



Welcome to Marching Out Together's September 2018 newsletter

At the time of writing - ahead of the Brentford game, and a quarter of the way into the season, we are still top of the league, which is very exciting. Our flag flying at Elland Road clearly inspires the players!

September's (slightly delayed!) newsletter includes short pieces on:

- Sponsorship of **Katie Thompson** - Leeds United Ladies
- Some great **media coverage** over the last month
- Recent meeting with **Angus Kinnear**, Managing Director
- A great **personal contribution from Casper** living in the USA
- A thank you to **Wayne** who ran the **Great North Run** carrying our flag
- A request for ideas for **Leeds United's centenary season**
- *Calling our younger members!*
- Some **football chat**
- **An appeal** for support from members

1. Marching Out Together sponsors Katie Thompson, Leeds United Ladies



We are delighted and proud to announce the sponsorship of Katie Thompson, a striker for Leeds United Ladies. Katie has recently joined the club, from Hull City. She made her debut for us in June this year, the last game of the 2017/18 season. At Hull City she was part of the Hull City team that gained promotion as champions.

We were able to fund the sponsorship as a result of generous donations from Mick Ward (a member of our board) and Casper ter Kuile, one of our members in the USA. A massive thank you to both Mick and Casper.

We were, of course, delighted that some members of the Leeds United Ladies team joined us on the Leeds Pride march this summer, and we hope to strengthen our connection with the team in the coming months.

Members of Marching Out Together will be following the progress of Katie and her teammates closely this season - and will be watching the team for the first time on [Sunday 21 October](#) (at home to Chorley at 14.00). If you are able to come along, please let us know.

2. Great media coverage over the last month



In order to achieve our aims, making sure people are aware of us and know what we are doing is really important. So we have been delighted to have received some great support and coverage over the course of the last month.



Keith Ingham from **Wealloveleeds** posted this great piece about the support we receive from our straight allies when we faced some abuse on social media:

<http://www.wealloveleeds.co.uk/latest/marching-out-still-proud-still-leeds#>

We hope to be doing more stuff with our new friends at wealloveleeds.co.uk in the future.



Thank you to Pete Martin for this interview on the **Soccer Bible** site: <https://www.soccerbible.com/interviews/2018/08/in-conversation-leeds-united-supporter-andrew-tilly-on-marching-out-together-campaign/>



As always we are truly grateful for the support we receive from the team at **The Square Ball**. If you don't subscribe you really should - if not, at least buy the copy with their latest feature on Marching Out Together:

<https://www.thesquareball.net/shop/paper-subscription-2018-19-part-season/>



The picture above is taken from **Kick It Out's Wall of Football**. And Marching Out Together was highly visible as part of the celebrations marking the 25th year anniversary of the launch of KIO. Lord Ouseley, the founder of Kick It Out, did a recent interview and sadly warned that the eradication of homophobia in football is a long way away...

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/football/2018/08/22/kick-founder-warns-football-will-find-homophobia-harder-tackle/>

3. Our recent meeting with Angus Kinnear, Managing Director of Leeds United



Some of our board members recently met up with Angus Kinnear, the club's managing director, to discuss plans for the group for the next 12 months.

Angus is committed to ensuring that Elland Road is a safe and welcoming ground for all fans, and continues to offer Marching Out Together his personal support, and he will ensure the club help us wherever it is practical to do so.

We discussed three main topics with Angus:



Plans for **Leeds Pride 2019**. We had a fantastic Pride this year and are discussing ways to make it even better next year.



Plans for **Rainbow Laces 2019**. Once again Leeds United will be supporting Stonewall's annual campaign. We are discussing various ideas, and we will be in touch with more details once we know what is possible.



Angus remains committed to Leeds United **adopting a Charter** to help deal with LGBTphobia. We all hope Leeds United will be the first club to adopt the new Charter. The current challenge is getting approval from the EFL and other bodies to endorse the charter.

More details to follow on all these points.

It is great to know that Marching Out Together is formally recognised as one of the key supporter groups at Leeds United, and that we are fortunate to have a progressive Managing Director who endorses what we are trying to achieve.

4. Casper from the USA explains his love for LUFC and Marching Out Together



Last month we requested contributions from our members - telling their personal stories about being LGBT+ Leeds United fans (or simply an ally). Please can other members send in their personal stories - we would love to include a story each newsletter.

Casper, who lives in the USA, kindly wrote this piece. Casper is the fan mentioned above, whose generous donation to the group helped sponsor Katie Thompson:

“I became a Leeds Utd fan for all the wrong reasons. As a thirteen-year-old entering a posh Kent boarding school, insecure about the growing realization that I was gay, I needed to find a football team to support. Surely this would be the marker of social acceptance? If I wasn't good at playing the game, at least I could become an excellent supporter of it.

These were the glory years of 2000-2001, but it wasn't Leeds' Premiership positioning that grabbed my attention. It was the lilting accent of David O'Leary. The Irish accent. The wry smiling tone. I heard him being interviewed and thought – this is the man for me! Whoever he's coaching, I'll support. I started to follow the games, cutting out pictures of the team in action in the Sunday Times, and creating my own photo album. Lee

Bowyer, Harry Kewell, Lucas Radabe, Mark Viduka. Following Leeds became a safe escape from some difficult teenage years.

A few years later, I persuaded my dad to take me to a game. We took the train up to Yorkshire – the first time I'd been to the North – and stayed in a B&B near Elland Road. We played Newcastle and won 3-2. A thrilling game. I remember being terrified of all of the adult men shouting and drinking. I had learned that straight men could be dangerous. Their anger and group-mentality could, at any moment, shift from the joys of the pitch to focus on picking on the gay kid.

When we scored, the guy next to me, stocky and strong, somewhat drunk and shirtless, picked me up and hugged me. Beer everywhere. I had never experienced anything like it. The elation of tens of thousands of people. All the boundaries of decorum falling apart in a moment of ecstasy. The communal singing. Now I could become a Leeds fan for the right reasons.

It's been more than seventeen years since that game, and I've followed Leeds ever since. My husband and I live in the United States now, so I've become a keen listener to any Leeds podcast (especially the Mighty Whites!) and follow threads on twitter. Without any local friends to chat to about the games and Bielsa's golden touch, this will have to do for now.

When Marching Out Together launched, I was thrilled. It is so disappointing to know there's not a single out player in the League. No doubt there are those who are open with their fellow players, but don't trust the reaction of the fans. It is even more distressing to know how many people feel marginalized and a little unsafe at a game. I know because I am one of them! The more of us who can share our story, and the more of us are visibly and confidently out, the safer it becomes for everyone else. This is how social change works.

I am so proud to support MOT as I am proud to support Leeds United. I hope you'll share your story too. Thanks,

Casper “

Please remember – we'd love to hear your stories too! We will print them in a future newsletter

5. Wayne - Marching Out , well Running Out, at the Great North Run



A friend of David Fletcher, one of our board members, made a brilliant gesture of support at the Great North Run a few weeks ago. Wayne - who's not even a Leeds fan - ran the race wearing rainbow laces, the New Armley FC shirt which carries our sponsorship, and carrying our flag throughout.

Brilliant support Wayne.

Thank you from everyone here at Marching Out Together

6. Leeds United's Centenary Season 2019/20



We understand this is a photo of the first Leeds United squad in 1919. Fortunately it's in black and white, so it's not possible to see we are wearing something scarily close to a Huddersfield Town kit!

Next season is the club's centenary season, and the club is planning some exciting events for all supporters. Two of our board members are on the Supporters Advisory Board (SAB) and they've already had some insight into some great ideas put forward by the club - but we are not allowed to

discuss them just yet. 🙌😊

However, the SAB members have been asked to contribute their own ideas. So if you would like to see a particular event or way of marking the centenary season, please let us know and we will pass them on to the club to consider. Thank you.

PLEASE LET US HAVE YOUR IDEAS



7. Calling Our Younger members



We realise that our younger supporters and members are an important part of Marching Out Together, and **you** will have **your** own ideas as to what **you** want to see from the group.

We would welcome more involvement from young supporters, so please get in touch if you have ideas or want to contribute to the group.

IMPORTANT NEWS:

As part of our plans for this year's Rainbow Laces campaign, we are hoping that the team will be led out by a couple of members of Marching Out Together for the game against **Bristol City on 24 November**.

If you are a younger member or you have children who might want to be a mascot for the game, please do get in touch. We are still confirming plans with the club, so nothing is certain just yet, but we are keen to assess interest early on.

8. Some football chat



We are certain that every Leeds United fan has been impressed by the impact Marcelo Bielsa has had on the club in such a short period of time.

It's been exciting to watch some amazing football in certain games so far - the best football seen at Elland Road for many years (well maybe standards dropped against Birmingham City) and of course many of us are dreaming that this could be our year.

We realise of course that we've been here many times before - Leeds were top of the league briefly last year too - but there is a stoic resilience, an unflappable persona with Marcelo, and it's not hard to imagine him calmly seated on his "bin" as the Leeds team proudly celebrate winning the title.

We know it's way way too early to get excited really, but hope is everything in football - and Marcelo has brought that in bucket loads (well maybe bin loads).

Let's enjoy it whilst we can. MOT.

Hopefully we will still be able to sing "We are top of the League!) when we write next month's newsletter.

9. An appeal to our members and supporters



Thanks to everyone for continuing to support and follow us.

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, we want to understand what each of you would like to see the group doing, what being a member might mean, ideas for the newsletter, and personal contributions we can publish. ***Please do get in touch!***

Our **badges and mugs** have sold out and we are ordering new stocks, but please let us know what other merchandise you would like us to produce. Would you like to buy a New Armley FC shirt sponsored by us for example?

It costs money to run the group - and we have been fortunate to receive generous **donations** from members, we raised money at Leeds Pride and the sale of mugs and badges raises funds too. One very generous supporter, Clair (who we were delighted to meet at Elland Road recently) has purchased £200 worth of badges for friends and colleagues!

If you are able to donate a small sum to support the group, please use the link to our webpage, where you can make a donation:

<https://www.marchingouttogether.co.uk/>

Please remember to let us know if you or a member of your family might be interested in leading out the team for the rainbow laces game - and please let us have your ideas for the centenary season. Thank you.

See you next month!



