

YUSU: Porterage cuts 'inevitable'

MATT GRUM

Henry James Foy
EDITOR

YUSU FAILED TO act when the current porterage cuts were first outlined to them this summer, in direct contravention to Union Active Policy.

In email correspondence obtained by *Nouse*, then-President Tom Scott informed the incoming sabbatical team and the current group of JCRC Chairs in June that the cuts were both "inevitable" and "not too bad", and that porters were not welfare providers.

Currently valid Union Active Policy explicitly demands for YUSU and Union Officers to "campaign against any decision which would mean a cut in the number of hours residential lodges are staffed in relation to the staffing of

tering in Derwent and Vanbrugh] may be the most contentious issue, but it's not too bad. Yes, I'd love there to be 24-hour porterage everywhere - but the money simply is not there. DFM doesn't make a profit for shareholders, and isn't trying to wrest more money from students' hands here," Scott continued.

In direct contrast to the public campaign currently being driven by YUSU, Scott stated: "Porters, while much-loved, aren't meant to be a 24-hour welfare point", adding: "I am strongly recommending that you meet with Jane [Grenville] - and perhaps even Keith [Lilley]... rather than immediately jump to war."

At the meeting, Scott was informed that the University had previously planned to close both the Derwent and Vanbrugh lodges forever, before the current plan, which provides for a 12-hour service in those lodges was implemented.

Current YUSU President Tim Ngwena has denied that Scott's comments should be attributed to the Union, or that they undermine the current 'Save the Porters' campaign.

"I can't speak for Tom, but it's not YUSU's view. YUSU's view is different in the sense that - at the time - we were focussing on a different issue and now we know what we want from our porters. YUSU's position has changed," Ngwena said.

"I'm sure Tom Scott would fully support Union Policy and campaign for 24 hour porterage," added YUSU Welfare Officer Ben Humphrys.

Unlike previously successful YUSU campaigns in 2002 and 2007 that forced the University to back down over porterage cuts, this year's action was slow to begin and has been relatively ineffective. Ngwena has denied that this is a



The long and short of it is: cuts are inevitable. To paraphrase Jane Grenville: if they don't cut there, they have to start cutting academic departments. (Part of the reason we've gone so high up the league tables in the past decades is because money's been moved to academia, not to DFM.)

[...]

That may be the most contentious issue, but it's not too bad. Yes, I'd love there to be 24-hour porterage everywhere - but the money simply is *not there*. DFM doesn't make a profit for shareholders, and isn't trying to wrest more money from students' hands here.

Former YUSU President Tom Scott said the proposed cuts weren't "too bad" in a email sent in June

result of YUSU indifference:

"It might seem that it came late but we've been thinking hard about what we want from it. This isn't the only thing going on. I think a lot of pressures have made it difficult to focus, and probably delayed our reaction perhaps more than we should have. I disagree that this

campaign is too late."

"The University's approach has been fragmented which means we haven't found the adequate time to fight against it," Ngwena added.

Despite receiving the email from Scott, JCRC Chairs did not launch any form of campaign until the commencement of this term.

"JCRC Chairs have massive responsibilities in week one and over summer. Freshers' Week has been prioritised and that shows the importance of colleges to first years," Humphrys said.

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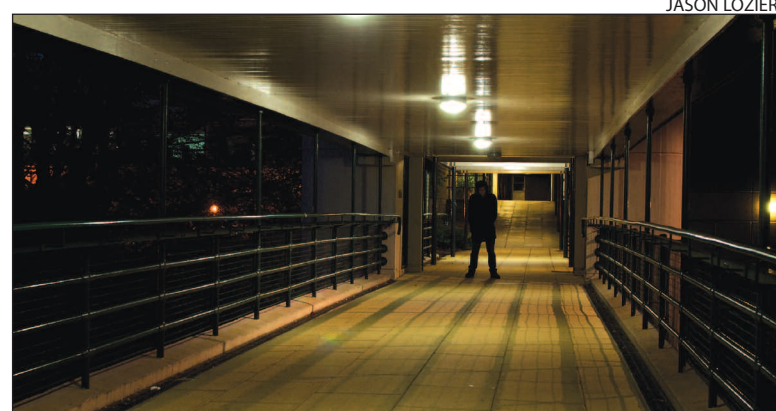
Student attacked by gang after leaving campus event

Sam Lawson
NEWS REPORTER

AN ALCUIN FIRST-year student was assaulted by four fellow students whilst heading home after the campus event, Rave D.

The attack took place at the Alcuin end of Derwent Bridge, following an interrogation by the four assailants regarding the victim's college, accent and background outside Derwent Bar just minutes before.

The victim, who wishes to remain unnamed, was pushed to the floor where four male students proceeded to stamp on his face and kick him in the back and arms. The attackers were then pulled off by another student. They then fled the scene shouting expletives at the victim. Describing his reaction, he stated: "I was just so surprised it



JASON LOZIER

The student was attacked by four others on the Derwent bridge

was happening. I was in no state to make any connection as to why it was occurring. I just froze up." One housemate of the target described him as returning "dazed and distressed."

The injured party, who sus-

tained a black eye and heavy bruising, was unable to identify the aggressors. The student who broke up the scuffle, having failed in calming the victim down, refused to give any more detail.

This incident comes after last

year's spate of attacks during welcome week and the subsequent effort to up security on campus.

When later questioned the victim elaborated, "You are often warned to be careful and have your wits about you when in town and when dealing with locals, but the campus should be the one place where you are able to be a little less on your guard. This was not the sort of thing I expected to happen at the York Uni of all places."

YUSU's Welfare Officer, Ben Humphrys, in response to the issue of safety on campus, said, "Relative to other Universities both York campus and town are safe for students. This incident highlights, however, the fact that anyone walking by themselves at night time is vulnerable to violent crime and the need for students to be conscious of their safety on and off campus."

University Press Officer James Reed commented: "Our security team has not been made aware of this incident. The University campus is a safe place but when incidents do occur it is important they are reported so the appropriate measures can be taken."

The University went on to comment that "campus security is continually under review. The security team will be expanded by an additional three members of staff this year and a further three members of staff will be employed in 2010-11. Six security staff will be on campus during the night in addition to the 24 hours porters services. This makes a total of 12 members of security and porterage staff monitoring the campus at night-time."

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