



# commercially speaking

News from Commercial Services (Sport & Physical Activity, Conferences and Catering) **January 2011**



## This Month

**Welcome to Yorkshire.** Chief Executive of West Yorkshire Business Partnership hugely impressed with conference facilities.

**New Head of Sport!** Robert Wadsworth will be starting work as the new Head of Sport at Sport & Physical Activity in March.

**The customer is always right.** The Refectory looks to understand their customers' needs.



**Stewart Ross**  
Head of Commercial Services

## Welcome...

May I start by wishing all colleagues a very Happy New Year.

January and February are some of the busiest times for our services. With the students having finished exams we can always expect and

have already seen record visits to our facilities and outlets. We hope this will be a great time for our business and as you will read later we have made a strong start to the year up to December in Catering and SPA and need to keep the foot on the pedal to ensure we meet our exacting financial targets. Maintaining our excellent service standards will be really important and you can read a bit more about the work we are doing in the Refectory on service and customer feedback later in the newsletter.

As I write Healthy Week is about to begin. This excellent initiative is a great example of how we are having an impact on the lives and experiences of our students and staff, achieved through hard work, planning and cooperation. I wanted to thank all the teams involved in delivering this event and hope that you will also get a chance to get healthy by partaking in some of the activities and events available.

Finally, I know I write for all staff when I express our congratulations to Bev on her MBE. It is such a well deserved honour and a real tribute to the way she personifies commitment and excellence in service in catering and university life.

**Stewart Ross**

## MBE for Beverley Kenny

*Beverley Kenny, Head of Catering and Event Management, has been appointed MBE in the 2011 New Year's Honours.*

The award recognises her work in conference and event management and her contribution to the student community through student catering.

Beverley has worked at the University since 1988, becoming Head of Catering and Event Management in 1996.

The statistics for Catering Services are impressive: Beverley heads up the conference and events team which manages 16 venues across Leeds. In addition, each and every day Beverley's team provides around 2,000 student and staff lunches, serves snacks and sandwiches to 8,000 people in campus coffee bars, and delivers around 50 buffets across campus.

Beverley commented on news of the award, "I am truly thrilled, extremely honoured and delighted, particularly for the catering and events team at Leeds; I am just very privileged to be able to accept it on their behalf".



**Just in...** Gill Watkins, Assistant HR Officer, has left the Facilities Directorate to take on a new role in Corporate Services. **If you need to contact Gill she will be on 68053.** We all wish her luck in her new job!

Catering Services are pleased to welcome back **Isabel de Costa** after her maternity leave. Gabriella, Isabel's daughter, is now attending Bright Beginnings, the University's Nursery.

**Red Nose Day** ([www.rednoseaday.com](http://www.rednoseaday.com)) is on the 18th March and we want your suggestions on what we could do to fundraise! Send any ideas to **Sue Pimblett** at [s.pimblett@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:s.pimblett@leeds.ac.uk)

**Do you have anything to add?** If you have any story you feel should be in a future edition of *Commercially Speaking* then please contact Matt Hamnett at: [m.hamnett@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:m.hamnett@leeds.ac.uk)

# Try something new in February...

*Sport & Physical Activity are launching their new set of 'Learn to Courses' which start in February.*

Courses can be taken in climbing, squash, pilates and yoga and all are suitable for beginners. Each programme lasts for 3/5

weeks dependent upon the course and are a great way to learn the basics in a new activity.

**Download the latest timetable from [www.leeds.ac.uk/sport](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/sport) or pick up a copy at The Edge.**

## University's HealthyWeek2011

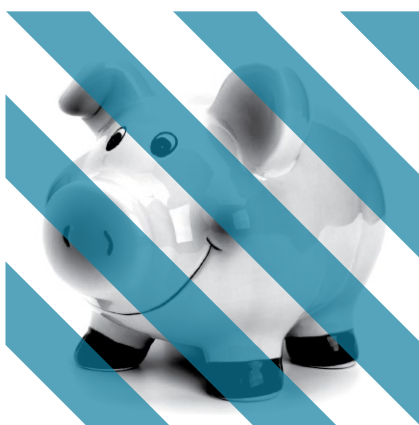
*This year's Healthy Week takes place from Monday 31st January – Sunday 6th February and features a number of activities and events to help you get into some healthy habits.*

The theme this year is **What's Stopping You?** and staff within Commercial Services have been working hard, along with the University's Wellbeing department, to promote the initiative across campus.

Catering Services are also supporting Healthy Week with a range of promotions including live 'cook & buy' demonstrations, Happy Egg omelettes, healthy Meal Deals and a bike-to-work special offer. More information can be found on the Catering website at [leeds.ac.uk/catering/promotions](http://leeds.ac.uk/catering/promotions)

A full programme of this year's Healthy Week activities can be found on the Healthy Week

website at [wellbeing.leeds.ac.uk/healthy-week.htm](http://wellbeing.leeds.ac.uk/healthy-week.htm).



*Is cost stopping you from being healthy?*

**There are plenty of activities that are available before or after work, and even some that you can take part in during lunch!**

## Free Olympic lecture series on campus

*The third annual Celebrating the Games series of Olympic & Paralympic themed lectures will take place in February and March, featuring 9 different subjects related to the Olympic & Paralympic Movement, London 2012, sport and sporting achievement.*

A number of high profile speakers will also participate in Celebrating the Games including:

- **Roger Mosey** - Head of BBC 2012. *25th February.*
- **Noel Thatcher** - 5-time Paralympics Gold medallist. *5th March.*
- **Sir Ian Johnston** - Head of Security for London 2012. *11th March.*
- **Debbie Jevans** - Head of Sport for London 2012. *25th March.*

The series opens on 4th February (12 noon, Council Chambers, Parkinson Building) with Martin Green, Head of Ceremonies for London 2012 who is overseeing the opening and closing ceremonies.

The second event is 'Leeds Triathlon and Golden Ambitions for London 2012' on Wednesday 9th February at 6:15pm (Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre). This talk will feature University of Leeds alum Alistair Brownlee (2009 World Triathlon Champion), current University of Leeds student Jonny Brownlee (2010 World Under-23 Triathlon Champion) and coaches Malcolm Brown & Jack Maitland.

Places will be limited & interest is expected to be high, so book your place early. The full programme of lectures is available at [www.leeds.ac.uk/olympics](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/olympics). To reserve tickets at any lecture, please email [celebratingthegames@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:celebratingthegames@leeds.ac.uk)

**All lectures are free to attend and are open to staff, students and the public.**

## Food Safety

by Geoff Tooley

*Shocking safety stories don't tell real story*

**Food Safety stories seldom hit the headlines unless they will shock.**

Premier Foods have recently had to pay over £16,000 for selling a loaf containing a mouse. These type of stories get more coverage than Katie Prices latest boob job/ face lift, but they don't tell the real story.



Although a mouse in a loaf isn't pleasant, it won't kill anyone! Compare the fine above to the measly £2250 which Mr. Barr of Wishart had to pay for KILLING 21 people with E-Coli.

How much publicity did this get? There is something wrong somewhere.

**Remember food poisoning does kill** - check [www.scoresonthedoors.org](http://www.scoresonthedoors.org) for up to date hygiene ratings - **don't forget all University run establishments have 5 stars!**

## Head of Sport

*Robert Wadsworth, currently Sport and Recreation Manager at the University of York, will be starting work as the new Head of Sport at Sport & Physical Activity on the 21st March 2011.*

In addition to his leadership of the University Sports Department at York, Rob has recently been managing a number of facility developments including the proposed new York Sports Village, and as some of you may be aware he has previously worked at the University of Leeds as Health and Fitness Manager.

# The customer is always right... even when they're wrong

by Ian Addy, Catering Operations Manager

**The best customers are the ones you already have and so it's important to make sure that they leave happy and satisfied.** They are the ones who will tell their friends and colleagues about their experience, good or bad.

A satisfied customer is the best advertisement that any business can have. A complaint resolved respectfully and consistently will earn the trust and goodwill of all our customers.

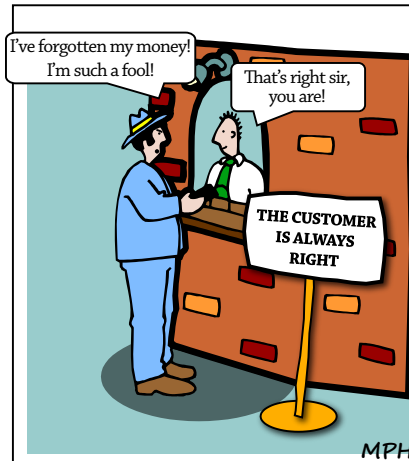
We have recently carried out a survey in the Refectory to try and understand our customers better and respond to their needs. It is always a useful exercise and one that is invaluable to us, in order to build on our customer base.

We asked a series of questions such as how they rate the quality of food and value for money and how they rate customer service, overall experience and whether they would recommend a friend.

The results gave us some extremely useful information, which has helped us to implement some improvements and

answer some of the requests. These actions cover all of our customers, including catered students.

Following the survey, we have produced a document entitled 'You Said – We Did' which informs the customer of the main action points of the survey.



**As a result we have;**

- Introduced more fish dishes onto our menu

- Revised some of our prices on breakfast items
- Continue to look at ways to improve our customer service
- Introduced more retail items for our customers to purchase
- Developed more Meal Deals offering value for money

What was really positive is that our customers said they liked the variety and choice on our menu.

Going forward, if we remember that there are only two rules for great customer service:

1. The customer is always right
2. If they are ever wrong – re-read rule 1

**Customers may very occasionally be rude, angry and possibly wrong, but if we send them away feeling that way, we would not see them again and we would lose all the potential customers they speak to as well!**

## Elite coaches work with student sports clubs

*SPA have worked in partnership with the Leeds Alumni Annual Fund to bring a number of elite coaches to the University of Leeds sports facilities.*

*The coaches will work with the LEEDS Gryphons teams before the British Universities and Colleges Sport leagues start for the second semester and will assist with their preparations.*

**Hockey** - England Women U21 coach Andy Bradshaw will lead sessions with additional input from England Hockey Centrally Contracted Goalkeeper coach Malcolm Pratt.

**Rugby League** - David Griffiths who has previously held coaching roles with Hull Kingston Rovers and Bradford Bulls will lead a pre-season session

**Football** - Brian Deane, the ex-England international and Premier League forward.

**Lacrosse** – The current England international lacrosse coach Phil Collier winner of three European Gold medals.

**Netball** - Joan Young, England Netball Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Excel coach

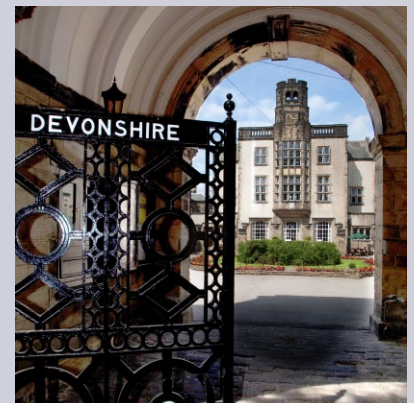
## Welcome to Yorkshire receives a welcome from MEETinLEEDS

*Welcome to Yorkshire, the official tourism agency for Yorkshire, has had its £10 million funding approved for the next year, giving a tremendous boost to business and tourism in the area.*

The investment means the continuation of high impact marketing campaigns that have already increased the value of Yorkshire's tourism industry from £5.9bn to almost £7bn. This decision is fantastic news for the University's conference and events operation, MEETinLEEDS, as the strong promotion of Yorkshire brings in both national and international business to the campus.

Peter Myers, Chief Executive of the West Yorkshire Business Partnership, recently attended one of our venues, Devonshire Hall, as a delegate, and stated that he was hugely impressed with what we have to offer.

Subsequently, Commercial Services Head of Sales & Marketing, Richard Handscombe, invited Peter back to discuss the University's wider facilities,



*Peter Myers, Chief Executive of the West Yorkshire Business Partnership was impressed with Devonshire Hall*

and the benefits of a closer relationship.

Richard commented, *"It's becoming increasingly important, in these times of financial restraint, that we are able to foster close relationships with large organisations such as the West Yorkshire Business Partnership and Welcome to Yorkshire. I'm delighted, but not surprised, that Peter was so impressed with the level of service that we're able to offer here at the University and look forward to working with his organisation in the future."*

# A financial update...

*Five months into the financial year Shelley Todd and Kev Stephenson, our management accountants, provide a brief update on how we are doing so far.*

Catering is currently on track to break-even, or produce a small profit, this year before investment costs, which is great news. The increase in Meal Plan students in the refectory from 260 last year to 850 this year has been a major factor but we are also averaging 35,000 transactions per week compared to 30,000 last year. We have maintained strong controls over costs,

both in terms of food costs and labour costs thanks to the hard work of all our teams. However, there are challenges ahead of us: the Function Floor has closed for refurbishment, which means we will see a drop in our income over the coming months; food prices are increasing and the recent rise in VAT to 20% will increase many of our non food costs going forward.

SPA is also on track to achieve its financial targets which included the need to make a profit to pay back towards some of the capital costs incurred when the Edge was built. The great news is that sports memberships are selling really well and we have exceeded our targets in this area. The downside of having

more members is that our walk up income is inevitably down because people are buying all inclusive packages, and we are also having to spend more on staff and cleaning for example to support the extra members we have.

Keeping good service levels and tight control over our costs will give us a great chance to hit our targets over the next few months. February and March will be the critical period as all our facilities and outlets reach maximum capacity across campus!

**More updates will be posted as we move through the year.**

# University Chefs reach finals

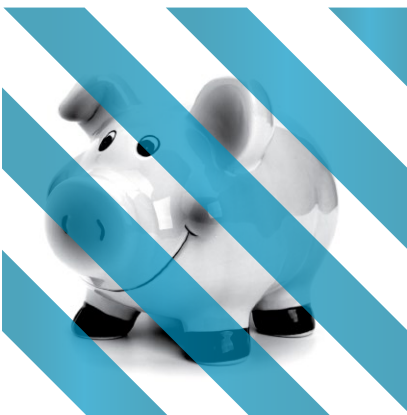
*Three University of Leeds chefs are celebrating after achieving a Merit as they reached the finals of Salon Culinare, held at the NEC in Birmingham in January.*

**Simon Wood, Lisa Hall and Chris Johnson** took part in the Rational Master Chefs Grand Prix in the Live Theatre competition where they were also awarded a medal of excellence and a certificate for hygiene standards.

Head Chef Simon Wood said, "It's fantastic to be able to take our chefs to a competition well known for its high standards in the catering industry and come back with a result like this."

# WHAT'S STOPPING YOU?

110 activities for leading a healthy and balanced lifestyle.



**Cost?** A healthy balanced meal can cost less than a takeaway.



**Motivated?** Exercise can relieve tiredness and leave you feeling invigorated.



**No time?** Prioritising your tasks can ease the pressure.

**Healthyweek2011**  
*Activities and events for staff and students*

Monday 31 January – Sunday 6 February  
[www.leeds.ac.uk/healthyweek](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/healthyweek)