

Sport

Opinion: The cost of living is pricing students out of university sport



Credit: The University of Sheffield

Becca Symns-Rowley

Every student understands the hardships of university living - budgeting for rent, scavenging around in the reduced section in the supermarket, and weighing up if you've got enough money leftover to get yourself to Pop Tarts on Saturday. With the cost of living crisis still hanging over our heads, our money isn't stretching as far as it used to, leaving some students having to make tough decisions. One major spending point for students is societies and sports teams.

The University of Sheffield boasts over 50 different sports clubs, all with differing levels of commitment. However, a common theme that links these clubs is the cost of membership, which can often be incredibly high.

In times like these, the question lies in whether or not people feel reluctant to get involved in university sports as they try and make their money last through the year.

Elliot, a third year student, spoke about how he has had to cut down on doing the things he loves: "With the ever increasing prices in all shops, I found that I literally could not afford to do the sports I loved anymore."

For others, paying for a year-long membership is one thing, but affording the weekly socials and

appropriate kit required by sports clubs is an entirely different ball park.

Sarah, who is a member of one of the University's largest sports societies, talked about how she feels priced out by the cost of being involved every week, even though she had already paid a significant amount at the start of the year: "Weekly socials are expensive with needing to buy drinks and ROAR tickets. You feel a bit alienated if you don't go so it's a big part of the experience."

She also spoke about how this had originally put her off joining the team in first year.

The pressure to keep up with weekly socials and the cost of basic kit is a huge problem for students who may already feel overwhelmed by the price of the initial membership. It can be off putting when considering which societies to join, feeling as though your options are limited based on how much of your student loan or part-time paycheck you can spare. For some students, it boils down between doing what you love, and being able to afford a food shop.

"I immediately had to rule out joining the club I wanted to because of the price," said Louise, a third year student reflecting on her choice to not join a society in first year. "There was a cheaper social option that you could pay monthly but it was still too

expensive, I knew it'd blow my budget for a month just on that."

Balancing your studies with a social life and doing what you love can be difficult enough in itself without the added pressures of whether or not you can afford to join in each week, or even if you can join the club at all.

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It was really upsetting having to put my social life on hold.

Students should not have to make social sacrifices based on their income, no matter how affordable the society may consider itself to be. The University itself offers advice and guidance on coping with the cost of living crisis, and encourages students to get in touch if they feel they are struggling. There is also a bursary on offer for eligible students; the money is aimed to help students pay for society memberships and sport activities. Despite the efforts of the University, there is undoubtedly a large number of students who feel at a crossroads between making the most of their time here and affording to pay the rent. Sports should be inclusive of all, regardless of the number in your bank account.

Black History Month: Uriah Rennie

Will Atherton

In August 1997, Uriah Rennie became the first black man to referee in England's top division, and 26 years on he remains the only man of colour to have achieved that feat.

'Uri', as he was fondly referred to by players and pundits alike, took charge of 175 Premier League matches during a 14-year career, dishing out a total of 543 yellow and 30 red cards. Rennie gained a reputation of being bold, confident and no-nonsense, helping to justify why he is still regarded as one of the best referees the Premier League has ever seen.

Rennie's pathway to the top began here, in Sheffield, when he started out refereeing in local leagues at the age of 20. He quickly rose through the ranks, operating in semi-professional divisions like the Northern Premier league until 1994.

He was then appointed to the Football League's official list of referees, completing his inspiring journey to

professional football and taking him one step closer to England's top flight.

Rennie stayed in the Football League until 23 August 1997, when he was appointed to the Premier League fixture Leeds United vs Crystal Palace. A year later he was added to the list of Select Match Officials, consolidating his status as a top-flight referee.

The pinnacle of his career, however, was becoming a FIFA referee in 2000. This meant that he was eligible to take charge of both international fixtures and European competitions, as well as Premier League games.

Rennie retired at the end of the 2007/08 season, ending his lengthy career as a Premier League referee.

Since then,

Rennie has shied away from the limelight, returning to Sheffield and becoming active in the Steel City's grassroots scene. He was made president of local side Hallam FC in 2010, and he continues to support and mentor local referees in South Yorkshire.



Credit: Getty Images



Credit: Arthur Wharton Foundation

Why you should start watching ice hockey in Sheffield

Freddie Dancey

Whether you're a first-year student three weeks into the biggest upheaval of your life and four weeks into a cumulative hangover, or a fourth-year strolling down the well-beaten road of examinations, essays, and lectures, university life can get chaotic for everyone.

Sometimes you just need to take a night off to relax with your friends and try something new. It's all but too easy to find yourself going to the same pub for the thousandth time, so why not swap the pints for pucks this week and jump on a tram for a night of excitement?

I know that sounds ambitious because as we all know, nothing is cheap anymore. However, occasionally at Utilita Arena Sheffield they offer standard price tickets to Sheffield Steelers' ice hockey games for just £8. For the majority of the time, a regular student discount ticket costs £17.50.

Add to that a £1.60 return tram from the University stop and you've got a chill night out without breaking

the bank! With both student discounts and periodic reduced tickets, attending a Steelers game is a great alternative way to spend your weekend evenings.

The Steelers currently sit top of the Elite Ice Hockey League and are on an excellent run of form; there's never been a better time to watch them play. Moreover, Sheffield has a large fan base when it comes to ice hockey, meaning the arena is regularly packed with fans.

So, why not take a break from the lecture hall and dive into the excitement of a live sports event? Utilita Arena Sheffield has carved out a niche for students seeking a cheap way to bond, cheer, and enjoy a night out like no other. Don't miss the chance to experience the thrill of the rink without having to delve into your overdraft.



Black History Month: The incredible life of Arthur Wharton

Forgotten for over 60 years, Wharton's legacy is finally being realised

Katy Roberts (she/her)

It would be easy to boil down Arthur Wharton's achievements to his role as the first professional black footballer in the English Football League, but it would also be incredibly downplayed.

Moving from Ghana to England at the age of 19 in 1882, Wharton went on to become one of history's most well-rounded sportspeople, venturing into cricket, football, athletics and cycling.

His talents could not be confined to a single sport. He was the first recorded person to sprint 100 yards in 10 seconds and played for a number of teams both in goal and on the wing across Yorkshire and Lancashire.

Darlington, an amateur team, took Wharton on as their goalkeeper in the 1885-86 season, where he developed some curious customs. These included swinging from the crossbar, crouching in the corner of

the goal, and preferring to punch the ball away rather than catch it.

After being scouted by Preston North End, he helped them reach the semi-finals of the FA Cup in 1886-87. During their third round victory against Renton, Athletic News described his performance as "one of the best exhibitions of goalkeeping I have seen for a long time".

Wharton took a brief hiatus from football to focus on his running, but returned in 1889 with Rotherham Town. Throughout his career, he also played for Sheffield United (where he featured in the First Division), Stalybridge Rovers, Ashton North End, and Stockport County.

Despite an extraordinary career, Wharton died in poverty at 65-years-old in 1930. Due to his dire

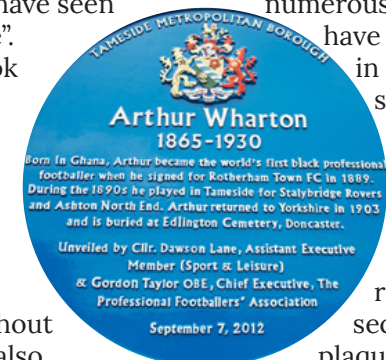
financial situation, he was sadly buried in an unmarked pauper's grave and became relatively unknown for several decades.

In 1997, an anti-racism campaign by Football Unites, Racism Divides succeeded in installing a headstone to remember Wharton's remarkable contributions to English sport. Since then, numerous campaigns

have gained traction in erecting statues of the sportsman, including in the FIFA headquarters.

More recently, a second blue plaque was unveiled where Rotherham Town played, 134 years to the day since Wharton first played for them. The first was put up in Tameside in 2012.

Credit: Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council



Credit: @steelershockey via X

Sport

Opinion: Fan outrage over extraordinary Sheffield Wednesday owner's statement

Adam Hulme-Thomas

In the world of football, a chairman's words often hold significant weight. Sheffield Wednesday's chairman recently issued a statement that has sent shockwaves throughout the footballing world. The remarks, which have been labelled as controversial, have left many fans deeply upset and questioning the club's direction.

Sheffield Wednesday's owner, Dejphon Chansiri, finds himself amid a storm of fan outrage following his recent statement. The fallout from his remarks raises questions about the club's future, its financial stability, and the critical role that communication and transparency play in maintaining a harmonious relationship between a football club and its devoted supporters.

In his statement, he did not shy away from making bold assertions and, at times, critical remarks. He cited various factors contributing to the club's financial woes, including "fines from the FA" that he blames certain groups of supporters for,

seen in incidents such as the pitch invasion at the end of the play-off semi-final vs Peterborough.

Chansiri's remarks have not sat well with a significant portion of Sheffield Wednesday's fanbase.

Some believe that his words undermine the morale of the players and that it contradicts the ethos of supporting the team through thick and thin.

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Many supporters see the statement as a deflection of responsibility and a failure to acknowledge the club's on-field struggles.

The statement also reflects broader challenges in modern football, where finances, especially from the Championship down, can be precarious. However, the arguments put forward by the owner have been

perceived as arrogant and self-centred with remarks such as "I am the one who saved the club".

The controversy surrounding the statement leaves the club at a crossroads. The chairman's words have undeniably strained the relationship with Wednesday's passionate fanbase. The way forward is uncertain, and many supporters are eagerly waiting for further communication from the club's leadership.

Furthermore, the team sacked manager Xisco Muñoz in early October after a winless start to the season. They are now onto their seventh manager in five years, Danny Rohl, who at 34 years old is the youngest boss in the EFL.

Time will tell how Chansiri and the club navigate these challenging waters, having stated that he "will not inject any more money into the club if I am being treated unfairly". But what is clear is that the chairman's statement has ignited a firestorm of passion and debate among Sheffield Wednesday fans.



Credit: Sheffield Wednesday

Goodwin swimming pool closed for good

Katy Roberts (she/her)

Enthusiastic swimmers at the University of Sheffield have been forced to find somewhere else to pursue their hobby after the pool at Goodwin Sports Centre was permanently closed.

Coldfield Swimming Pool, as it was formally known, initially shut due to safety concerns at the end of July.

There were hopes that it would eventually reopen, with Sport Sheffield previously stating on Facebook: "We are working to develop a plan for the future."

"Whilst the entire Sport Sheffield team is deeply saddened by the closure of the swimming pool we hope you understand why we have taken these measures."

Now, the newly rebranded University of Sheffield Sport & Physical Activity has confirmed that problems with the windows mean that the swimming venue will not reopen.

In an email sent to students, they announced there was "an issue with the window frames in the pool area, which was identified during a maintenance

survey."

Repairs were carried out earlier this year following fresh concerns that water was causing the timber to rot.

Whilst no concrete plans have been made public so far, they said that they are moving forward with steps to develop new facilities.

In the meantime, the nearest swimming pools are King Edwards in Broomhall and Ponds Forge, which is easily accessible by tram.

Goodwin Sports Centre is also currently undergoing a refurbishment of the gym, which is due to be complete in late November 2023. A temporary gym is open to students until then.

Upcoming fixtures in Sheffield

Football:		Ice hockey:		Rugby Union:	
Sheffield United	Sat 4 Nov	Sheff Steelers	Sat 28 Oct	Sheffield Tigers	Sat 11 Nov
Wolves	15:00	Nott. Panthers	19:00	Billingham	15:00
Sheffield United	Sat 25 Nov	Sheff Steelers	Sat 4 Nov	Sheffield Tigers	Sat 25 Nov
Bournemouth	15:00	Manc. Storm	19:00	Lymm	15:00
Sheffield United	Tues 5 Dec	Sheff Steelers	Sun 12 Nov		
Liverpool	19:45	Cov. Blaze	16:00		
Sheff Wed	Sun 29 Oct	Sheffield Steelers will be looking to continue their magnificent run of form following their decisive victories at the Utilita Arena earlier in the season over teams such as Dundee Stars, Manchester Storm and Coventry Blaze.			
Rotherham	13:00				
Sheff Wed	Sat 11 Nov				
Millwall	15:00				
Sheff Wed	Wed 29 Nov				
Leicester City	19:45				

