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ISSUE 5

THE LOOKOUT

THE STUDENT WATCH MAGAZINE

**STAYING FRESH:
HOW TO FOCUS
ON YOUR WELLBEING
AT UNIVERSITY**

**A STUDENT'S
GUIDE TO SAFE
SOLO TRAVEL**

**NIGHT OUT SOS:
A STUDENT'S
FIRST AID KIT**

**IF THEY CAN'T
HEAR YOU,
MAKE THEM!**



Welcome to The Lookout.

For three years now, Neighbourhood Watch have teamed up with young people to produce The Lookout, a magazine written for students, by students. We provide the platform, but you provide the voice.

Since the first edition of The Lookout in September 2021, students have penned pieces on everything from surviving exams to surviving a night out; from making your money last to keeping your things safe. They're informative, but creative, and have proved pretty popular.

And if you want to make a difference, you can do that through **Neighbourhood Watch's Youth Council**. The Council will comprise a diverse group of students and young people, there to share ideas for improving safety on and off campus, as well as feedback on how that is implemented. It's an empowering way to create a happier, more secure environment for yourself and your fellow students. You can put yourself forward for the Youth Council **here**.

Finally, a huge THANK YOU to all our crowdfunder backers who made this issue possible. We dedicate this issue to all 737 of you, whether you donated £5 or £5,000, or entered our festival ticket prize draw.

In this issue of The Lookout, we have a quality quartet of articles on mental wellbeing, First Aid on a night out, solo travel, and how to make your political voice heard.

If you'd like to be involved in the next edition of The Lookout, contact **hello@hypecollective.co.uk**.

Enjoy.

Huw Davies, Editor

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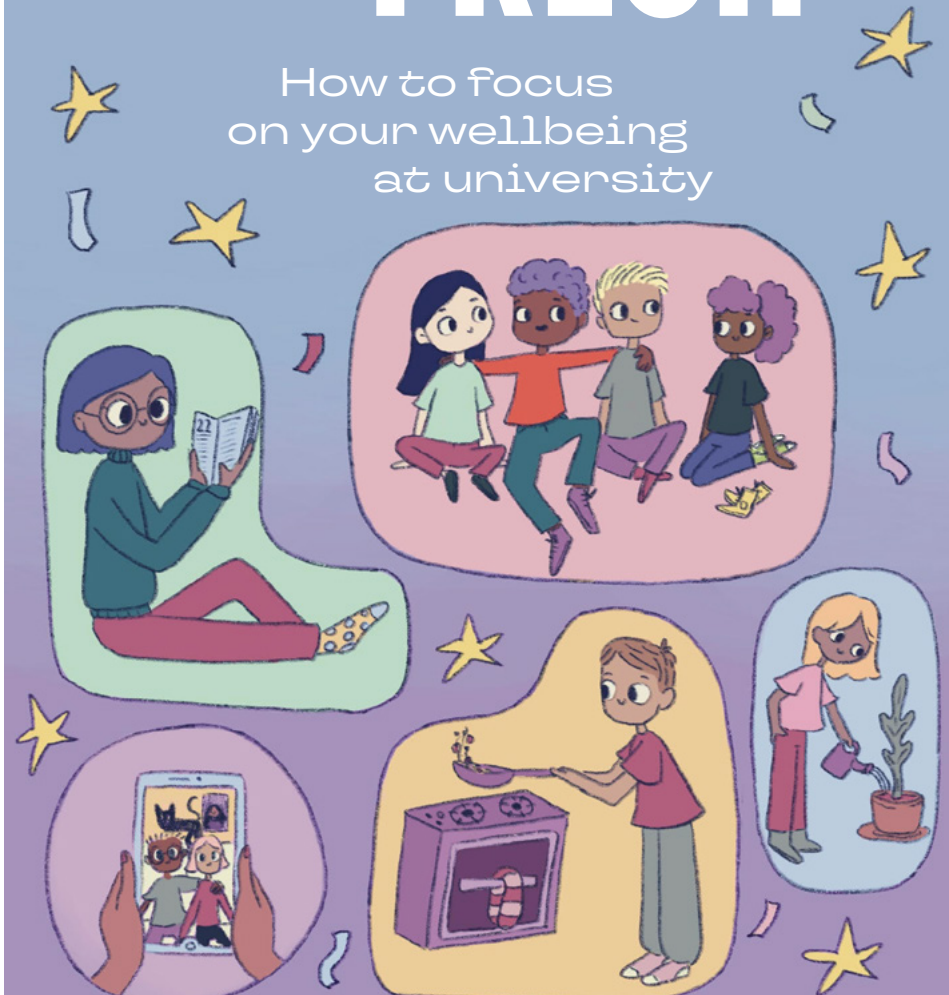
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**IF THEY CAN'T HEAR YOU,
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STAYING FRESH

How to focus
on your wellbeing
at university



**Alice Lambert, University of Leeds,
French and Spanish BA**

Your first year at university is a brilliant experience – but the opening few weeks can be challenging. As you navigate this new chapter, don't forget to keep in touch with your mental and physical wellbeing. These tips should help.

Find a society

Whether you want to meet like-minded people or branch out and try something new, university societies provide a great opportunity to do either. There are dozens, even hundreds, of groups you might fancy: everything from sports and music, to crafts and simple shared interests in TV and film. And don't be worried by out-of-date reputations from American college movies: most societies aren't primarily about partying, and plenty are alcohol-free.

Try local activities

Tempting as it can be, don't confine yourself to campus. You may be living in a whole new area, not just a different building. Local sports leagues, gyms, and park runs can help your mental as well as physical health, or you might want to extend your network through volunteering opportunities in the community – it all helps to give you an extra sense of purpose, as well as more chances to meet people.

Meal plan

It sounds so simple, yet so few of us do it. Planning your weekly food shops and dinners can help your budget and your wellbeing. It allows you to focus on studying and socialising. And it doesn't mean you can't treat yourself... just maybe not every evening.

Tempting as it may be,
don't confine yourself
to campus



Illustrations: **Rachel Horton, Birmingham City University**

Dive into podcasts

Stressed? Apps such as Headspace or Calm offer guided meditations, allowing you time to relax and reconnect with yourself. Or, you could listen to a podcast during your walk to lectures/seminars/the lab/the pub. Sometimes you need to disconnect from the outside world for a bit, and there are so many genres and formats available.

Keep a journal

No, we aren't talking about those cringeworthy pre-teen diaries full of drama, although it can still help to write down your feelings at times. A journal is a way to organise your thoughts at a time when it's easy to feel overloaded, because starting university means contending with so many different new things. So. Many. Things. Plan your week or just release stressful thoughts onto paper or screen – you'll be surprised how much it can help.

Everything
feels easier
on a
good
night's
sleep!



Use university support services

Don't be afraid to speak to your lecturers about any concerns, academic or personal. But if you feel it would be useful to talk to a professional, then investigate your university's counselling and wellbeing services.

Stay in touch

Meeting new people is great and all, but there's nothing quite like reaching out to old friends and family when you're feeling lonely. One quick FaceTime can do you the world of good.

Have a night in

You should never feel peer-pressured into going out if you're feeling tired or overwhelmed. Give yourself time to relax. Everything feels easier on a good night's sleep!

Talk it out

Lastly, don't feel afraid to open up to new friends about challenges you experience at the beginning of university. Often, they'll feel the same way. Together, you can navigate and support each other through your new start as a fresher.



*A student's
guide to safe*

SOLO TRAVEL

SO YOU WANT TO TAKE A TRIP ON YOUR OWN? GREAT IDEA.

BUT FIRST KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

**Bridget Eke, University of Leeds,
Aeronautical and Aerospace
Engineering MEng**

Whether it's a long-term break or just a quick weekend getaway, there are ways to maximise your fun and minimise the risk. We've gathered some advice and spoken to students who've travelled solo, to give you the lowdown on going it alone.

Accommodation

Strike a balance between submerging yourself in the customs of a place and ensuring your own personal safety, which has to be your priority as a solo traveller.

How do you decide where to stay in another country?

Leah, 23: "I'll always opt for an AirBnB. I find security in knowing the correct channels to reach out through if I have any issues. Landlords have been very welcoming and provide great recommendations. And I like staying in a home away from home."

Asif, 20: "Cost is usually my number one decision-making factor. If I want to stay in multiple cities, I'll pick a hostel to save money, and to meet other solo travellers as well."



Maximise your fun
& minimise the risk

Solo travelling can be a lifechanging experience, but it's important to stay alert.



Getting around

Google Maps is a dream tool in any location, of course. Prior research can be vital, though, because some cities will have their own version of Citymapper that'll help you to plan a route before you arrive.

The right app will allow you to compare modes of transport along with prices, so you can jump on a Metro, pre-book an airport transfer, or safely book a car ride in advance.

It's also useful preparation to look at forums for advice, from travellers as well as locals.

Safety

Solo travelling can be a life-changing experience, but it's important to stay alert. Keep some safety practices in mind and you can avoid serious problems on your adventures.

What is your top safety tip for travelling solo?

Leah, 23: Definitely to secure your valuables. In busy cities, keep an eye out for pickpockets. I like to keep my passport with me when I'm out and about, and if I do stay in hotels, I'll use the safe.

Hannah, 24: Always share your location and travel plans with a trusted friend or family member. I love the iPhone app, Find My iPhone, where you text someone your number and it means they can track it.

Activities

You don't need to be a Type A planner to prepare – the freest of free spirits can find the perfect activity in advance with just a little bit of planning. It gives you that buzz of anticipation, too.

What's the most memorable activity or excursion you've undertaken alone?

Asif, 20: "Quad biking in Croatia is up there, for sure. I get why people call me a thrill-seeker, because I'm always trying to top my previous experiences."

Leah, 23: "I love immersing myself in a city's culture from a local's perspective. In Portugal, I went on my first walking tour, which are usually free or 'pay as you feel'. I learnt so much from the local tour guide, while also feeling safe walking in a group."

Personal care

This is one of the more 'adult' aspects of travelling – a bit of a pain, in other words – but it's important. I'll always speak to my GP a few weeks before a trip, to check if I need any vaccinations for my destinations. The **NHS: Fit For Travel website** is incredibly useful, with lots of advice.

Also, when travelling alone, I always feel better for having that extra blanket of security: travel insurance.

In the end, having peace of mind makes the trip that much more rewarding.

NIGHT OUT SOS

A STUDENT'S
FIRST AID KIT



Illustrations: Scarlett Lee Carlton, University for the Creative Arts



**Maira Rana, University of St Andrews,
Medicine MBChB**

As summer fades, we're all scrambling to organise ourselves before heading to university, whatever year we're in. You may have already planned exactly which bars and clubs to visit after settling in – if so, nice work – but there's something else important, too: having some basic first aid knowledge under your belt for a night out. It's worth it.

So: from a med student, here's what to do if...

...a friend cuts or grazes their hand:

It's easily done. Thankfully, it's easily treated, too. First, stop the bleeding by applying pressure with something clean, dry and absorbent. A bandage or non-fluffy towel should do it. Next, wash your hands thoroughly and pat them dry before cleaning the wound using sterile wipes, bottled water or, if you can get it, cooled boiled water. After that, clean the skin around the wound using soap and water, then pat the area dry with a clean tea towel and stick a plaster on it. The wound, not the tea towel.

...a friend slips or trips and falls:

You're in a busy place, a few drinks in, and the lighting's low: falling over is a strong possibility. If it happens to someone you know, take a minute or so to help them check for injuries. Ask if they're OK and confirm they can understand their surroundings. Then help them to get up, by gently instructing them to roll safely onto their hands and knees before using a stable piece of furniture to hold onto, with both hands, in order to support themselves.

However, if you find that your friend suddenly becomes confused after falling and shows symptoms such as feeling disoriented, struggling to pay attention, or not being able to think or speak clearly and quickly – or even hallucinating – then try to ask them a couple of questions: their name, their age, and today's date. If they seem unsure or can't answer, they'll most likely need medical help, because many causes of sudden confusion, including head injury, need to be assessed

and treated as soon as possible. While you wait, stay with your friend, tell them who you are and where you are, and keep reassuring them. Make sure you use simple words and avoid continually asking them lots of questions.

...a friend is experiencing dehydration or heat exhaustion:

Alcohol + dancing + packed nightclub crowds = dehydration (naturally) and potentially heat exhaustion (wait, really?). Yes, even in the UK. Some symptoms of heat exhaustion: headaches; excessive sweating; clammy and pale skin; leg, arm and stomach cramps; fast breathing; a high temperature; extreme thirst and weakness. Fortunately, heat exhaustion doesn't require emergency medical assistance if you can help your friend to cool down within half an hour and prevent them from developing heatstroke. Move them to a cool place, help them to remove excess clothing, such as jackets or socks, and give them a cool sports drink, rehydration drink, or water. You can also cool them down further by fanning them and either sponging or spraying them with cold water. Best ask first.

...a friend has drunk too much alcohol:

Resist the temptation to draw on them, and first check for symptoms of alcohol poisoning, which can range from slurring, being sick and having pale or blue-tinged skin, to slow or irregular breathing, suffering a fit or passing out. Stay with your friend. If they've lost consciousness, put them in the recovery position and check they're breathing properly; if they're awake, help them to sit up.

Keep them warm with a jacket and provide water to sip, not slug, but don't give them caffeine or more alcohol, because it can lead to further dehydration. The NHS also advises going to the hospital to be monitored, as alcohol poisoning can have serious complications.

...a friend has been spiked:

It's so important to recognise the signs of spiking. They can include dizziness, difficulty walking, hallucinations, visual problems, paranoia and amnesia. It's also vital to alert security staff so they can help you to arrange the appropriate medical care, such as going to A&E or visiting a walk-in centre, depending on your friend's health. But don't leave your friend alone while doing this. And keep talking to them, to ensure they stay awake.



Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity
registered in England & Wales, CIO no: 1173349.



Put yourself
forward for our
**YOUTH
COUNCIL**

Do you want to
lead the conversation
around safety, community
cohesion and wellbeing?

Do you want to help lead the
strategy for a national charity
engaging with the Home Office,
policing and local government?

Our Youth Council empowers students and young people to support each other and share ideas for creating safer, happier and more inclusive spaces both on and off campus.

**STUDENT
WATCH**



To find out more contact youngpeople@ourwatch.org.uk

Help set the agenda for all things student safety,
community and wellbeing.

APPLY HERE!

If they can't hear you, make them!

**YOUNG ADULTS AGED 16-24 ARE DISADVANTAGED - BUT DISENGAGED.
HOW CAN WE OVERCOME POLITICAL LETHARGY?
IT STARTS WITH LOCALISED ACTION.**

Without positive activism, young voters will be followers, not leaders

Young people are the future leaders of our communities. At least, they should be. In reality, they're politically marginalised, and will continue to have little – if any – say on the direction of British politics unless they acquire a clear understanding of how decisions are made, locally and nationally. Without positive activism, young voters will be followers, not leaders; accepting change, not making it.

So, how do we equip them with the tools needed to translate their passions into political participation? Education – but not the kind you're thinking.

Today's generation faces more social, financial, and environmental issues than any generation before it. A soaring cost of living, lack of employment opportunities, impending climate disaster... and yet students remain, in the main, politically disengaged. To even begin fixing those

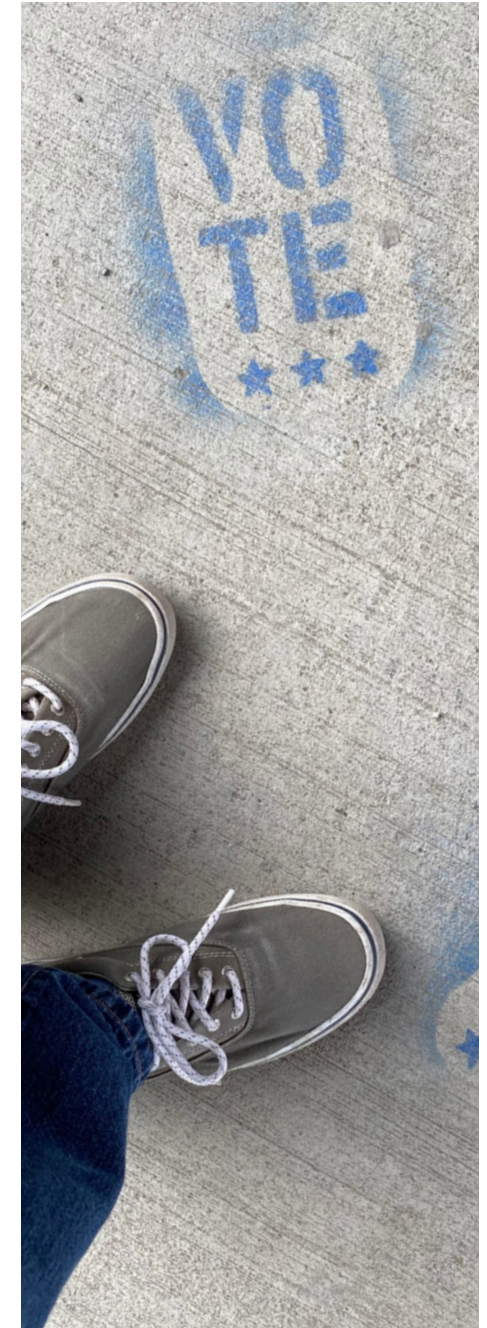
obstacles, young people need the skills and knowledge required to participate in the democratic processes that change political discourse. That means providing them with civics education, giving them opportunities to be involved in their communities, and breaking down voting barriers.

Political apathy comes from educational gaps – not in long division and spelling, but in political literacy, which is the pillar of a healthy democracy. A recent **APPG (All-Party Parliamentary Group) report** showed that fewer than a third of secondary schools taught citizenship education or politics. How, then, can marginalised groups in the student body understand what is needed to prompt political engagement?

Ultimately, this can breed dissatisfaction and mistrust: **a 2021 report** showed

that trust in the Government fell from 39% in 1987 to 15% in 2019. Throw in the growth of unreliable news in a fractious digital society, and young adults become detached from the decision-making process. Turnout in general elections remains low.

Neighbourhood Watch conducted nationwide research over an 18-month period, surveying 2,565 people aged 16 to 24, to understand – and look for solutions to – the lack of participation in local communities. It found that 41% of young people would like to take action to remedy local concerns. More than two-thirds shared anxiety over the increase in crime, including mugging and drink-spiking, and wanted to address the situation. But 47% of respondents said they were unsure where to even start.



Eva Petrova, University of Aberdeen,
MA International Relations and Legal Studies

Encouraging engagement is an effective step in forming political awareness. It's crucial to raise issues, small or significant, regional or national. We can start with community actions. Participating in a local campaign, or even just helping to clean the neighbourhood park, can inspire young voters to start thinking bigger and bolder. Taking part in co-led, co-developed projects empowers participants from all backgrounds. Confidence breeds confidence. As one respondent claimed, "Taking an active part in community activities gives us young people a better understanding of the reality of the community".

Working alongside each other, young adults will be inspired to break down barriers to casting their vote. Only after urging young adults to take part in their local communities can we begin to tackle socio-economic disparities.

It's our collective duty to lift young people towards progress in society. We can help them to be future leaders.

You can help to set the agenda for student safety, community and wellbeing by putting yourself forward for the Youth Council [here](#).

Encouraging engagement
is an effective step in
forming political awareness



HAVE YOUR SAY!

The Lookout magazine showcases incredible stories by students.

We greatly value your feedback and suggestions as they help guide and inspire future editions of The Lookout. Prioritising student perspectives on topics such as student safety, community and wellbeing, we invite and encourage you to have your say...

Share your feedback on The Lookout September 2023

We would love to hear your feedback on The Lookout. Let us know what we can do to improve this magazine, and if you'd like to be a part of our next edition!



Join our Youth Council!

Learn more about our Youth Council and register to join here!

Stand up to street harassment

You can make a difference in standing against street harassment.

Visit our website for advice on spotting harassment, tips on how to safely intervene, and more.



Cybercrime advice with Cyberhood Watch

Cybercrime can affect anyone, but there are several easy steps to take to stay safe online and help protect others. Read more here!

