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# COMMUNITY

# VALUE

**ECONOMIC**

**VALUE**



# Economic Value

Longstanding commitment to communities



Not only are tenants affected but it is also evident **that the actions and behaviour of irresponsible private sector landlords** can often be critical to the broader **socio-economic and environmental wellbeing** of some neighbourhoods.

*- Davies and Turley, 2014*



WE ARE THE **BIGGEST**  
**PBSA** IN THE UK



WITH AN OPERATING MODEL THAT  
INCLUDES **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**



WE SUPPORT **SOCIAL INTEGRATION**  
AND **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**



It is against the law to  
smoke on the premises

# Economic Value

Longstanding commitment to communities

At Unite Students our employees, many of whom reside within the area they work, feel a strong **sense of community** as they identify with the locality of their workplace and are connected to it through home and work life.



# Economic Value

Longstanding commitment to communities

In our **Brunel House property, Bristol**, we have regenerated the historic Horse Bazaar, a statue dating back to 1873, which signifies the area's importance in connecting London travellers with their New York destination by horse and carriage.

The statue and open space can be accessed by the general public during the day.



# Economic Value

Longstanding commitment to communities

Another property that has benefitted from renovation is **St Vincent's, Sheffield**. The property incorporates a 19th century chapel which, after being left derelict for over 20 years, was restored as part of the development in 2016.

The church has now been completely restored with the design of this historically significant building balancing old with new, aiming to preserve and enhance the original features.



# Economic Value

Longstanding commitment to communities

An example of a community engagement plan and how this successfully integrated Unite Students with local residents is our **Parade Green property in Oxford.**

The property, on opening, experienced some negative feedback from local residents and Unite Students deemed that a community engagement plan was necessary to ensure that community needs were met whilst students were supported to integrate.

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 1](#)



# Economic Value

Longstanding commitment to communities

The support we provide communities is also reflected in our local partnership with the South Wales Police. Our Cardiff team have sponsored the **Student Safety Bus** and Volunteer project since 2018 assisting vulnerable people across the community to get home safely.

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 2](#)





# Economic Value

## Student Footfall & Expenditure

We enrich areas with a variety of services and choice as well as creating more employability opportunities.



£80BN UK  
OUTPUT



OVER 830,000  
UK JOBS



109,000 JOBS  
IN SCOTLAND



35,000 JOBS  
IN WALES



THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYED PEOPLE  
SUPPORTED BY STUDENT SPENDING  
IS **MORE THAN THE TOTAL**  
POPULATION OF LIVERPOOL



IN SCOTLAND  
**4 OUT OF 100**  
**PEOPLE**  
ARE EMPLOYED  
BECAUSE OF  
STUDENT  
SPENDING

# Economic Value

Responsible Employer



are an accredited Real Living Wage Employer and hold the prestigious **Investors in People Gold Standard accreditation.**

## SOME OF THE BENEFITS WE PROVIDE INCLUDE:



A generous holiday allowance



Annual work bonus



Shared parental leave



Flexible working

We directly employ almost **2000 people** across the UK

We work with **1800 suppliers and contractors**

We have connected with **1625 Independent People**



# Economic Value

Responsible Employer

US

UNITE  
STUDENTS

strategically partners with organisations like **Into University** and **BITC** to offer employees volunteering opportunities that add value to our employees and the communities we operate within.

One example is **Business in Focus** where employees participate in employability focused workshops that develop skills such as **teamwork**, communication and **leadership** in young people. Hoping to raise aspirations and widen participation in Higher Education.





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# COMMUNITY

# VALUE

uS

UNITE  
STUDENTS

**SOCIAL**

**VALUE**



# Social Value

## Community Projects

A pillar of Unite's responsible business commitments is to support the communities that it operates in. This commitment sees great levels of engagement with communities across the UK and allows us to have a true positive impact on our local residents and wider community.

Across the UK we have established '**community spaces**' within our properties that support various charities and not for profit organisations that provide a service to the locality.





# Social Value

## Community Projects

We offer tenancy for peppercorn rent and agree to fit out the community space to suit the need of the tenant.

A great example of this is our **Maha Devi project** in our Stapleton House property, London. uS wanted to maximise the impact of the planning stipulation Regulation 106 that we must provide a community space to serve the local area and petitioned the local council to allow them to create a tender process for the tenancy.

The tender was awarded by a committee derived of key stakeholders within the area including students and local community councilors.

As a result of this tender Maha Devi, a yoga therapy charity providing heavily subsidised therapy to children and adults with special needs, have seen a **52% increase on the number of sessions delivered** last year and the **number of users increasing by 30%** on last year

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 3](#)

# Social Value

## Community Projects

In our home city of Bristol we have created an opportunity for **Streetwise**, a multi-agency project that deals with street-based Anti-Social Behaviour to extend their outreach.

We have fitted out an office and meeting space in our Chantry Court property to provide them with their first home. We have also funded an additional full time **'Street Beat'** worker.

The opening of these premises means that we now support three charities through the provision of free or heavily discounted commercial spaces across the UK. We are also currently looking for a fourth charity to take on a space which will soon be available in Edinburgh where we plan to run a strategic tender process to ensure we can maximise the impact for the community.



# Social Value

## Community Projects

Our community engagement doesn't begin once our buildings are established but we ensure that **consultation and engagement** with communities begins in the pre-development stage. This helps us to establish a **relationship with the community**, and allows us to better understand needs, concerns and most importantly take on feedback that we can apply to our planning proposals.

A great example of this is a new development proposal, **Abbey Lane, in Edinburgh** where a community engagement plan has been submitted as part of the planning process. This plan outlines the detailed changes and responses we have made as result of community feedback throughout the consultation period. Not only will this property host a community space but as a direct result of community feedback the plans now include increased pavement width and public realm improvements to allow pedestrian visibility from cars.



# Social Value

## Community Projects

We are looking to continue the inclusion of community spaces in future development opportunities and already have plans for this in an upcoming **Nottingham build, Derby Road**, as well as our future **Middlesex Street, London**, property to be built for 2021 / 2022.

Our Middlesex Street property will not only house a community space but will also include public realm improvements alongside new theatre and exhibition spaces as acknowledgment of its historical significance as a theatre.

This historical preservation will also be mirrored in our 2022/23 **Bristol Royal Infirmary** property with the renovation of the 19th century hospital.



# Social Value

## Community Projects

To help us drive and embed our responsible **business objectives** we partner with the NUS and have done for a number of years. We are the only PBSA operating the award-winning Green Impact programme which we refer to as Positive Impact in our properties. This is an engagement model that encourages **positive social, sustainable and environmental behaviours**. In recent years we have developed this programme further with the support of the NUS to incorporate and promote our work with local communities.



In our first year of the community project roll out we had **15 cities engaged** and working towards positive impacts for communities.



# Social Value

## Community Projects

An example of where this has been implemented successfully is at our **Selly Oak site in Birmingham** where the team have partnered with the Canals Trust and University Of Birmingham to clean up the canal and surrounding area providing a **safer, cleaner and more engaging environment** for local residents and students alike. Since opening in 2019, we have invested **over £21k** into the local area and community.



In our first year of the community project roll out we had **15 cities engaged** and working towards positive impacts for communities.

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 5](#)



# Social Value

Charitable Donations



Since 2017 the total charitable donations made by uS are just over

**£3.6 MILLION**

Inclusive of:



VOLUNTEERING



DONATIONS



FUNDRAISING

An average of just over **£125,000**

FOR EACH CITY THAT WE OPERATE IN



# Social Value

## Charitable Donations

We **partnered with the British Heart Foundation**. For the last four years we have operated a donation programme in that sees students donate unwanted items to the BHF which are then sold in local charity shops with the money raised from the sale funding life saving research. **Over £1 million** has been raised through this partnership to date.

As the only PBSA providing the NUS Green (Positive) Impact programme we attract customers to our properties that are **responsibly minded, wanting to give back to communities and support charitable giving**. We even offer students volunteering opportunities to encourage their involvement further, with **almost 500 students** volunteering directly through our Positive Impact campaign.





# Social Value

## Supporting Young People

We are **committed to supporting young people** and focus much of our community and charitable work to supporting this demographic. A charity **partnership with Into University** was established in 2017 to support their mission of widening participation rates of young people from more socially deprived backgrounds.

OVER A THREE-YEAR PERIOD

US WERE ABLE TO SUPPORT INTO UNIVERSITY FINANCIALLY  
**WITH A GRANT OF £240,000**

and with employee volunteering focusing on building employability skills within young people but also in the provision of educational workshops.

# Social Value

## Supporting Young People

**Leapskills** was developed in 2017 as an **educational workshop** to support young people transitioning from the home to independent living, with a focus on university accommodation. The resource is free and available to all schools, colleges and any other organisation working with young people aged 17-18. Leapskills was developed as a result of **insight and research** that highlighted how unprepared young people were to live independently for the first time. To date the workshop has been delivered to **nearly 3000 young people across the UK** securing an endorsement from the Department of Education and extremely positive feedback from users.

80% OF USERS REPORT BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF:



LIFE IN SHARED  
ACCOMMODATION



HOW TO OVERCOME  
CHALLENGES





# Social Value

## Volunteering

In the UK it is estimated that **30% of students volunteer** throughout their academic year. This contributes to a monetary value of **£160m each year**.

WE KNOW THAT IN MANCHESTER ALONE

one volunteering programme, **Manchester Leadership**, contributed **£266,611** into the local economy in just 1 year.\*

Every employee is entitled to one full day every year to volunteer, contributing **£24,000 into the UK economy**. These volunteering opportunities have included a range of activities from litter picks to canal clean ups, park tidies right through to DIY renovations as well as many more in between. But it is not just the monetary value that makes a difference to local communities; a standout example of employee volunteering is the **STEPS project in Loughborough**.

\*Source: The University of Manchester Student Volunteering and Community Engagement Team

# Social Value

## Volunteering

Another similar DIY renovation also took place in Bristol this time benefitting **RE:Work**, a social enterprise engaging young people in vocational training.

The project was managed by our Estates team who called in many of their contractors to support this initiative which oversaw a complete renovation of the office space, charity shop, canteen, storage area and external space with total spend equating to **around £100,000**.



# Social Value

## Volunteering

A team of Unite Students employees gave a **DIY SOS-style makeover** to the premises of a specialist nursery helping children with motor disorders and their families to live fuller and more active lives. The team, of over 40 volunteers, spent a day completing some much-needed refurbishment work for the charity, and managed to secure over **£50,000 worth** of equipment and resources donated by generous business partners and contractors to assist with the work.

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 6](#)





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# COMMUNITY

# VALUE

**US**

UNITE  
STUDENTS

**ENVIRONMENTAL**

**VALUE**





US

UNITE  
STUDENTS

Rubbish dumping and tipping caused by students is a huge concern and issue for local residents especially around check out times. At Unite Students we take steps to ensure that this is minimised and that waste disposal is handled efficiently and ethically.

# Environmental Value

Making a positive environmental footprint

As the largest and most experienced PBSA we understand **students and the communities we operate in** and as a result we have developed operationally excellent practices which help us **prioritise the wellbeing** of both our students and the communities we operate in. This includes behavior management contracts, community engagement leads and community projects.

As we own the buildings we operate we have the flexibility to invest in and make decisions which ensure we deliver on our brand promises with a focus on safety and security.



# Environmental Value

Making a positive environmental footprint

As the only PBSA to hold the **5- star rating by the British Safety Council** we know we operate safe and secure buildings. In May 2018 we bought Liberty Court Annexe. The site had little or no adequate fire stopping and the fire alarm system needed a full upgrade with most of the flat and bedroom doors having failed fire inspections.

Our Leicester team got to work and completed a refurbishment and updated safety systems to ensure that we deliver market leading standards of safety to all properties within our portfolio. This is an example of how we are working actively to make buildings safer and more secure.



# Environmental Value

Making a positive environmental footprint

Our properties are not only safe from a material point of view but we also **provide security patrols** to ensure the safety of our students, employees and local residents by deterring anti social behaviours and excessive noise pollution which not only effects our premises but also the surrounding area.

An example of this lies in Durham where our **high engagement levels and strong presence** in the community enabled us to act on feedback to increase security around the property. This has in turn reduced local noise complaints in the surrounding area.

This has led to us receiving an **official thank you from the local Parish Council**, with our area being the only student populated area in Durham that is not causing noise complaints.





We have used  
**100%**  
**RENEWABLE**  
**ENERGY**  
in all properties\*  
since 2017

# Environmental Value

Making a positive environmental footprint

As responsible buildings and procurement chains are a very important aspect of how we do business we purchase a large portion of our electricity directly from a specific wind farm in Scotland under a corporate power purchase agreement (PPA), meaning there is a **direct link between our sites and the source of generation.**

We were one of the first **125 global companies** to commit to developing and implementing science-based carbon targets and have **invested over £20m in energy efficient LED lighting** and controls, and in 2018 began an **£11m energy efficiency programme** including solar PV, air source heat pump installations, and smart networked heating controls, as the first phase of a planned 5 year energy efficiency programme. From 2018 onwards all our new buildings are built to BREEAM Excellent standards, playing their part in improving our environmental performance.

\*NOTE: this excludes ASV sites where contractually we have to purchase our electricity direct from Aston University who do not offer us REGO backed power



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# COMMUNITY

# VALUE



**COVID-19**

**RESPONSE**



# COVID-19

## Response

Our response to Covid-19 has **responsible business practice** as a key driver and this has been evident in the support provided for customers, employees and our commercial tenants.

To support the wellbeing of our customers we took the decision to release our students from their tenancy agreements and **offered a free contract extension** where requested.

We are also offering any international students who need to quarantine on arrival a 14-day free stay to ensure they can do this safely and without impacting on their academic year.

We hope to reduce the level of financial strain that may be felt by them or their family throughout the Covid period giving our customers more disposable income in such challenging times. **As a result of this decision uS has endured a loss of earnings estimated at £100m.**



# COVID-19

## Response

We have also offered rental waivers and deferrals to our business tenants.

OUR COMMERCIAL ESTATE HAS BENEFITTED FROM

RENTAL DEFERRALS  
EQUAL TO

**£277,431**

AND

RENTAL WAIVERS  
EQUATING

**£266,033**

This support equates to **£543,464** (at end of July 2020) and has benefitted 22 tenants to date, with the majority of these businesses made up of **sole traders, locally owned franchises and charitable organisations.**



# COVID-19

## Response

Throughout the struggles of the Covid-19 outbreak we have been keeping in touch with our charity partners and associates to offer what support we can. We were humbled to learn from Maha Devi, who operate from our Stapleton House community space under a peppercorn rent agreement, that **their partnership with Unite Students has allowed the centre to roll out their programme of classes online**, protect jobs and offer free sessions and resources.

As a responsible employer and secure business we have been fortunate enough to continue operating at full capacity with **no employees being put on the Government furlough scheme** throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Many of our frontline staff receiving key worker status in order to support our students residing with us throughout lockdown.

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 7](#)



# COVID-19

## Response

We are aware that Covid-19 has had an effect on many areas not just financially and we have taken steps to help **safeguard our students and communities** come the start of the new academic year by the **development of a Home Charter**. This has been designed to clearly outline the expectations that uS, as landlords, has of their tenants, and what customers and communities can expect from uS. The charter emphasises the importance of responsible behaviour -ensuring the safety and wellbeing of everyone within the locality.

The priority we have given to our safe and secure proposition has been highlighted by uS being one of the first UK companies that has been accredited as a **Covid assured workplace** by the British Safety Council.

[MORE INFORMATION IN APPENDIX 8](#)



# COVID-19

## Response

As research suggests young people will be one of the demographics most negatively impacted by Covid-19 we have reviewed our learning resources.

By repurposing our, Department of Education accredited, Leapskills workshop to allow facilitation through remote learning, it is hoped that this approach will offer some support and guidance in better preparing young people for independent living.



# Appendix 1

## Parade Green - Community Engagement Plan 2019

Parade Green was opened in September 2019 and houses almost 900 students who attend Oxford Brookes University. Parade Green is located within a highly residential area and the development was not initially well received by some local residents.

Issues that caused complaints at Parade Green included noise, light pollution with the biggest aggravator of all being parking.

The team at Parade Green have worked tirelessly with local residents' groups as well as Oxford Brookes University and have managed to hugely reduce resident complaints and are quickly establishing themselves as a key community player.



# Appendix 1

## Parade Green - Community Engagement Plan 2019

This success can be attributed to the appointment of a Community Champion.

The role involved a nominated member of the team spending time with local residents from the surrounding area and listening in depth to their concerns and complaints on a one to one basis. An important part of this role was also to attend and participate with local community councils and forums.

The complaints have declined  
**FROM 55 TO 7 IN THE FIRST 5 MONTHS**  
of appointing a Community Champion.

**AN 87% DIFFERENCE**

Had the role been in place from the initial planning stages it is thought that many of the initial problems and hostilities could have been avoided.



# Appendix 1

## Parade Green - Community Engagement Plan 2019

Procedures that are now in place at Parade Green include:

- Monthly community updates distributed to the local community- there is now a mailing list with a subscription option
- Shared use of Parade Green facilities for local residents and students including gym and cinema
- Enhanced site patrols after 10pm
- Car parking checks performed x3 daily
- Continuing support and joint campaigning from Oxford Brookes
- Partnership with local school, providing enrichment opportunities as well as maintenance support.

The appointment of a Community Champion is an approach that uS are now looking to roll out to future new developments.



# Appendix 2

South Wales Police - Student Safety Bus 2018 to present

Since 2018 Liberty Living have sponsored the Student Safety Bus and Volunteer project in Cardiff. uS have since acquired Liberty Living and have confirmed they are continuing the sponsorship of this project.

**The Student Safety Bus works across the 4 universities** within the city centre and supports any vulnerable person who may need assistance to get home safe and well, running throughout the night across the popular student areas of Cardiff every Wednesday and Saturday during semester time.

Whilst its **primary function is for student safety**, the bus has **also assisted numerous other members of the public** who have found themselves in vulnerable positions. The bus prevents the need for emergency services/vehicles to be tied up with incidents and links in regularly with the staff at the Alcohol Treatment Centre.



# Appendix 2

South Wales Police - Student Safety Bus 2018 to present

Our sponsorship of this initiative has also strengthened our relationship with the South Wales Police and has helped to fund their volunteer programme involving students supporting the police on similar projects.

The SW Police said of the result of the sponsorship:

“ We have gone from **strength to strength** and as well as a number of initiatives **we now cover the night time** economy safety projects on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday night.



# Appendix 3

MahaDevi - Community Space 2017 to present

A yoga therapy charity working with children and adults with special needs and life limiting conditions is based at our Stapleton House property in London. Here, **therapists deliver more than 100 sessions a week** across three flexible spaces including one-to-one sessions, tailored to suit specific conditions and individuals.

It all began back in 2017 when Unite Students, in partnership with Islington Council, utilised a planning stipulation to incorporate a community space within its new Holloway Road accommodation. The emphasis was to find an organisation that would bring direct benefit to the local community, whilst helping to integrate the student residents.

MahaDevi relocated from their previous home, into our much larger premises that we specifically outfitted for their client's needs.



# Appendix 3

MahaDevi - Community Space 2017 to present

The impact of the work has grown substantially:



**52%** INCREASE IN  
**SESSIONS**  
DELIVERED



**30%** INCREASE IN  
THE NUMBER  
OF **USERS**

In 2019 a **General Manager** and a **work experience placement** were hired as well as a part-time **receptionist**.

The centre itself provides heavily subsidised therapy to children and adults with special needs often working with hospices to provide yoga therapy to children with life limiting conditions and end of life care. **Over 100 yoga therapy sessions are now delivered weekly** across three flexible spaces including one-to-one sessions, tailored to suit specific conditions and individuals. **Waiting lists have been substantially shortened** due to the larger space facilitating more therapy sessions.



# Appendix 3

MahaDevi - Community Space 2017 to present

In addition, the centre has now been able to create a fund which helps to **subsidise sessions for families** on a low income, making them affordable to all. This is a result of the increase in commercial classes that can be facilitated due to the larger studio space. **228 sessions were provided via this fund** over the past year. MahaDevi has also been able to avoid an increase in the generic session price (already priced at less than half the cost of the national average for this type of session) over the past three years.

Finally, the centre has helped provided an interface with the student community living in the adjacent property. The centre now has **25 students attending classes on a weekly basis**. Several of these students have volunteered along with other members of the community to help redecorate the studio spaces, helping to achieve one of the key objectives to provide a genuine way of integrating the students with the local community.



**"It was becoming increasingly difficult to run safe spaces for people [where we were before]. We could never have known until we moved here what would happen: it's just growing and growing in terms of being a community hub."**

**- MahaDevi manager Ben Eydmann**

The objective for uS was to create a direct positive impact in the locality, integrating students and the local community. As a result, we have strengthened our position in the community and developed positive relationships with all parties involved.

# Appendix 4

Streetwise - Community Space 2020

Unite Students is working closely with Streetwise, a charity in Bristol which supports rough sleepers and drug users. We have provided Streetwise with office space and are funding a full-time employee.

Official records put the number of **rough sleepers in Bristol at 951, up 23%** year on year. The reasons behind homelessness are often complex and can be a result of many different factors.

Over the past few years the impact of this has been felt by our teams, students, and local communities with regular instances of anti-social behaviour as they come and go from our properties and the surrounding areas.

As part of the Bristol Safety Strategy, put in place to help tackle this challenge, **a commitment was made to work more closely with local community groups** who were already working within the city centre to tackle this issue.



# Appendix 4

Streetwise - Community Space 2020

We are delighted to now be working with Bristol City Council organisation, Streetwise.

Streetwise was launched in 2002 and was set up to reduce the number of people visibly begging in the centre of Bristol. **In its first year, it reduced the number from 300 to below 50.** The initiative is a multi-agency project that deals with street-based anti-social behaviour.

Our support has provided and fitted out an office and meeting space, providing Streetwise with their first ever home as well as funding an additional full time 'street beat' worker. In the first four months of this position being filled **4 clients have successfully completed an alcohol detox program** and **214 members of the street community** have engaged in **a methadone treatment program.**



**Working with street-based anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a very complex task that requires input from a number of different agencies. The chance to come together with those agencies will help us to unify our approach and find ways to deliver a more effective service. At the same time, building a relationship with Unite will allow the service to access clients and ASB hotspots that may otherwise go unnoticed."**

*- Richard Hawkrige,  
Team Leader at Streetwise*

# Appendix 5

Selly Oak - Community Project 2019

Unite Students' volunteers **helped dredge a canal and clear a tow path in Selly Oak, Birmingham.** They helped remove shopping trolleys, bicycles, golf trolleys and much more.

It came after uS opened its second building in Selly Oak in September 2019, an area dominated by the University of Birmingham (UOB) campus and student accommodation. As demand for student housing greatly outstrips supply in this area the team wanted to ensure that Unite Students are the provider of choice for all stakeholders particularly local residents and community.

**The team have partnered with the Canals Trust and University Of Birmingham** to clean up the canal and surrounding area providing a safer, cleaner and more engaging environment for local residents and students alike.



# Appendix 5

Selly Oak - Community Project 2019

Since opening in 2019, we have invested over **£21k into the local area** and community with teams of volunteers dredging the canal, clearing the tow path to improve environmental conditions as well as safety around the canal.

This also **encourages our students to adopt clean methods of transport** between their accommodation and the university. We have also linked in with the Lapal Canal Trust and supported them financially to help reshape part of the canal making it safer and more accessible.



"Our top priority is keeping our students safe and providing a brilliant experience; we want to extend this to the local community in the areas surrounding our student home. Working closely with the University of Birmingham and local charities, we are working to make a positive impact that benefits a wide range of people. We look forward to continuing this work going forwards, bringing in more student involvement to help with their integration into the local community and spread these efforts even further."

*- Victoria Simmons, Area Manager Birmingham*

*Mahabeni manager Ben Eydmann*

# Appendix 6

STEPS -Volunteering Project 2019

A team of Unite Students' volunteers helped give a DIY SOS-style makeover to the premises of a specialist nursery helping children with motor disorders and their families to live fuller and more active lives.

In 2019, our estates team led by Lee Barnes, our Regional Estates Manager, set to work completing a DIY SOS style makeover for STEPS, our Loughborough team's charity of the year. The team, of over 40 volunteers, spent a day completing some much needed refurbishment work for the charity.



# Appendix 6

STEPS -Volunteering Project 2019

The team also managed to secure over **£50,000 worth of equipment and resources** donated by generous business contractors to assist with the work. Every Unite employee has one day every year to use as a volunteering opportunity and this was a great example of teams coming together to make a real positive impact to their local community. Lee and the team have made a huge difference to local service users and should be very proud of what they achieved.

Centre Manager Janet Russell remarked, **'We are delighted with what's happened. It's like a dream a come true!'**



# Appendix 7

MahaDevi - Covid-19 Response 2020

Thanks to their partnership with Unite Students, MahaDevi Yoga Centre rolls out their programme of classes online, protects jobs and offers free sessions and resources.

COVID lockdown has had a serious impact on families of children with special needs. But **thanks to the continued support from Unite Students, MahaDevi Yoga Centre can continue to deliver their yoga therapy sessions at a reduced cost or free of charge.** The yoga therapy treatments are open to all families with children with special needs including **autism, Down's Syndrome, epilepsy, Prader-Willi Syndrome, ADHD, cerebral palsy, and wheelchair users.**

During lockdown MahaDevi Yoga Centre were able to transfer their full programme of classes online. Available to anyone for free or a suggested donation, Due to the from support Unite Students they didn't need to cut back but offered a like for like service and attracted new students from much further afield.

**Unite Students offered an extended lease of 5 years** which provided MahaDevi rental security allowing them to concentrate on unlocking emergency funding available to charities.



I had been struggling with my lack of routine working from home so when MahaDevi started streaming their classes I thought this was an amazing idea. The class started a transformation, not only in my day and mindset but reminded me of the importance of trying to fit something in every day. I would recommend it to anyone, especially those who have wanted to try a class but maybe felt self-conscious in a room full of strangers as you now get to try it out in the comfort of your own home! Oh and pets can join in too!"

*- Rachel Yoga Student*

Since 2017, MahaDevi has been able to deliver almost **3000 more subsidised yoga sessions** to children with disabilities.

# Appendix 8

