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UCU Calls out UoY Vice-Chancellor as Disputes Continue

BY EMILY SINCLAIR (SHE/ HER)

"I would ask, what else can members do? ... We are facing a situation where we literally cannot afford to stay in the jobs.

What type of university is it going to be? Is it all going to be casual contracts? Are we all going to be still underpaid? Are women and disabled members going to be paid

much less than males? What kind of future do we want?

We agree the sector is underfunded. What we disagree with is that our members should take the brunt of that through paying conditions.

I'd ask our Vice Chancellor and I ask him directly regularly 'what

are you doing?' 'Who are you talking to?' 'Why are you not turning your frustration towards the people who are making our institution unviable?' ...

Read our full interview with UCU Co-President Steven Spencer on page 5

Editors' Note

Hi All! To our new freshers - Welcome to York! And to all you returners out there - welcome BACK to another year of Uni fun! This issue of Vision has a little something for everyone. From gripping news pieces on UCU strike action to a jam packed Scene supplement, grab a cuppa and enjoy your intro to York. If you need any freshers tips take a look at our lifestyle and features pieces dedicated to the newbies of York. WELCOME back to another year of Vision! Enjoy! EMILY SINCLAIR, (She/Her) Editor President & KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARB, (She/Her) Editor Secretary



Deputy Editor's Note

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our print. From UCU to the University's Boob Team, our wonderful SABBS to our VC, Swift Soc to Cosplay Society - this print has it all. And thank you for picking up this print! We hope you enjoy!



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Oscars of Higher Education: York Shortlisted for University of the Year

BY HANNAH WILLEY (She/Her)

The University of York has been shortlisted by Times Higher Education (THE) for University of the Year.

On the 7th of September Vice Chancellor Charlie Jeffery released an email informing students the University has been shortlisted for University of the Year, alongside Anglia Ruskin University, University of East London, University of Exeter, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, and University of South Wales.

York's success is attributed to their response to the cost of living crisis and their efforts to improve student life. Their scheme, "The Cost On Living", has involved collaborating with the wider commu-

nity of York to offer support for students throughout last academic year, and continuing this semester.

The University has outlined its aim as: "To listen to the unheard stories of those most vulnerable in our society and take action to make real change".

This has included research into the causes or "drivers" of the cost of living crisis with a focus on equality, acknowledging disparities that make some students more vulnerable to the crisis than others.

York was also successful in other categories, with Northern Accel-

erator (a university collaboration including UoY) being shortlisted for Knowledge Exchange / Transfer Initiative of the Year, and Jason Daff being shortlisted for Outstanding Technician of the Year.

The winner for University of the Year will be announced in December, but the University is already celebrating its success with Charlie Jeffery highlighting how Times Higher Education are considered the 'Oscars' of higher education.

Students Await the Return of Their Grades

BY HANNAH WILLEY (She/Her)

Though a new academic year can be a fresh start, for many students it will be beginning already with underlying anxiety over when or if they will receive their marks back from last year.

During the marking and assessment boycott in the summer term of last academic year, staff stopped marking students' work in an effort to convince the University to negotiate employment matters, such as wages and pensions.

As a result, many students ended the year without feedback from across the term. For third-year students, this meant graduating without knowing if they had even passed their degree.

Of course, this led to the frustration of students across the country, as shown during the graduation ceremony at the University of Edinburgh, when they protested the University's lack of cooperation with its staff in July.

On the 6th of September, UCU announced they had voted to end the marking and assessment boycott, instead giving universities five more days of striking action. This may be a relief for students anticipating their marks, but it

still doesn't mean we will get them soon. UCU members plan to continue striking from Monday 25th to Friday 29th September, which is the first week of the semester.

In fact, there's no guarantee we will get marks back at all. Given the build-up of unmarked assessments, it might be too much work for staff to cope with going forward.

"Not being able to receive or review grades or feedback has become incredibly frustrating," a student told *Vision* as they go into their third year, "students are not only faced with the uncertainty of grades but the inability to work with feedback and implement improvements into upcoming assignments."

Back in July – before the UCU called off the Marking and Assessment Boycott – the Vice Chancellor Charlie Jeffrey sent an email to the student body reassuring them of staff's efforts to ensure work was marked. He mentioned the potential use of "alternative, well-qualified markers".

Speaking to *Vision* this week Jeffery said:

"We're trying to find a way to enable our colleagues to recover that work and to remain at the

same time very conscious that some students might need their final outcome for a job. For these reasons we need to prioritize as best we can. So it's good news."

"There are strong views on both sides... everybody needs to show the humility to be able to move beyond all the things that have been said."

"There are some universities where the relationship between employer or trade union is quite happy. I think we've maintained, even through all of the challenges, a good basis for conversation here."

YUSU Academic Officer Meeley Doherty shared: "Unfortunately we can't solve the strike. We can just try and help you get through it. We can do things like signpost students and go to meetings and express students' worries."

Considering the Marking and Assessment Boycott ending, Meeley further addressed the backlog of grades waiting to be returned. "It has been on my radar. I know which departments are the worst affected and I've reached out to the academic reps that are already in place."

"I would heavily recommend to any student that is feeling wor-

ried about either the effects of the boycott or the effects of industrial action to reach out to the YUSU advice and support center.

"If you haven't got your marks, please don't panic. It doesn't mean you're never getting your marks. It just might mean that they might take a little longer but we're trying our best to make sure that we keep on top of knowing which students are affected and make sure they know where to go."



IMAGE CREDIT: MARTI STELLING

IMAGE CREDIT: EMILY SINCLAIR

New Campus Nursery Delayed

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

Construction on the new Campus Nursery has been delayed by landscaping issues, *Vision* can report.

The new nursery was due to be completed by September/October this year. Located on Campus East opposite York Sport Village,

it is now expected to be finished by December and open to children in January 2024.

The new nursery aims to cater for up to 90 children, and is to provide a more sustainable location for the already existing nursery on Campus West.



IMAGE CREDIT: DAN GORDON-POTTS

University Spending

£1.2 Million Removing Asbestos

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

An FOI request obtained by *Vision* can confirm that the University of York is projected to spend a record £1,203,000 on asbestos removal this year (2022-23)

A Freedom of Information (FOI) request found that the University is on track to spend a record amount hiring external contractors to remove asbestos from campus in the past year. This will be over £500k more than the University spent removing asbestos the previous year, and more than the record £911k they spent in 2017.

According to the UK Government Health and Safety Executive body (HSE), asbestos is killing over 5000 people a year, as inhaling enough of its fibres can lead to fatal types of lung cancer and asbestosis, an incurable condition.

The money spent hiring contractors this year does not include

the amount spent on managing asbestos's presence. Asbestos, in its varying types, has been found in over 100 buildings the University owns. Some of the buildings have since been demolished, but many are still standing, and *Vision* can confirm that many of them still contain varying levels of asbestos.

The University has emphasised that the presence of asbestos on campus is nothing to be alarmed about. In their FOI response they said, "It is not the presence, but the management of asbestos which is the key to safety and the University has comprehensive strategies in place to meet our legal duties and the duty of care we have to our staff, students, visitors and authorised contractors.

"Our strategies take a risk-based approach to asbestos management. Where appropriate, this has led to the removal of asbestos

or the treatment of the material to protect, encapsulate and seal. Where asbestos is in a good condition and encapsulated it is often left alone, as is recognised good practice. All known items of asbestos that are left in-situ are monitored on an annual basis as a minimum, to ensure that they remain in a good condition.

"The University employs a dedicated Asbestos Management Team, a team of specialists, who are responsible for ensuring that these management processes are effectively delivered and that asbestos hazards are managed on campus."

For managing asbestos, the University has spent £151,000 in the last year, not including internal staff costs for those responsible for coordinating asbestos management activities. The University has confirmed they anticipate spend-

ing at least £800k per year over the next 5 years to continue removing asbestos from campus. This includes the numerous and iconic 60s concrete-clad buildings over Campus West, as well as a number of newer buildings (built before the blanket asbestos ban came into place in 1999).

Some of the buildings known to house asbestos, including Heslington Hall and parts of Derwent College, are also grade II listed buildings. Listed buildings are considered to contain architectural and cultural significance, and are protected from demolition.

The University has confirmed that there is no official government guidance on how to manage listed buildings that contain asbestos, so there are many questions about what approach the University ought to take in the future, particularly in the long-term.

Written off until 40 years after the April repayment starts. The main reason given for these changes is so over 50% of graduates repay their student loans back in full, as opposed to current levels, around 20%. When asked for his opinion on the topic, YUSU President Pierrick Roger commented: "The changes introduced to tuition loan repayment plans will push students into even more sustained debt.

A new student loan repayment plan, known as Plan 5, will affect all incoming undergraduate and PGCE students starting their courses this academic year.

These students will face lower repayment thresholds of £25,000 per year, meaning they will pay 9% of any pound over that amount in their loan repayments. The threshold for anyone who started their courses between the 1st of September 2012 and July of this year will still be on Plan 2, so their threshold remains at £27,295.

Another key difference between these two repayment plans in England is that for those on Plan 2, student loans will be written off 30 years after the April on which they were due to start repayment. In contrast, loans for graduates on new repayment plan 5 will not be

Student Loan Repayment Plans to Change

BY MATT DAVIS (He/Him)

"I want to be categorical: these changes are disgusting and the government should be ashamed of itself," Roger continued.

Both these changes seem relatively minor tweaks to student loan repayment plans. However, the worry is that they could disproportionately affect those on lower and middle incomes by forcing them to pay a higher percent of their earnings to settle their student debts.

It could also mean students from lower and middle income backgrounds will also have to spend more of their lives paying off their student debts than those from more financially privileged backgrounds.

In a right of reply, the university said:

"We know parts of our estate - some of which dates from the 1960s - needs updating, and some buildings do contain asbestos. It can be costly to remove, as it needs to be extracted safely by specialist teams in accordance with national health and safety guidance.

"But staff, students and visitors should not be concerned, the material is a feature in many older buildings and has been properly maintained and surveyed and does not pose a risk in its current condition.

"We are passionate about our campus and are committed to investing in our infrastructure, creating the right spaces to help students and staff achieve excellence."



IMAGE CREDIT: DAN GORDON-POTTS

Financial Pressures Delay Student Centre

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)



The new student centre at the University of York is to be delayed.

Construction of the student centre, which was set to open in 2025/26, was intended to begin this year, with the demolition of the existing security centre located in Market Square on Campus West.

The centre was to be an exciting new space and had been co-designed with students. It would provide food outlets, flexible spaces for student groups, and much-needed new media studios for York's lively student radio, TV and print news societies.

Since these plans were drawn up, the University has now pivoted and is delaying construction to review these designs.

A University spokesperson said, "The University, along with all others in the sector, is facing increased financial pressures and in light of this we are currently reviewing our designs for the Student Centre to re-examine associated costs, before moving forward again with our plans".

YUSU President Pierrick Roger told *Vision*, "We are not surprised by the delay the Student Centre project will be taking. It has become

clear over the past few months that both inflationary pressures had substantially increased the cost of the building, and that priorities for the building were in the wrong places.

"The University should refocus the building to prioritise student life essentials and remove anything that would make this seem a (costly) vanity project."

The University still intends to build a new Student Centre, and have said, "The University is committed to providing a new Student Centre and it remains one of the University's key transformational initiatives as part of our vision as a University for Public Good.

"As we review our plans, it gives us a chance to take into account all the feedback over the last 12 months and deliver a really exciting and bold space for all our students."

Student Unions to Merge

BY HANNAH WILLEY (She/Her)

In March, the University of York Students' Union (YUSU) and the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) announced they would be merging. Now, they have made plans for moving forward as a single student's union.

Earlier this year the University of York unions made a joint announcement they intended to merge in future, as "an opportunity to strengthen our combined offer for students by working together more closely".

On the 30th of June, they released a new statement outlining some of the ideas students had given, which included providing more support to research postgraduates, mature students and disabled students. They are also considering forming a single communication plan, which will offer easier access to the union's events and activities.

Representatives of the union, Ben Vulliamy, Jonny Exon, Pierrick Roger and Vivianne Cao, continue to approach this merge with confidence.

In a joint statement, they said: "A single, well-resourced students' union will be able to support both a York-wide student experience and support the diversity of interests and needs that come from within an increasingly diverse student population."

They're planning to hold an all-student vote for new officer roles and governing documents, which can be presented to union members around March or April in 2024.

The merge remains an ongoing process, as it "requires some detailed consideration of fairness, transparency, and regulatory requirements that are expected to take a year to complete."

New University Energy Centre Runs on Fossil Fuels

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)



The Campus East Energy Centre, located between Langwith College and Constantine College, is running on fossil fuels, *Vision* can confirm.

After a Freedom of Information request was submitted to the University, it has been revealed that the centre - which cost £8.1 million to build - is "currently being commissioned on natural gas."

When in full operation, the centre is estimated to use approximately 27 million Kilowatt-hours (kWhrs) of gas per year, although the University have clarified that they have "yet to do further optimisation work to improve operational efficiency."

Natural gas is formed from the remains of plants and animals trapped and compressed between layers of sediment underground.

It is considered to be a cleaner

fuel to burn for energy, releasing fewer byproducts than oil and far less than coal.

However, when burnt, natural gas still produces carbon dioxide, a potent greenhouse gas which is driving global temperatures to increase, and accelerating climate change.

Pierrick Roger, President of the University of York's Student Union, told *Vision*, "I am extremely disappointed in the news of the new Energy Centre. Biogas and natural gas are not sustainable alternatives to more traditional fossil fuels.

"Although they produce a lower amount of greenhouse gas emissions at point of use than other fossil fuels, biogas and natural gas are methane and are therefore extremely prone to huge amounts of methane leakage throughout production and transport.

"The University knows this as

I have repeatedly pointed it out to them. Over 20 years, methane gas has a global warming potential of 86, meaning it is 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide in warming our atmosphere."

Roger raised concern that the energy centre goes against the University's clean energy transition commitments, saying: "This development is not in line with the energy transition the University has committed to. Campus should be hooked up to the national electrical grid where all electricity can be purchased from renewable sources as is currently being done, not more gas power plants.

"The University has not achieved a single one of its emissions goals over the last 15 years, and this development only pulls us even deeper into the emissions hole we're in."

The energy centre uses Com-

bined Heat and Power (CHP), a method hailed by many as far more efficient than other conventional means for generating energy or heat.

By intentionally generating both heat and power at the same time, carefully monitoring the two, and capturing the heat (which usually escapes and is wasted as a by-product in typical power stations), CHP systems can reduce carbon emissions by up to 30%, and help reduce energy bills by 20%, according to the UK Government.

The centre aims to maintain a steady supply of energy for Campus East over the next 10 years as it expands, and heat produced by the facility will be used to heat buildings at the University to reduce waste.

The new centre, which started construction in October 2021, was only just completed in March

this year. Currently, it is undergoing "seasonal commissioning" to get connected up to the University heat and power network, and monitored for efficiency.

While the centre is currently using natural gas, the University confirmed that "the energy centre is designed to run on multiple fuels including biogas [but] it is currently being commissioned on natural gas."

The University commented: "The Energy Centre has been constructed to last in excess of 50 years, and the generating plant within it is expected to satisfy the ongoing expansion of Campus East over the next 10 years. The design of the building is such that it can readily be extended and adapted as the University energy demands continue to change allowing new technology to be adopted as necessary in future years."

VC! “What Are You Doing?”

BY EMILY SINCLAIR (She/Her)

IMAGE CREDIT: MARTI STELLING

I spoke to Steven Spencer, the co-president of the UCU York branch about the current academic turbulence we are in and what the future holds.

How much more action does the UCU feel is going to be necessary in order to get any sort of change? It seems that things have been going on for a while and some would argue that neither side is budging.

That's not strictly true... There's two disputes that we have.

We've been in dispute about pensions now for three years, in this instance, but it's a longer dispute that goes way back to 2016/17. On that side of it, there has been progress. We have a valuation of the pension scheme that is upcoming. Every three years it has to be revalued. What we have from the employers at the moment... is a joint declaration about how to take this valuation forward and restore benefits.

On the 'four fights' dispute, we've reached an impasse at UK level because we've been very clear that a 5% pay rise this year, following a 3% pay rise last year, is simply not enough.

It's not enough in any environment. In York's particular environment there is a housing cost crisis and a housing supply crisis. We're competing with the private industry for highly qualified people who are walking. They can't afford to stay in academia anymore.

The employers will not budge at the moment. They're absolutely intransigent on this point.

The fact that the university is struggling with money - as it claims - is due to senior management decisions. It's not an external thing.

How long will it take? We don't know.

If you want to characterise the way members are, they're tired, very frustrated, but they're bloody angry.

We're in another academic year

with another set of students with the same set of problems and they are solvable.

As a student, there is big anger as to how much of an impact this is having on us. We don't see the £9,250 from the government for our tuition, that goes directly to the university. We can't stop paying that. Yet, for that money since April, I've had nothing marked, I've had a lack of teaching.

As a student, you are getting the complete brunt of this. Do you realise how much the students are suffering?

Do you think we do?

I think you do, but I think in order to get your point across, we are becoming collateral damage in a larger dispute.

That's interesting... I'll give you an honest perspective... This would be like the percolator viewpoint at the membership. It has broken members' hearts to have been in this situation and to deploy in a marking and assessment boycott. We have had members not sleeping, going off work with stress, had members in tears, endless conversations and agonising over 'Is this necessary?'

Most of us are underpaid. We are overworked. We only come to work because we want to work either on research or with students or both. So do we realise? Absolutely. We feel it.

Does our senior management realise what an invidious situation they're placing you and us in?

We went to a marking and assessment boycott because we had threatened it. The marking standards this year are atrocious.

Mechanisms that have been put in place to enable people to graduate means degrees simply are not quality assured to the same degree they usually are. That's appalling, absolutely appalling. I would ask, what else can members do?

What type of university is this going to be? Is it all going to be

casual contracts? Are we all going to be still underpaid? Are women and disabled members going to be paid much less than males? What kind of future do we want?

We agree the sector is underfunded, what we disagree with is that our members should take the brunt of that through paying conditions.

I'd ask our Vice Chancellor and I ask him directly regularly 'what are you doing?' 'Who are you talking to?' 'Why are you not turning your frustration towards the people who are making our institution unviable?'

Speaking to Vision this week, Charlie Jeffery responded:

“[To Steven] I say exactly the same thing. What are you doing through your mechanisms to help produce that common ground?”

UCU has withdrawn their marketing and assessment boycott. Do you think the marking and assessment boycott actually did anything?

Was it worth it? We don't know how this ends... Typically, industrial relations, when they break down, you have a period of action, then you have a negotiation. What's happened now is employers have chosen to make this a battle of attrition.

They've given up on the current government... They're not willing to impose more financial pain on students, nor would I wish them to, but that's what they're doing... we're the target.

Has the marking and assessment boycott, moved things on? I'd say it has. The very fact we're talking about it. The fact that students have been involved in this and have seen first-hand just how morally bankrupt institutions are to pass degrees, to have people who are unqualified marking essays and give feedback that is sackable, in normal circumstances.

The university, in effect, committed gross misconduct on itself in terms of the way it has tried.

It has moved... We say 5% is nowhere near enough. They say they can't pay any more. The power is not on our side.

We're asking for the same things, which we think are totally reasonable. Will employers force us into more action? I don't know. I honestly don't know.

How can students help, how can we actually help move everything along?

Your generation of students are being made to think like consumers. Your degree is framed as a series of things that you pay for, things that you should get because you've signed a contract. That's not really what's happening here... all you're actually paying for is to get the degree. How they choose to do that is totally up to them.

Think of yourself as people who are joining a community for life. If you're a York graduate, you're always going to be a York graduate. The quality of the institution and the reputation will always matter.

What do students want the University to be like, in 10 years time? I would say once you know what you think the University should be, tell the University what you want it to be, tell the Vice Chancellor, tell the UVB members, tell the Council, tell the press.

“We want York to be a genuine university of public good, not just a strapline on a bus.”

We are on the same side. It's just very unfortunate that you happen to be going to university at a time where industrial relations are broken down and there's multiple external pressures stopping them from being reformed unless management is brave.

I did an open day the other day. Someone said to me, 'is it worth it?'

If you're asking me in general 'is a degree worth it?' Yeah, I think it still is. It's getting to the point that

if we go down the line that we're going down, in a few years time I'd have a different answer. I'd say go to a country that still respects higher education.

The message to freshers is: come into this new year with your eyes open. You're walking into a university system that is creaking. It is under financial pressure. There's a government that does not give a s***t about it. They don't care. They would actively see universities go bust at the moment.

You actually have a live political argument on campus. There's activism. It has the potential to make a big difference.

Don't just look at the narrow degree education you've come for, look at the broader picture.

We are doing things to engage more... we find the student union quite difficult to engage with because it's very hit and miss, in and out, and people have their own agendas. It's not a criticism of them, it's just saying that our relationship with them doesn't work well at the moment and we have tried to liaise.

In a Right of Reply, the University of York said:

“We agree with many of the points made in Steven's interview, particularly in regard to yet another cohort of students facing more disruption and the same set of problems 'that are solvable.’”

“And we know our staff work hard, and want and deserve more, but Steven is incorrect when it comes to his point on financial handling. Finances across the HE sector are under severe pressure, compounded by inflation, which has added tens of millions of pounds to university costs across the UK.

“This year and beyond, we can expect to see many universities posting operating deficits while also working hard to reduce costs.

“We are also not compromising on our academic standards - marking students' work will take time in some cases as we insist on well qualified markers who can give this time to complete.”

OPINION

What Happened to Harry's Law?

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

Last year, *The University of Exeter student paper, Exe-
pose*, published an article interviewing the parents of Harry Armstrong Evans—who ended his own life during his first year at Exeter studying. Due to inadequate support at the university, Harry's parents argue he was let down.

When Harry died, his parents also considered the state of mental health support more broadly at universities across the country, arguing that there should be more transparency about student mental health, and suicide statistics.

Currently, universities are not required to publish coroners' reports of student suicides. Harry's parents - and many others - consider this important information that should be available to prospective students and parents, particularly for those already experiencing mental health problems before going to university. Suicide statistics, they argue, could be a key indicator of the strength of wellbeing and mental health support at any particular university, and a deciding factor for some.

It could also help mental health support services improve. They put together *Harry's Law*, demanding that universities become required by law to make suicide information public. After garnering media coverage from national outlets such as *The Guardian*, and amassing over 5000 signatures on a government petition, *Harry's Law* did not reach sufficient signatures to be debated in parliament (a minimum of 10 000) and is now officially closed.

So, the question we're all asking is, what happened to *Harry's Law*? Has this slipped off the agenda? If so, why? While some may disagree with Harry's parents, surely this is a debate worth having?

Why Should You Care About the Screen Actors Strike?

BY KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARB (She/Her)

"Hello fellow actors..." joked Steve Buscemi as he joined the SAG rally last month in NYC.

"Get up get down, New York is a Union Town" chanted the sea of actors, just beginning and industry icons, as they stared up at ABC's city centre location with disdain, outrage and seething rage.

"We don't expect you to understand who we are but we ask you to hear us and beyond that to listen to us," yelled Bryan Cranston as he looked across the crowd that packed out Times Square.

Of course you don't need to attend a NYC rally or an LA picket line to understand and feel the power of Hollywood's biggest strike. As 'Walter White' said - "listen to us."



Earlier this year the Writers Guild of America commenced a national strike against the big Hollywood studios that still overwork, underpay and underappreciate the writers who birth the ideas and stories fueling their industry. Two months later, the actors joined them, bringing their own sense of outrage and impassioned hope for change to the streets.

Historically speaking, when the Screen Actors Guild and The Writers Guild go on strike at the same time you know it's a big deal. During the last joint strike in 1960 future president Ronald Reagan was leading the actors as

SAG president. And shortly after the first joint effort shut down the movie and tv industry, the US economy plunged into recession.

In fact, even as US movie production screeches to a halt so too does the global industry - where even across the pond in the UK or down south in Australia screen actors are unable to film, eliminating local jobs and slowing economies everywhere. And regardless of where you are, American movies and tv are watched everywhere - with local cinema and TV distributors likely to feel the absence of these ceased productions very soon.

So economically speaking Hollywood strikes are clearly a big deal. But why should you care that actors with piles of money want more of it? Well true, you shouldn't. It's what the rich actors are trying to spotlight that really matters.

This time round the SAG Aftra strikes are fighting for a basic pay increase for the actors who aren't celebrities yet: those hard working upcoming actors who live paycheck to paycheck auditioning and bussing tables just to one day get cast in the next big blockbuster or the next big netflix original. So when you see Florence Pugh, Margot Robbie, or the cast of *Parks and Rec* hanging around outside the picket lines don't assume it's just for the 'gram (although sometimes it is). These industry icons remember their time out of the spotlight, and any fight for better, more equitable pay for these newbie performers is a fight for the future stars of the industry.

Furthermore, those valiantly marching strikers are not just asking for increases in the stagnated pay of the past, they are fighting for the future operations and worker rights of the movie industry. As AI and deep fake technology expands and becomes

increasingly realistic, there has never been a better time to discuss, argue and yes strike for industry wide regulations on AI use in film.



With actors increasingly asked to participate in body scans and sign over their likenesses for extra pay, big studios are able to cost effectively fill screens with extras and even stars that are entirely AI generated and CGI created.

Not only does this violate and endanger the work conditions of an industry of acting professionals - Yes, including the celeb cohort - it also perpetuates a world where one could watch any film with no idea if that actor is real or an increasingly realistic creation. So if you would prefer to watch the real Meryl Streep in *Mamma Mia 15* instead of an AI generated one, show a little support for the strikers who just want to have a conversation about the AI future on the horizon.

And speaking of Meryl Streep, herein lies a more selfish but equally worthwhile reason to care about the Hollywood wide strike. For as long as the actors and writers are on strike the industry slows to a halt. No productions, no promotions, no new releases.

Zendaya's sport romance *Challengers* has been pushed back to 2024, as has her joint Timothee Chalamet outing *Dune 2*. And it's not just Zendaya affected. We will inevitably reach a point where the entire 2024-2025 film slate dries

up if studios continue refusing to return to the negotiating table.

Even now we are missing out on the enjoyable promotion of current films and tv, as actors refuse to scab on the strike by promoting their projects. One such example is *Only Murders In The Building*, which has been unable to show off the hilarious new chemistry of Paul Rudd and Meryl Streep, who joined the cast this season, despite them both stating they were incredibly excited to do interviews. (See I told you Meryl Streep was important).

Of course, we will never know what we have or may subsequently miss out on. But that's okay, because herein lies the biggest reason to care about the Hollywood strikes.

Not only do strikes help humanise the actors participating in them, but they equally bring stardom credibility to the efforts of ordinary strikers in other industries, such as medicine, education or ongoing rail strikes.

As the pandemic prompted social change and fights for rights across society, it is a verifiable 'good thing' that celebrity voices are also willing to approach the negotiating table of their industry.

There is growing hope that things can change, that the working world can become more equitable and more survivable. There is hope that pressure in any industry can create widespread change across all industries. There is hope that a strike can create meaningful change. If only the big bosses, the governments, the Hollywood studios would approach the negotiating table too.

Until then, the actors, writers and everyman workers will continue to strike, and they assuredly need your support.

Support Plans are Letting Students Down

BY HANNAH WILLEY (She/Her)

Student support plans (SSP) at York are put in place to provide extra time to complete assessments for students who need it. Last academic year, however, a student was let down by the process and is still facing the difficulties when returning for his next year. He now wants to encourage students to always double-check assessments they receive back if the results aren't what they were expecting.

In summer term, a student submitted two versions of an assignment, both of which were within his extended deadline, only to be disappointed and confused by his mark.

Upon meeting with his assessor, he remembers: "(the marker) opened his computer and he was pointing out where I had gone wrong and I took one look at what he was marking and I just told him: 'that's not the final submission I submitted'."

"We worked on it for eight weeks," the student told *Vision* last month. "Originally finding out that I actually failed... it kind of threw me off. So originally, what I was thinking is just that it was the assignment in general that was the issue. I thought I had just been running in the wrong direction with it."

But, as he soon discovered, it was his earlier assignment that had been incorrectly selected to assess, even though the assessment

policy is to examine the final version submitted by the student before the deadline.

"When you put in any individual request for an extension, you have to specify the amount of time," he says, "so for this one I had requested five days and I'd been given that and that was all fine as part of my student support plan.

"I submitted it on day five. Both of the versions were four hours apart and what they've done is they've taken a look at it seeing that it was past the four-day extension, which is the one for anyone that doesn't have a support plan, and then saw both of them were overdue, so 'we'll take the one closest to the deadline'. But that wasn't the deadline I'd been given."

In other words, his student support plan had not been accounted for. The student was understandably frustrated. "I was going to put in a formal complaint," he reported, "but in the end I just sent an informal email to the head of department. Their responses were saying that it was caused by human error."

As he pointed out in the interview, this only creates further disparity between students who seek support and those who don't: "That's what I have a problem with, that something like this was allowed to happen because all the students that don't have SSP, [their assessments] are just fed into the electronic system. Ultimately, the students with the support plans are the ones that they have

to just do manually because there's no system for dealing with them. My issue with the whole thing is that there shouldn't have been an opportunity for human error if everyone else is going on an automatic system."

When his department was alerted to the issue, they sent the correct file to the marker and had it remarked. The student received his new mark and was happier with the result.

However, the knock-on effects of this error were not so easily solved as it affected the student's ability to complete his other assessments. He noticed his marking error five days before his first summer exam, and he had to cope with "having the stress of failing a module and having to still find time to study, which is a large part of what contributed to me having to defer one of my exams."

He then ended up taking all three of his exams during the summer deferral period, and was then told as a result he could only expect to receive his timetable for the upcoming year on the 12th of September, less than a week before the semester begins. He asked for a temporary timetable in the meantime based on his department and module selection, but has "never heard from them again".

When asked how he feels about the Student Support Plan when it works successfully, the student said: "there is only so much they can do. I don't realistically know what

else they can do apart from just the basics. It's just worrying when this happens, but apart from that, I'm pretty happy with the plan.

"The main thing I'd be looking for is just to make other students aware," he concludes. "Errors do happen, and if something doesn't look right, you can query it and follow it up.

"If I hadn't made the meeting with the marker myself, I would have had no idea that this would have happened, which gives me no indication that this has not happened before, either to myself or other students."

In a Right of Reply, the University said:

"All of our colleagues at the University are aware of just how important our assessment processes are to the student experience.

"Every effort is made to avoid errors, and to correct them as quickly as possible when they occur. We'd remind students, if they have any questions or concerns about assessments, to contact their department as soon as possible - as this student did - so that we can put things right."

In order to make assessment at the University of York inclusive, it's essential that student support plans are carried out correctly and without error. As this student's experience shows, errors in marking can affect other workloads and have long-lasting consequences even when the problem is solved quickly.

When Should we Start Teaching Kids About Mental Health?

BY LAURA ROWE (She/Her)

Most of us will experience mental health issues at some point in our lives. With this in mind, isn't it essential that we start teaching coping mechanisms early?

The University's society Open Minds helps students get to grips with mental health. Flying Eye Books, a children's publisher, also believes in the importance of teaching children about mental health at a young age.

Last year, I had the privilege of being on the Open Minds committee, working closely with the team to train our volunteers to provide mental health education for stu-

dents. While I was completing this training myself, I was able to speak with professors in psychology who told us that providing this support to children was super important.

There are ways and means. None of us are saying that we sit down with children and tell them the ins and outs of all the possible struggles they might face. But to gently introduce the topic and tell them they aren't alone will go a long way to getting rid of a stigma that is detrimental to everyone.

Being an English literature student, I'm always convinced that books are the answer to everything. And Flying Eye Books seems to share this philosophy.

They told me about four books that gently educate and provide children as young as



ra Suarez) has a strong message about self-acceptance. Both of these books help children to accept their differences and embrace them.

Some tackle more overt mental health issues and struggles. *The Laugh* (Fay Evans) talks about living with grief. It is gentle and touching and provides essential support for children. A book like this can help to explain some of the most difficult feelings and allow children to start to work through them.

And of course, what is key for everyone is a bit of empowerment. Sarah Soh's *Juniper Mae: Knight of Tykotech City* breaks connections with a strong, shy girl role model in STEM. It's got it all.

None of these books should raise an eyebrow. We're educating children about mental health but in a subtle and gentle way. The focus on empowerment and self-acceptance is key. It's setting in place all the messages we need in later life to combat mental health issues.

Open Minds does incredible work, which I hope can be continued, and books like the ones published by Flying Eye Books can help to build a future where the mental health stigma is removed.

toddlers with support systems. They range from more gentle stories about self-acceptance to helping children who are struggling with grief. By providing children with these stories, and by making it something they can talk about, we are ensuring that the next generation knows how to talk about mental health and we can remove some of the stigma.

Ning and the Night Spirits (Adriana Fong) encourages introverted and shy children to find their voice and *Monster Support Group: The Werewolf's Tale* (Lau-

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COLUMNS

Activities Officer: “Please Join Stuff!”

By **EMILY SINCLAIR (She/Her)** and **ANNA NJOROGÉ (She/Her)**

Anna Njorogé was elected YUSU Activities Officer on the 25th of February 2023. She has been active in the role since the end of the last academic year. A few months into her job, I wanted to see how she's getting on. Her plans, her goals and who she truly is.



What does an Activities Officer mean to you?

It's so wide, there's so many things to cover and I think it's so important to start out with a strong footing of what you're going to approach it with... My biggest motivation at the moment is this idea of taking societies seriously. Whether that is support for committees... or it's making sure everything is accessible enough or the relationship between YUSU and student groups is strong and communica-

tive. I know, as somebody who has been in a lot of societies, it can get to where societies feel abandoned by YUSU and like they have to sort a lot of problems themselves. I want to try and break that wall of communication down as much as possible.

That's a very daunting thing to come into, do you feel pressure? Or, are you quite happy to take it and go your own way?

Omg... I knew Rohan [the previous Activities' Officer] and I was very lucky to work with Rohan on the BAME showcase. He was such an impressive person and he knew and got on with everyone and he is obviously this really great personality and that's the sort of thing that... I really need to settle into because I'm not the most extroverted, loud person in the world. I do think that will change my approach to the role because I'm focusing on a lot of structural changes and implementing training and it's hard to get hype for something like that in the same way you get hype for events.

I'm really lucky to be coming into the role with so many good connections... I'm so lucky to be on the BAME network committee, so lucky to write for *Vision*, so lucky to be so involved in all of the performance societies and have some links to political societies. The fact I

have all those links to societies isn't even about being able to go out and talk to them, it's about knowing/allowing it to inform my work.

Whilst I'm not the most extroverted person in the world, I do feel very lucky to have links to all those societies.

You talk about accessibility. Obviously, accessibility is a term used all the time. What is accessibility for you and for this role?

Yes (laughs) it's so vague and can come off as so corporate but I want to avoid that as much as possible. To be a stereotype, it does mean that every single student whether they want to or not has the opportunity to become involved in campus life, be involved in student groups, be involved in societies... It's about having the choice. What I want to avoid as much as possible is this idea that there are just some students that don't join, it's not for them etc. I think that's lazy, I think it's reductive, I also think it's how minority groups get targeted because there are structural reasons why certain groups of people cannot enter a group.

I want to... hopefully introduce programmes that will get rid of the idea that just because X amount of students don't necessarily want to be a part of a society it doesn't mean we should make it impossible for them.

Do you feel that societies play a role, almost more than ever in the current turbulent academic situation that we're in, in boosting individuals mental and physical health?

Societies are so interesting when you think of them on a wider level, they are completely run by students... I know a lot of students and have talked to a lot of my friends about how societies have been able to sort of fill a gap that they feel like they've had. Now, not to say that if people are suffering from marking boycotts then they should go join Drama Soc. It's more that I think there is a massive enrichment that comes from societies.

Also, I think this is quite a taboo subject but I know it's certainly me, my societies and the societies I was involved in inform my career decisions and future a lot more than what my degree did. I enjoyed my degree, I'm glad I did it but at the same time it's really important to acknowledge... students who have been studying traditional degrees who want to go into nontraditional forms of career and their societies are giving them the experience that they need to do that.

Not to say (laughs) and I am officially saying that now (laughs) that any society should take precedence over your degree but I do think that we should acknowledge

the actual real world applications a society has for a lot of students. I don't think it fills a gap of what's going on currently in the academic climate but I do think it's really important and helps so much with mental health.

For the incoming freshers, it is a bit much as you walk around freshers fair, you're all a bit ill by that point in the week, everyone is hungover, tired etc. what should they be doing at Freshers fair even if it's just one or two pieces of advice so they can find their way around and work out which societies are for them?

I've only got cliches! Always look up. We have an entire website that lists every single society by category as well... If you are just wandering around of course you are going to think 'ah there's no societies for me' because you're just stuck in central hall!

My biggest piece of advice isn't really for freshers fair. It's for those weeks after -just go - you don't have to go after that point, you usually don't even have to have a membership for those 'give it a go' sessions, they're completely free.

Everyone there is lovely, I can promise, everyone is lovely and everyone there wants you to participate... Please join stuff!!

Why Read Print?

By **YORK VISION**

If this page happens to be open and you happen to glance at this paragraph, then this article is for you.

In an age where we are bombarded with information, and there's so much going on, it's easy to feel overwhelmed - especially when the news seems to be an endless stream of one horrific thing after another. If you download a news app to your phone, twenty four hours a day you're subject to constant alerts telling you everything

that's going on all over the planet. From political uprisings, genocides and horrific wars (oh, and climate change to top it off), it's fair enough that you feel as though you want to simply switch off from everything and never read the news again.

Those pesky 'breaking news' notifications are always giving you access to the worst pieces of the world. Whether you want to or not, within seconds you have consumed the headlines, not taken them in just consumed the negative highlights of the day.

This is where newsprint comes in. Within the pages of print, not only do you get complete articles all at once, but the physical pages on which they sit provide a space for you to slow down, take time for yourself, and read them fully. The experience of reading these inky words is intentional, slow and purposeful. From reading a paper like *Vision*, you can think about an article in greater detail before you turn to the next page, or get on with your

life.

Call me old-fashioned, but I think there is something so much more genuine in having a physical copy of a news piece, it feels more in the moment than an online article. Take sports, having a result or a match report physically in print, in your hands, just so much more special than a random tab on my iPad or my computer.

It is important to have longer form content that is more than a one-sentence news alert and a series of one-sentence updates to it. In print, the news itself has a little more time to breathe, be analysed, and thought about carefully.

It is unlikely that I will make someone read this if they do not get this far in this issue, but if you have I would like to ask you to read on and keep making the time to sit with the news for a while before moving straight on. Trust us, the value you'll get from it will be far higher than instant news alerts, and, hopefully, far less depressing.



Advice From a Vision Alumn

By **CHAY QUINN**

Your early 20s are about trying 12 different things in the hopes that you will find your niche. Take that as the driving force for your time at York, and you won't go far wrong.

The main thing I am glad I did is throw myself into things with the reckless abandon only a hyper-active 19-year-old can muster. I got drunk, I got punched, I got pub-

lished, I got drunk some more and I wouldn't change much.

I would not be where I am today without the stupid b*****d I was making my mistakes for me. But don't feel the need to take advice from a washed-up old hack like me either. You have three short years in York - it'll go in a flash (trust me). Make every day count because one day they'll run out!

**Barbenheimer:
Local Cinema Hits
Records**
S.3

**Dirtbag
Live**
S.5

SCENE.



**Pet
Cremation**
S.7

**NEW
CARTOONIST!**
S.11

**SEND
NUDES**
S.8

2 SCREEN



REVIEW

The Hollywood Dream Disillusioned

Mulholland Drive,
Dir. David Lynch 2001



BY ROBERT YOUNG

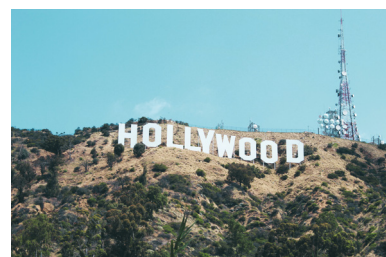


Image by Nathan DeFiesta, Unsplash

Considered by the BBC to be the greatest film of the 21st century, writer and director David Lynch constructs a surreal thriller that follows a naive Naomi Watts, new to Hollywood, and her attempt to aid an amnesic Laura Harring.

Lynch believes your perception is malleable, a pretentious view of the film may constrict yours. As such, I would recommend viewing Mulholland Drive blind and contrast your interpretation with mine and others.

Among other things, a significant part of Mulholland Drive explores

the evil of the 'Hollywood dream'. The contemporary West once put this dream on a pedestal, the ultimate prize of fame and luxury. Lynch presents the shortcut to this prize as easy, perhaps necessary. In the film, this path to glory is present at Mulholland Drive itself, a real, eminent road in Los Angeles, a path rife with guilt, isolation, envy, and regret.

Lynch frames the dangers of this shortcut in a surreal, dream-like manner, accompanied by seemingly strange editing choices, slapstick villains, and Hollywood movie stereotypes. Yet, we are connected to the

real world through famous places, actors, and historic costumes from the Hollywood 'golden era'.

Real life is a nightmare, so we entangle ourselves in a dream. This was no truer than in the times of the classics: Sunset Boulevard, Casablanca, and The Wizard of Oz, the latter notorious for having exploited its female lead Judy Garland.

Mulholland Drive is more than a technically intriguing mystery, it is an adaptation of Hollywood's darkest secret, over a decade before it was made infamous.

A note from Jed...

Being SCREEN Editor at Vision is the perfect opportunity for anyone that spends too much time watching TV (probably most of you). You're a part of the amazing Vision team which means you can natter on about all the stuff you're watching, as well as getting invited to exclusive press screenings and seeing the latest films and TV shows before anyone else. In my two years as Screen Editor, I've attended premieres, festivals, and press conferences for Marvel and Star Wars TV shows and had so much fun. And it also looks pretty good on a CV...I'm now working at Warner Bros.

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- Art S8
- Literature S9
- Food S10
- Games S11

Special thanks for this issue 282 of SCENE goes firstly, to all my writers. We have pages filled thanks to their ingenuity and passion which continued over the summer holiday. None of us are paid for this, we sit in a cold dark asbestos-ridden office for hours making this paper - truly a testament to what Vision stands for.

Thanks to Karl, the lovely marketing guy at City Screen for data on Barbenheimer, delightful Kate Butch for giving us their time, now ex-York student (and Circulation mag reviver) Arminel Selwood, Harkirit at the Crescent, the incredible Amy Mann - keep doing what you're doing! To the excellent and kind Paul and Theresea of Mill Cottage, thank you. Izzy, for your frankly, unde-

nably beautiful, nudes (no dodgy phone camera flash, and completely solicited). Siona and the team at York Art Gallery for letting me in for free, Fitzcarraldo Editions for the book, Thin Ice Press (especially Sierra!) for your time and studio tour, the absolute class Selina Mills, for your life-changing book and conversation. The people at Rio's, for the review opportunity, Jacob clearly enjoyed. Jed, as always, for the Blurble - a great legacy as outgoing Screen editor. And finally Ayman - for the cartoon, which I hope brings a smile to people's faces.

Thanks also to the Biga plus for agreeing to advertise in this issue - your garlic bread is delicious!

Hello Freshee



DAN GORDON-POTTS
SCENE EDITOR

Often in the past, FRESH has been all about introducing you to uni, the do's and don'ts, all of our experiences, gossip on clubbing, yadayadayadaya. But this issue is slightly different. It's not really treating you like a fresher, more just giving you the freshest info (i.e. pet crematoriums), and a taste of what we do at SCENE (i.e. real journalism). If you like it, want to write for us, photograph, illustrate, help with advertising, or anything else, join us, we would

love to welcome you into our cold dark asbestoffice (trademarking this term i.e. asbestos-filled Eric Milner).

Anyway, onto this issue - one for the history books I think, including the latest in pink-centric theoretical physics: The Barbenheimer Effect, and an interview with one of my personal icons, the incredible Kate Bush, well, I mean Kate Butch...but oh well next best thing. Also going back to our tabloid roots with nudes on page 8. Enjoy!! D

Cartoonist: Ayman Zahir
Insta: @ayman_ish



REVIEW

Finding the Magic in Childhood and Moving On

Scrapper, Dir. Charlotte Regan
2023



BY ROSIE BAILEY

Charlotte Regan's feature film debut *Scrapper* (2023) is a colourful love letter to the strength children have in preserving the magic of the world, despite tragedy.

The film follows only child Georgie after the sudden death of her mother. Georgie, all things considered, seems to be coping 'well'. She has tricked the social services into believing she is being looked after by an Uncle that definitely doesn't exist and opts to take care of herself instead.

While the title 'Scrapper' suggests someone who gets into fights, Georgie is a different kind of fighter, as she fights to preserve her reality and the amusement she creates to sustain her. This is all until her father, Jason (whom she has never met), turns up at the front door to take care of her.

Full credit must go to Lola Campbell (who is brilliant in her first film role) and Harris Dickinson for their performances and on-screen chemistry. They work together through improvisation and natural comedic flair to create a truly charming father-daughter narrative.

The way in which Regan has captured Georgie's experience of the world around her is both vibrant and unique. Scenes glimmer with bright bubblegum pops and a playful editing style that moves between dispersed interview clips from side characters and Georgie's own reality.

What could have been a heart-wrenching story of loss and survival, becomes a joyous bundle of ideas and punchy laughs - a true breath of fresh air.

Image by Chang Qing, Unsplash



DID YOU KNOW?

Thanks to *Barbenheimer*, City Screen's footfall more than tripled in one week!

NEWS

Barbenheimer: Local Cinema Hits Records

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS

York City Screen has reported record footfall and admission to its cinema thanks to the release of Greta Gerwig's 'Barbie', and Christopher Nolan's 'Oppenheimer'.

Both films, which were released on 21st July this year, have been subject to unusual hype, thanks to social media, and the somewhat hilariously contrasting storylines.

In the first week after the release of the two jarringly-different blockbuster films, City Screen reported a 3.5x increase in their normal weekly footfall. Barbie, which stars Margot Robbie as Mattel's iconic white doll, along with Ryan Gosling, as sidekick white male (just) Ken, took 3372 admits.

Existentially harrowing Oppen-

heimer, starring Cillian Murphy, Florence Pugh, and Robert Downey Jr. took 2531. In total, both films made up 87% of all admissions to the cinema that entire week.

City Screen recorded quadrupled box office ticket sales, and triple its usual revenue in concessions (cinema snacks and café-bar sales).

They also revealed that the demographic of ticket sales shifted significantly to younger viewers, with 23% of all sales being student tickets.

Only after 3-4 weeks did admission levels begin to return to normal. However, throughout the Barbenheimer boom, a similar ratio of tickets were sold for both films, 60:40 for Barbie and Oppenheimer respectively - an interesting trend that follows worldwide box office data

showing Barbie winning significantly in box office sales success, grossing over \$1 billion, while Oppenheimer made a lesser, but still fairly sizable, \$800 million.

City Screen have embraced the phenomenon whole heartedly, hosting a dog-friendly showing of Barbie in the opening week which sold out. Around 60 people turned up, and 30 canines were present at the screening; the dogs were (apparently) very well behaved.

At the cinema, sightings of pink were also very common over the summer, and people of all ages were spotted walking through the doors to go see the films, from children attending with their parents, to pensioners wondering what on earth was going on. An outdoor screening

of Barbie was also held in Museum Gardens earlier this month.

Barbie follows the story of the iconic (yet problematic) plastic children's toy who lives in the garishly pink 'Barbie-land'. With a feminist message, the narrative revolves around this artificial world of perfection falling apart and Barbie having to enter the 'real world'. Oppenheimer, on the other hand, is based on the true story of American Robert J Oppenheimer, 'father' of the atomic bomb, which devastatingly killed over 100,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, ending World War II and changing the world forever.

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INTERVIEW

“She lives in the woods and doesn’t have a phone - that’s the kind of life that I want to have”

SCENE. Interviews Drag Race UK’s newest star, Kate Butch

BY EMILY SINCLAIR and KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARB



A note from Emily...

3 ...2...1, Curtain up! Here’s your chance to get involved in something really exciting and edit the stage section of York Vision. Break a leg in the role as you get to immerse yourself into the performance world whether that be on campus, in the city or something a little bit off the wall. You’re free to do whatever you want with it and, after all, the page is your stage. Oh and by the way, there’s always the chance to climb the ladder of success (as Sharpay and Ryan would say)... I’m now the editor of the whole paper.

We got the chance to interview the one and only Kate Butch, the sensational ‘Comic Sans of drag!’ Since our interview, which took place on the 14th June, Kate Butch has announced they are going to be on Series 5 of Drag Race UK!

Have you always performed as Kate Butch? Is there a reason you are drawn to Kate Bush as an embodiment?

Yeah I have always been Kate Butch.

I went for the Kate Butch thing as I love Kate Bush, she’s weird and quirky, doing her own thing and she doesn’t really care what people think. She lives in the woods and doesn’t have a phone and that’s the kind of life that I want to have.

Is your performance rooted in the ‘Kate Bush’ persona or do you explore other things?

I never did Kate Bush stuff to begin with... I sort of just took the name, I thought it was quite funny! I started off with lip syncs, meme based lip syncs... people were like ‘why don’t you do Kate Butch stuff?’

What can we expect from Kate Butch?

A lot of CBBC nonsense. I don’t know if you’re aware of the work of Tracey Beaker or Histories that could be considered horrible? It’s songs that everyone knows and then little silly bits that I like.

Is there anything you love about performing specifically?

I just love attention (laughs), it’s my

favourite thing!

What is your pre-gig routine?

A lot of warming up, vocal warm ups, I don’t want to embarrass myself. I drink a lot of water... hydrate or drydrate... put some makeup on!

I get excited!... Even while doing the soundcheck I’m like ‘oooh this is the proper thing!’

How did you turn this into a career? I’m sure, as with a lot of performers, this didn’t immediately make you enough money to live on?!

I worked at a box office, stayed in the theatre, and kept my toes in! And then, it was actually the pandemic that made me go full-time... I did a lot of virtual zoom gigs... then, when I came back into the real world, sud-

denly I was like ‘oh I don’t have time now to do a real job!’

It’s still ups and downs... Pride month... that’s lovely! I did Harrogate Pride, it’s been exciting.

Drag is a very current thing to be in right now which is so exciting for you because you are paving the way for it as a career, doing incredible things with it. But also it can be quite uncertain, surely?

It’s getting there, there’s progress. Obviously there’s some people. I think with the portrayal of drag in the media and stuff people are more used to it. I mean it’s been around for ages.

It’s not just one thing. For a while it was kind of seen as ‘a man in a wig

telling off-colour jokes’ but now you can show it differently. You could be a model, you could be a stand-up comedian, you could be an actor!”

Drag Race UK Series 5 is out on BBC Three on the 28th September. Watch it live, or catch up on BBC iPlayer (remember you need a TV licence...)



Image by Emily Sinclair

Do you keep using your headphones to drown out your mind? If so, join the club (who said I'm excluding myself from my lengthy rant). Press access to events, yadayadaya...join us if you want.

MUSIC

5

Photo by Anna Brown

ALBUM CHOICE

3 Feet High and Rising

De La Soul, 1989

BY ARMINEL SELWOOD

The thirty four years that have passed since *3 Feet High and Rising* was released have left their mark on its legacy. Clunky slang that died decades ago or never made it off the ground lurks around every corner. The outdated fashions fossilised in tracks like 'Take it Off' are enough to make the modern listener wince.

Multiple puzzling abandoned album concepts play out in the innumerable intermission tracks in a way that confounds modern industry standards. Even the dense mesh of samples this album is built out of would make its commercial release an unthinkable impossibility today.

But it's these eccentricities that keep it a unique gem in the history of rap. This is a wholeheartedly fun-loving and friendly album, packed with earworms and brimming with an infectious exuberance. Samples are flipped cartoonishly and paired with playful lyrics to create something unapologetically immature. Their counter-cultural kindness and juvenile charm made them the target of mockery in their day, largely thanks to savvy marketing execs pitting them against macho gangsta rappers, but most of modern rap stands in part on the shoulders of *De La Soul* and this album in particular.

Their discography has never been this accessible, and there's no better place to start listening than here. *3 Feet High and Rising* preached lessons that the youth of today can still learn from - lessons about accepting our differences, maintaining high standards of personal hygiene and most importantly, giving peace a chance.



PERSPECTIVE

Keep using your headphones to drown out your mind

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS

Image by Kiran CK, Unsplash

Everyone's wearing headphones nowadays. Walk down the street to the shops, and they're all in there, sitting snug inside people's ears, some with dangling wires, but most now magically wireless. They're shaped like little overgrown tic tacs, or charcoal coloured grapes or something. Some are bulky like Mickey Mouse ears - real headphones, not earbuds or airpods or whatever.

Now, before you start thinking this is an attack on headphones and on music, I want to quickly dismiss this. I love music. I, like everyone else on this strange little planet, listen to

music daily. It feeds my life, and enriches it beyond my abilities to articulate and write down with these words. It's also, simply, a fun thing; listening to music is something to do (especially live music, nothing like it). It can also change our perspectives, connect us to ideas and people and experiences beyond our own, and provide us with emotional 'catharsis' - that sweet sweet release.

I don't hate music. In fact, the title of this article is actually one of my favourite lyrics from a song which came out in 2009 (remember that year, or were you Freshers not even alive at that point, I lose track?). This song is called 'Eet' by Regina Spektor,

a Russian-born lyrical and musical force of nature.

Anyway, all this aside, I think that maybe we have our headphones in too much. Walking down some horrible car-filled street, listening to music at full volume to drown out our minds and what we assume to be the monotonous depressing drudgery of modern life, I can't help thinking we might also be drowning out more than just our minds. Might we, even more importantly, be drowning out the world around us?

With headphones constantly glued to our ears, chronically addicted to podcasts, or racking up our Spotify listens to one song over and over,

Somewhat legendary (and now fairly middle aged) band, Wheatus (behind the hit naughties song, Teenage Dirtbag) visited The Crescent in York on the 19th September.

SCENE got inside access, and by SCENE, I mean myself and a friend from work who I dragged along. After an hour (Wheatus really held out on playing Dirtbag until the very end), my lovely colleague (and photographer, credited) decided to leave. It also cropped up that I had to call my dad and discuss funeral arrangements at the same time - a great excuse to get some fresh air, camera in hand, and soberly discuss whether or not I wanted to say anything at said relatives funeral (still undecided as I write this). Hanging up,

I then made my way back inside and waited...and waited...and waited. I went to the toilets and sat down, still hearing the blaring characteristically whiney nostalgic electric guitar and cheesy keyboard riffing away.

Eventually I dragged myself back up and stood, listening to the music. Then, the lead singer at the front paused and said "Ok kids, it's dirtbag time." Parts of the crowd, who had up to this point remained pretty quiet (clearly not know-every-song-lyric Wheatus fans...relatable), suddenly came to life. Phones pulled out, recording buttons hit, and, after back and forth jokes on stage, they began to play the song. I think I recall them managing to spin out the track and make it last 15 minutes (instead of four). However, I don't think a single person in the entire room refrained from singing - the verse "I've got two tickets to Iron Maiden baby" seemingly left in the hands of the audience alone, acapella. Not bad for a song that came out in 1999.

I'm Just a Teenage Dirtbag

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS



'Nobody Should Die in a Blue Blanket'

Laura Rowe interviews Amy Mann, a student nurse at York who knits blankets for patients in end-of-life care

BY LAURA ROWE

SPOTLIGHT

After losing her Grandma (Mama), York student nurse Amy Mann started knitting. Now, she carries on her Grandma's legacy, knitting blankets for other patients in end-of-life care.

Amy started Kathleen's Legacy (KL), a volunteer group at the University, named after her grandma, Kathleen.

KL provides handmade blankets for palliative care patients (200 blankets, 500 hearts and shooting stars to be exact!), but it's so much more than a blanket - KL gives patients something made with love.

"My Mama knitted blankets for anyone and everyone she could," Amy told Vision

"If you got a Mama blanket, it was made with love, especially if the person receiving it would be having a bad time."

"Knitting kept my Mama going in lockdown - my Mum found so many squares which were intended for blankets, as well as a huge amount of wool!"

Now the baton has passed to Amy. KL's ethos is simple. "No one should die under a standard blue hospital blanket. I can't imagine any-

thing worse."

A KL's blanket will provide warmth and love, one last time, which can stay with the patient or can be passed onto the relatives. Because they are knitted by hand, the blankets are one of a kind and will never be used for another patient again.

"Kathleen's Legacy is a hug in a blanket. The idea is that if you have nothing or nobody to hold your hand while you die, you are wrapped and warm in a Kathleen's Legacy blanket."

As well as being a granddaughter to someone who went through palliative care, as a student nurse, Amy has seen these types of situations firsthand.

"Palliative and end of life patients are two separate ends of the scale. When we speak of palliative patients, they are receiving medical care to manage their condition and symptom management. End of life could be months, weeks, days and hours before someone dies.

"Dying for a lot of people and their relatives can lead to a lot of uncertainty of what to expect and what they will see. Memories are so important and dying should, where possible, be dignified and supported correctly without causing trauma.

"I want people to feel love one last time and relatives to have a positive memory going forward about their relative."

"When you go into a hospital you get the basic bed sheets and blanket (blue, green, yellow), could you ever imagine knowing a relative died in such a blanket and what had happened on that blanket before?"

"It makes me cringe a little to know that these blankets hold so many secrets.

"I want people to feel love one last time and relatives to have a positive memory going forward about their relative."

"I have the blanket my Mama died with to this day, and sleep with it every night as it brings me comfort - knowing she took her last breath in it, but also because she absolutely loved it and the memories behind the blanket were so special even be-

fore she died."

Regarding whether being a nurse has made Amy more passionate about her project, Amy told Vision that "to an extent, it has, with the various deaths I have seen".

Her biggest passion, however, remains honouring her Mama's legacy and memory.

"My passion drives from helping others experience death in a beautiful light and helping others be able to say goodbye in a peaceful and dignified way, where possible."

Kathleen's Legacy has also worked with Innocent smoothies and Age UK to help knit the UK's largest bobble hat in January 2023!

"I was asked if I wanted to share my story with other crochet and knitters," Amy told us.

"All day a large group of us helped create the bobble hat squares!"

And it didn't end there. Once it was taken down it was split into blankets to be given to hospices, animal shelters and hospitals.

Amy isn't stopping here! She has also been nominated for the Royal College of Nursing for 'Student of the Year' award.

"I [will] find out in November if I



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the idea of being a Journalist 'on the ground' actually speaking to people and finding out? Do you like the idea of spending 3 hours trying to transcript an entire interview, trying to figure out that one word (or two) you can't quite hear, and listening to the person's own lovely voice? If not, don't let that stop you...please don't.

I Visited a Bespoke Pet Crematorium, Here's What I Learnt...

Grab yourself a cup of tea or coffee and settle down to enjoy these long reads...

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS



“As far as pet crematoriums go, our service is a little bit more bespoke.”

These are the words of Theresea, speaking to me a few months ago when I went to visit.

Theresea, along with her husband, Paul, live and work at Mill Cottage Pet Crematorium in York.

Located on Windmill Lane on the edge of the University's campus, the cottage is as picturesque as it sounds, sitting up a winding driveway, opposite the cycle track and footpath which goes through the science and business park.

The crematorium sits neatly alongside their home, in a converted and extended garage, on a mound by the ruins of what used to be a windmill. Here, they also have a small, cosy reception room. This is where I met Theresea and sat down with her to chat about the business...

“I used to be an undertaker and a funeral director for humans,” she tells me, “that's where the idea has come from.”

Theresea sits across from me at her welcome desk. Behind her is a wall covered in pictures of pets, which, I learn later, is a memory wall of some of the many pets who have passed through.

She says she started out working as an undertaker for humans, and, before you assume, she defends herself saying “I'm not creepy – I just enjoy it!”

Despite being good at her job, she says she was encouraged to shift ca-

reers and become a funeral director. She tells me she thinks this was partly because she was 5ft 4, which isn't a particularly great height for carrying coffins.

Being admittedly shorter, and one of the few women in that particular line of work, she agreed to switch things up and became a funeral director full time. However, she soon realised she didn't enjoy it as much.

“It was more about selling funerals, which wasn't what I was into. I spent my days thinking how can I leave this job and do something I want to do?”

Whatever job she did next, she was tired of commuting, so wanted to do it from home.

“I said to Paul, my husband, can we open a funeral home?”

Paul, who worked as a driving instructor at the time said, “I'm not sharing the house with dead people!” In other words, a fairly solid (but understandable) no.

So, she continued working as a funeral director. Then, she had the opportunity to take part in a festival, aptly named Dead Good Festival, in York. This fairly niche week-long event, as you can probably predict, is all to do with death.

“The local crematorium do things, everyone does things,” Theresea says.

It was here that she found out about providing services for pets, the very real experience of pet grief, and because of this, she began to do some research. When she suggested the idea of running a pet crematorium to Paul in 2019, he was up

for it.

So, they began saving - Theresea quit her job and joined her husband working as a driving instructor.

“It totally bored me to death!” she says, recounting it all to me now. But, she tells me, she is grateful for having done it as it helped her and her husband save enough money to start the business without relying on any loans.

When the pandemic kicked off at the end of 2019 and everything went into chaos, Theresea says that set everything back a bit, but, in a way, it also helped move things forwards.

Although she had the idea for setting up a pet crematorium, she hadn't figured out where she'd actually base the business. They only found out about Mill Cottage when they went through what we all experienced: lockdown boredom.

“When we first went into lockdown, our eldest came to stay with us. We had a couple of dogs and would take them for walks – up around the university and that cycle track [she gestures], over there. We'd see this place, but it was all so overgrown we couldn't actually tell what was behind [it].” She says they each other a look, and then saw

the cottage, run down, and clearly vacant. It dawned on them - they suddenly saw in front of them the perfect opportunity for their new business idea.

They got in contact with the landowner, Halifax estates, which owns a fair amount of the land around the University area, and they agreed to renovate the building, gut it, and clear up all the surrounding overgrowth. When she told them about her business idea, they were more than happy for her to set it up, and, it turned out, charge them very reasonable rent.

They opened their doors in September 2022, but they were still trying to wind down their driving school business, which was more difficult than they thought it would be. Some of their students struggled to pass their tests, but, business-savvy as she is, Theresea recognised that there was an opportunity to spread the word about their new business by keeping going with their pupils and not shutting down too soon.

“I thought some [of our pupils] had parents and grandparents with pets, so I couldn't cut ties – we had to see it through.”

Simultaneously managing a driving school business and a pet crematorium was...

Read more on SCENE page 12.



Owners Theresea and Paul, proudly stood in front of their welcoming reception at Mill Cottage Pet Crematorium

ART is a wonderful thing, art is a really cool thing. If you get this reference, or just agree with me, join us here and write about the stuff that people create, and how it changes how we think about the world. Press access is a real thing, and your life will never be the same after. Art-tastic, if you ask me.

ART

PERSPECTIVE

SEND NUDES:

Drawing From Life

BY IZZY EDWARDS



Drawings by the writer

Before a life drawing session begins, there is conspiracy in the air. The taboo of 'nakedness' looms large over a fresh batch of artists, suddenly feeling conscious of their own bodies. An almost reverent silence falls, as the model drops the robe to the floor and transforms into a landscape of texture and light.

One of the biggest challenges for any artist is rendering the human form. We are so hyper aware of what a person 'should' look like, that we can forget to really look. In the internet age we are bombarded with glossy photoshopped two-dimensional images of celebrities. It is artistically draining.

Attention must be paid to everyday bodies: those that have fat, scars, spots, hair. Texture is infinitely more captivating than smoothness. It is

liberating, and necessary, to see all bodies in art. Life drawing pushes you to observe a body in real space, real lighting.

In the 1962 film *Cléo from 5 to 7*, the protagonist discusses life drawing and her fears of the scrutiny of others with a friend who poses nude, to which the model explains: "They're looking at more than just me, a shape, an idea. It's as if I wasn't there, it's like sleep." Thinking of the body as something wider, a landscape, helps an artist to understand distance and perspective. Moreover, it connects us to each other through mutual identification. I, too, am a body. I, too, can be art.

Drawing from live models has been an integral part of artistic practice since antiquity, but you don't have to be a master, or even especially interested in art to

attend a life drawing session. It can help get you out of your head and connect with your own body. It's meditative – a quiet communal space with a shared focus for an hour or two. At the beginning you may feel tense, overly aware of your own breathing, avoiding gazes, but as the hour unwinds you lose yourself in it and all too soon you are closing your sketchbook until the next one.

The University of York's Art Society will be hosting life drawing sessions again this year. Keep up to date on their instagram for more @uoyartsociety



REVIEW

Ecological collapse, colonial hobbyists and death

Bloom, York Art Gallery

What are blooms? Mass abundances of flowers? Are they colourful petals in dizzying arrays, following intricate natural structures (think Fibonacci) to create what seem to be the definition of beauty in human civilisation?

Or, are blooms signifiers of a new, terrifying age? Delicate reminders of nature's fragility in a human society addicted to capitalism and on the brink of ecological and social collapse? Is the quiet cultivation of blooms a sign of resistance?

What about gender and identity? Are the multitudinous and multi-coloured form of flowers, suspended on delicate thin stems and encased by leaves, a symbol of ideal femininity, virginity and purity? Can flowers ever be masculine? Are flowers a trope of outdated gender norms?

Do blooms, bunched in vases also hold existential wisdom? Are they symbols of frailty, yes, but also of

transience, the circular nature of reality - of births, deaths, and rebirths - of matter never disappearing but simply reforming?

Set close to home, inspired by the extensive history of York Museum Gardens, which sits right alongside it, York Art Gallery's latest exhibition Bloom explores these themes and more.

It takes you on a tour of fine botanical drawings, which briefly touch upon the heritage of this niche 18th and 19th Century field of interest and its links to (of course) British colonial rule.

We see too how the desire to record (in painstaking detail), the world of natural wonders that surround us is a uniquely human one. Alongside traditional botanical drawings, we see their continuation into the present day, some following their strict methods, while others seek to interpret their ebbs and flows, their colours and spirit.

We also get the opportunity to

observe still life artworks, and the history of the vase-of-flower-trope as something of a lifeline for women of centuries past, denied the same educational opportunities of men, and turning to the domestic everyday sphere to find beauty, create meaning, and forge their own artistic identities.

Impossible flower arrangements (Jan van Os), denied by the laws of time and nature, are displayed thanks to the imagination of the artist and their paintbrush. Impressively contrasting this, the degradation time brings - dead, decaying blooms on show, hearkening somehow both fear and reassurance.

All of this and far more is on show for a limited time. The exhibition provides a good range of classic and contemporary interpretations (Henri Fantin-Latour to Jade Blood), meaning there is something for every art-lover; and, on the converse, works that you can appreciate but not necessarily warm to in style

(I am yet to find someone who finds a cubist vase of flowers particularly pleasing, but there you go).

The flower, of course, is an enduring symbol of peace, purity and virginity, and the exhibition does not miss this, with works ranging in their religious and feminine iconography, to feminist deconstructions, all incorporating a bloom in one way or another.

Bloom is running from now until the 8th of October. Admission with student concession is £7.20. Entry to the permanent collection is free, and makes an excellent, cultured morning or afternoon out.



REVIEW

Music Connects Past With Present

The Variations by Patrick Langley, Fitzcarraldo Editions

The Variations by Patrick Langley follows the life of recently deceased reclusive composer Selda Heddle and her complex relationship with the 'gift'.

The 'gift' is a hereditary trait that allows people to be able to hear voices from the past. When Selda dies, this ability passes to her grandson Wolf, who struggles to come to terms both with his grandmother's death and the newly accessible 'voices'.

I enjoyed the novel's exploration of the impact of Selda's death, through her former best friend Ellen, her daughter and her grandson. The inclusion of these characters' perspectives provided an overview of Selda's life, with a mix of both the past and present. The novel reflects the life of the composer but also highlights how the past and present are always linked with those who have the gift. Langley's description of the gift hav-

ing benefits, such as direct communication with long deceased people, is balanced by its disruptive and haunting effects on the individual. Both Selda and Wolf have episodes where the gift controls them, and they wake up in places and situations they do not remember consciously acting on.

The disruptive effects impact Selda and Wolf throughout their lives. For both of them, their connection with the gift is most present when interacting with music. In Selda's case this means having an innate musical ability, but it also allows for an all-consuming obsession to create a piece that portrays her musical legacy before her death.

Ultimately, The Variations is a novel that is concerned with how the past and present interact and the importance that music has in inspiring and maintaining lasting memories.

Reviewed by Suzannah Binns

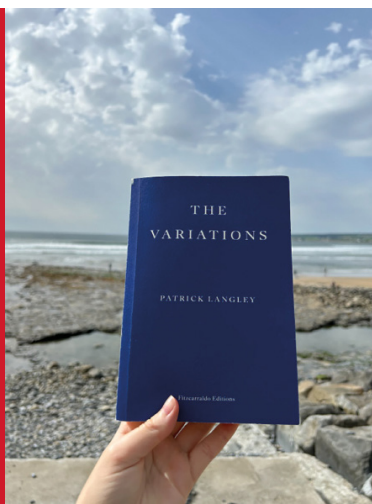


Photo (above) by Suzannah Binns



NEW SERIES

Impressive: Setting Individual Letters by Hand

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS

Hello reader. Ok, so you are reading this article. I have your attention. Pretty cool, thanks for that. Let's begin talking about what you're doing right now, reading these words. Have you ever thought about how that's possible, as in how these columns of paragraphs made up of sentences, made up of words, made up of letters - how they all get here?

And not here?

Weird no? All of these small, fairly intricate letters, placed neatly alongside each other in uniform rows. Full stops. CAPITALISATIONS. Italics. Bold type. Fonts like this one (Gill Sans, if you're asking, based on the typeface made for the London Un-

derground, if it looks familiar to you). How about beloved Comic Sans, or boring Times New Roman? Letters, making words, making sentences, including punctuation: and spacing. All of this forming paragraphs.

(See what I did there?) Now, of course, these words, which you read in quick concession, your eyes quickly but carefully darting across the page (or skim-reading: I see you), all of these words form stories. Stories are incredibly powerful things, or at least, that's what I think - but I'm an English student, so I may be biased. Anyway, regardless, the very existence of these letters on the page is something that is unbelievably fascinating to me. All this stuff - type, is incredibly ↗

REVIEW

What is Blindness?

Life Unseen by Selina Mills, Bloomsbury

What is blindness? Is it pitch black, like you were always made to believe as a child - covering your eyes with the palms of your hands and trapping out all the light? Is it a case of simply 'not seeing'? Do your senses really become heightened? Do you gain special new abilities? Or is it all incredibly depressing and tragic? Is blindness the worst thing that can possibly happen to you?

Explore these questions and more in this historical memoir - traversing the depths of history and uncovering the countless myths we have constructed around blindness, deeply enwrapped in our language and culture, with no better a guide than journalist and broadcaster Selina Mills (BBC, Reuters, The Telegraph).

↘ intricate and often underappreciated. Now, like with this newspaper, it is all digitally made. These words, for instance, were all typed out on a computer in a google doc, then put on Adobe Indesign, and then (finally) sent to be laser printed with pretty modern technology, using modern ink, on this rather grey, delightful substance, we like to call 'newsprint', which you're reading now.

However, there was once a time (not that long ago, in the total span of known human history, to be fair), when words like these were not so speedily printed out and automatised so efficiently. There was once a time when all words, all texts, were either drawn, or printed by hand. Individual letters, placed alongside each other in rows, locked together to create what is called a forme, held in place by heavy objects (often magnets) and 'furniture' (chunks of metal), and placed on a printing press and rolled with ink. Letter, after letter, word after word, paragraph after paragraph, page by page.

It was time consuming stuff, and incredibly labour intensive. Want proof? Keep an eye on this section, as with this article, we launch a new (and the first ever) SCENE series, called Impressive, where we intend to explore everything print, and learn a lot along the way. Excited? I know I am.

Selina, registered 'legally blind' (whatever that means), navigates it all in this deeply personal book, detailing her own experience of losing her sight, and how the way other people treated her was often more difficult than going blind in the first place. A fascinating read, packed with wit as well as warmth, intelligence and poise.

If there's one thing to be certain about, when you read this book, you will never think in the same way again, and you will be challenged to question what it really means to 'see'. Nervous? Fair enough. But you're reading this in a paper literally called Vision, so it's probably best you pick up a copy. Read the signs.

Reviewed by Dan Gordon-Potts

Food food food. Drinky poos and all that baklava - if you like independent restaurants and are passionate about cafes (Bishy-Road fan?), or pubs, bars, etc., email me at scene@yorkvision.co.uk and write for us. With press credentials (aka free stuff and people treat you nice), sky's (or pie's) the limit.

A lively atmosphere inside Rio's.
Photos by Jacob Bassford



York Vision (alongside other student media), had the pleasure of attending the preview night of the new Rio Steakhouse opening on Bridge Street in the centre of York, just opposite the Tank & Paddle for those of you who know your bars.

On the 15th September, myself, members of YSTV, and the guys behind What's for Tea on University Radio York, turned up, alongside other members of the press and food critics eager to see what the steakhouse was like, before it opened to the public the next day.

Rio, with branches across the North including Chester and Middlesbrough, absolutely pulled out the stops. After first being greeted in the door with a complimentary drink (the first of many) of champagne, we were shown to our seats and were soon around the Salad Bar. I say it was a salad bar, but it was more of a buffet. There were plenty of cured meat and fish options as well as pasta, potatoes, mushrooms and various assortments of cheeses and vegetables to start us off. If you were vegetarian, this is probably where you would have to get your food, and there were plenty of non-meat options. To call it a Salad bar is probably a bit of an injustice!

The service is quite unique. The restaurant's full squadron of waiters and waitresses came around with various different meats on offer, and, while you serve yourself at the 'Salad Bar', using blue and red colour coded mats at your table, you then inform the staff walking around if you want

any more met.

Although a steakhouse, Rio's offers a variety of meats cooked in Brazilian style. All the meat options were to die for, but the best by far had to be the lamb. I'm always a sucker for lamb but the ones they provided were just sublime, carefully smoothed with mint sauce and sea salt flakes: it just melted in your mouth.

And the food just kept on coming. I like to think of someone who could eat for King and country, but even I was defeated after a little while, so had to refuse the Chicken hearts that were tried, and perhaps not so keenly liked, by the other people on the table.

As this was a press preview night, pretty much everything was on the house, including drinks. We sampled their signature cocktail, a nice blue concoction, before having a couple of glasses of the House red, a fine number sourced from Portugal (kind of keeping with the Brazilian theme), as well as a pint or two of Camden Town Pale Ale.

We couldn't say the hospitality was lacking. The restaurant was a huge operation, with lots of members of staff, all seeming to be really excited for the opening.

Asking a couple of the waiters who were serving us, they said they were really enjoying working there.

With a DJ blasting songs throughout the night and keeping in the Brazilian spirit, it had a bit of a party atmosphere for it, which might not suit some looking for a quiet conversation, but we certainly all enjoyed it. If that wasn't enough, the manager gave a quick speech before announc-

ing a surprise. This surprise turned out to be three carnival dancers, decked out in headdresses consisting of magnificent feathers to compliment their smooth Latin moves to ramp up the party atmosphere.

They were really good dancers and got people off their seats to join in, enticing Ava of YSTV to have a boogie too! It really was a welcome addition to the night, but I'm not sure how regular a fixture that would be! Nevertheless it showcased the effort that went into the hospitality there.

The toilets were a bit far, awkward and not very well signed to access for those that had enjoyed Rio's hospitality a little too much, and, whilst the service was great and everyone was really lovely, they were offering new meats really quickly. As a quick eater myself I didn't mind this at all, but I know some people who would be put off by that, especially if they wanted to savour the deliciously medium rare beef on their plate.

In terms of actual cost on an ordinary night it's pretty good value for money, £39.95 on Friday/Saturday nights per person. For students, it might best be used for a big group celebration, like a 21st Birthday or if family are in town to foot some of the bill.

With Ate O'Clock just up the road on High Ousegate and The Cut & Craft on St Sampsons' Square, Rio has solid competition for Steakhouses in York City Centre, but with its unique service, gorgeous food and friendly atmosphere, there's a lot of potential for it to do well in the future



Brazilian dancing to celebrate the opening of new buffet-style steakhouse

What an Absolute Treat!



Camden Town Pale Ales to pair with steak, salads, and more...

REVIEW Jacob Bassford attends Rio's Steakhouse before their official opening...

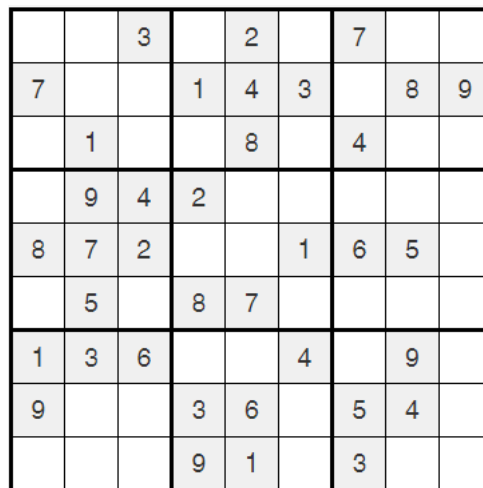
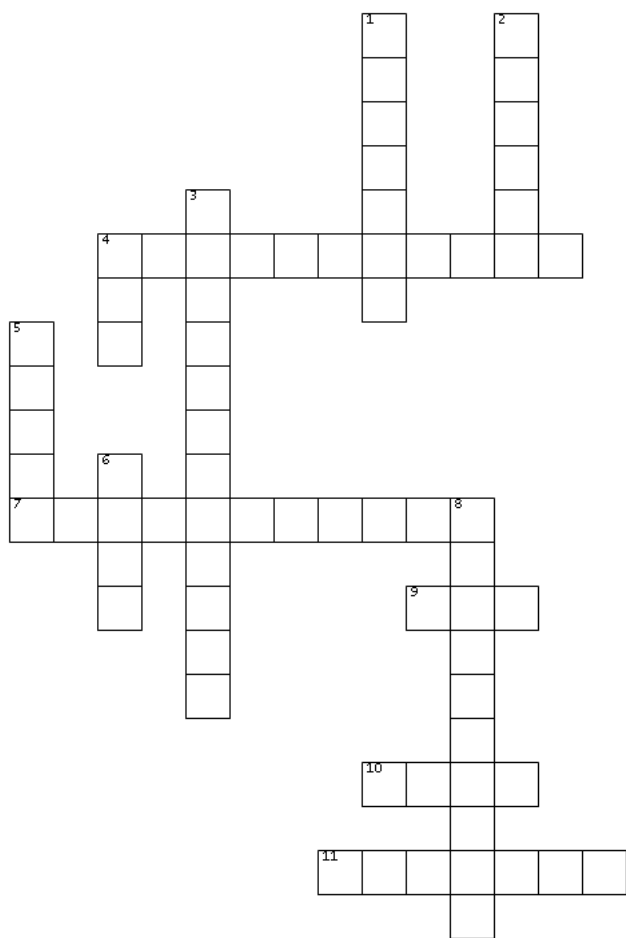
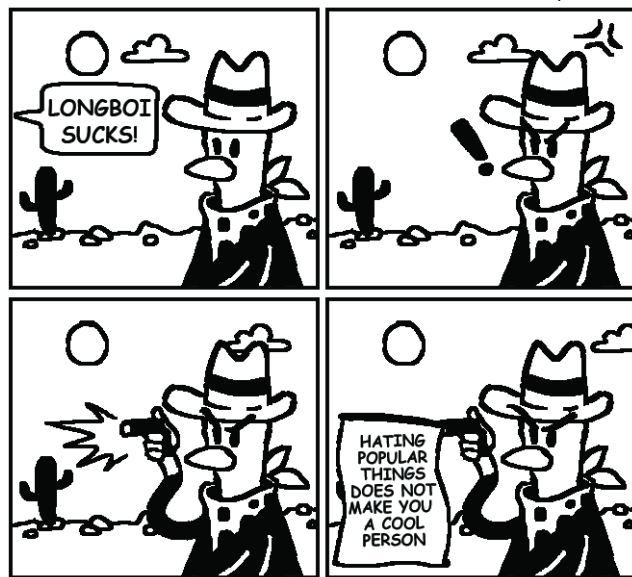
Feel like your phone is ruining your life?
Play these

GAMES

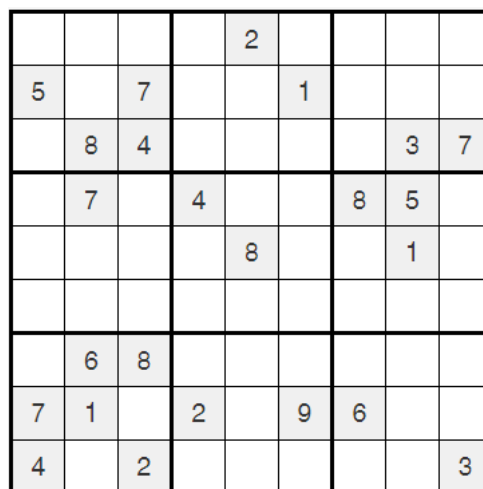


Introducing our new cartoonist:
Ayman Zahir
Insta: @ayman_ish

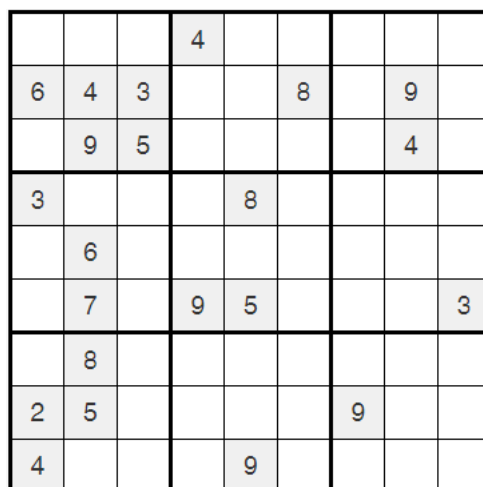
LONGBOI: THE TRUTH HURTS *Ayman*



So EASY I could do with
me eyes shut like



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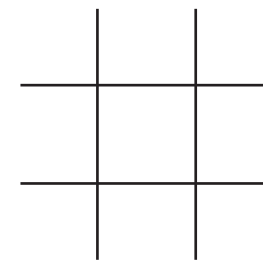


I mean...I've given up at
this point. Waiting on you
to do the same...no I joke
I believe in you :)

Advert: Games Editor Vacancy

Are you a brainy human? I mean, do you like numbers, sequences, algebra, logic, theoretical physics, astrophysics...and sudoku? Or are you one of those language nerds who loves grammar (and grandma), and linguistic theory? If either is the case, please email me at scene@yorkvision.co.uk because you are (desperately) needed to fill this section. Actually, scrap that, if you are reading this at all, please just email me, I don't care - there are no entry requirements. Whilst I can't say it will look great on a CV, I can guarantee it will be good fun (and your name will be in the credits, you lucky thing, get excited).

Game below requires a friend. Eek.
That's awkward for you...



ACROSS

4. These ceremonies almost didn't happen...
7. These lovely things apparently don't clean your air as well as we thought (or as well as the ads would have you believe)
9. Name of Brazilian city...and also (definitely coincidentally) name of new steak restaurant down the road
10. An historic city filled with cobble streets and winding alleys
11. Name of band not good for the gluten intolerant

DOWN

1. This thing just ended...so where are my marks?
2. We need your...fill in the blank.
3. Phenomenon that gave cinemas a good boost in a dodgy economic environment
4. These three letters seem to have sent the world into a slight existential frenzy, also, as it happens, they are very chatty
5. She is Kate but she is not of the Bush kind
6. When one draws the human form in the purest way (see art section rated X)
8. Name of alleyways in historic city specified (also includes name of popular chocolate bar)

FREE TICKETS YOU SAY?

Watch any movie at City Screen York (Picturehouse) with **TWO FREE TICKETS** for you and a friend!

If you completed the Blurble, then be the first to let us know and we'll get you tickets! Simple as that. (Just take a pic, or send the answers to scene@yorkvision.co.uk)

Blurble.

You have a 150 word blurb describing a Film, TV show, Theatre production, or well, basically anything. Guess the title and fill in the blanks.

WINNER gets free cinema tickets -
move your eyes to the left to find
out more

After losing his wife at the start of the film, the widow must team up with a mentally handicapped woman to go to the dentist after his son, whose name means 'no one' in Latin, is kidnapped. Along the way, they encounter some stoners and a friendly support group.

SCENE is the arts and culture section of Vision.

We cover everything from upcoming films, theatre shows, music releases, art and literature, as well as food...lots of food.

In SPOTLIGHT we shine a light on what deserves centre stage.

We also have the privilege of hosting the Games section, because we don't take ourselves too seriously.

Enjoy.

SCENE Interviews New Uni Merch Artist

**Emily Sinclair chats
with Artist Michael
Wylie**

**How did it all come together?
Were you contacted?**

Yeah so I was contacted by the University merchandising team. I had created a 'York'... illustration, I think they had seen that... I think they really liked the style.

I've been to York a lot but I've not studied at York University or been to the campus and so I need to get a feel for the place.

We had a bit of a meeting to discuss what they'd like on the design and then [I was] also sent quite a few images of the buildings etc... so you sort of get a feel for it.

What was the process? Was it one creation that then got printed loads of times?

All of my work is hand drawn.

I drew it all out in pencil, I do sort of a rough layout. I put all of the key

points, the key imagery, where all the landmarks and things like that are, everything down on the paper.

Then I sent that over to the team just to have a look and see that I was heading in the right direction, before using ink and really finalising stuff. There was a lot of back and forth.

It's obviously a very busy design. Did it take a while to get that in order?

I like to create these intricate designs but in doing that you have to make sure that it's still balanced and not too confusing to look at. I want to create something where you can notice a new point every time you look at it.

Do you view it as a process for the person experiencing the art?

Sometimes if you just look at each illustration individually you think that a certain area might look good in say a solid black cover but because of where it is placed on the overall layout it wouldn't work. You need to spread out these dark areas so when you look at it it's not too heavy.

It needs to be pleasing to view.

I sort of look at the design, look at the drawing, and then I'll step away from it and almost blur my eyes so you can literally just see the really solid colour to see if it's quite balanced. You're not looking at the text, you're not looking at the fine detail you're just looking at the overall weight.

**Find Michael on instagram,
@sketchbookdesign_UK**

Think of this space like the middle isle of Lidl: .a bit chaotic...

THE BACK PAGE.

Continued from page 7

as you'd expect, not that easy; "We'd be driving down the road and someone would call and I'd think 'that's a potential client!'"

Now though, she doesn't have to worry. They finished their final driving tests in April last year, and since then, they have been focused on running Mill Cottage full time.

Theresea, her husband Paul, and their children, who have all helped out at various points with the business, have set out to do something different with Mill Cottage.

"We care, and that's the difference between us and a bigger place," she says.

With every person that comes through Mill Cottage, and every dog, cat, mouse, hamster or any other pet, Theresea and Paul try to make the experience as personal as possible. From doing custom pawprints, to locks of hair, and even an ink print of an entire pet snake for owners to take as memories (the latter looked particularly impressive when I saw a

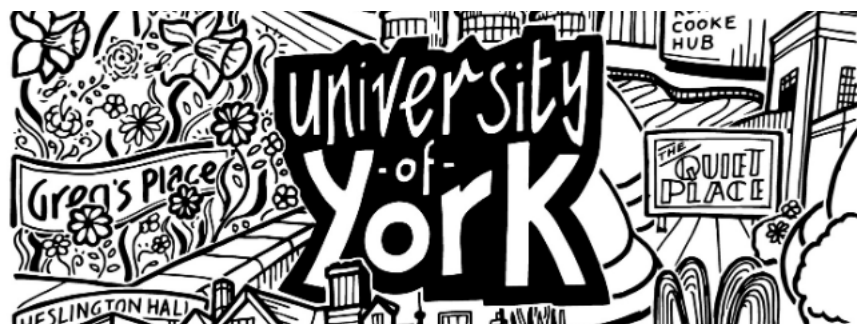
picture), they go above and beyond providing a high quality service for bereaving pet owners by "keeping it small."

Pet cremations happen one at a time, which means there is no chance your pets ashes will end up with others. This is significant, as it is very common for pets to be cremated en masse at bigger corporate pet crematoriums. The ashes you get from them, Theresea says, "nine times out of ten, are not just your pet."

As well as providing keepsakes, Theresea also lets other local businesses advertise and provide their own pet-keepsake services – everything from framed paw-moulds, to jewellery filled with ashes and ashes-stuffed 'memory dogs'.

I see examples of their work on a shelf in the room, and across from me, two stuffed 'memory dogs' (like stuffed toys, if you're wondering) – these are Theresea's own, Spot and Pip, who passed away a few years ago, and now sit in the corner behind her

...especially as it's currently 3am as I'm putting this together.



desk.

When Mill Cottage was featured in the local press last year, Theresea says they received comments from people online, questioning what on earth they're doing, or assuming that their prices would be extortionate.

But, Theresea tells me, they don't mind the criticism.

"If people have got pets, they understand what we do," she tells me, "we get thank you cards – people really appreciate what we're doing."

People appreciate them so much that they even come back – just to pop in and say hi. Part of the reason seems to be because they really go above and beyond.

Theresea always keeps in contact with the owners and checks up on them to make sure they are ok throughout the process. Because they are such a small business, they are always on call, supporting owners. They are always ready to pick up, arrange drop offs, or collections from the vets. Theresea and her

daughter are also trained in bereavement counselling, so they can offer emotional and psychological support through their clients' grieving.

They don't store the bodies either, but give owners plenty of time to say goodbye. If they want, she's even gone as far as putting them on loudspeaker if they want to say final prayers to their pets before they go, and she always lets them put letters or photographs in with their pets if they wish.

Everything at Mill Cottage is in the details, and everything is thoughtfully planned out.

While running this sort of service can be serious and quite sad, Theresea also tells me that there are also plenty of funny moments – as there often are when people are going through extreme emotions of grieving and loss.

"We do get some people that come in the night before with their pet, and they ring the next morning and ask 'How is he?' and I'm like, well,

he's still dead...I don't know what you want me to say? So mostly I say 'Well, he's fine!' and they're like 'Am I being stupid?'"

Of course, it all makes sense to Theresea, "I'm just like – they want some sort of reassurance."

Reassurance is definitely what they provide at Mill Cottage, and a real sense that cold corporations really shouldn't be in the cremation business at all.

"Some people will say they want specific things – like little toys to put in the casket. If you go to a big company, they're not gonna remember you or your toy, or any instruction – you ring up and ask to say a prayer and you'll probably be told to do one."

Thanks to Theresea and Paul for meeting me for this article and giving me a tour.

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COLUMNS

By Your YUSU Part-Time Officers

Is 2023 the Right Time to Embark on University as a Mature Student?

BY DANIELLE PURVIS - MATURE STUDENT OFFICER

It's a well known fact that mature students face many challenges when it comes to studying full time. As a 44-year old mum of six I could make a list.

Top of that list is cost. The cost of living crisis is something everyone is having to deal with. For me, food is astronomical, energy bills make my eyes water and that's just the basics.

Add on extras such as childcare, clothing, Wifi and travel costs, the student loan doesn't go far. But this isn't me complaining. In fact it is

one of the reasons I decided to go to university and study Social Policy.

Growing up in a disadvantaged area meant that university was never on the horizon. It was getting a job so I could start to pay my way. For many years that was ok. Until I had my children.

I wanted more for them. How could I encourage them to work hard at school, go to college and think about higher education when I hadn't. Then, Covid-19 caused us all to evaluate life and a major decline in my mental health led me

on the journey to today.

Not having the formal qualifications for university, I enrolled on an 'Access to HE' course and I found a love for learning I didn't know existed, and that gave me the determination to succeed.

Getting to York was the ultimate goal. My first year was tough. As a commuting student with a family at home, I was never on campus long enough to make any friends. I decided my second year wasn't going to be the same. I became a student ambassador,

course rep and signed up to be a student buddy. Getting involved in student life was amazing. I was so much happier. I embraced the opportunities available.

I then thought about the changes I wanted to make and before I knew it I was nominating myself for mature student officer!

I wanted to build a community where nobody would feel lonely. Timetabling was and is a big issue. Having to spend £20-25 on travel for a one hour seminar. At one point I was ready to give up.

How could these changes be made, if I wasn't willing to do it?

So for me, 2023 IS the right time to embark on university as a mature student.

My three daughters and three sons would agree. Making them proud is the best feeling of all.

Email: maturestudents@yusu.org
Instagram: @yusu_mature



What Does it Mean to be Working Class at the University of York?

BY HUGH BAKER-LOMAS - WORKING CLASS AND SOCIAL MOBILITY OFFICER

What does it mean to be working class? What does it mean to be from "t' norf"? And, most importantly, why does The University of York have a problem acknowledging its own paradoxical approach to working class students?

Ever since I was elected as Working Class and Social Mobility officer in early 2023 I have noticed a strange pattern of events and attitudes that has led me to feel that UoY likes working class students because they pay but doesn't want you to know we are here.

It started with a simple conversation in my second year house between two of my friends.

Oddly enough they were debating about which ingredients

are most healthy in a smoothie but that's not the point. Changing their names to A and B to respect their privacy, I overheard how A (Well spoken and quiet middle class lass from the west country) insisted to B (your average loud working class lass from Leicester) that it is perfectly normal for every family to own a food processor. Obviously this is an less common opinion and it got me thinking about attitudes and approaches to the simple things in life.

A, B and me are still very good friends but internalised classifications of class and wealth have shown the differences between the three of us.

Whilst this example is impor-

tant let's zoom out a bit and look at the bigger picture.

The HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) says that on average 91% of students come from state school backgrounds, yet The University of York themselves have published data to show that in 2022 roughly 40% of graduates came from the three lowest EIMD levels (English Indices of Multiple Deprivation).

This lines up with national data; the 2021 social mobility barometer showed that 48% of adults that answered in the UK consider themselves to be working class.

All of this shows that York University has a much lower percentage of working class students than

the rest of the country. With working class students in the minority, the necessity of the Working Class and Social Mobility YUSU network is more evident than ever.

Therefore showing the first bit of the paradox: a university in Yorkshire (working class homeland) has a minority of working class students.

HESA data also shows that most students that come to the university are not from northern counties. Thus, the paradox rears its head again, with northerners being in the minority - necessitating the creation of a Northern Society at a northern university.

Finding this information was incredibly difficult and what I did

find was hard to interpret.

The University likes to pride itself on its inclusion strategy yet on the main web page for this initiative there is no section for working class students or the concept of social mobility, something I consider to be shameful.

All of this has just gone to affirming my commitment to representing working class students at the University.

The University might not acknowledge the presence and importance of the working class but I certainly will.

If you would like to help me in this endeavour then get in touch at wesmo@yusu.org or check out the insta at @yusuworkingclass.

FEATURES

Some of our Societies!

BY EMILY SINCLAIR (She/Her)

Archeology Society

"We aim to mix fun socials and events with the exciting study of Archaeology. All are welcome as long as you want to have fun and learn more about the fascinating world of Archaeology."

Craft Society

"Craft Society Allows students to explore a physical form of creativity whilst relaxing and unwinding after a day of working hard. We provide a safe space for anyone of any background."

Bean Society

"A key sense of community for Bean enthusiasts we want to support our members and their interests in the discourse of bean related memery."

York Drug Science Society

"A multidisciplinary society dedicated to educating and advocating for the medical research, science of, and safe use of psychedelic and psychoactive substances."

Entrepreneurs Society

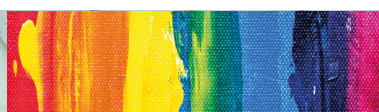
"Discover the path to transforming your ideas into reality! Join the dynamic Entrepreneurs Society, where we ignite your entrepreneurial spirit through captivating speaker events and engaging networking sessions."

Latin American Society

"At the Latin American Society we want any Latin American fellow or anyone interested in Latin America to feel welcome. Our society aims to promote, celebrate and educate about Latin American culture and traditions. Nos vemos pronto!"

Drama Society

"As one of the most active student theatre societies in the UK, DramaSoc is the perfect place to get involved with performance at York. A typical week includes two shows in our dedicated theatre space (The Drama Barn) and two workshops, so there is plenty of opportunity to get stuck in!..."



LGBTQ Social Society

"LGBTQ Social Society is a safe space which allows for anyone who identifies as LGBTQIA+ to spend time with, support others, and find support within the community."

Bridge Society

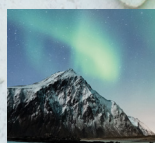
"Our aim is to encourage students to learn and get into the game 'contract bridge' - one of the most popular partnership card games in the world. No experience is needed..."

Filipino Society

"All about bringing the culture of the Philippines to York University and its students! You do not need to be Filipino to be a part of the society - we have members from all sorts of backgrounds - anyone is welcome!"

Japanese Society

"Our society has two very broad aims. The first, orientated towards non-Japanese students is to promote and support them in exploring Japanese language and culture. Our second aim is towards Japanese students, where we try to support them during their time at York and the UK."



Nordic Society

"Nordic soc is one of the only Nordic societies at any university in the UK. A space for all people part of the Nordic world by blood, or by insiration!"

The Christian Union

"The Christian Union exists to share the good news of Jesus with those on our campus! We believe the gospel has the power to transform lives, and we want to see that happen here in York. Our weekly Thursday meetings (19.30 in ATB/056) are open to anyone who wants to learn more about Christianity!"

York's Circus and Magic Society

"We pride ourselves in offering a massive range of activities! ... We run multiple sessions a week, and welcome newcomers and circus-pros alike, as well as providing equipment to help with trying new things and achieving skills you may not have ever considered before."

Baking Society

"Baking Society brings together the best of baking, from weekly competitions to in person baking-sessions, and interests those who have a passion for baking."

Poke Society

"Welcome to Pokésoc, the best society like no one ever was. We are a free society that hosts events every Friday during term, with an additional Wednesday event on certain weeks. All are welcome, so whether you're a hardened competitive player or just like Pikachu, come along!"



Swift Society

"Our society aims to create a space of individuals who all have one thing in common, a love for Taylor Swift. We host a variety of socials such as craft nights, club nights, karaoke and many many more."

Comedy Society

"Comedy Society is a place for everyone to discover what makes them funny. Through our host of free workshops covering stand-up, improv as well as sketch writing and acting, there is something for anyone with a funny bone!"

LAUGH

York Student Think Tank

"York Student Think Tank offers opportunities to develop skills and experience in policy making. We facilitate short, student-led policy projects in which a group of students choose a topic that interests them and propose a short outline and evaluation of this policy."

York Debating Society

"York Debating society is a friendly and welcoming society open to all debaters both new and old... It is a great opportunity to build public speaking skills, critical thinking and argumentation while also having fun!"

York Cosplay Society

"We are a community full of people interested in the art of cosplay, helping one another with making/buying costumes, meeting like-minded people, hosting photoshoots and hyping each other up!"



Art Society

"All about embracing creativity in a super chill and fun way... we meet every week for good times and great art."

Malaysian Society

"The Malaysian society organises multiple gatherings a year for students at the University of York to connect with each other, growing our inclusive community in the process... We hope to spread our unique Malaysian culture and allow more people to learn about our amazing food, country and people."



Reenactment Society

"We at ReeSoc want to find something for everyone who has even a passing interest in history, historical dress, crafts, or historical martial arts. As well as being a great place to get started in Anglo-Saxon and Viking reenactment, we also act as a hub for helping you get started regardless of the period."

University Radio York

"The UK's oldest legal independent radio station, and is entirely student run! We broadcast 24/7, whether that be a live show, or our jukebox playlists to entertain whilst nobody is in the studio. From music and speech, to news and sport, we've got something for everyone!"

Shake Soc

"A performance society centered around all things Shakespeare!"



Outdoor Society

"Outdoor Soc is one of the university's oldest and largest society. Every Sunday of term since 1964, we've taken people on a guided Hike ...Our walks and socials are open to members and non-members, so be sure to come along and explore the great outdoors!"

York Student Cinema

"York Student Cinema is the University's on-campus cinema, screening films every week throughout term-time (since 1966). They are a cinema run by students, for students, staff and the public alike."

Nouse

"We're Nouse (like the River Ouse) and we began publishing in 1964, making us the oldest print media at the University of York!"

Normon rea Gallery

"The Norman Rea Gallery is the only student-run gallery in the UK! We offer a unique opportunity for students to work in a contemporary campus-based art gallery and to provide a platform for local and international artists."

UoY Caledonian Society

"A fun, relaxed group which meets once a week to learn traditional Scottish reels. The society is aimed at all abilities and most of our members have never reeled before."



Environment and Ethics Network

"The Environment and Ethics Network exists to give students a voice on some of the most important issues of our time. In our regular meetings we hold discussions and talks, seeking to build a community committed to tackling the environmental justice crises we face."

Humans of York

BY KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARB (She/Her)

Academic Tips from Meeley Doherty, your 2023/2024 YUSU Academic Sabbatical Officer.

As a YUSU Sabbatical Officer, Meeley's job is to represent students and guide you from admissions to graduation. Newly appointed Meeley looks forward to "spending time chasing academics - who luckily don't run very fast."

Her tips for surviving Uni:

1. **Talk** to your Sabbatical Officers: "How can I represent you if I don't know what you want?"

2. **Reach** out for support: "There's so many places you can go for help."

3. **Become** a Academic course rep: "you get to know how your course works from the inside out, making your degree easier" and "you get my unconditional love."

4. **Pick** modules you're interested in: "The point of uni is to learn and grow and you can't do that if you play it safe."

5. **Don't Panic**: "It comes down to mindset. Stay focused. It's not the end of the world."

6. **Attend Class**: "Don't skip lectures and don't be afraid to speak up."

7. **Get Involved**: "You have time, just find the balance and find the balance that works for you."

Hannah Nimmo (YUSU Community and Wellbeing Officer) and Pierrick Roger (YUSU President) explain SABBS, YUSU and how they work to represent you

What is a Sabb?

Hannah: I always find this question really easy and really hard to answer because I can give like a corporate answer or a real serious answer,

My job is to campaign for what is best for students. I do that every single day.

Especially it's representing students who often go on represented or underrepresented within like the student community

What is YUSU?

Pierrick: What the union is here for is to provide for students directly. Whereas the university provides an education but YUSU is an organisation that's owned entirely by students.

And it's a project for people who want to make a change. Our steer is always entirely directed by students.

What does YUSU do?

H: YUSU offers an advice centre separate from the uni.

So we do a lot in terms of supporting students to succeed. We campaign a lot for financial support. There's a lot of daily campus aspects that were YUSU creations.

Where did last year's efforts leave off?

Off-Campus Rent Grant

H: All of the money has been taken from striking staff was fenced for new off campus rent grants.

We went back to the university and said we need to look to address the increased rent prices, especially for students with bills included. We need to be doing something more reactive for off-campus rent.

P: There's a few criteria that should be accessible to most students. The grant is up to six or seven figures, but we need people to take it up.

Fruit and Root Bags

H: We spent literally hours bouncing mushrooms into bags.

P: we've secured £30k this time around. We're gonna be able to feed 6000 students.

H: We're also looking to diversify what goes in the bags, hopefully. Try to give recipe ideas to go in there too. Like hello fresh!

P: We have enough money to set up a pantry which has basic daily essentials. So shampoo, conditioner, washing up liquid etc. A lot of people also struggle with getting this and for some people it's a lot of money.

International Student Support

P: 500 pounds are going to be targeted, specifically for international students, because we've had feedback that a lot of these students arrive without a credit card and some go a few days without food. Which is ludicrous.

What plans do you have for the next academic year?

First Bus

H: The university, the council and first bus know we are coming.

The change in prices is going to have a massive impact on our community of students with disabilities, and our students who commute.

P: They've given us all manner of excuses. Claiming they make a loss on the campus service, despite full buses.

H: If students are getting on at East Campus and not paying to go in to down, Is there a reason why?

If we have got students who can't even afford to pay a one pound bus, we're looking at a bigger issue.

H: And I literally said 'with all due respect, I don't care. I don't care that you're not making money. My priority is what works for students.'

A national campaign.

P: The government just decided at the end of the summer before Parliament finished to remove international students' dependents' visas.

This is shameful, so I'm going to be starting up a bit more national chaos. I just need to figure out if what I want to do is legal!

H&P: This year we're going to be agents of chaos.

Vice-Chancellor Charlie Jeffery on his role and why UoY is special:

What is the job of a VC? "That's a hell of a question. I'm the head of the institution. That's got all sorts of things in it."

"Basically I'm Chief Executive, Chief Academic, Chief advocate."

What is so unique about UoY?

"A university for public good. And it's hard to define a public good - think it means lots of things. What we do in our teaching and our research should have impacts on our society."

"We've got brilliant people, brilliant students and academics. It's a fantastic fizzy melting pot of brilliance."

"There's a fantastic opportunity to fulfill existing interests or learn new ones. There are 370 opportunities here for students to do stuff of interest."

Advice for the freshers?

"It's a huge moment in someone's life. And it's a moment absolutely to make the best of, whatever you study you're doing it because you're interested in it and get stuck in. Really enjoy it."

...And for the returning students?

"There is always a balance to be struck between the academic and the extracurricular. You are now much more expert in your subjects. Let those skills and knowledge loose."

"But if you're worried about something, share your worry."

"I think there's something significant about this place which is perhaps different to others. "I think there is a sense of community which is a bit more real"

Vision speaks to Lucy Francis, the Boob Team president, on how the University of York Boob Team makes a push for inclusivity and spreads the message to check your boobs.

The Boob Team is part of the CoppaFeel! charity that aims to get everyone checking their chests so that the late detection of breast cancer is a thing of the past.

"The goal is to spread the message throughout the country to every campus because it's often overlooked that young people can get breast cancer. People often think of it as something you just get when you're older, but that's not the case. It's a massive misconception that breast cancer

only happens to old people, or older women in particular, which is a very small category considering everyone can get it. That means there are so many people who don't even think that they need to check. Boob teams, like our own mean, that we can reach out to young adults and spread our message of checking your boobs."

"If you start from a young age and get used to it, then you're going to carry it in and get used to your normal and then be more equipped to find if something is wrong."

'Your normal' is, I think, the key. Everyone's boobs are different and unique to them. Lucy stressed to me that they tell you things to look out for, not that if you have x, y or z that means something is wrong. Everyone is different, and it's important to

know your own body. "We want people to get to know their normal so if something seems a bit off, they can recognise that easily and get it checked out quickly."

And because everyone is different, Lucy and the Boob Team committee want their society to be inclusive of everyone.

They have their diversity and well-being officers who ensure that they reach out to diverse audiences, which, according to Lucy, "is really important because when you're trying to spread this message: you want it to get to everyone."

The committee of 22/23 consisted of only women and non-binary people, which is possibly reflective of the wider world. Men often don't think that the boob team's message applies to them, or don't feel included in the conversations.

UoYBT Urges us 'Check Your Boobs'

IMAGE CREDIT: LAURA ROWE

BY LAURA ROWE (She/Her)

Reflecting on this, Lucy told Vision that "it's a really big issue that CoppaFeel! gets us to look into. I think it's such a big misconception that men can't get breast cancer because they don't have boobs but it's very important to get the message out that everyone has breast tissue, male, female, non-binary, so anyone can get it."

"We're really trying to target men because if they don't think they can get it then if there is something wrong they

might not get diagnosed until quite late. We've now got Isaac on our team which should really help us reach out to more men because I think when it's a group of all women and non-binary people, men might not think it's a space for them."

Being inclusive is massively important to UoYBT, given that their main message is that anyone can get breast cancer. "Everyone is included in our group and welcome. We think that's very important so we try to spread an image of diversity so everyone knows they're welcome."

Letter to Freshers

BY AMBER HANDLEY (She/Her)

Dear Freshers, Firstly, congratulations! After months of hard work and revision - you have made it to York. With Fresher's Week underway, I wanted to offer advice from my own experience of Freshers' Week and first year in general.

I hope you are well stocked with paracetamol, cold and flu medicine and tissues. Freshers' flu truly does live up to expectations. Get yourselves registered with a doctor because when you are coughing up violently bright green mucus, you are going to need antibiotics. The events which cause you to contract such a famed illness, are the result of a week full of nerves, events with bizarre dress themes, and other strange activities including the possibility of meeting some llamas.

Don't expect Freshers' Week to be the best week of your life, it probably won't be. You'll likely be exhausted, dehydrated, hungover, and constantly worrying about meeting new people. That's not to say it won't be amazing. It's the first week of officially 'adulting'. You get the chance to explore the city you'll call home, figure out where you like to go out, get to know campus, and the people you're living with.

Along with an array of possibilities, Freshers' Week can hold extreme pressures. The expectation to go out every night, drink copious amounts, and meet the people who you will spend the next three years with, are just a few of the pressures I felt during my first week. Unlike my older sister, I did not meet my future husband during Freshers' Week, nor did I meet the majority of the friends I have going into

third year. Freshers' is about trying out adulthood and everything which accompanies it, so don't feel pressured to follow what other people are doing, or fear your experience is inadequate, because it is different.

Regarding your first year as a whole, there are a few things I want to pass on. Firstly, don't feel the need for your friend group to revolve entirely around your flatmates. If you get on with your flatmates that's great, but still take the time to meet people on your course and through societies. Housing is a topic which is brought up rather quickly into first year, scaring you into immediately agreeing to live with people you have known for a few weeks. So the second thing is try not to rush into your decisions regarding housing and ensure you put yourself first, however selfish that might feel. Join different societies and sign up for anything that interests you, as academically, first year is more about easing you into your course, rather than grilling you with exams and coursework. So, ensure you make the most of the leniency of First Year, as it doesn't last long! Homesickness is another big part of Uni and it can hit you when you least expect it. To help cope with it, regularly keep in touch with family and plan visits home. In the meantime, friends quickly become your family while at Uni, so ensure you tell them how you're feeling. Finally, enjoy every minute of it because it goes way too fast. Oh, and good luck! I hope your first year is as amazing as mine was.

Love, Amber



IMAGE CREDIT: HOMETHINGS

Brown toilet roll makes more sense

This bamboo fibre loo roll from Naked Sprout is, to some, disconcertingly brown. However, as is the nature with loo roll, it's fair to say it gets brown anyway. Why bother making it white in the first place? Made with 100% bamboo fibre, and not bleached with any nasty chemicals (hence the brown), Naked Sprout uses bamboo because it grows a lot faster than wood pulp. They also package all their rolls in cardboard so are 100% recyclable. Is this the future of bum wiping? The *Vision* team have tried it: "It did exceed my expectations" "Wow, that was actually a very pleasant toilet experience."

Brown kitchen roll, brown tissues...

This bamboo fibre loo roll from Naked Sprout is, to some, disconcertingly brown. However, as is the nature with loo roll, it's fair to say it gets brown anyway. Why bother making it white in the first place? Made with 100% bamboo fibre, and not bleached with any nasty chemicals (hence the brown), Naked Sprout uses bamboo because it grows a lot faster than wood pulp. They also package all their rolls in cardboard so are 100% recyclable.

Sustainable sponges

Microplastics are everywhere. They'll be all over your plates if you use one of those cheap throwaway yellow and green sponges from the supermarket - what's really super about that? Fancy ingesting them

Sustainable Home Products

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

do you? Fancy washing the dishes and contributing to irreversible and catastrophic ecological damage do you? Didn't think so. These sponges from a company called Seep are made with fully natural materials (i.e. cellulose wood pulp and loofah fibre). We have to admit, our preference are the thin ones that then magically grow when you add water to them (they're also a little more flexible for getting into the corners of pans and giving them a good scrub), but both are a step up from their silly yellow plastic counterparts. They are, however, a step up in price - but many say they're equally, if not more durable. The fun water expanding sponges are also available from Home Things, and are a nice bright yellow if you want to differentiate.

Refillable sprays

Think of the countless number of nozzle spray bottles that you throw away after you've used the last dregs to wipe the gunk off your countertops. Not great. Now think of them clogging up our waterways, breaking down into tiny pieces, and being ingested by a wide array of living things on the planet (including, thanks to the circle of life, your fellow humans). Not delightful. What is delightful is this company, Home Things, who make spray bottle refills. They're simple little tablets that you can drop into your old empty spray bottle (or one of their own reusable ones) to make your own refillable spray without buying another

stupid plastic spray bottle. All you have to do is fill your spray bottle with water (with tablet in) and leave for 5-10 minutes. Once dissolved, you'll have your very own cleaning spray, which you can spray your counters down with. They're actually quite fun...but also be careful not to spray them too much and in poorly ventilated spaces.

Refillable washing up liquid

This one, also from Home Things, was a bit of a disappointment. Admirable intentions, but requiring a jug, a whisk and a washing-up-liquid-in-powder-form and mixing it all together with water (lumps aplenty), it was a fraction too much effort for the average consumer. The liquid also didn't quite work as well as the household brands, and the bottle it came in was more of a soap container and didn't work as well as a purpose made washing up liquid bottle with its squeeze nozzle.



IMAGE CREDIT: HOMETHINGS

What do you Want From Your Brew?

BY LAURA ROWE (She/Her)

As we leave summer behind and settle into autumn, who doesn't need to try some new teas? And we've got the perfect one for you.

Thankfully Healthy sells Indian Herbal teas made locally in Harrogate. They pride themselves on being sustainable products that enhance your physical, mental and spiritual well-being!

According to creator Dipti Arora, she started blending herbal teas to treat her own immunity problems and 'was inspired to provide customers with the much-needed comfort and support they didn't even realise they could find.'

After having won Great Taste Award, Thankfully Healthy cre-

ator, Dipti Arora, reached out to *Vision* to try a few of her teas, and we're so thankful (!) she did.

I'd just got back home after a long, rainy day at work with the weather looking very November-like in August. But what did I find on my doorstep? A lovely little parcel filled with the prettiest tea boxes I've ever seen. My day got instantly better.

The beautiful designs on the boxes immediately stood out to me. But now let's get into what's most important. Do they taste good, and do they actually do what they claim to do?

We were lucky enough to be sent 3 flavours: Tea Dreams, Immunity in a Cup, and Digestive Healer. I don't know about you, but I've never seen teas with names like these before!

Immunity in a Cup:

A strength and energy-inducing tea which includes rose petals, turmeric and cardamom. The slight spice from the turmeric was a lovely addition and helped me feel energised! All the teas are handmade making each sip feel that bit more special knowing that it's been lovingly prepared.

Digestive Healer:

Including spices like cumin, marigold and fennel, this tea heals digestion. My experience of herbal teas has been kept mostly to things like peppermint and green tea. These teas all have flavours I'm not used to finding in teas, but this one was maybe the most unusual for me. Despite this, I loved this flavour. After the initial spice there is a very sweet aftertaste perfect for my sweet tooth! But

most importantly for me, I found it really soothing for my stomach. Ie it does what it says it does.

Tea Dreams:

This 'peaceful night-time tea' is made up of 3 ingredients: butterfly pea flowers, Indian ginseng and lavender. This was by far my favourite tea for one reason. When I poured the hot water over the tea bag, it turned the most amazing, dark indigo colour. I've never seen anything like it! The flavours of this tea, especially the lavender, are subtle and soothing, perfect for before bedtime.

Each of these boxes costs about £5, so they are a little pricier. But if you are an avid tea drinker, they are worth the investment! After all, what is better than curling up in the evening with a cup of (healthy!) tea and a good book?

SCIENCE

Five Reasons To Care About Tuberculosis

BY KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARB (She/Her)

1. Tuberculosis is the world leading infectious disease, **killing 1.6 million** people every year, or 3 people every minute.

2. Considered a 'romantic' disease of the past (spoilers if you haven't seen *Moulin Rouge*) TB has been **curable** since the 20th century thanks to antibiotics. The main barrier to fighting TB? Diagnosis.

3. Caused by slow moving bacteria, but fast moving transmission and signalled by a undernoticed cough, **diagnosis is not easy**. Furthermore, Multi-drug resistant TB requires distinct and expensive treatment, making early and accurate diagnosis vital.

However, in 2021 only 1 in 3 MDR -TB sufferers were able to access care.

4. **Innovative technology** called GeneXpert machines can diagnose TB (and many other diseases) in an hour. But Danaher (the profitter) and Cepheid (the producer) charge \$10-15 per test cartridge, despite a cost price of \$3.

This **200-500% profit margin** is 'unconscionable' when a \$5 test price still allows for huge profits for the company.

5. With 2/3 of all TB cases occurring in Asian or African nations, the burden of TB falls upon populations who **simply can't afford** these extortionate prices.

Enter author John Green, a partnership of global health care providers, and a community of meme-making activists ready to ensure everyone can access life-saving diagnosis and care.

Their #Peopleoverprofits and #timefor5 campaign believes that a public good is only 'good' if it is accessible to all. That limited funds should not mean limited treatment. That health care should always prioritise **People Over Profits**.

And that it is time for \$5 tests.

"You've built something amazing but building something is only valuable if the people who need it most can access it."
- John Green

ON SEPTEMBER 9TH DANAHER ANNOUNCED PLANS TO REDUCE PRICES TO \$7.97.

We hear all this stuff about how houseplants can help physical and mental wellbeing. But is any of it true? Do we actually all need to get a houseplant? Or is it more effort than its worth?

Houseplants are said to reduce stress levels, boost you productivity and even help you recover from illnesses faster. In recent times, we've been told that a lot of these are because houseplants reduce indoor air pollution. *Vision* spoke to Nicola Carslaw (Professor of indoor air chemistry) who has some disappointing news.

The answer is short and simple: no. Carslaw elaborated, "I show a picture when I give public lectures about what it would be like if houseplants were to make a difference, and basically it would be like a jungle in your house. You'd have to get a machete to get in!".

Okay, well, consider my hopes dashed! "I think there was some research done by NASA in the 1970s when they started space travel and they thought, yes, it'll be great to have plants in the International Space Centre".

This research found that certain house-

plants removed organic pollutants. But of course, this has now been debunked.

According to Carslaw, we're falling for a marketing technique. "In a very contained and controlled environment, plants have been shown to, perhaps, remove some pollution". But crucially "it's not what B&Q say on posters".

"It's just not going to happen on any scale that is noticeable."

It's not all bad news though. While plants might not help with air pollution, or your physical health, they can help your mental health. "I'm not saying having plants in your home isn't good because Psychologically they have lots of benefits".

The Journal of Physiological Anthropology would agree. In a report, it was found that interacting with indoor plants can reduce psychological and physiological stress.

As the proud owner of over 20 houseplants, I can confidently say that having



BY LAURA ROWE (She/Her)

plants around really does improve your mental well-being. At least that's what I tell myself when its time to repot them all...

Either way, they definitely brighten up my room.

Carslaw sums it up in a sentence "it's lovely to have green things around the house, but they are not going to clean your air."

IMAGE CREDIT: VADIM KAIPOV

What is York's Hygiene Centre?

BY LAURA ROWE (She/Her)

The Hygiene Bank is a people-powered charity and social movement, grounded in the community. **Vision sat down to discuss what they do, why they do it, and what you can do to help.**

Started in only 2021, The Hygiene Bank York aims to tackle hygiene poverty locally by providing essential hygiene products to those who need them.

What support do you offer?

The Hygiene Bank York collects new, unused and in-date personal care and household cleaning essentials. These are donated to our community partners, such as local charities. We can provide specific hygiene essentials and care packages, such as family care packages: laundry detergent, nappies, wipes and soap or individual care packages: shower gel, shampoo and period products. We've also been a part of awareness events, including a panel session discussing period poverty.

How can people access this support?

The Hygiene Bank York has a network of community partners who we offer our support to. We

can signpost those that may need support, and we encourage organisations, charities and schools to get in touch if they need support.

Is there any student specific support available?

We've had student societies involved with the project through fundraising efforts, but should anyone need support, we can signpost students to our network of community partners or work alongside your educational setting to provide donations where necessary.

Why do you do what you do?

Hygiene poverty is not being able to afford the everyday hygiene and personal care essentials that many of us take for granted. We believe it is not right that feeling clean should be a luxury or a privilege for anyone in our society, but this is not the case for many. Our project was started to

ensure that those who are having to forego the everyday essentials, like brushing your teeth, putting on deodorant, having period products available, are supported and have access to the basics they need. And we will continue to offer our support to the local community so that those experiencing hygiene poverty have somewhere to get help.

How can people get involved to help?

We are always in need of donations, and with National Hygiene Week coming up in October (2nd-8th October), we are encouraging our community to get involved where they can! This year's focus is '5 ways in 5 Days', which will centre on how people, communities and local businesses can work together to tackle hygiene poverty.

You can either help us raise awareness (check out our website [<https://thehygienebank.com/>]

give-products/yorkshire/] for ideas!), or you can donate products to one of our 20 drop-off points in and around the City of York. Or perhaps you could even organise a fundraiser to either raise funds or collect products! We appreciate all the help we receive from our local community, and if you would like to know more about how you could get involved, please get in touch!

How important is it that people get involved?

Supporting The Hygiene Bank York helps not just one organisation, but multiple grassroots initiatives tackling issues from poverty to homelessness in the local area. With the cost-of-living crisis, we have seen a rise in requests and the number of calls asking for help, so we are always looking for people to get involved. Our hygiene bank relies on donations that are collected, sorted and distributed to our network of community partners, so the more people we can get involved, whether through raising awareness or donating products, the more support we are able to offer in our local community.

IMAGE CREDIT: THE HYGIENE BANK



ENVIRONMENT



IMAGE CREDIT: DAN GORDON-POTTS

York Goes Solar: University Builds New Solar Farm on Campus East

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

The University of York now has its own solar farm, located on Campus East by the Institute for Safe Autonomy (ISA) and the Piazza building.

The £1.5 million farm sits between Constantine and Langwith Colleges respectively, and looks over the picturesque Campus East lake. The facility, designed and delivered by the German technology company Siemens, covers an area

of 1500 square metres and is set to power around 80% of the ISA's expected total daily energy use. It should generate approximately 170 Megawatt hours of power annually.

The solar farm, funded by the UK Research Partnership Investment Fund (UKRPIF), will allow for the ISA to be a 'living lab', allowing researchers to use robots to inspect and maintain it. An array of

photovoltaic panels are configured in different arrangements, including on the side of the ISA building itself. There are also sun tracking arrays, which will help maximise sun exposure and increase energy yields.

Miles Elsdon, Director of the ISA said "it is a really exciting and innovative project that shows our commitment as a University to sourcing sustainable energy."

The hope is that the solar farm will help the University become more energy self-sufficient, and reach its net-zero emissions targets. The facility is one of nine projects receiving a total of £19 million from the UKRPIF to make buildings at universities across the country more sustainable.

The completion of the solar farm comes at the same time the University has built the controver-

sial Campus East Energy Centre, which sits just metres away from the site. The energy centre is currently being commissioned on natural gas, and is set to provide a minimum of 10 years of energy and heat to the rest of the buildings on Campus East. Concerns have been raised about the use of fossil fuels at the facility, including from YUSU President Pierrick Roger (read on page 4).

“It doesn’t have to be perfect!”

Vision chats to Scoop, the sustainable, zero-waste shop on Campus

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

Scoop sells every-thing: from loose veg, spices and dried oats, to toiletries like shampoo bars and bamboo toothbrushes. I got to chat with a few of their members about their shop, how to reduce waste, and whether going ‘zero-waste’ is too expensive as a student...

“Some things are simpler than people think,” Darla tells me. Dar-

With a fresh lakeside setup, Scoop is selling everything from fresh vegetables, Hebden’s loose leaf teas, fill-your-own dry goods (oats, lentils, chickpeas etc.) to sustainable toiletries (bamboo toothbrushes, tooth tabs, plastic-free deodorant), all on campus.

Their selection is constantly expanding, and they explain, it’s not just because plastic packaging can be bad for the planet.

“Zero waste [products] help cut down on carbon, because you’re not having to produce containers to put [things] in and dispose of it later on.”

Amelia tells me this as she is busy ironing beeswax into cotton fabric in order to make the wraps which they will then sell in their shop.

la is a second year biology student, who is currently busy making beeswax wraps (a sustainable alternative to cling film), as I come to chat with her and Amelia, a third year Chemist, on a spring evening, coincidentally in Spring Lane. They are both members of Scoop.

“Scoop is a student-run zero waste shop,” Amelia says.

“So that means we try to reduce waste and ethically source everything we bring into the shop as much as possible. We are entirely run by student volunteers, which means we can keep costs down which is the main thing for students. Everything for members is sold at wholesale price, and for non-members it’s only 10% added on top.”

“Our aim is not to make a profit,” Darla adds, “it’s to provide students with affordable, ethically sourced products which are good for them, and good for the planet.”

Scoop is based in Eric Milner on Campus West, having recently moved from their previous and hard to find location in Wentworth College.

Unlike cling film, these wraps can be re-used multiple times, and do the job of wrapping odd bits of food and leftovers just as well as their plastic counterpart by simply using the warmth of your hands to mould them around whatever you need to wrap.

Darla talks about the impor-

them to have a look at how what they consume and buy impacts the planet, and how you can put effort into improving things.

One of the ways they are different from other zero waste shops, besides their great wholesale prices, is the approach they take towards other aspects of the business.

“We don’t really buy new things,” Darla says, “we just get given them, or make things ourselves.”

For instance, their shop has plenty of containers, old jam jars, boxes and more, which you can pick up, free of charge, and fill up with a variety of their unpackaged foods, which they then weigh at checkout.

“I got into Scoop quite by accident,” Amelia says, “I was looking at the campus map for places to eat, and found Scoop and thought ‘What is that?’ Then I saw it said you could volunteer and I was like ‘Oh, I’ll go for that!’ My CV was a bit sparse at the time so I thought it was a good way to get some experience.”

Amelia joined during Covid lockdown, so she told me how it was nice how Scoop helped her to get out and do something outside of her course.

“Doing this you meet more people that are like-minded. Sometimes in the news it feels like it’s dominated by climate doom and people going ‘this isn’t working’, but then you look around and you’re like people do care, they just need to be given the voice, and the choice. Especially at Uni, it’s just money.”

I ask them about that, as that is the next question most of us have about going ‘zero-waste’, particularly at Uni – what about the cost?

Darla comments, “it is true that a lot of these sort of zero waste shops are a lot more expensive,” but she also adds, “it’s just convenience for a lot of people, as well as affordability.”

Having a low-waste shop on campus can help solve that convenience problem for a lot of people.

Amelia adds, “It doesn’t have to

be perfect. If you go on social media and search “zero waste” it’s all brand new jars, wooden lids, really fancy and expensive, and it also means that they’ve all chucked out all the plastic takeaway boxes that they used at home already. [But] it doesn’t have to be pretty or perfect,

time.

For more info about Scoop’s opening times, follow Scoop on Instagram @yorkscoop. You can also become a member to get their members discount and join their society on the YUSU website.

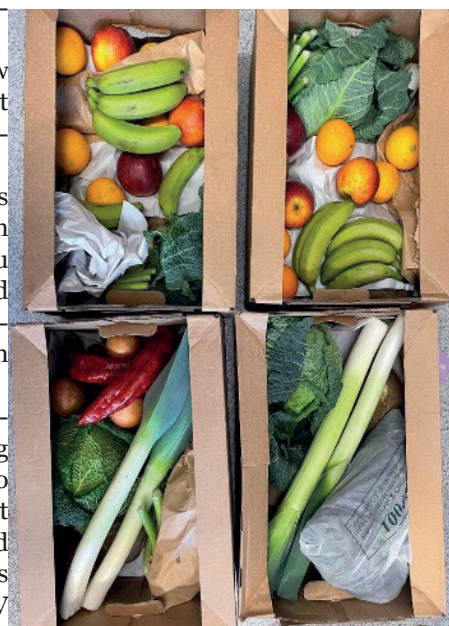
Here are some of Scoop’s (low-cost) recommendations for cutting down on waste:

Pick loose: If you have to shop at a big supermarket pick the loose carrots or the loose onions instead of the ones in a plastic bag. Then you’re only buying what you need so it’s not going to go off, and you’re not buying the plastic bag. Win-win.

Reuse the box: If you get a take-out, just reuse the plastic box! You can use it to store all sorts, and it saves you buying expensive Tupperware that does exactly the same thing.

Soupification is a new word: Make soup out of leftovers, to save yourself wasting food and having to buy more. “Just chuck it all in,” Amelia says, “put some spices in – broccoli stalks in soup, celery leaves, carrot leaves, throw it all in.”

Share food: “At Uni when you’re living with other people that are having lots of different meals, you can say, ‘does anyone want this celery because I’m not going to eat it.’ My housemates and I can’t get through a bag of celery on our own, so we share it. It goes into so many different meals - someone in the house is bound to be able to make something from it.”



it can just be [that] you save the jar that your peanut butter came in and you put, say, dried chickpeas in it. It doesn’t have to be perfect.”

Reusing, she explains, is one of the best ways to be more sustainable, and the best thing about it is that it’s free.

I ask Amelia if she knows about the woman online who can fit all of her rubbish from 2 years into a single mason jar. Is that the kind of sustainable lifestyle we should aspire towards?

“I think that puts people off,” she says, “it’s extreme, it doesn’t happen overnight.”

Darla talks more about lowering your expectations as being a good starting point. “There’s that idea that only people who have the time or money can act in a sustainable way, but you can still do little things.

I ask them where else you’ll be able to find Scoop, “We’ll be at Freshers’ Fair in September, we’ve got free food so you’ll find us there, with usually a lot of [loose] spices!”

York Scoop is open on Wednesdays and Fridays during Term



IMAGE CREDIT: @YORKSCOOP

Gaming Good for Wellbeing

BY DAN GORDON-POTTS (He/Him)

Research from the University of Oxford's Department of Experimental Psychology and Psychiatry has found that gaming is not found to have a negative impact on people's wellbeing - good news for esports enthusiasts (see Toby's article on the right).

Out of 12,000 people surveyed in secondary schools (aged 12-18 years old) in England in 2021 as part of the OxWell Student Survey, the 31.2% of participants who reported themselves as 'heavy gamers' (spending at least 3.5 hours a day playing video games), did not report experiencing any negative effects with regards to their well-being. In fact, these gamers actually reported higher well-being than participants in the survey who played games less or did not play them at all.

The author of the study, Dr Skripkauskaitė, says that these findings are "reassuring" and show that "rather than worrying about the time spent playing video games, we should explore the opportunity of video gaming as a potential tool to find more affordable, creative and less stigmatising ways to reach out and help adolescents experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties." Co-author, Mina Fazel, suggests these findings, which came out last year, are similar to the results of other studies involving adult participants, suggesting that video gaming generally does not have negative effects on people's mental health more broadly.

Only 1 in 12 'heavy gamers' in the study reported wellbeing issues and losing control - these were most often female, playing games on their mobile phones, and usually reported previous traumatic experiences, implying that they turned to gaming as a coping mechanism.



University Esports and You

University sporting competitions are a longtime staple of university culture. From the annual Cambridge boat race, to our very own Roses tournament against Lancaster, sporting events like these have been played for centuries.

While the human desire to compete hasn't changed, it would be difficult to argue that the way we play sport is the same as it has always been. Sport has evolved in parallel with technology and culture, and in the age of machines and AI referees, that hasn't stopped.

An example of these evolutions is the rise of competitive video gaming, dubbed 'esports'. Despite its young age, it has grown massively over the past few decades, especially as more and more people spend their time online.

One of the huge advantages that esports has over traditional sports, especially at university level, is accessibility. For example, if the University of York AFC wanted to play against the Portsmouth football team, they would need to cross the whole country. Comparatively, if the York CS:GO (Counter-Strike: Global Offensive) team wanted to take on Portsmouth's, then it's as simple as connecting to a server from their own bedrooms.

It's important to stress that esports isn't just for the top 1% of players. Everyone, regardless of skill level, can get involved. "We have teams made up of players who have never played before, all the way up to some of the best players in the region" says Olivia Weston, head of esports at York.

The two titans of university esports are The National University Esports League (NUEL) and National Student Esports (NSE).

Each run frequent tournaments throughout the semesters across a menagerie of games at all levels.

Competitors are not fighting for nothing - thousands of pounds, plenty of merchandise, and qualifications for larger tournaments are given out every year. Back in 2019, our very own Overwatch team terrifically topped these tournaments to qualify for an event in the USA, flying out to play on LAN against opponents from around the world.

If it is not the thrill of competition, if it is not the prizes, if it is not the enjoyment of the games, what reason should you get involved? The answer is simple - it's the community.

From your teammates, to everyone else in the society, to meeting people from other universities, you're surrounded by people who share your passion. Furthermore, while there exists connotations that Fresher's week is all



BY TOBY CHESHIRE (He/Him)

about booze and nights out, if that's not your thing, Olivia notes "it's a really great way to meet friends without the pressure of going out and drinking". Extending past competing, it is not uncommon for there to be social events such as tournament watch parties and casual games nights. Looking to get involved? Look out for Fragsoc and Esports society at Freshers' Fair or on the YUSU website.

Perhaps one day, esports will reach the same heights as traditional sports. Perhaps one day, these university esports tournaments will reach the same notoriety as other sports tournaments. If this is the case, then history is beginning to be written now by ordinary folk, just like you, who followed their passion and chose to get involved. If it never happens, then at the very least you will have a good time.

After all, it's just a game, right?

York to host Women's Rugby World Cup in 2025

BY JACOB BASSFORD (He/Him)

On the 21st August 2023, it was confirmed that eight venues would be hosting games at the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup in England. One of the venues confirmed to be hosting (as the RFU looks to expand the union code in both the Men's and Women's game in the north) is York's own Community Stadium, which is currently the home of York Knights Rugby League FC and York City FC.

It is yet to be confirmed which games York would be hosting, as the qualification continues, with only four out of 16 teams confirmed for the 2025 tournament. However, the tournament will be running from the 22nd August to the 27th September, so there is a slight chance that the 2025 Fresh-

ers intake as well as returning students might have a chance of seeing a Women's Rugby World Cup game as they join the University down the road.

The 8500 seater stadium, owned directly by the City of York Council, also hosted both semifinals of the Women's Rugby League World Cup (which York Vision's own Kaitlyn attended the semifinal between England and New Zealand back in November 2022). Despite the good news that the tournament will be held across the country, purpose-built rugby stadiums such as Doncaster Knight's Castle Park and Leicester Tiger's Mattioli Woods Welford Road (which has a capacity of over 25,000) have been ignored and this has inevitably led to disappointment in these regions.

Leader of the City of York



IMAGE CREDIT: KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARBA

Council, Councillor Claire Douglas (Labour), spoke about the impact of being one of the host cities on York and its citizens.

"I want to thank all the partners involved in our successful bid to host the Women's Rugby Union World Cup. It is fantastic that once again York will play host to a world cup, with world-class female athletes living and playing in the city for a number of weeks.

"We see time and time again the impact sport can have on people's lives. This is demonstrated by the legacy of the Rugby League World Cup held in the city last year, and also the recent successes of the Lionesses in inspiring a new generation. Sport brings people together and can be great for our physical and mental wellbeing." "We hope this tournament is a cat-

alyst for increased participation at any of our fantastic community clubs."

Rugby Union is not necessarily a big sport in York, with Yorkshire's long history as being the progenitor of the League code.

York RUFC's men's side is in the fifth tier of English rugby, whilst neither the University's mens nor women's sides are in the top division of BUCS. Maybe being one of the host cities for 2025 will be a step towards changing that, and the fact that York has now hosted matches of two women's international tournaments in quick succession has given further prestige to a stadium that has only been fully operational since February 2021.



JACOB BASSFORD
SPORTS EDITOR

Got a story?

Email me at sport@yorkvision.co.uk



Vision's Take on the 2023 Men's Rugby World Cup

BY **JACOB BASSFORD (He/Him)** and **KAITLYN BEATTIE-ZARB (She/Her)**

Lopsided draws, stacked teams, plenty of drama and tension as Rugby Union's showpiece tournament has kicked off in France. With two rounds already completed, Vision's own proud Kiwi, Kaitlyn, (when she's not supporting the Aussie cricket, that is), and the not-so-proud Anglian, Jacob (a confessed Francophile), give their two-pennies worth on Pools A and D in what has already proven to be one of the most compelling World Cups ever.

Jacob's Take on Pool D (England's Pool)

England's build-up to the World Cup was the opposite of ideal. Out of four matches, they only won one, an unconvincing win against Wales in Twickenham in a contest of who was the least diabolical team, which England won scoreline-wise but it was a game that left both Cymry and English fans alike feeling that both sides had lost. The defeats included a first-ever loss to Fiji (who despite an unlucky loss to Wales still have a really good chance of qualifying), as the disconnect between team, the RFU and the fans look wider than Moses' parting of the Red Sea. Add in England's ill-discipline and the fallout behind Owen Farrell's red card getting controversially rescinded before be-

ing successfully repealed by World Rugby, you have feelings of dread or just general apathy (a symptom embedded since that World Cup Final loss in 2019) amongst England rugby fans before the World Cup had even began.

However, they did the business in Marseille, despite yet another red card, with a George Ford drop-goal masterclass in one of the best standout flyhalf performances from an English flyhalf in years. We have to be careful of overhyping, the implosion of Argentina was also a telling factor in that result. But England now have the momentum to finish top of their pool, despite a compelling test remaining with Samoa after an unconvincing win against Japan, and a repeat of the 2007 Rugby World Cup run to the final is more than on the cards, or at least a saving-face result of a quarter-final or semi-final. Given the mess that English Rugby has been in since that final in Yokohama, to me saving face seems like that could have been Borthwick's plan all along.

Matches thus far:

England vs Argentina, 9th September, 27-10 to England

England vs Japan, 17th September, 34-12 to England

Kaitlyn's Take on Pool A (All Blacks Pool)

I'll admit it. I don't typically watch a lot of

rugby. But when the World Cup is on - and more importantly when the All Blacks are playing - I try to watch a few games. And boy has the start of the All Blacks RWC journey been nerve wracking.

Ending the preseason with an unfortunate loss to previous RWC champions the South African Springboks, the Kiwis entered the tournament's opening match against host nation France with an impassioned Haka and bookies odds against them. However as the two nations faced off, it certainly wasn't always clear who might take home this first important win of the tournament. Despite a Parisian home crowd vehemently against them, New Zealand started the match strong by setting a new fastest RWC opening try in the first 91 seconds. And speedy number 11 Mark Telea didn't stop there, cementing a Kiwi lead with a dive to score his second dive at 43 minutes.

However, my excitement was short lived as France tested the waters with an amazingly close dive for the try line from star winger Damian Penaud, saved by the most sudden of defences from flyhalf Richie Mo'unga. And yet, moments later, France once again pushed their way across the try line and finally snatched a powerful lead from the southerners... a lead that would remain theirs for the rest of the game. Despite fervent defence, it was clear the Kiwis energy was waning as France verifiably dominated the end of the match, cheered on by their sea of homegrown supporters. My hope diminished with each additional try, and by the end All Blacks fans in the stadium and watching across the world were just glad the sudden slaughter was over.

In a game full of errors and missed opportunities on both sides, it is poetic that the host nation were able to build off remarkably close tries and ride that stadium wide cheer to the first win of the tournament.

Do I wish it wasn't against the All Blacks? Yes. Do I believe All Blacks can bounce back? I hope so. Is this tournament the year of the Kiwis? Only time, and the next match, will tell.

And now a special comment from a true-blue All Black fan watching along all the way over in NZ, my mother:

"The second half was hard to watch. The French played with passion and patience in the last 20 minutes. Meanwhile, the All Blacks seemed determined to avoid the oval object as much as possible. Their kicks back to the French were insipid and easily coun-

tered since no-one in Black wanted to be seen anywhere near the ball. In the World Cup margins between the main contenders are typically minuscule. Teams need to be hungry for possession and focused on retention. To progress past the pool stage the AB's will need to shake their ball aversion quickly. Frankly, its not looking good."

Matches thus far:

France vs New Zealand, 8th September, 27-13 to France.

New Zealand vs Namibia, 15th September, 71-3 to New Zealand

Reaction to the World Cup as a whole:

Jacob: Firstly, what an opening two rounds this has been. Perhaps as not as upset-heavy as some fans were hoping for. There has been controversy off-the-pitch, from the choice of how anthems are performed to World Rugby relentlessly striking down any social media content that is not from themselves or affiliated outlets. The highlight of the first round has to be the Wales vs Fiji game, unless you're Welsh you have to feel heartbroken for the Flying Fijians they were so close. Refereeing has, and always will be, intensely debated, and yet again one of Rugby's biggest problem continues to be its inconsistency in officiation, ranging from perceived bias towards Wales, to the red card and subsequent ban of England's Tom Curry for a head-on-head collision whilst bemused fans wonder why the same siting did not happen to Jesse Kriel of South Africa.

Games to look out for:

- England v. Samoa. Samoa are very capable of an upset

- New Zealand v. Italy. An All Blacks side low on confidence versus perhaps the most talented Azzurri team to come to the World Cup. Could be a game of massive proportions

- Scotland v. Ireland. Almighty Celtic clash that could decide if one or the other is qualifying for the knockouts.

- Australia v. Wales. After Fiji beat the Wallabies, this game could decide the nature of Pool C.++

The Courtyard Student Bar will be showing Rugby World Cup games up until the Final which will be broadcast live on the 28th October.

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Humans of York

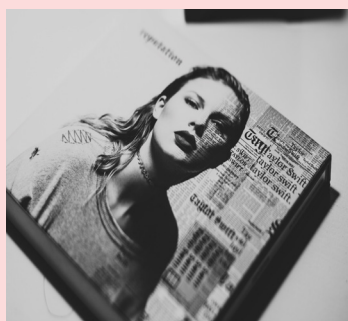
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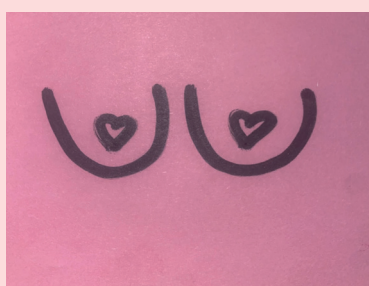
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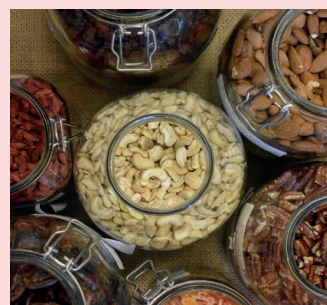
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