



commercially speaking

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

July 2011

Issue 8



John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons, addresses UK Youth Parliament in the Conference Auditorium

This Month

EPOS system installed. Catering Electronic Point of Sale system goes live.

Busy conference season starts. Three major conferences on campus, and more to come!

BUCS successes for University legends. SPA celebrates BUCS awards.



Stewart Ross
Head of Commercial Services

Welcome.

At a time when much of the University is considering a period of slowdown and perhaps looking forward to holidays, staff across Commercial Services, and indeed the Facilities Directorate, have been moving into top gear with an incredibly busy conference season, the delivery of a first class graduation experience for graduands and families alike and the management of lots of changes in preparation for September 2011. **It's times like these you can really see why the Facilities Directorate as one team is so important.** We are all working so closely with our colleagues in Estates, Campus Support and Residences to deliver an excellent experience: just think about the way in which security, cleaning, the maintenance teams, the catering and sport staff and colleagues in the residences are all playing key roles in shaping the conference guests visit for example!

The fantastic work of staff at this time, often working over and above what might be expected is very much appreciated, not just by the Vice Chancellor and other senior colleagues but even more importantly by those customers who have been fortunate to eat in the refectory, grab a coffee during open day, use the sports facilities and generally experience our unique service. The feedback has been first class: we have been delivering on our vision of excellence and you can read comments directly from customers received via Twitter to prove it later in this edition.

I've said on a number of occasions that our vision of excellent service and financial sustainability must be based on getting a better understanding of what it is our customers want. We have talked in previous newsletters about how we are putting in place new systems to gauge customer views about our performance (such as mystery shopping and satisfaction surveys). However, a major step forward for us in Catering over the coming months will be our new till system which is going to revolutionise the information we get from our customers. We are delighted we have rolled this big new IT project out quickly and efficiently and in plenty of time for the new academic year. **But, we also need to be better than the rest at selling our already fantastic offer:** the new MEETinLEEDS advertising campaign and the innovative summer sports membership offer are just two ways we are trying **to be the best** in selling the University of Leeds!

So much is going on, and let's face it, I feel with all the gloom out in the economy it's good to be working in such a busy place with a real sense of purpose! **I would like to thank you for contributing to this and for making the past two months a great success, let's keep it up through to the start of the new academic session.**

Best wishes, **Stewart Ross.**

New till software to give us the competitive edge

Commercial Services has many thousands of customers using our cafes and the Refectory every day.

Every transaction should tell us something about the habits of our customers; what they like to buy, when they buy it, how often, and even in an ideal world who our customers are. This information, packaged up as data, is a gold mine and using the information we get to inform our decisions: how we improve what we sell, when we sell it and how we market it, is one of THE most important ingredients to making our business a success.

Unfortunately the till system we have been using in Catering over the past few years has not given us access to the sort of information we need to know and as a result we have decided to make a change and do it quickly so we can be informed and make decisions using the information we have; this is exactly the sort of thing that our new strategy is demanding of us.

So, over the coming weeks a brand new till system (MCR) is being rolled out across our catering outlets under the project management of **Shelley Todd** and **Kevin Porteous**. This will mean new till screens for the staff to use and hopefully, thanks to the involvement of key staff in our user testing group such as **Dorota Gomulska**, **Andreea Dumitru**, **Julie Richards** & **Sharon Magee**, the look and feel of the tills will work as well, if not better, than the last!

As soon as we start using this new system from August, we will also start gathering the much needed data and we will begin to get reports out of the system that will give us a **competitive edge over all of those competitors across the road and on the high street.**

Just in...

Congratulations to **Ian Addy**, Catering Operations Manager, who received his Managing Safely qualification from the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health this month.

Special Offer!

£15 for 10 days membership at The Edge Fitness Centre on campus. See advert on last page for more.

What have we missed?

If you have something you'd like to add to the newsletter then please email m.hamnett@leeds.ac.uk

Busy conference season starts



The team at Storm Jameson, wearing MEETinLEEDS uniforms, welcome delegates

As many of you will have noticed by now, Commercial Services has started its very busy conference summer season and the campus has started to fill with the sounds of delegates rather than students using its facilities

Already we've had three large events that have taken place at the University.

The first was the International Medieval Congress (IMC) which saw over 1,600 delegates meet at Bodington Hall. This is the largest academic event of its kind in the UK and it was the 17th time that the Congress has used Bodington Hall to hold their meetings, workshops and discussions.

BUCS (British Universities & Colleges Sport) also held its annual conference and awards ceremony this month (you can read about

our own successes in the article on page 3), this time on the main campus of the University, where they were able to make full use of the excellent facilities we have to offer.

Delegates were openly impressed with the accommodation at Storm Jameson Court and the short walk to the University's state-of-the-art fitness complex, The Edge.

Karen Rothery, CEO of BUCS, has already praised the work we did to make her event such a success:

"The Leeds team was outstanding; nothing was too much trouble and the whole experience first class from start to finish"

The National Union of Students have also hosted its annual conference, Students' Unions 2011, on the main campus, again making use of the fantastic facilities available at Charles Morris Hall, including our new residence Storm Jameson Court.

The Twitter feed the NUS used to communicate to their delegates was at times covered with tweets acknowledging the brilliant food our chefs have laid on for them:

[@ashleyrudge](#) told us that he was 'Loving lunch time in Leeds!' and

[@CunninghamToby](#) said: 'lunch yum yum best uni food I ever ate!'

All three of these conferences have been national, if not international, events.

Being able to host them well is an extremely important way of helping the University achieve its strategic goal of being among the top 50 universities in the world.

Degrees on Campus by Natasha Rahanu

The Sun is out, the gowns are on
With hats and smiles too
Laughter trickles through the campus
Like a stream of sparkling blue

As cameras flash, up go the hats
Because at this time of year
You can't walk out without getting snapped
So grin from ear to ear!

Girls in heels and boys in ties
Queue for their cream teas
And glasses of sweet bubbling wine
It must be the degrees!

Food Safety

by Geoff Tooley

"Fat is bad for you"

Well, this is probably correct if you ate nothing else, but I don't know anybody that does.

Contrary to the advice thrown at us on "You Are What You Eat" you do however need some fat in your diet to be healthy.

Interestingly this advice was given by the so called Nutritionist Gillian Mckeith (who actually has as many relevant qualifications in nutrition as my bunny Alfie).



Health Nutritionist, Alfie?

Obviously eating too much of the wrong sort of fat isn't a great idea. Saturated fat definitely increases the risk of heart disease, so try to avoid living off pies, cake, cheese, butter etc.

The current recommendations are that the diet should be based on: **33% Fruit and Veg; 33% Bread, Cereals and Potatoes; 14% Meat and Fish; 14% Milk and Dairy products; and 6% Fats and Sugars.** Does your diet look like this?

Interestingly the Government is considering reducing the recommended daily calorie intake from 2500 calories a day for men and 2000 calories a day for women. As a society we are living a more sedentary lifestyle, with less physical jobs.

We have reached the stage where calories "in" are more than calories "out" and hence we get the current obesity problems that the nation is facing.

However let's try to keep everything sensible – as a well built ex-girlfriend once said to me when we were sat on a see-saw - it's all about balance!!

Tweet what you eat!

Catering can make all the difference for a successful and memorable event. We've always known that we have some of the best chefs in the business here on campus who are able to create inspirational menus for the delegates that use our facilities for conferences. Still... It's always nice to get feedback.

Recently we've had some comments from a source other than our normal feedback forms though: the National Union of Students (NUS) gave their feedback via the social networking site Twitter as they ate each course!

It started at lunch time:

@CunninghamToby said: "lunch yum yum best uni food I ever ate!" and @ashleyrudge added: Loving lunch time in Leeds!

By the Awards Ceremony later that night the tweets were coming in thick and fast, and all of them positive!

@nusuk: The food served at the #NUSAwards tonight is locally sourced

@MaddyRB: lovely starter!

@wheelybarrow: I think the food is the first winner of the evening

@BenAMJackson: Beautiful Rhubarb crumble

@jonathaneisaacs: There is something in the ice cream that is yummy but I just can't place it. Anyone any ideas?

@DanielRidsdale: the lamb is awesome #fact

@SamwiseHampson: The whole team here from @LoughboroughSU has been impressed by the food and everything about the night so far.

Congratulations to everybody who was involved in making this event such a huge success.

BUCS successes for University legends!

The University of Leeds hosted the 2011 annual BUCS Conference from 12th – 15th July.

Over 300 delegates from 70 different institutions across the sporting sector were hosted by colleagues from across Commercial Services in what has been described by BUCS Chairman, Ed Smith, as the "best conference to date".

The conference ended on a high for the University as two of our own were presented with awards at the conference dinner which took place in the Refectory.

Former Assistant Director of Sport, Dr. Sue Jacklin, was recognised for her Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education Sport.

Sue started her career at the University of Leeds student union in 1977 as Assistant Sports Administrator having graduated from the University of Cambridge and the University of Leeds. She then spent the next 34 years working tirelessly to make a difference through sport for the students of Leeds and beyond.

Sue retired from the University this academic year (her contract finally comes to an end in July) as Assistant Director of Sport and she is unusual (but we think also special) in that her career bridged the student union and university sports departments nearly for the entire period of her career and as a consequence epitomises the partnership that is at the heart of BUCS.

Triathlon Scholar, Jonny Brownlee, won the BUCS Sportsman of the Year award



Jonny Brownlee, #2 in the world

in recognition of the incredible season he is having on the world triathlon stage, where he is currently ranked number 2 in the world behind his brother, and Leeds alumnus Alastair Brownlee.

His results this year include:

- **TU World Championships Sydney:** 2nd place
- **ITU World Championships Madrid:** 2nd place
- **French Grand Prix Series:** 3 podium finishes

For more information about Jonny Brownlee please visit our Olympics website to view his profile (<http://goo.gl/1djVt>).

Receptionist of the month award

The Edge has introduced a new receptionist of the month award scheme in order to reward its staff for the excellent service they provide

The award, which started in May, has been created to help to maintain and improve the high customer service standards on reception and to highlight any staff training needs.

The accolade is measured through a points system based on set criteria. Staff are awarded points for making membership

sales, generating leads, minimising errors and scoring highly on both internal and external mystery shops.

There have been big improvements on the reception as a result of this initiative so far!

Congratulations to our current receptionists of the month for June: **Helen Mallory** for full time staff and Helen Tribick for part time staff. Together, both staff members made an impressive 60 membership sales and scored very well in 4 internal mystery shops, helping to provide a first class customer service. Keep up the great work!

MEETinLEEDS pick apple for latest campaign

The Conference Sales & Marketing team have picked something refreshingly different for their latest advertising campaign that has already gotten people talking.

The campaign, under the heading "Refreshingly Different", features strange and unusual fruits, for example: a square apple; or an orange being peeled to show an apple underneath.

Richard Handscombe, Head of Sales & Marketing, explains: *"We were looking for a way to show event organisers that we offer a refreshingly different way of hosting events at a world-class university. The adverts have already featured in a number of conferencing publications and are part of a larger campaign that we will be promoting until the end of the year"*.

The square apple has already been featured in Conference News magazine, Hospitality & Events North and In Any Event magazine and the other fruits will be used to re-enforce the message in the next few months along with emails and social media messages.



The Edge knows what you DIDN'T do last summer

The Edge's latest marketing campaign has proved an incredible success so far in increasing its summer membership.

The Edge are offering 10 days membership to the pool, gym & fitness suite for just £15, an offer that has already brought in an additional 400 members as Sue Pimblett explains:

"We are extremely pleased with the interest shown in the summer membership offer with over 400 people benefitting. The challenge in the weeks ahead will be to convert these people into full long-term members."

WE KNOW WHAT YOU DIDN'T DO LAST SUMMER...

*No excuses this time!
Come join us this summer – just £15 for 10 consecutive days at The Edge**

Speak to a member of the Sales & Marketing team for more information

W: www.leeds.ac.uk/theedge
E: edgemembership@leeds.ac.uk
T: 0113 343 7406

*Access to Fitness Suite, Swimming Pool and Classes.



the
EDGE
FITNESS | SPORT | WELLBEING

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

18th century soldier worries event manager

Delegates gave Event Manager Paul Ellingham a briefly-stilled heart when they attended the 'Eighteenth Century Soldier' conference at LUBS the other week.

They were treated to a demonstration of a British Redcoat going through their rifle drill – something that Paul had to write a risk assessment for (rule no. 1: guns should not be loaded!).

The event went off without a hitch and the delegates had an exciting talking point over dinner in University House. Another great success for our Conference Management service!

In the words of the organiser, Dr Kevin Linch in History:

"Everyone has been very complimentary about the conference and how smooth running it was, all very much down to your team!"



Green Tips

This month's tip is:

Reduce lunch packaging.

Bring meals from home in tupperware containers, or bring empty containers to eat your bought lunch. Bring a thermos to store coffee, whether home made or store bought. Carry some spare cutlery or keep some in the office kitchen.

Find out more about the University's Green Impact: leeds.ac.uk/greenimpact