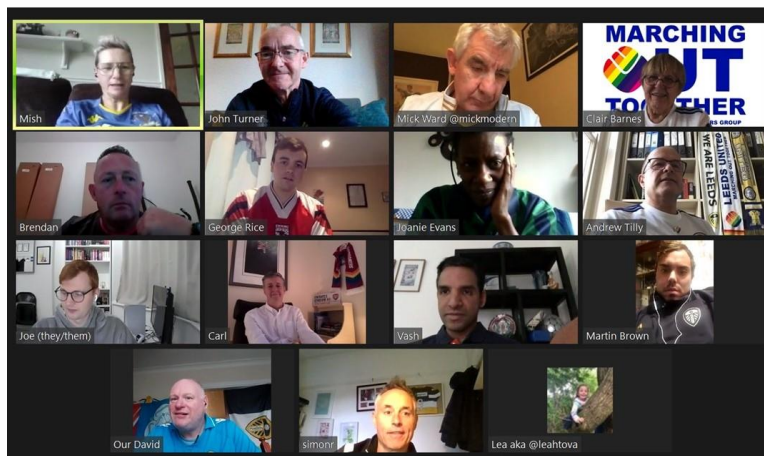




Newsletter – Spring 2021



NEW INSTA @marching_out_together



NEW FB MOT Marching Out Together



@MarchingOutLUFC



www.marchingouttogether.co.uk



marchingouttogether@gmail.com

Welcome, everybody

Wow! The 19/20 season was more of a rollercoaster than ever, but in the end as it emerged from the pandemic suspension, Marcelo Bielsa found the magic formula to cure the playoff collywobbles and we didn't just gain promotion, but did it as Champions and with a ten-point margin.

Never doubted it, did we?



On top of the pandemic in the past year the Leeds Utd family lost Norman Hunter, Trevor

Cherry and Jack Charlton. And on top of all that Calvin Phillips' family have lost Grandma Val, whose laughter and presence will be missed right throughout the club.

We are also very aware that in the wider football family and beyond many people have lost loved ones and had a very hard year with disruption to employment and daily life. We extend our thoughts and very best wishes to all, and will continue to go through it together.

We'd like to apologise for this update being so late. Many of our small team of volunteers were affected by Covid-19 - whether the infection itself, shielding, caring for others, or indirectly through impact on their work in local authorities, caring services and the NHS. Add to that gremlins with our social media and website systems, and we could say we've had a few ups & downs.

This will be the final newsletter in this format as we move to a new website and improved social media, but we have a lot to share.



In the following pages we will talk about **lots** of activity around Rainbow Laces and LGBT History Month, and why that matters.

We have been doing lot with the club, have updates on Leeds Fans' Foodbank and Olivia Sharp of Leeds Utd Women, and of course you... our lovely members x

#MOT

#ALAW

Club Matters

This has been an extremely demanding time for the club, given the disruption both on and off the field caused by Covid, and coming at the same time as all the commercial and operational demands of the Premier League. We are very grateful therefore that the club has remained committed to working with us both under the guide of the Supporters' Advisory Board, and in direct engagement with M-O-T.

We are delighted that the club has signalled its genuine and active commitment to equalities and inclusion by making some key new appointments to the management team, and we particularly extend a welcome to new head of Equality Diversity and Inclusion Helen Evans.

The support the club gave during Rainbow Laces week around our home match with West Ham was outstanding, including Liam Cooper's notes and a whole page in the match programme. And on the night, right on kick-off we were thrilled to receive the email opposite from CEO Angus Kinnear! This genuine and visible support really matters.



The club really committed to LGBT History Month including the executive team having a half-day LGBT awareness session, as well

Because you guys aren't here.....

CEO of Cool Messages



This is an email from Leeds United Football Club Limited (the Club).

as its first-ever training programme for 150 staff across the whole club. At the Academy there were sessions for all age groups (we joined the U18s & U23s) and their families, which will now take place annually.

And we continue to talk to the club about social media issues, training for stewards, signage at ER, and detailed plans for Pride 21.

Stay tuned for more!!!

Rainbow Laces

Last season we were proud to parade on the pitch before the Middlesboro game and this year the pandemic has limited the celebrations but we still made a big contribution.

The club are strongly committed to ensuring that ER is a safe and welcoming place for ALL fans and again took space in the matchday programme to highlight this, as well as supportive comments from Liam Cooper.



HELLO EVERYONE. Tonight we're hoping to get back to winning ways with a victory over West Ham. United Against Arsenal last time at Elland Road, we should have come away with all three points. We dominated the match, were better than we were in the game, but goal. That can be and we shouldn't only draw, but then we were played on the side.

Going to Lincoln. I brought everyone out tonight. Again, we were in the chance, which we almost had. I was glad for the club's the end and we've since been carried along that team. I'm sure it will be a great day for us.

We were disappointed with the 2-1 defeat against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. There is no getting away from the fact Chelsea are a great team and they will be right up there at the top end of the table at the end of the season. They have some world-class players.

Our fixture tonight is dedicated to Stonewall's annual Rainbow Laces campaign and I will be wearing the rainbow armband with pride. Football is a game for everyone and if wearing the Rainbow Laces armband helps even one person, then that is a step in the right direction.

LEEDS UNITED SHOW SUPPORT FOR RAINBOW LACES CAMPAIGN

Tonight's fixture against West Ham is dedicated to Stonewall's annual Rainbow Laces campaign as we show our support for all LGBT+ people in football and beyond.

The Rainbow Laces campaign, which started back in 2013, has been relaunched this year with the chance for supporters to now celebrate specific identities under the LGBT+ umbrella – including lesbian, bi, pan, ace, trans and non-binary flags.

Since Stonewall created the campaign close to one million pairs of laces have been distributed and these new designs show the importance of allyship and creating inclusive communities, with the continuing aim of making sport everyone's game.

Tonight's fixture will feature a Rainbow Laces ball plinth, handshake boards and substitutes boards as

well as images across the LED perimeter boards. There will also be rainbow armbands for the two captains and pin badges to enable everyone to show their support.

For more information and to purchase your own pair of Rainbow Laces, please visit www.stonewall.org.uk/out-work/campaigns/rainbow-laces



A message from our friends at Marching Out Together...

Today we celebrate Stonewall's annual Rainbow Laces campaign again – and in doing so it is important to remember that rainbows and the rainbow flag are distinct. Flying a rainbow flag or wearing rainbow laces is a symbol of inclusion for the LGBT+ community and its allies.

John Turner, a board member from Marching Out Together, explains the significance of Leeds United's visible support: "Having Marching Out Together's flag inside Elland Road is a symbol that everyone can feel safe and welcome at the club, an invitation for anyone who feels vulnerable to talk to us."

Last season members of Marching Out Together proudly provided a guard of honour before the Rainbow Laces game. Sadly this year, with no fans, that won't be possible. But at a time when fans can't be together, Marching Out Together has held pre-match Zoom calls with its members before each game, and have been joined by members of the opposition LGBT+ fan groups.

Drew Harrison adds: "It's been a great way to meet

up with members who can't always get to games, and some who feel isolated during lockdown. The friendly banter with opposition fans has been fun and a chance to share ideas of how to improve inclusion within the sport."

The club continues to work closely with all of us at Marching Out Together, and others, to develop its programme to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the Leeds United family and in its interaction with the local schools and community. Elland Road is a place where everyone is welcome. #ALAVV



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This annual celebration was established by @Stonewall in conjunction with Kick It Out to celebrate LGBT involvement in football and emphasise that homophobia has no place in our game – on the pitch, in grounds,

amongst fans, and to use the power of football to reinforce that across wider society. This year the event followed a BBC documentary about Les Ferdinand's ongoing battle with discrimination, and the appalling reaction of some Millwall fans when their players took the knee on their televised game. The need to highlight equality and inclusion and to tackle discrimination has never been greater.



During Rainbow Laces week we also had members featuring on The Square Ball podcast and BBC Radio Leeds evening programme, talking about why the campaign matters, as well as our group.

Why Rainbow Laces matters...



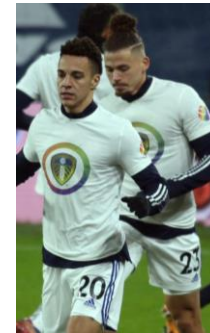
“As a family, we were delighted and extremely proud to be able to join Marching Out Together on the pitch at Elland Road, for the Rainbow Laces campaign last year, to celebrate LGBTQ+ in football and at this club we all love so much.

Sport, and football in particular is such an important part of life for many of us and can be a great distraction in difficult times. So, it is incredibly important that football is inclusive for everyone to play and enjoy. We want our children to grow up in a world where they know they can be themselves and enjoy the things they love, so we are proud to wear our rainbow laces and look forward to the day we can all celebrate on the pitch once again.” *Deb S, MOT Member*

“The truth is that for most of the time the majority of people don’t even think of what it’s like being an LGBTQ+ fan. The visibility of our flag and special events at Elland Road and elsewhere are a real symbol to the LGBTQ+ community that they *are* welcome and safe, and they should be able to be themselves and enjoy the game. ‘Rainbow Laces’ can make people think, spark conversations and lead to better understanding – including our own attitudes - and straight allies like me have a vital role in that.”

John T, MOT Member

This year we were proud to provide rainbow-badged shirts for the players to warm up in, which featured in the Sky TV coverage of our Rainbow Laces match with West Ham.



In February we raffled one of those signed by the squad in aid of **SAGE** (part of Yorkshire Mesmac), a support organisation for older LGBTQ+ people who often face isolation – even more so during the pandemic. This raised over £1,450 which will make a big difference in putting on great activities for their service users. *Thankyou all !*

Sage
Supporting older
LGBT people
in Leeds

**Yorkshire
MESMAC**

In Conversation with Olivia Smart



We are extremely proud to sponsor Olivia Smart of Leeds Utd Women.

Olivia is a great role-model and ambassador for the city and club. She is in her 16th season with LUFC, and is studying to qualify as an advanced practitioner in transplant surgery based at St James's Hospital in Leeds. And she's also a great footballer! In between all of that, Olivia was kind enough to find time for a chat to bring us up to date on her football, work and studies, and the impacts of the pandemic.

Last time we spoke you were pressing Barnsley for top spot although with a gap and then the season was suspended. How do you think it might have played out?

Who knows, hopefully it would have been one of those played out until the death with Leeds the winners !!



You completed your 15th season in disappointing circumstances, but then won the Bobby Collins Award. How did that feel?

It's a privilege to be part of this club - this family - and for them to recognise me off of the pitch is just humbling.

The new season started with a lot of new signings. What impact has that had?

It's been nice - fresh faces and a change in tack is good for everyone and our football style. In terms of my role I am naturally a defender who doesn't defend, ha ha !! I press as a higher wing back.



This season was suspended after 6 games with LUFC sitting 4th. What are your hopes for a restart?

Obviously we're hoping to get back to football and get going again but, sadly there are other priorities now and I think everyone's very understanding of that.

What stage are you now at in your studies, and have you been able to maintain that in the pandemic?

I'm almost finished, the masters is almost complete. I guess I just have to thank my home life, family and friends for being able to carry out the perfect work life balance!



How did CV-19 affect your transplant role: did things continue and under what conditions?

Yes transplant thankfully continued in Leeds. It slowed as most things did but we still managed to keep the programme here open.



We were proud to see you launch the vaccination centre at Elland Rd: what did it mean to you to have those two core parts of your life intersect?

It was nice, sums it up for me. Leeds as a club and a city is home for me and it was just nice to be doing my job at my second home !!

Is it possible for you to sum up your and your colleagues experience & feelings about the pandemic?

I don't think it'll ever be possible to sum up what we have all experienced and the effect it will have on everyone I think for the rest of their careers. I think the nature in which everyone has pulled together is truly a remarkable feat of British culture and people.

Thankyou for your time Olivia, good luck for the end of your studies, and we hope to come and see you play before too long. Keep safe.

Let's meet up before the match...

Does anyone remember Ye Olden Days?

Sometimes we would make a special arrangement. Other times it would be a regular fixed thing: no-one needed to say anything, we just knew we would be there. It would be part of our pre-match ritual: the journey to the ground, parking, walking along with the East Stand getting closer, the burger and programme and 'Square Ball'.



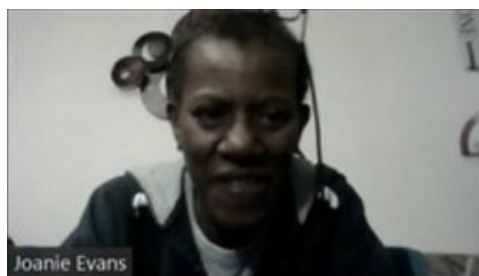
And then the beer and banter, leaving at the exact point to allow for the turnstiles and getting to your seat *just in time*...

(Apart from Thames Valley Whites, obviously... they are still somewhere near Meadowhall.)

Nowadays we have to do it online, little thumbnails of each other and sometimes becoming frozen... statues and... missing bits of said something on mute?

But we still have the beer & banter!

Joanie - I've been a supporter of Leeds since I was a youngster, marvelling at the skills of Billy Bremner, Norman Hunter, Allan Clarke, Eddie Gray. It's been great taking part on the MOT Zoom Chats, and being able to speak to like minded fans has been fantastic. And... it's just a real laugh too!



David Its something that's kept match-days..... match days!

Being a match-day but not getting to watch the boys strut their stuff is really difficult... keeping up with members of Matching Out Together has been the rainbow in a frustrating period.

Meeting like-minded fans from other teams, the ability not only to banter and chat football, but also share experiences and ideas how to take visibility of LGBTQ+ and football to the next level has been enlightening and invigorating.....

Mish - I'm absolutely loving them. It's been a fantastic sense of belonging since I joined MOT, especially living away.

This pandemic has hit everyone hard and chatting about something and nothing with fellow LUFC LGBTQ+ fans and fans from other clubs, has been heartwarming and given me a boost I most definitely needed.



If you want to say something on the chat, you can. If you just want to stay quiet and listen, that's also fine. No judgement, no pressure. Just like minded people, with a few things in common including the wonderful, super, super Leeds United!

...in the Fanzone...?



erm, no... 'Cyber Arms'

- ✓ *Get your email*
- ✓ *Click the link*
- ✓ *Join in or sit & listen, up to you*

Go on... give it a try!



Martin I've found the pre-match chats very beneficial in terms of building my social network, but also making friendships.

More importantly I can be myself which enables me to enjoy having a laugh amongst everyone in the group as well as having banter with other fan groups.



I have thoroughly enjoyed hearing the discussion on topics such as racism, homophobia etc as I feel it's very important to continue raising awareness that this type of language being used in football grounds or in society in general is unacceptable and shouldn't be tolerated.

Leeds Foodbanks

The bad press football fans often get overlooks all the charity and community work they do. Many fans groups have links with their local foodbanks, and Leeds United Supporters Trust is a key partner for the Leeds Foodbanks.

As the season kicked off many fans groups protested against Pay-per-View charges, and by kick-off of our match with Aston Villa £40,000 had been donated, the figure rising to £60,000 in the course of the week – a wonderful effort!



Here's a brief look at the work of our local foodbanks.



Leeds has two foodbanks: one in North & West, the other South & East. Both are part of the Trussell Trust which is the largest foodbank organisation in the country.

Since 2018, the L.U.S.T. donation page has raised **over £100,000**

Clients can self-refer, or are usually referred to the foodbank by other agencies in the city, including schools, churches, police, community hubs and mental health service-providers.

Needing a foodbank is often a sign of other issues and the foodbanks work closely with partners for mental health, domestic violence and debt counselling .

Since last March, Leeds Foodbanks have supported **over 40,000** people, around 40% of those children.

Foodbanks don't provide the weekly shop: it is an emergency top-up for individuals, couples, and families in distress, with three-day food parcels.

The pandemic has meant rising demand at the same time as that operations having to be redesigned with more online referrals, streamlined operations and social distancing measures at the distribution centres.

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/leedsfansfoodbank

Leeds Fans foodbank
Passion for football, compassion for the community
in conjunction with:    

LGBT+ History Month

We closed off a very busy spell with activities for LGBT History Month throughout February... and when we say “busy”

Board members Mark & Mish took part in awareness sessions run by **Football vs Homophobia** for U18s and U23s at the Academy, where the students talked about Robbie Rogers’ story, the importance of language and how to make sure LGBT+ players would feel welcome and safe.



And members really enjoyed a call before the Villa game with the Academy Education & Player Care leaders Katie Slee and Callum Williams talking about their work.

We learned about the ‘typical’ day, and how the Academy works with families and carers - including ‘host’ families for the lads who come from elsewhere in the country.

We also talked about the fact that there must be LGBT players in the leagues, but no-one had come out because of fear of the reception:-

“They would be perfectly fine within the squad, and the Club would be great. It’s only the fans who make it a problem.” Katie Slee

Something there for all of us to think about, and to continue to work for change.

And to sign off the month LUTV invited us to make a podcast with Robbie Rogers, Jermaine Beckford and Bridie Hannon.



Members of our Board had a lot of media attention during LGBT+ History Month including appearances on ‘The Roaring Peacock’ podcast, a video promoted by BBC Sport, an interview with Yorkshire Evening Post and an hour-long special on BBC Leeds.

We are really grateful to all these partners: the appearances are important for awareness of the campaign, but also help us talk about how positively LUFC is working with us.



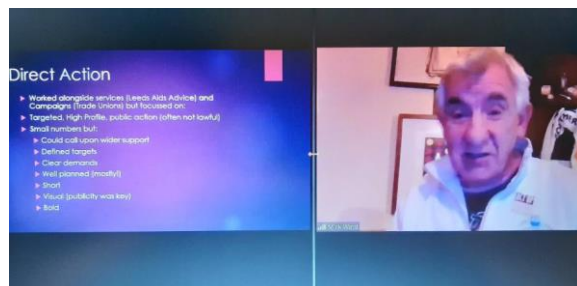
Even more LGBT+ HM !

To close off LGBT+ History Month, our board member Mick Ward (@mickmodern) gave an online talk prompted in part by the popularity of TV series *It's a Sin* about the impact of AIDS in the 1980s, talking about the reality of campaigning on LGBT+ issues then and now.



Mick talked about the context of the mid-80s with shock government awareness campaigns, a setting of prejudice and hostility, and Clause 28 which banned the

presentation of homosexuality as acceptable by schools and local authorities.



In response a number of organisations – including MESMAC who are still operating in Yorkshire – set up advice lines and support services.



The audience also enjoyed hearing about Mick's campaigning with direct-action group 'ACT UP!'

which had a lot of success with high-visibility quick-action impactful demonstrations aimed at prominent figures and sites.



Mick closed with a challenge: “It’s not enough just to think about being an ally: it’s what you DO that counts.”

And finally...

During February board-member Mark Umpleby (@MarkUmpl) managed to complete a project to produce a new badge in time to send them out free and exclusively to members during LGBT+ HM. This was funded by a grant from **Fans for Diversity** (a joint initiative of Football Supporters Association and *Kick It Out*); also big thanks to Erik Winterburn for all his help with the design.

“Visible support - including our flag at the ground - ensures our message of inclusion reaches as many people as possible” says Mark. “Members wearing our badges and scarf at matches or at work and with friends make a very powerful statement.”



From our members' reaction we know you love them... so that's going to be a great statement!