the area and discuss matters relating to topics such as safety.

Students have consistently talked about the accessibility of the student services and feeling their concerns were going unheard. Taking this onboard, the Vice President (Welfare) set up the Student Services Advisory panel at the start of the year, to allow Officers at the Union of Students to directly speak with the Head of Student Services, Sarah Richardson, to influence and further develop Student Wellbeing. The initiative has continued to evolve, with the Vice President (Welfare) playing a crucial role as the voice for students accessing wellbeing services. Participating in Student Hub Workshops, the Vice President (Welfare) has brought invaluable insights

from the student experience to ensure that the developments benefit all stakeholders involved in utilising the space.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is of particular importance to the role of Vice President (Welfare) and students at the University of Derby. Over the last year, liberation months have been a catalyst for finding and gaining insight into student opinions, such as support for students with disabilities, bringing them to the attention of the University Equality

Diversity and Inclusion Committee. EDI is a continuous movement, and many students, particularly those who are trans, are often shown to feel a disconnect if others, particularly staff aren't using their preferred pronouns. The Vice President (Welfare) knew and understood this, reaching out to the Chief Digital Officer to see if current systems enable students to select their preferred pronouns. It was later explained that it is possible to select options from a drop-down menu, which needs populating. Because of

this, the Vice President (Welfare) is developing a paper to the EDI Committee, to implement a proposal of what students can choose from.

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Freedom of Speech has been of particular focus of the UK Government as of recent, with research indicating that students didn't feel they could express their opinions in Higher Education. Because of this, new legislation was developed to ensure that Freedom of Speech could not be hindered, and Unions and Universities had a duty to promote and market it. As the Executive Officer for Freedom of Speech, the Vice President (Welfare) has been working with the Director of Legal, Governance & Assurance Services to ensure the University and the Union of Students are prepared ahead of the legislation coming into effect. This right to Freedom of Speech and the sensitivity of topics it can encompass came around when the Academics for Academic Freedom developed held an event in April 2024. After being contacted by Derby and Nottingham Students, along with organisations from Nottingham and Edinburgh, the Vice President (Welfare) released a statement on the Union's website explaining why it was allowed to go ahead. Feedback from the event was later taken to the Task & Finish group and the Student Safety and Security group, to understand how these events impact students at Derby. With the year coming to a close, the Vice President (Welfare) is excited to continue their work on student safety, working with the Head of Student Services for the safer streets scheme, and working on fostering a welcoming student community, ensuring international students feel at home in Derby.



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Activities

The Activities team, led by Dan Bowden, support and develop all of the student led groups at the University which includes the Sports clubs, Societies and Student-Led Services.

The Union have enjoyed another successful academic year, starting with being part of the Union Freshers’ Fair back in September. 73 student groups held stalls (increase of eight from 22/23) over the two days with, additional opportunities provided for these groups to promote themselves at the ‘Settling In’ and ‘Autumn’ fairs held during October in the atrium. These events have helped our societies’ individual memberships increase by 136 members (up 21%) which has been a focus for the team this year.



Dan Bowden
Student Activities Manager



Societies Social

In February, the Vice President (Activities) and the Societies Council hosted a quiz in Basecamp for our society members which was a great success with over 75 people attending. The event was totally free for students and involved pizza, drinks and prizes. Each society had the opportunity to host a round if they wanted to, which included LGBTQ+ history, movie musicals, politics and games. Everyone really threw themselves into getting involved and it was great to see - a fabulous example of students working together on a big scale to put on the events that they want to see! Feedback on the night was really positive, so the team are hoping to replicate this event throughout the next academic year.



Union Societies Pass Holders – 778

Union Sports Pass Holders – 984



Quote from Musician and Band

“The Musician and Band society has enabled us all to meet new people with shared interests and build relationships, confidence and music skills. It has given us all the chance to share our hobbies with friends, family, faculty and other students with increasing quality throughout the year, which we hope to continue into next academic year”

Will House (President of Education Society)

"I only began getting involved with the Union of Students at the beginning of this year, my second year, but it made realise that I wish I had got involved sooner!"

"The Union helped me create a new society, the Education Society, which has performed exceptionally well thanks to the help of the Union and its amazing staff."

"Since the creation of the Education Society, the Union's Societies Coordinator and the rest of the Union staff have helped no end with everything possible. From funding to giving us the opportunity to present at conferences with University VIPs, they've helped bring education-based degree students closer, no matter their specialism or cohort."

"It's been wonderful to see so many budding teachers network with each other through socials, fundraising, and volunteering opportunities. We even managed to top it off with an incredible Summer Ball at the end of May!"

"From a personal standpoint, the Union has provided me with necessary support to steer a new society, which has provided me with essential employability and social skills that can be used beyond university."

"If there is one thing I would recommend to any new, or existing, students it would be join a sport or a society and get involved with the Union! It will provide you with so many amazing opportunities, allow you to meet so many amazing people and lifelong friends and also prepare you for life beyond university with essential skills!"





International Students events

To ensure the Union has been providing opportunities for our international students the Men's Football club created an International Student Football Give it a Go event to engage with students that start slightly later in the year so miss the standard trials process. This was promoted by the University's International Office, and it saw over 20 students take part with some individuals being selected into one of the clubs BUCS teams, with others being signposted to other football opportunities at the institution.

Charitable Fundraising

This year, our student groups have excelled in their fundraising efforts, collectively raising over £30,000. This impressive achievement is the result of a concerted effort across our clubs and societies, with numerous groups participating in a variety of events. Highlights include skydives, sponsored walks and treks, and charity matches. Additionally, RAG (Raise and Give) are undertaking two sponsored challenges this summer: the Three Peaks Challenge for Marie Curie and the Morocco High Atlas Mountains trek in aid of Amnesty International.

The Union has helped coordinate several 24-hour fundraising events in the University Atrium where students have literally worked around the clock to not only generate money, but also raise awareness of charities that they feel very passionate about. This includes the Union's Lacrosse club who held a 24-hour throw and catch event in the atrium, raising over £400 for Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, and the Cricket club who were raising money for Runs 4 Research (a campaign for Alzheimer's Research UK) raising over £700.



Some charitable fundraising highlights include:

- **RAG High Atlas Mountains Trek: £7,527 for Amnesty International**
- **Netball Skydive: £5,473 for When You Wish Upon a Star**
- **Various student groups: £3,722 for Movember**
- **RAG Three Peaks Challenge: £2,883 for Marie Curie**
- **Education 12 Mile Night Walk: £1,588 for Children First Derby**
- **American Football Charity Match: £1,273 for Maggie's Cancer Care**

All this has accumulated in a 313% increase on last year's fundraising total!

Community Awards – 77 people came to celebrate the annual achievements of our Societies and Student-Led Services.



Sports Awards – 240 students and staff were in attendance.



Committee Training

In person committee training took place on the 28th and 29th May and saw over 100 students attend to learn key skills and information to help them start their time in post as positively and successfully as possible.

Areas covered included individual positional role training, recruitment, conflict resolution and EDI support. It was also an opportunity to engage with clubs and societies around their plans for next year and how they can transfer these ideas into their action plans to enable them to enhance their offer for the next academic year.



Sports Team Photos

The sport club annual team photo shoot took place on the 16th of February and was attended by over 20 of our sports clubs. Our students love to take part in this and take away a memento of their time in the sport that they love.

Key stats for Team photos

- Over 20 sport clubs engaged.
- Over 380 students attended and had pictures taken.
- Four students supported Take That Photo's on the day and got paid for their time, earning some much-needed funds.



RFU funding Success

A successful funding application was made to the RFU (Rugby Football Union) to support the men's club this season. The Union were allocated £2,600, which enabled the club to create opportunities for students who could not get into the official 1st team. Friendly fixtures were arranged with other universities, and the funds helped cover transport, facility, and match official costs. This funding allowed an additional 20 students to experience Rugby Union, strengthening the case for adding an extra team to the BUCS program for the 2024/25 season.

CASE STUDY

Louise Vinton (Equestrian)

When did you get involved in the Union of Students?

I got involved in the Union of Students in 2021 when I decided to join the Equestrian club in my first year at university.

In what capacity are you involved with the Union?

I was a member of the club for the entirety of my three years at university, and on the club's committee in my second and third year, first as Social Secretary and most recently as President.

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

Being part of a sports club and the Union has enabled me to meet an incredible circle of people, as well as giving me

opportunities that I would not have had otherwise – including the chance to compete in equestrian disciplines that were never available to me during my childhood.

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

As well as the opportunities to compete, I have had opportunities for personal development, including gaining skills through my roles on the committee - teamwork, leadership, and organisation being some of many! Additionally, I had a circle of friends, now being some of my closest, in which I got to share a common interest with. I found this helpful when being away from home and adjusting to university life and the newfound independence.

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

Being in a sports club also aided my studies. Having greater responsibilities provided me with a need and better ability to effectively manage my time, whilst also giving me a space to unwind from my degree and enjoy a sport that I have grown up with.

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

Recognition of the effort that we put in, and opportunities to complete further training through the Union, such as first aid training, and receiving my University Honours award have

provided me with a greater array of skills for my CV. This, along with the life skills gained, have been useful prompts within interviews which I feel have helped me to secure a graduate job within HMPPS.

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

The array of sports and societies run by the Union of Students means there really is something for everyone to get involved in! I'd recommend to any students that they get involved with a club, whether you have grown up with the hobby, or push yourself to try something new.



Varsity

What a great day! So many standout performances that contributed to Derby finally beating the University of Hertfordshire and being crowned Varsity champions 2024!

The Union is immensely proud of all the students who participated in Varsity 2024. This includes not only the competing teams but also the clubs that performed, the enthusiastic spectators, and the numerous volunteers who helped make the event a spectacular success.

This year was home fixtures for Varsity, the Union were fortunate to receive support from various academic partners who provide their services throughout the year, adding a high level of professionalism to the event. The Sports Therapy and Rehabilitation course offered first aid and pre/post-match care on the day. Additionally, the Sports Journalism and Football Journalism courses worked tirelessly to create a professional environment with fixture streaming, match reports, and interviews — something rarely seen in university sports.



Varsity – Key stats

- 22 different sports took part over the day
- 600 student competitors
- Over 900 student spectators (includes competitors watching other teams)
- Over 40 sport journalism students engaging with the event and using the experience for course modules.
- Over 30 sport therapy and rehabilitation students supporting on the day, again using the experience to count towards course requirements.



BUCS Review

The BUCS 2023/24 season has seen sports clubs achieve three league wins with Basketball Men’s 1st, Futsal Women’s 1st and Rugby Union Women’s 1st all winning their respective leagues as well as Futsal Men’s 2nd’s gaining promotion from a 2nd place finish too.

In April Futsal Women’s 1sts also achieved the only cup win of this season, winning the National Trophy 8-4 in the final.

Outside of leagues and knockouts; student athletes achieved three gold medals, one silver medal, and three bronze medals in individuals’ events (Badminton, Rowing, and Cycling).

Badminton

Kiara Henry & Sophie Watson - Women’s Doubles - Gold
Magda Lozniceriu & Jonty Russ - Mixed Doubles – Gold

Cycling Track

Rhianna Parris-Smith - Women’s 500m Time Trial - Gold
Women’s 750m Team Sprint - Bronze
Women’s Team - Bronze

Rowing Indoor

Ollie Hanks - Open Lightweight - Silver



BUCS achievements

- BUCS League Winners**
- Basketball Men’s 1sts – Midlands Tier 1
 - Futsal Women’s 1sts – Midlands Tier 1
 - Rugby Union Women’s 1sts – Midlands Tier 3B

- BUCS League Runners up**
- American Football Open 1 – Midlands Tier 2
 - Basketball Women’s 1sts – Midlands Tier 2A
 - Football Men’s 1sts – Midlands Tier 2B
 - Football Men’s 3rds – Midlands Tier 4B
 - Football Women’s 1sts – Midlands Tier 2B
 - Futsal Men’s 1sts – Prem North
 - Futsal Men’s 2nds – Midlands Tier 3A

- BUCS Individuals Successes**
- Badminton Women’s Doubles Gold – *Kiara Henry & Sophie Watson*
 - Badminton Mixed Doubles Gold – *Magda Lozniceriu and Jonty Russ*
 - Cycling Track Championships: Women’s 500m Time Trial Gold – *Rhianna Parris-Smith*
 - Cycling Track Championships: Women’s Team Bronze – *Rhianna Parris-Smith, Jodie Taylor and Rhiannon Briffa*
 - Rowing Indoor & Adaptive: Open Lightweight Silver – *Ollie Hanks*

Non-BUCS achievements

- Dance**
- Leeds Beckett University Carnegie Dance
- 2nd Intermediate Ballet
 - 2nd Intermediate Tap
 - 2nd Intermediate Contemporary
 - Best Choreography – Elland Elliott’s Tap
- Go Hard or Go Home
- 1st Beginner Tap
 - 1st Beginner Jazz
 - 1st Beginner Wildcard
 - 2nd Beginner Commercial
 - 2nd Beginner Ballet
 - 2nd Beginner Contemporary
 - 3rd Team Spirit
 - Best Choreography – Elland Elliott’s Tap
- Northampton Take the Stage
- 2nd Intermediate Tap
 - 3rd Intermediate Contemporary
 - Best Costume for Tap
 - Best Dancer of the Day – Elland Elliott

- Cheerleading**
- BCA University Nationals
- Stunt team – COED Level 1 placed 2nd
 - Stunt team – All Girl Level 1 placed 4th
- Legacy Cheer and Dance University Nationals
- Comp team – COED Level 2 placed 6th
- Pool and Snooker**
- British Regional Tournament Trials
- Jay Atkins selected for Midlands team and reached the QFs

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Advice

The Union’s Advice team is led by Becca Wood. Becca and the team have hosted a series of events and campaigns throughout the year, with the aim of raising the profile of the Union and the support available, alongside educating and providing informative engaging activities relating to themes seen by the advice team and sector wide data.



Community Pantry

The Nursing and Midwifery Officer, along with help from members of the British Sign Language Society and last year’s Gender Officer, completed their campaign to advertise the development of a Community Pantry that was posted on the Union’s Ideas Forum. The campaign by the group was a huge success, accumulating over 170 votes for the idea, the most votes on a proposed idea in the Union’s history.

After investigating a variety of suitable spaces and refurbishing the area the Union reviewed to be appropriate, the Union of Students’ Community Pantry has been soft launched, receiving interest to supply the space from external and internal sources, to help those in need.

To be able to access the space, students visit the InfoPoint and ask for the Community Pantry, or they can ‘ask for Penny’ if they do not feel comfortable asking directly to access the pantry. The location, being opposite the InfoPoint, allows the Union to ensure that the resources are going to students who have asked for assistance, whilst also providing the opportunity for the Union to provide additional support via the Advice Service.

Currently, there have been a number of generous donations from both staff, students and the Multi-Faith Centre. Twenty students have accessed the pantry so far and have been signposted to the Advice Service for additional support. The Union looks forward to further promoting the pantry to support as many students as possible.



University Mental Health Day

On the 14th March, the Advice Service hosted an event in the Atrium for University Mental Health Day. The event included tea, coffee and cakes. Students engaged in mindful activities including painting and colouring. The Union Activities team provided interactive games such as giant Jenga and basketball. The aim of the day was to talk to students about how they can best ensure their mental wellbeing is prioritised, where they can seek support from as well as providing some fun activities for the day. Approximately 99 students participated in the activities for the day.



Partnerships

Since October 2023 to May 2024, the Legal Triage has supported 26 students through providing legal guidance. The service is run by staff on the Law Programme and is supported by third year law students. This allows law students the opportunity to build on their work experience and develop their skills, whilst supporting students with issues including employment and housing.

SV2 is a Derbyshire based charity service supporting anyone who has experienced any form of sexual violence or abuse. They have been offering a monthly drop-in service for students. SV2 have also been present at Freshers and Sexual Violence Awareness Day to promote their services.

Restore are a Derbyshire based charity providing support for sex workers. They have been on site monthly to offer a one-to-one befriending service for women who engage in sex work. This is a confidential service offering sexual health and mental health support. Restore have been present at Freshers and Sexual Violence Awareness Day to promote their services.

Outreach 1625 have offered monthly drop-in service. They provide harm reduction information and advice about drugs and alcohol; provide safety resources; and can offer support to access additional help for drug and alcohol issues if needed. Outreach 1625 have been present at all Union events including Freshers, Varsity and Sexual Violence Awareness Day.



Destresstival

Destresstival is a week-long event organised by the Union to help students unwind during their exam period. Throughout the week, the Union promoted a variety of activities, including yoga sessions at the Multi-Faith Centre, events coordinated by Student Living, and library drop-ins. The Advice Service also hosted an Inflatable Fair featuring axe throwing, a basketball shootout, and other pop-up activities. Additionally, there was a 'Brain Gym' day where students participated in activities such as painting, loom band making, beading with Ingrid from the Multi-Faith Centre, and playing board games. These events collectively engaged approximately 225 students.

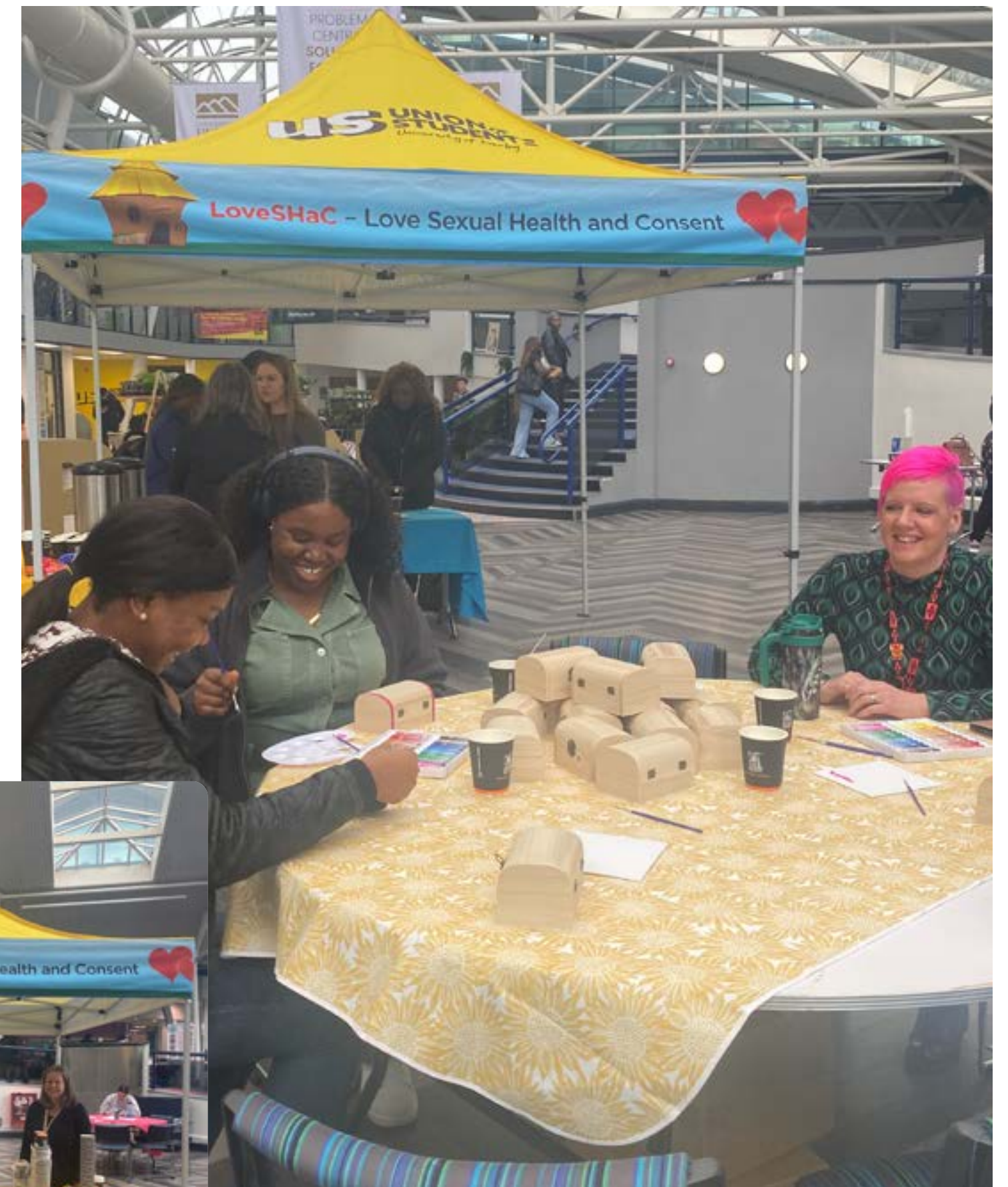
Training opportunities

The Union Advice Service has been delivering monthly online workshops relating to various topics, including academic appeals, academic misconduct, budgeting, bullying vs. banter, Look After Your Mate, consent, and eating disorder awareness training. These workshops have been well-attended.

This year, the Advice Service has partnered with the Nuclear Skills Academy to ensure a monthly on-campus presence for apprenticeship students. Union Advisors hosted monthly drop-in sessions, providing apprenticeship students with opportunities for in-person appointments. Additionally, the Advice Service conducted workshops throughout the year for level 3 and level 4 apprenticeship students on topics such as budgeting, Look After Your Mate, consent, eating disorder awareness, and bullying vs. banter. The campaign roadshows will include stops at the Nuclear Skills Academy, ensuring all students, regardless of their academic path, have equal access to the campaign messages.

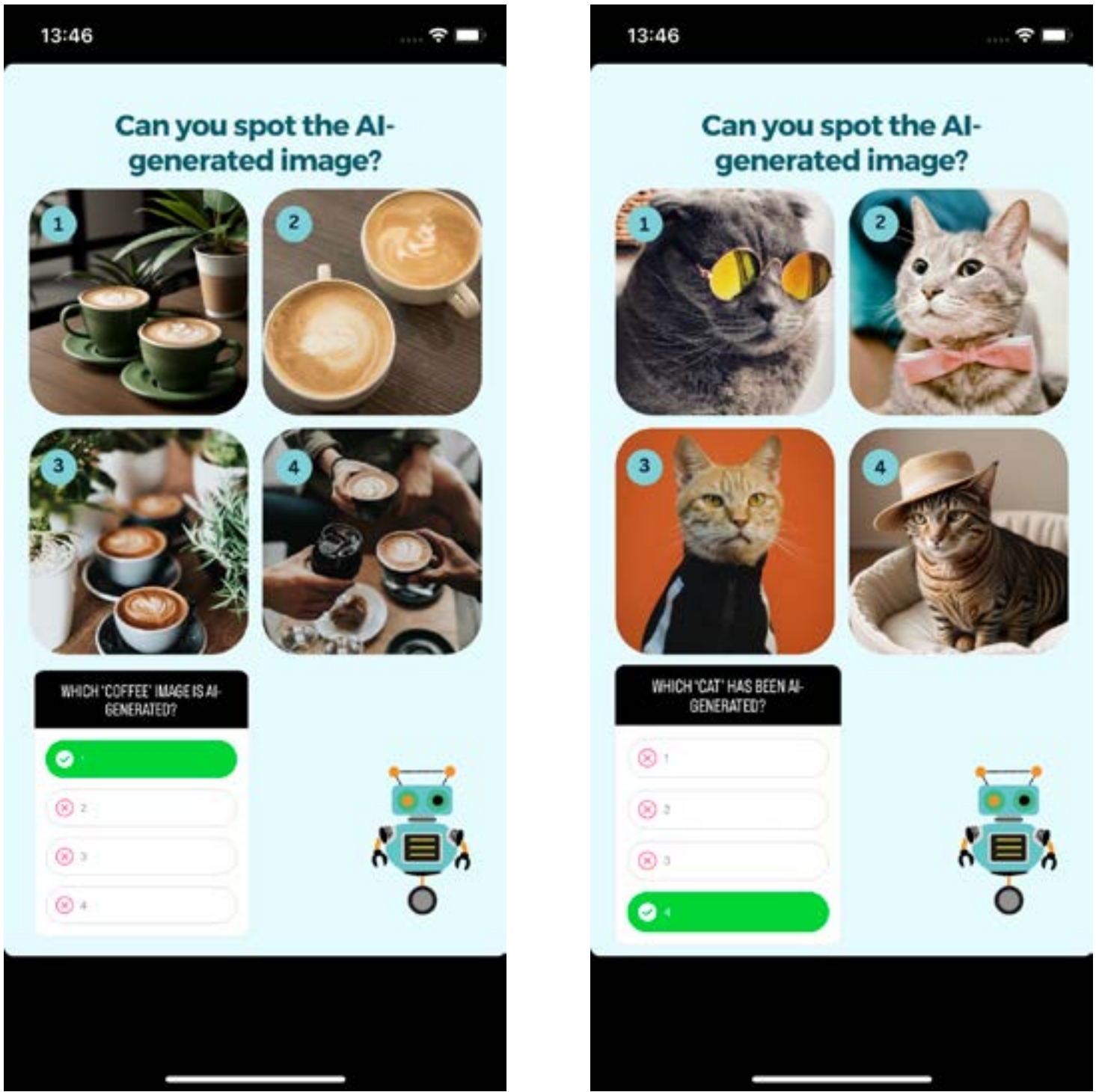
Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault Awareness Day

The week commencing 5th February was Sexual Abuse & Sexual Violence Awareness Week. The Vice President (Welfare), alongside the Advice Service, hosted an event on the 6th of February in the Atrium to support SA&SV awareness. The event included a tea and coffee stand, as well as wellbeing activities such as journalling workshops and 'paint and chat' sessions, where students were invited to chat to an advisor and a trained ex police officer Tracy Bradford, whilst painting their own wellbeing chest box. The Union SVLO service used this week as an opportunity to raise awareness of the service to ensure that students know where to seek support if they need it. SV2 and SAIL (ISVA services within Derby/Derbyshire) were also invited along to speak to students about the services they provide.



Students vs Robots

The Union Advice Service ran a campaign from October to December called Students vs Robots which is all about Generative AI. The campaign aimed to open discussions with students about the benefits and limitations of using Generative AI, whilst also sharing the dangers of using it when it comes to academic misconduct. The campaign involved Generative AI articles, a fun Generative AI animation and a ‘spot the difference’ social media campaign with generative AI photos and real photos. The campaign also had its own mini robot mascot (GenBot) which the Vice President (Welfare) used to take around the University sites to speak to students about if they know what Generative AI is and whether they feel they can sensibly use Generative AI with confidence. The Vice President (Welfare) spoke to around 30 students with many feeling they couldn’t use Generative AI responsibly. For the social media campaign, at least 134 students participated in the polls, and an average of 60% were able to accurately identify which image was AI-generated.



SVLO Delivery Plan

One of the key aims for the SVLO service is to raise awareness of who the SVLO’s are and how they support students within the University of Derby. To meet this aim, the SVLO’s have reached out to all the Heads of Schools within the University to ask if they can meet with the Programme Leaders to do a presentation about the SVLO role, in the hopes that this information will cascade down to all lecturers within the school. The overview of the presentation includes a summary of the role; how they support students to report to the University; who their connections are; how they can work with academics; how and why they collect data; how they raise awareness; and what the aims are for the academic year. The request to join meetings has been well received. Since these meetings, there have been some referrals from staff members to the SVLO service.

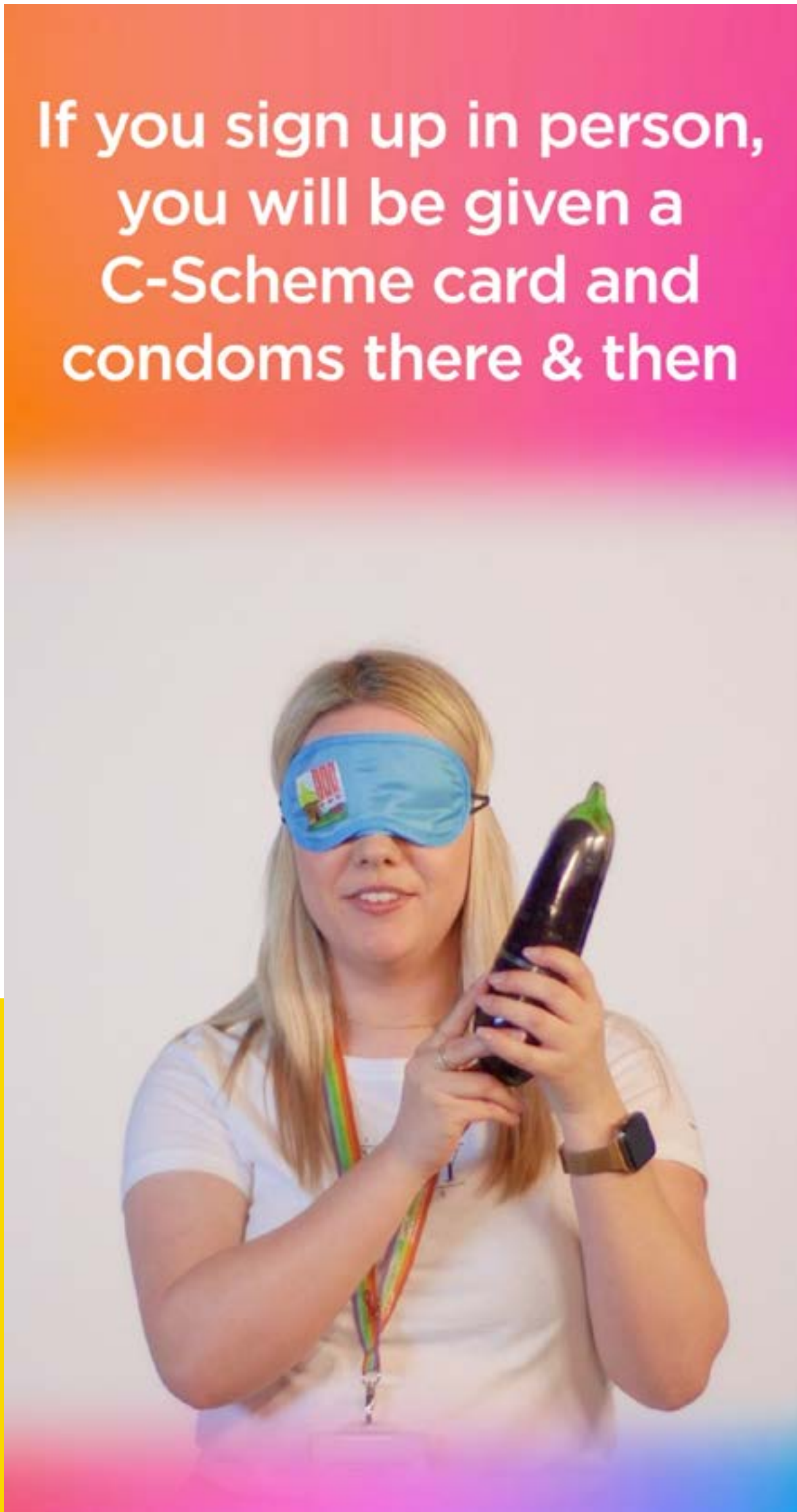
The SVLO service invited SV2 onsite to deliver consent training to sports students ahead of tour. This was attended by 75 students who learned what consent it and isn’t; how to be an active bystander and where to report and seek support. The Advice and SVLO Manager was invited to be a guest speaker to first year Radiography students on sexual misconduct within the workplace and how the SVLO service can support.

C-Scheme

The Union continues to deliver the C-Scheme, providing free condoms and lube to 16- to 24-year-olds through the scheme. Since September, we've had 215 students sign up to the scheme across all sites, including Buxton and Leek College. Through the sign-up form, the scheme allows us to check that students are practicing safe sex and signpost them for health checks accordingly. Similarly, there is a question around consensual sexual relationships which enables us to signpost students to the SVLO service and external support if they've experienced nonconsensual sexual activity.

Live Chat

Info and Advice Assistants supervise the live chat function on the Union's website, students can ask questions related to any aspect of student life. Live chat is available daily between 10.00am and 4.00pm. The live chat function has had 115 students access it since 1st September 2023.



SVLO cases

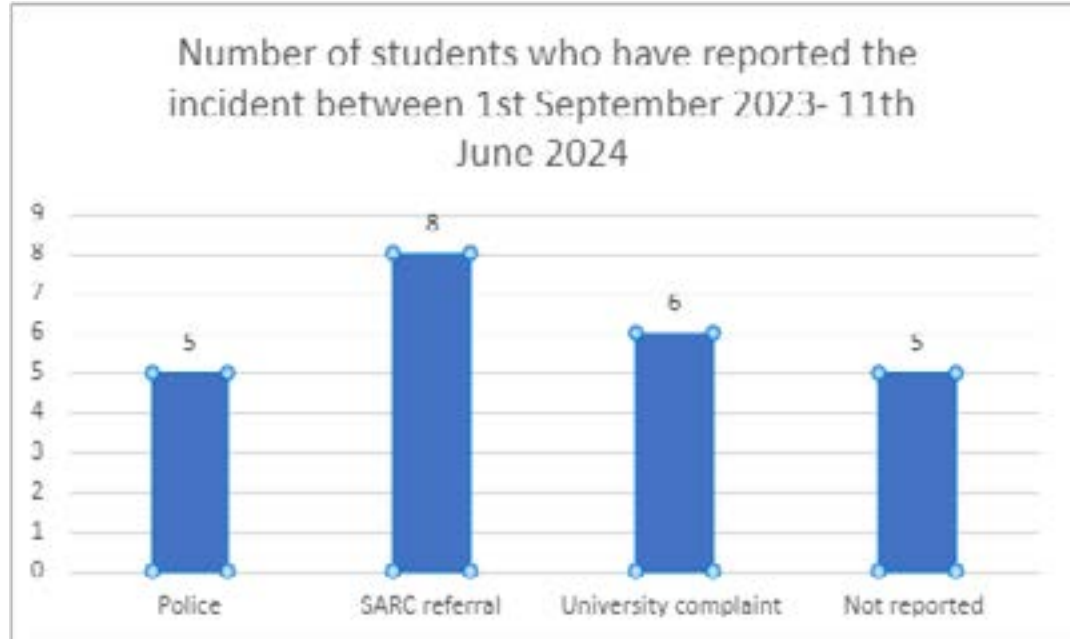
There are currently two trained SVLO's at the Union. Students can access the service directly or may be referred by Wellbeing or the programme team after disclosing an incident of sexual violence. The SVLO service has built strong relationships with SV2 which is an organisation in Derby who support victims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

The SVLO's role is to support students, provide reporting options and to signpost to external supportive services. The SVLO's can also support students with reporting to the University or Union. This includes outlining the procedure, reviewing their statements, and attending any relevant meetings. Working with the Student Policy and Regulations Team, the SVLO's can request extensions on behalf of the students. This is a trauma informed approach, ensuring the student doesn't have to write a statement to submit through the RAC process.

Below is information showing the number of cases the SVLO service has had from the 1st September 2023 until 11th June 2024. The Sexual Violence Liaison Officers allow the students to disclose as much as they are comfortable with. Therefore, some students may not disclose certain information, such as the setting the incident took place.

Total number of cases: 24

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ➤ Referred by SARC - 4 | ➤ Setting: Student accommodation - 9 |
| ➤ Referred by Wellbeing - 12 | ➤ Setting: Public - 4 |
| ➤ Reported person: Student - 14 | ➤ Setting: University campus - 2 |
| ➤ Reported person: Stranger - 3 | ➤ Setting: Home - 4 |
| ➤ Reported person: Friend - 6 | ➤ Setting: Online - 2 |
| ➤ Reported person: Not disclosed - 1 | ➤ Setting: Not disclosed - 3 |

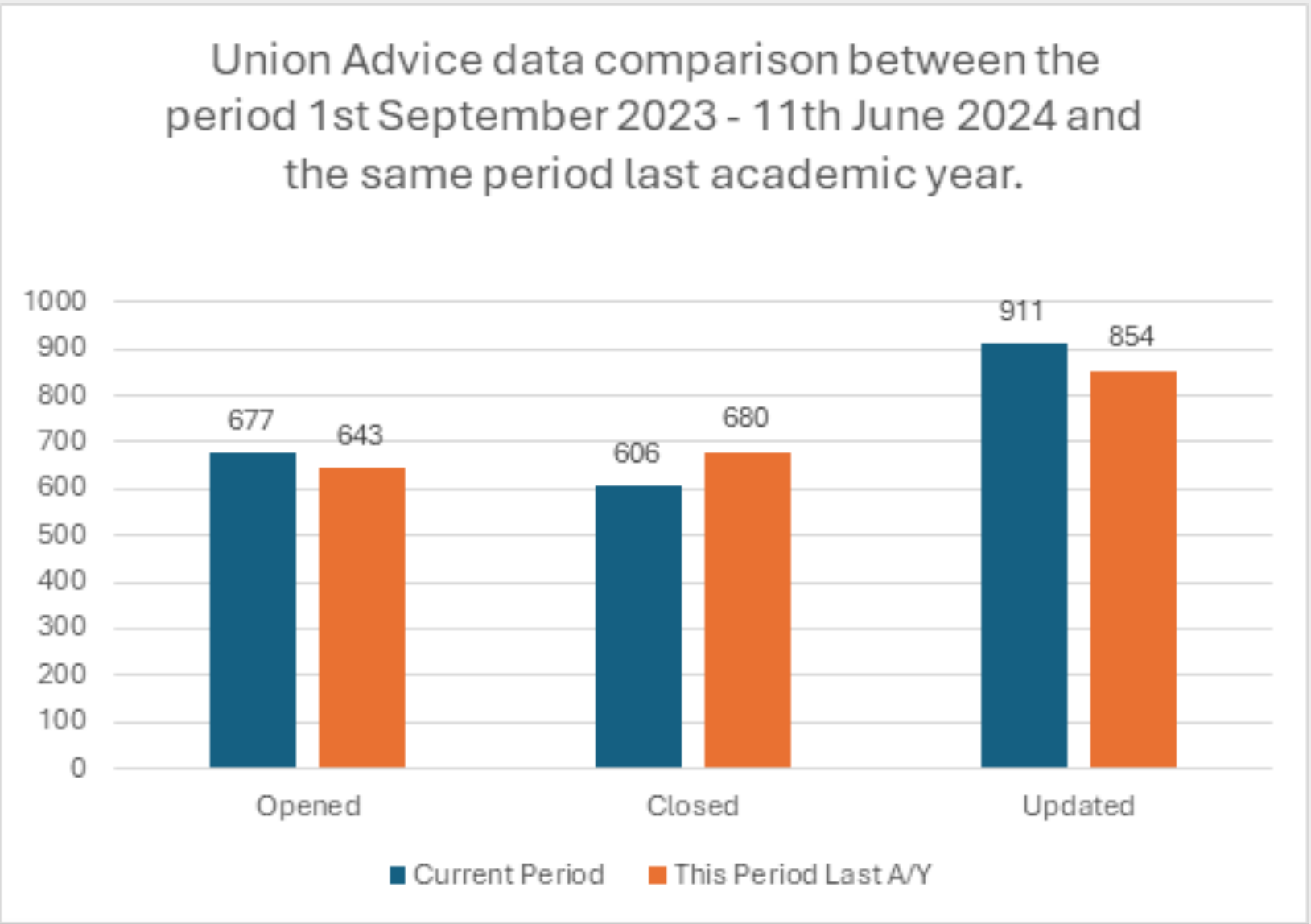


Sexual Violence Liaison Officers provide the different reporting options to the students and can support with reporting the incident. Their role is to provide the information but ensure that the student makes the decision based on what is best for them. Students may decide to report the incident to both the police and the University. SVLO's may refer students to the Sexual Assault Referral Clinic who can support with collecting forensic evidence, depending on when the incident took place. Five students have decided not to report either to the University or to the police so far. One of those students reported that they didn't feel comfortable at the time the incident took place (historic incident). Reassurance was given to all students.



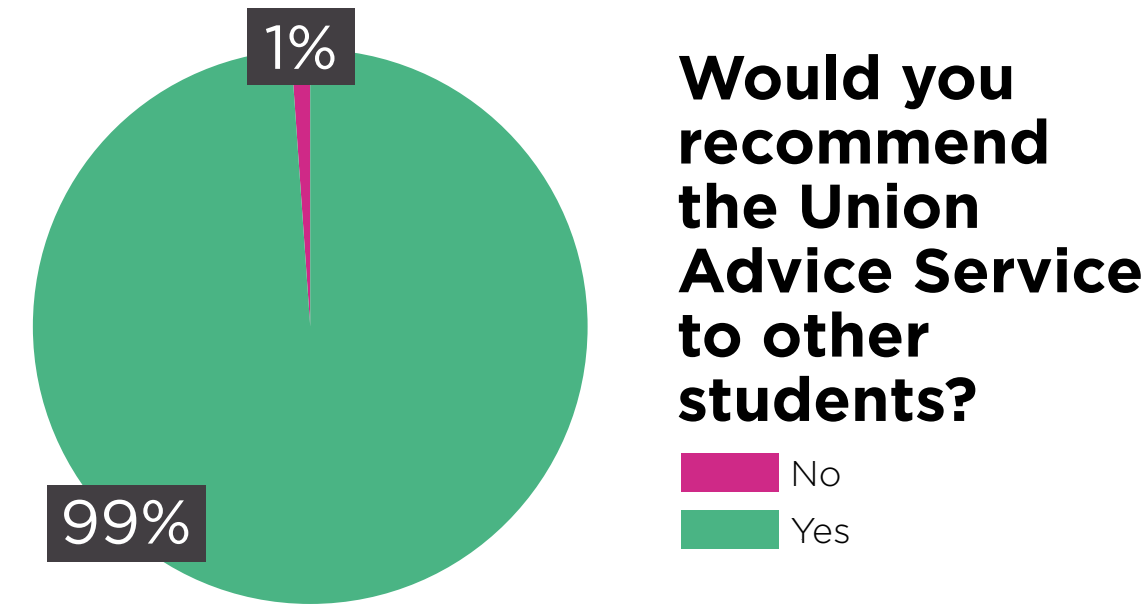
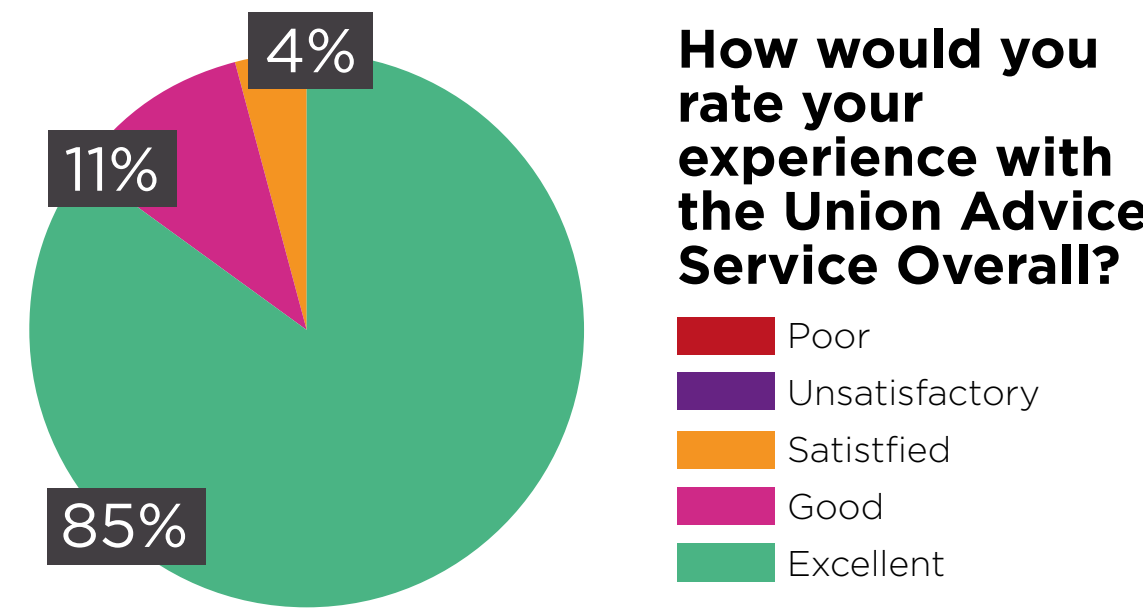
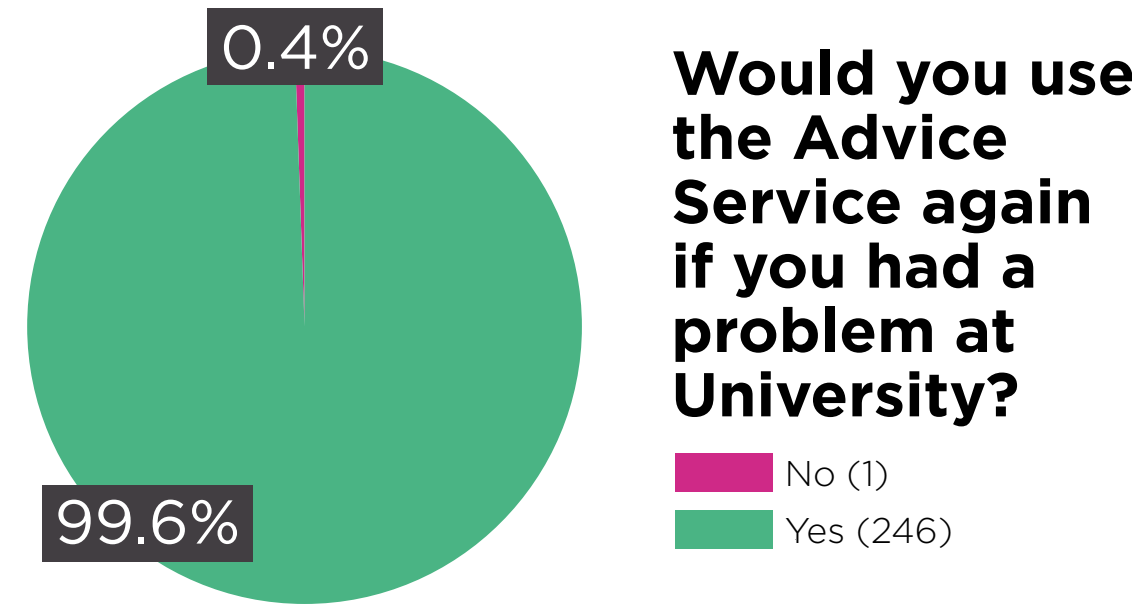
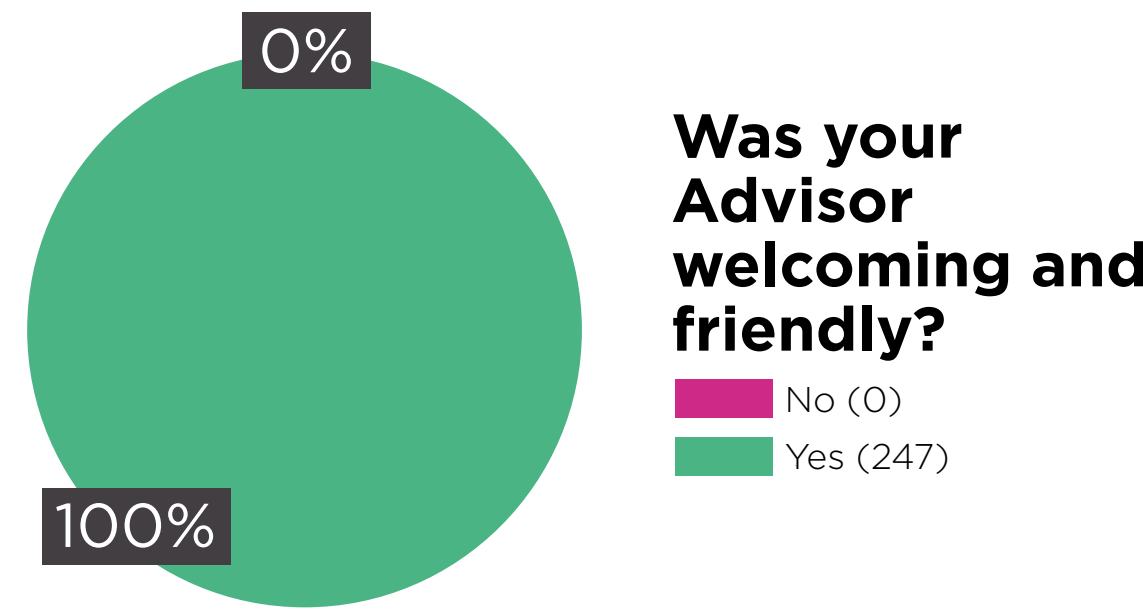
Support

The Advice Service continues to increase the number of students they are supporting year on year with a 12% increase from academic year 2021/2022 to academic year 2022/2023 and a 4% increase from last academic year to the current academic year. The main trends seen are academic misconduct cases, complaints and academic appeals. The Advice Team continue to encourage students to access the workshops delivered by both the Union and the library to help them to better their understanding of academic misconduct and how to avoid it.



Feedback

247 students completed the anonymous feedback form following their case closing within the service. 100% of students found their advisor welcoming and friendly.



Additional comments provided by students

“To me, the Union is excellent in everything.”

“My advisor was absolutely fantastic. I could not have gotten through the process without her.”

“The service was so easy to use. We were offered an appointment via teams very quickly and at a time that suited. The advisor was supportive and helpful.”

“Genuinely not a single one, my advisor was nothing but understanding and helpful, a true asset to the University of Derby Students’ Union.”



End of Year Plans

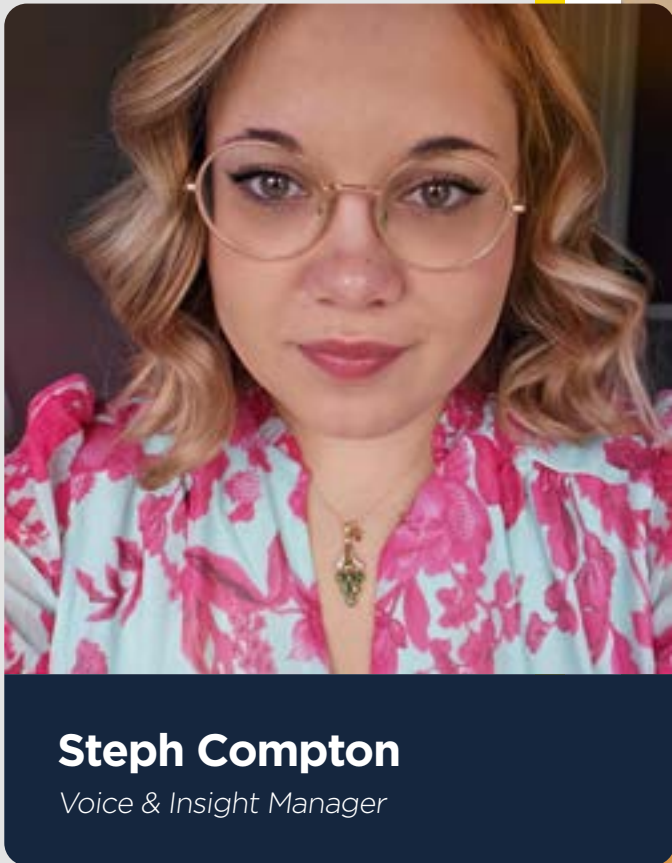
The Union have created affordable and easy recipe cards which will be distributed at Freshers to help students improve their cooking skills whilst encouraging them to eat balanced meals. As part of this initiative, the Union will also be creating a cooking series showcasing how each dish is made through social media and the website.



From October to December, the Advice Service will be delivering a campaign to support students to better understand how to be financially responsible, as well as how to avoid financial fraud. The Advice Service will be working with both University staff and the local fraud department within the police.

Student Voice

In March this year the Union was joined by a new Voice and Insight Manager, Steph Compton, joining as the Union’s Main Elections were coming to an end. Steph plans to continue developing and growing the elections period, to ensure the increase of engagement continues on a positive trajectory for 24/25.



The Voice Team delivered another fantastic Elections results night event at the Old Bell Hotel in Derby. The By-Election results were held at an external venue for the first time this year. On 2nd May at the Maypole in Derby our new Vice-President (Education) was elected following an active and successful campaign. Voter numbers increased this year, for both Main Elections and By-Elections.

Since March, the Voice Team have delivered the 2023/24 Education Awards at the Museum of Making, a College Forum, an Executive Officer Scrutiny Panel, and an All-Student Meeting. The Union saw good engagement across all of these events and continue to collect valuable pieces of student voice and feedback. The recruitment of PAL Leaders for 2024/25 is still ongoing, some excellent individuals have been recruited so far and will continue this process over the upcoming weeks. The team will also be recruiting for a new PAL Assistant and a Voice Assistant; two fantastic part-time opportunities for our students to take advantage of.

The Voice and Insights Manager along with members of the Voice Team, are involved with the newly formed



Election Statistics

Year	Candidates	Voters
2022/23	33	831
2023/24	38	1134

Student Voice Review group, in conjunction with the University. Following an update at the Learning and Teaching Committee, the members have agreed a two-phase plan and will be commencing work on phase one this summer. The first phase entails a campaign to better promote our existing Voice mechanisms and to boost engagement with university staff and students. Lots of exciting work and progress lie ahead. The aim is to fully engage in these efforts and strengthen the working relationship between the Union and University colleagues.



Ben Clarke (Student Officer)

“My name is Ben Clarke and I’m a recent graduate in Theatre Arts. Being a Student Officer and working within and alongside the Union throughout my university experience has been very rewarding for me on both a professional and personal level.

“Over my three years at the University, I’ve been an active member of the Musical Theatre society undertaking committee roles including President in my final year; alongside this I was also the Societies Chair. In taking on these commitments I have learnt valuable transferable skills that I can take into my life and many professional working environments in the future. It’s helped me further understand and put into action positive teamwork and communication skills, most notably, alongside much more.

“I can guarantee my university experience wouldn’t have been anywhere near as fun, exciting and valuable if it wasn’t for these amazing opportunities offered. I would encourage anyone to take the leap into these positions as they are so rewarding for personal and professional experience.”

Student Reps

Rep Employability

Each academic year, data is collected on whether student representatives feel more employable as a result of their role. This data is gathered twice annually: once in December or January, and again at the end of the academic year. The purpose is to track improvements from previous years and measure the progress, particularly for new representatives, throughout the current academic year.

Feel more employable:	Jul '20	Jul '21	May '22	Jan '23	May '23	Jan '24	Jun '24
YES	61%	77%	64%	47%	54%	35%	57%
NO	39%	23%	36%	17%	24%	10%	15%
UNSURE	-	-	-	36%	22%	56%	28%

The percentage of reps feeling more employable increased from 35% by the middle of the academic year to 57% by the end. Initially, the low percentage was due to many reps being new to the role and not yet recognizing the skills that enhance their employability. However, from the middle to the end of the year, there was a notable 22% increase.

Between May 2023 and June 2024, there was a notable improvement in the number of respondents feeling more employable, with a 3% increase. Additionally, there was a significant 9% decrease in those feeling less employable. However, there was also an increase in uncertainty, with the percentage of unsure respondents rising by 6%. Overall, the data suggests a positive trend in employability perceptions, though there remains a growing sense of uncertainty that will need to be addressed.

The Rep Community

The Rep Scheme’s role as a community is crucial to the effective functioning of the feedback mechanism. A strong community fosters open communication and support, enhancing the quality and depth of feedback and fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement.

Feel part of a community:	Jul '20	Jul '21	Jun '22	May '23	Jun '24
YES	63%	62%	57%	55%	66%
NO	37%	38%	42%	45%	34%

This data highlights a notable trend: a significant increase in the proportion of Reps feeling connected to the community, reaching its highest recorded level since 2020. Specifically, there has been an impressive 11% rise in community engagement over the course of the project.

Rep Training

Department	07/12/2020	12/07/2023	09/04/2024
AHE	43%	58%	61%
BLSS	50%	62%	63%
HPSC	42%	64%	60%
SE	44%	56%	65%
Average	45%	60%	62%

The percentage of Student Reps who have completed the Rep Training has significantly increased over the past four years. This data, analysed per college, shows substantial improvements, with the smallest increase being 13% and the largest reaching 21%

Feedback

Despite having fewer reps this year, it is encouraging to see them being more productive and collecting more feedback, with an increase of 65 pieces of feedback compared to the previous academic year.

Academic Year	Reps
2023/24	693
2022/23	637





Emma Barker (Student Rep)

My name is Emma Barker and I study Psychology. Being a student representative has significantly boosted my confidence, particularly as someone with autism. This role has allowed me to voice my opinions and advocate for my peers, enhancing my communication and leadership skills. It's been an empowering experience that has not only supported my personal growth but also positively impacted my academic journey. Engaging with faculty and professionals has provided valuable insights and connections, enriched my understanding and helped me succeed in my degree.

PAL

The PAL (Peer-Assisted Learning) program continues to thrive, with a dedicated team of 23 Leaders and one Assistant supporting around 3,000 first year and foundation students, primarily via Microsoft Teams.

This academic year, the PAL team has enhanced the visibility of their face-to-face interactions. Several Leaders have conducted in-class introductions within their disciplines, and two have hosted in-person drop-in sessions for their students. Additionally, PAL Leaders have represented the program at various student-centric events (February Fresher’s, Global Gathering, Applicant Day, Open Day) and staff-focused events (Academic Showcase, Programme Leaders’ Forum, and Student Affairs Committee).

A key performance indicator (KPI) for the PAL program is to enhance the employability of its Leaders. According to the Mid-Year Leader Survey conducted in January 2024, 90.91% of Leaders felt more or much more employable due to their role. They identified skills such as ‘Organisation’, ‘Managing Commitments’, and ‘Communication’ as significant gains.

The survey also provided valuable insights into additional training desired by the Leaders. This feedback will inform targeted training sessions for the remainder of the year. For example, the PAL coordinator plans to collaborate with the Union’s Advice Manager to deliver ‘Look After Your Mate’ for Mental Health First Aid training, direct Leaders to LinkedIn Learning sessions on Critical Thinking, and coordinate with Careers to offer a tailored session on transferable skills for job applications. The survey’s response rate provided a fairly representative sample, though there is no previous Mid-Year Report for comparison. Notably, all responses were received shortly after the survey opened.

PAL Leader positions filled 2021-24

Academic Year	Positions Filled
2021/22	66%
2022/23	76%
2023/24	79%





Khadijatou Bah (PAL Leader)

"I have been an active member of the Union since my first year. I first became a student rep in my second year which I am still continuing alongside my peer assisted learning (PAL) role which I started in my third year. Being involved in the Union has had several positive impacts on my professional and personal development. By participating in the Union, I have opened myself up to new connections and experiences. Meeting people who share my passions, as well as those with differing viewpoints, has broadened my understanding of the world and cultivated empathy and communication skills. The Union has also provided me opportunities for leadership roles, organising events, and managing resources. Engaging in these activities has helped me develop skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

"Moreover, involvement in the Union has helped me advocate for student rights, voice concerns, and represent students' interests to the university administration. Being part of this process allowed me to contribute to shaping policies and decisions that affect their education and campus life. Involvement in the Union has enriched my overall university experience. It provided me a sense of belonging, fostered community, and enhanced personal growth.

"In my capacity as a PAL leader, I have been able to apply my knowledge from my course in a practical setting by sharing with

first year's and foundation students how to settle into university, how to prepare for their first placements and assignments, and most importantly how to organise and manage their time well in an intense practical field (nursing). This has improved my confidence and widened my cross-cultural knowledge regarding how students from different cultures settle into university through listening to their stories.

"Being involved in the Union as a nursing student has particularly helped me communicate better, become a great listener, and empathise well with my patients when on placements. These are the biggest skills I had to learn in both my roles when dealing with students concerns.

"Every student is automatically a member of the Union. However, by actively participating the Union activities whether that is by voting in Union Elections, running for student leadership roles, submitting referendum ideas, joining one of the societies, writing papers for the Union, working for the Union office, or by campaigning or volunteering is the biggest investment any student will make in their university experience. The Union is there to make sure you're having the best possible time at university. It is not only an amazing resource but a great way to connect with your student community and feel involved. I can't recommend them enough!"



Champion Groups

All permanent staff members of the Union participate in a Champion Group, aligning with their passions and interests. The work carried out in these groups is in addition to their regular roles, with some staff using volunteering hours to undertake projects. This year, our EDI Champions Group has delivered a variety of events and activities. During February the Union's EDI Champions group arranged a Chinese New Year event to encourage students to celebrate Chinese culture. This event included activities such as colouring in the 12 zodiac animals, badge making, lantern making, and the library were invited to showcase books about Chinese New Year.



The EDI Champions Group arranged for Antisemitism training for all Union staff to ensure that colleagues are aware of the historical context of antisemitism and how it continues to impact the Jewish community. As a result, the Union feel more equipped to better understand and support Jewish students who may be struggling.

With the understanding that many students within the University struggle with their finances and budgeting, the EDI Champions group are delivering a pre-paid meal deal voucher scheme. This will hopefully

encourage students to buy vouchers for their meals when they first receive their loans, ensuring that they always have the vouchers available should they be struggling financially and need to buy food. These can be used in all Union of Students outlets and will have a one-year expiry date from the date of purchase.

The Advice Service have created recipe cards providing guidance on how to cook cheap, balanced meals. These will be distributed at Freshers and have meat, vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options. The EDI Champions group felt that cooking videos may be more accessible for some students and more enjoyable to watch. Therefore, they have created a 'cooking series' which will be available on Union social media channels and the website from September. The aim is to encourage students to buy balanced meals and cook delicious recipes that are low cost.

The Union's Sustainability Champions have volunteered their time for 3 projects over the 2023/2024 academic year. These have been:

- *Planting bee friendly perennial plants and fruit trees at a local school in Allestree; this was aimed to benefit local biodiversity and provide the school children with plants to care for and harvest over the years.*
- *Building two bug hotels on the KR campus.*
- *Building a greenhouse out of plastic bottles at the Allestree primary school, which will give the children an area to grow plants from seeds and learn about them.*

The volunteering projects have been valuable not only for the community contributions, but also for the staff and they have provided the following testimonials about their volunteering time.



Staff who took part in the Union sustainable volunteering projects had the following to say about their experiences.

“Volunteering my time at the school to plant trees and flower beds, as well as building bug hotels on campus and putting out hedgehog houses, has been incredibly rewarding. Hopefully we have enhanced the school and university grounds aesthetically, as well as improving habitats for local wildlife. Working outdoors, getting my hands dirty, and witnessing the transformation of the spaces has been a really satisfying experience. Engaging in these activities has undoubtedly had positive impacts on my wellbeing and mental health, providing a sense of purpose and connection to nature.”

“Volunteering with the Sustainability Champions at a local school and building the bug hotels on site for me brought great benefit to both my mental and physical health. Getting outside in nature and doing something productive always makes me feel good and I enjoy being active so there's nothing better than combining the two for a good cause!”



"I have thoroughly enjoyed all the volunteering projects that I have been able to take part in with the Sustainability Champions, they have all been very rewarding and satisfying. The environment and being as sustainable as I can is something that is very important to me, so being able to take part in these opportunities is something that has meant a lot to me, and by volunteering at the nearby school I felt able to contribute to the local community, promote sustainable food growing, and spend some time outside enjoying all the benefits that brings."

"As part of the Sustainability Champions with the Union of Students, I volunteered on multiple projects including gardening at a primary school and building a bug hotel on the university grounds. These projects were beneficial not only for the environment, but I also noticed an improvement in my mental health as it was great to be able to step away from my desk, get outside, and do something different with my colleagues for a few hours. I particularly enjoyed volunteering at the local primary school as we could see we had made significant impact quite quickly once we had planted some new flowers and shrubs and pulled out some weeds. I am looking forward to volunteering in any future sustainable initiatives to help make Derby a greener city!"

"It was great to have the opportunity to work with the Sustainability Champion group to give back to the local community. Although I'm not a green-fingered person in general – it was a great chance to get my hands dirty and be involved in a project that will be seen, enjoyed, and hopefully an inspiration to staff and students at the school. The fact that the Union provides an allowance of time to put towards these projects, as well as the Sustainability Champions ability to set up and run these opportunities, is a fantastic pledge to a greener future as well as a way for people like me to make a difference where we may otherwise not be able to contribute. I loved every minute and can't wait for the next one!"



Marketing

The Marketing team have supported over 30 Union projects in 2023/24 including Elections, Varsity, and Awards Season. A main focus for marketing this year has been sustainability; aiming to creating lasting materials that can be used over several years as opposed to single use, event specific assets.



Our highlights this year

- Building on the Elections and Awards campaign assets and adding to the growing repertoire of evergreen promotional materials to ensure key Union messages cannot be missed.
- Growing the Union’s online presence and following by doing regular giveaways and interactive activity on our social media, as well as working with university comms teams, to ensure digital promotion reaches a wider audience as well as being inclusive to students across all sites.
- Promoting sports clubs, societies, and student-led services through the ‘Out of Office’ series which features the Executive Officers trying different activities so students can see behind the scenes before signing up.



Enhancing the student experience

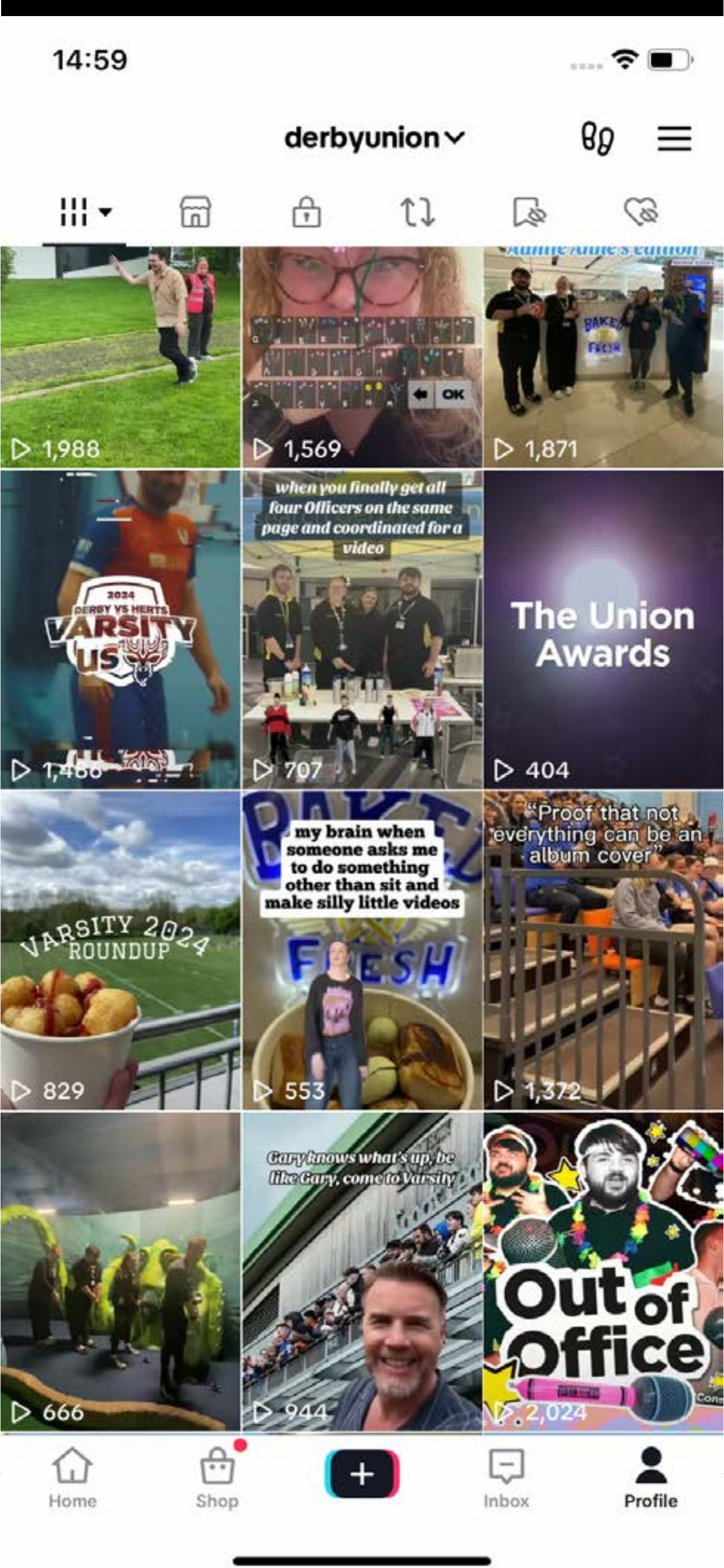
- The Marketing team launched a new market fair that invites small, local businesses to trade in the Atrium. The first Spring Market welcomed 16 new vendors and contacts to the Union of Students, all of whom responded positively when asked for feedback and the majority reported that they would come back for another event. The fair was a positive experience for those involved, and the Marketing team are looking forward to the next one, Artisan Alley, in September.
- The Marketing team have been building relationships with new local businesses and have gained three new regular traders that have vastly improved the student experience, receiving positive feedback on the variety of stalls provided.
- In addition to these new traders, the team have been fortunate to keep relations going with several regular traders who the Union have been working with for numerous years.
- The Marketing team have worked closely with big name brands in Derby to bring students exciting freebies and giveaways including a weekly Auntie Anne's pretzel giveaway, and lots of Paradise Island Mini Golf tickets.

Connecting with students

This year, the Marketing team have put emphasis on connecting with students through making the most out of our digital channels. The output on TikTok has been increased and the team have organically grown the channel by over 300 followers over a five-month period through posting engaging content and interacting with students.

The Marketing team have also run several initiatives to encourage students to engage with the Union on social media (particularly Instagram and TikTok as these are the priority platforms) through events such as February Freshers with our spin the wheel game and by giving away free pancakes on Pancake Day. These initiatives serve a dual purpose of helping connect with students whilst also providing them with free items, something that hopefully improves the student experience and offers support through the current cost of living crisis.

Throughout this year, the Marketing team have strived to involve students as much as possible to live up to our value of being student-led, and this has been done through connecting with students over interactive Instagram stories. This has resulted in an increase in the number of interactive stories shared – which includes polls, multiple choice boxes, links and question boxes – as a method of both collecting feedback and hearing the student voice. Alongside this, the Executive Officer team have run weekly ‘Thursday Thoughts’ segment where they ask students questions around a specific topic to hear what students think.



Social Media Statistics

Here are some key statistics that reflect the social media reach and engagement with students over the past academic year.

Varsity promo video: our Communications Coordinator (Content) created and published a video featuring sporting students as a teaser trailer for our upcoming Varsity competitions. This video performed exceptionally well, especially on Instagram, gaining 14,562 views, 267 likes and 8 saves; the view count is seven times the average number of views for reels on the Union of Students page.

TikTok during the Elections Nominations period: between January 30th – February 26th, there were 243 profile views, 16,000 video views and 316 likes (likes and views across all videos posted in this time frame). Nine videos were posted with elections content in this time frame to help promote the campaign and increase awareness amongst students.

Instagram stories during the Elections Voting period: during this time, 41 Instagram stories containing voting messaging were shared, 14 of which had links which received a combined total of 67 clicks. This social media coverage increased the number of students voting in the elections, as the majority of these links led students to the elections webpage where they could vote.

Commercial

Chris Meynell is our Venues and Events Manager – Chris reports commercial performance has continued to remain challenging, with new income streams failing to materialise and student spending habits not recovering. Despite this the Union saw profit increase by £3,026, a figure that had potential to be higher, however the correction of a long-term stock issue and the partial shut-down of Basecamp kitchen resulted in a financial impact of approximately £23,000, something the Union hope to avoid next year.



The Union also failed to see development in the expansion of its catering operations to cover Markeaton Street and Britannia Mill, which did prevent further income generation streams from being developed.

Financial Year Ending 31 July	Surplus/Deficit
2021	(£52,352)
2022	£60,501
2023	£83,948
2024* REFORECAST	£86,974
2025**	£136,525

*Forecasted **Budgeted



Away from financial performance, the Union has seen some key wins including:

- The employment of 80 student employees, investing £221,665.21 into student employment August 2023 – April 2024
- Delivery of a ‘Free’ Freshers wristband to all eligible students, provided access to a variety of Union activities and events
- Support of University and events through catering delivery at multiple events utilising campus kitchen and catering infostructure including:
 - LSS Careers fair
 - Open Days
 - Fashion Exhibitions
 - Halls Fest & End of Term fest at halls
 - End of term exhibition show
 - International delegate events
- Supported University Wellbeing by providing meeting room space for appointments.
- Key role in the University of Derby’s responsible futures submission

Alongside these activities the Union strived to enhance the experience of our student employees, not only financial, but assisting their development, progress whilst studying and ensuring they are given the flexibility to achieve their aims at the University of Derby.

During the two years I have been working at Blends, I have been able to develop my social skills and confidence when talking with others. This has been through the support and relationships I have had with other staff members and customers overtime. As someone who struggles with social anxiety, I have been able to take these skills and increased confidence forward into other aspects of my university experience – for example in placements.

– Grace

Blends has helped me more financially and worked perfectly along with university, helped me maintain good grades due to not having to work through lectures. Helped me socialise more and make friends which has had a positive impact on my wellbeing. Helped give me skills that I struggled to get elsewhere by training me to be a barista.

– Lucy

I believe that this job has added to my financial expenses throughout this year. It is a very flexible job around your studies, and I wish I'd have worked here before my final year as it's been a very valuable experience. I used to be quiet, but this job really enables you to come out your shell, to be able to work as a team and enables that customer to worker relationship. As a multitasker, it really does reinforce this skill in such a friendly environment. The staff help you to socialise at university and care about your wellbeing.

– Emi

Working for Blends has been nothing but a positive experience and was the best move I could've made for myself. If I had stayed at my previous role, I would've been stuck in a workplace, that unlike Blends, didn't care about me as a person or a student. The atmosphere and team at Blends are one that I am happy to be a part of each day. Everyone is so lovely, and you just feel really supported. I've worked in hospitality jobs for all of my working life, but I feel Blends has allowed me to grow in confidence with my skills and talking to people as well as being independent. The current job market as a student is awful so I feel lucky to have gained a position somewhere they understand student life must fit around them, with consistent hours and good pay. Having weekends off too is unreal I've never had that before. Can't wait to come back next year.

– Gracie

BLENDS



The Bean Fund

The Bean Fund was set up by the Union of Students, taking income generated through its single-use cup levy and creating a fund for students to pitch for money to deliver sustainability projects and have a positive impact on Derby campuses and the local area. This year some of that funding was used to fund two student projects: Botso and We Bee Crazy.

Botso was a student proposition, focusing on the upscaling of used glass products to create new items such as drinking glasses, candle holders and reed diffuser containers. Ewan was given £749.16 for his idea, providing him the foundations to take his business idea forward.

"I approached the Bean Fund through the Union's website and sent across my project Botso. Then a pitch like interview followed, finally I received the fantastic support of the Union with the funding too, I also received support with getting in contact with the right people within the university to excel Botso further. Thank you so much Bean Fund and the Union of Students!"



We Bee Crazy was a student proposition with the aim of creating more Bee Haven's across campus, including additional planters on the Basecamp decking and the creation of ponds and wetlands adjacent to the Union allotments. Andreea-Elena was successful in applying for £285 of funding to deliver her idea.

'My name is Andreea-Elena Florea, an international student with a deep-rooted passion for sustainability. Following an introduction by one of my esteemed lecturers, Anne Wylie, to Enactus Derby, I was inspired to develop We Bee Crazy, a project that would have a positive impact on both the community and the environment. The Bean Fund has been pivotal in helping to bring this project to fruition as it has provided essential funding for both the purchase of beautiful flowers and a cutting-edge smart watering system that will ensure the flowers receive adequate nourishment all year round, not just during the academic year. The flowers will be strategically placed on the Basecamp and Heap decking to support pollinators such as bees and butterflies, while also enhancing the outdoor experience for our fellow students. I want to express my gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout this thrilling project.'

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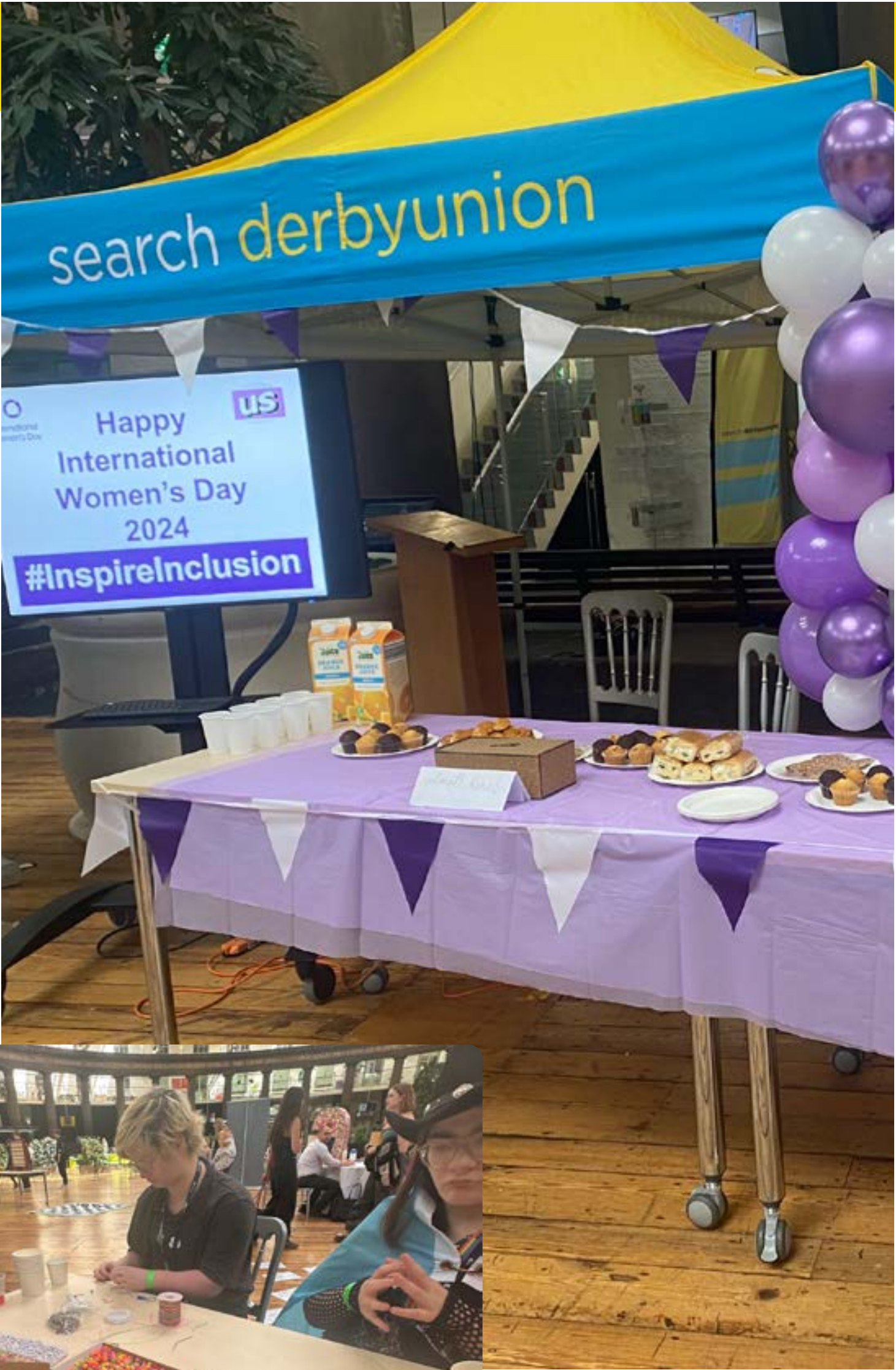
Buxton & Leek

Leah Adshead, the FE Coordinator at Buxton and Leek College, has been instrumental in organising numerous events and liberation awareness campaigns throughout the year. Additionally, she has coordinated the student representative system, ensuring that student voices are both heard and addressed.



The Union continues to provide exciting enrichment opportunities to students attending Buxton and Leek College. The Social Space is a thriving hub of activity over the lunch period where students are provided with activities to participate in and offered a safe, relaxing environment to socialise with friends. In addition, we create a community space for our LGBTQ+ students and allies, to come together regularly, increases their sense of belonging, which supports their confidence on campus.

The Union’s Membership Engagement Manager and Further Education (FE) Coordinator had a meeting with colleagues from the BLC to discuss and plan the schedule of activities for the year. Their main goal was to support curriculum areas and meet Ofsted requirements. As a result, they developed an engaging timetable filled with events and activities aimed at



encouraging participation and raising awareness of liberation campaigns and issues relevant to young adults.

This collaboration paid off, as evidenced by the overwhelming number of students who entered quizzes and submitted artwork for the Black History Month event. Similarly, attendance at the Go Green Week workshop was impressive. It is clear that with the support of academics highlighting the importance of extracurricular activities, student engagement significantly increased.

Awareness campaigns and events have included;

- *Black History Month*
- *Love Your Colleges*
- *Disability Month*
- *LGBTQ+ History Month*
- *Womens History Month*
- *Mental Health Month*
- *Destresstival*
- *Go Green Week*
- *BLC FEST & Awards*



In addition, the Union has supported student fundraising initiatives across both campuses.

This year, the Union has continued the delivery of the course rep scheme at BLC, electing 52 students at the beginning of the year. The Union have liaised with the learner journey team to develop this further next year, introducing opportunities for reps to meet with the principal and delivering a course rep conference. Being a course rep enhances the employability skills of the students whilst also making a positive impact of the overall student experience.

Plans for Freshers at BLC are currently underway and the Union looks forward to another year of supporting and enhancing the student journey at BLC.



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