

# StandUp Luton

One Town One Community One Voice  
Special Edition

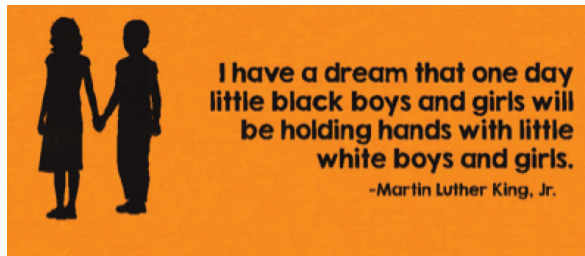
## Thank you Luton

For all the positive comments and support you gave our first edition. We distributed 20,000 copies which would not have been possible without the help and support of Luton folk and businesses who gave up their time to help distribute StandUp Luton news - a big shout out goes to every business, shop and the people of Luton who gave us their support and time and got the paper out there. We would also like to thank you the reader for your emails and positive comments.

Lutonians this is your paper! This is an opportunity to show the good that come out of this town. Standup Luton News is your news - stories about people and stuff going on in your town. We need you to share your stories - so don't be shy.

This paper is a free newspaper that is entirely self funded. It is our voice, independent of any government funding, sponsorship or project funding. Hard to believe for some we know; but as one person said, when we explained this was a paper with just good news about Luton, "about time". So read on we are only concerned with reporting conscious stories about issues affecting the people of our town; stories about the good things Luton people are doing for others; profiles of successful people in Luton; and explanations of local initiatives and campaigns.

Your manners are your beauty."



**YOU CAN GET IN TOUCH  
WITH STANDUP LUTON BY  
EMAILING :**  
[standupluton@gmail.com](mailto:standupluton@gmail.com)

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*Next Edition's feature article: Do you the young people of Luton get a Bad Press because they are Bad?*

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# StandUp Voices

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## StandUp Says

Our feature articles remind us of the need to be authentic - to stop and think about who we really are or perhaps who we really want to be. Living up to what we believe and doing what we say is never easy. So how authentic are you? Have you ever found yourself telling your children not to shout and the very next day you're shouting at them because they are driving you mad?

We all like to think we care, whether our values are driving by our faith or our politics. But how often do we rush past the homeless man, sleeping at Luton station, because we are late for our train? How often have you found yourself openly involved in criticising someone you have never ever spoken to? When we act with hostility, getting high on our ability to get one over another person in debate; do we ever stop and think what that person thinks or feels?

StandUp Luton folk are no different than the majority of people. So whilst we strive to be authentic we also know that we are only human -just like you. So we will continue to try and live the vision we want to achieve by doing our little bit. We will behave towards others as if they are trying their best - to act rather than criticise them for their lack of action. Why? Because we feel this is the correct way to make our Town not only a better place but also a more authentic place.

### Our vision is simple:

- To create an alternative story based on the lives of positive people.
- To promote a simple message - we can fight injustice, hatred and extremism without violence.
- To start a movement of people who act together in order to support others - not for money but for humanity.
- Lets stop apologising for the things we never done.
- Lets start by putting some joy back in this Town of ours;
- Lets start believing that it is up to us to change this Town.
- And lets StandUp together because sitting on the fence is no longer an option.

## Editorial Policy:

To have your say  
email: [standupluton@gmail.com](mailto:standupluton@gmail.com).  
Title your email "Letters."

StandUp will try to answer all emails. We will only publish letters and comments that reflect, or allows us in our answer to reflect, a positive image of Luton and / or its people. We only publish materials that reflect the principles we stand for. We prefer talking about things that you, we or other people are doing rather than moan about what others are not doing. We will never publish your email address and will only acknowledge you by your initials and where you are from.

### Editorial Team

Designer: Ahmed Quazi    Sharon Zaman  
Yousiff Meah                Basil Davis  
Shaz Zaman                 William Thomas

## Your Say

Dear StandUp,  
Hi,  
Hope you are well. I picked up a copy of Issue 1 of StandUp Luton & would like to know more about how I can get involved. Look forward to hearing from you.  
Kind regards,

LD

Dear LD

We received a number of letters and facebook posts asking a similar question. Let me firstly thank all of those who offered support and for the positive feedback on the paper. I also need to ask you to be patient as we are all volunteers and occasionally it takes time to answer. There are lots of ways you could get involved - attend our meetings on particular subjects which are promoted on facebook; get involved in some of the campaigns we highlight, contact the organisations who we mention and offer them support. Email us with stories about stuff going on for us to publish; volunteer to distribute the paper; or let us know your particular interest and we will do our best to involve you in something positive.

SUL

Dear StandUp

I have read Standup from page to page and I am baffled to learn that some people find it threatening. I agree with you this is a golden opportunity to open up dialogue with those people, who for one reason or another, have misunderstood what you are trying to achieve. I'm hoping to open up dialogue between Gypsies, Roma and Travellers with the settled community. Let me know if I can help in anyway please. Love & Peace with Justice.

PW

Dear PW

Unfortunately there was a rumour spread that SUL was being funded by the Government. Some people just love it when rumours are brought to their door. This led to a very organised campaign that saw our facebook page closed for a while and letters of complaint

being sent about individuals. In the end there will always be some who are threatened by people who take the initiative; but they really are a small minority compared with all the people wanting to do good; and thankfully the majority of folk in Luton are focused on how to make this town a better place. Please send in an article on the topic of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and the positive stuff you are doing.

SUL

Dear SUL

Homelessness is becoming a concern in Luton. I know it's not a positive story but I think it needs addressing; to bring awareness and to highlight this. We need to find ways to tackle this issue especially when it involves families with children. The positive aspect in Luton is that there is the lamp and Noah and salvation army but there seems to be a lack of support for families with children. I hope you would consider this topic in one of these issues ,there are many testimonies in the homeless experience and I feel that we as a community should be doing more. ,anyway congratulations on Standup Luton 1st issue blessings.

KD

Dear KD

One of the things we need to remind ourselves is that, whilst there is support available for people in need, there is always room for more support to be provided. In our meeting on Homelessness our guest speaker said "the homeless do not belong to anyone, and if your support is needed it will be accepted." At the same time we also need to increase awareness of what is available and remember that many of the existing organisations providing support are in need of more support as well. We our looking to repeat a meeting on feeding the hungry. Hopefully this will enable you to connect with other people who want to make a difference. If you would like to help organise our next meeting on this topic let us know.

SUL

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# Memories of Christmas

## Shaz

I was 4 years old when my father, who worked at the local factory first brought me home a present at Christmas which was given to all the workers who had children - it was a toy plane. Then at five I got one from Santa who visited the school and gave me a colouring book and crayons.



It was my friend Paul who first told me I could write to Santa - he showed me the letter and I wrote a modest list - action man, racing car, airfix model and little toy soldiers ..... I sent the letter to Santa's grotto at the Co-Op because that's where Santa lived.

And then I got a reply! - from Santa! Saying If I was good he would be sure to visit my home. I ask Paul what I needed to do.

Paul told me that Santa comes down the chimney and you need to leave him some milk and cookies. So I told mum who put out the milk and some biscuits - we did not have cookies.

I told mum to make sure she did not leave the fire burning -

and just in case I snuck downstairs and put the door on the latch.

I tried to stay awake watching the stars - waiting for Santa. But, of course, I fell asleep.

In the morning I woke excited. I looked at the end of my bed - nothing! I rush down stairs - the milk and the biscuits were still there.

My friends all had new bikes and toys so I thought Santa didn't like me - as I grew up I just assume he was a racist - it wasn't until I was ten that I worked out my mum and dad were Muslims and did not know anything about Christmas or Santa Clause.

Despite this early trauma, I really like the Christmas period in this country. It is a time for family and loved ones, a chance to recharge the batteries, and an opportunity to show our neighbours that we appreciate their friendship.

But for me personally it is also a time to think about those less fortunate than myself - an opportunity to reflect and do some good.

This year's letter to Santa \_ Dear Santa I am still waiting for my action man!

Shaz



## Jax



Hello Readers. I'm back Jax Jackie Neufville, aka Jax66 It's almost that magical time of the year when families and friends unite.

So what does Christmas mean to you? For me it's that time when those you love and cherish gather together for prayer, food, fun and entertainment.

However I do believe that some have lost the whole meaning of Christmas - it's all online shopping! Excess food deliveries, cruises and massive expense. Don't get me wrong all of the above apply equally to me but it wasn't always like this

Growing up Christmas was a truly magical time. Your mum dad or both would work their fingers to the bone to provide you with the ONE. I repeat the one gift that truly Made your Christmas. I've pictured in this post the possible one thing you would have ask for

You slept cause you knew Santa would not arrive unless u were fast asleep. In the morning you would wake, get up, wash., dress, eat breakfast, go to church and come back almost bursting at the seams.

Finally u open up that magical gift and play with it, sometimes sharing it, all day into the early hours. Always grateful and thankful for whatever you were given. Dinner was always after the Queen's speech and oh my what a feast it was!

### *I miss those simple days.*

*This Christmas why not stop....think back and maybe, just maybe, we will all remember just how special that day was.*

*Finally I'm Pleased to say we reached our target of £4200. At the charity Spinathon we raised £4282. So so proud and a massive thank you to all that took part and supported this was my 2nd. Event. The charities will have the cheques by the 1st Dec xx*

Till next time.  
Have an amazingly magical Christmas.

Jax 66



Our  
Minds  
Matter



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Would you like some company on Christmas day? If you're on your own come and be our guest - enjoy good food, great company, fun, film and games..

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# Will the real Father Christmas Please StandUp.

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Every now and then there is a story reported about Muslims wanting to Ban Christmas! It is part of a repeated mythology that the press from time to time report – despite the fact that there is never a grain of truth in the stories they seem to uncover. So I was amazed to hear about news from Holland that there had been an increase in attacks on Black people because – apparently - Black people were also trying to ban Christmas.

It appears that the Dutch celebrate Christmas by dressing up and “blacking their faces” to represent Black Peter – a clown like character that was the companion of Father Christmas.

Now Dutch society, and therefore Dutch people, takes much prides in being extremely tolerant and anti-racist. Their history proves it; their open policies demonstrate it. Yet there is a huge discrepancy between what is claimed by society in general, and what many minorities experience.

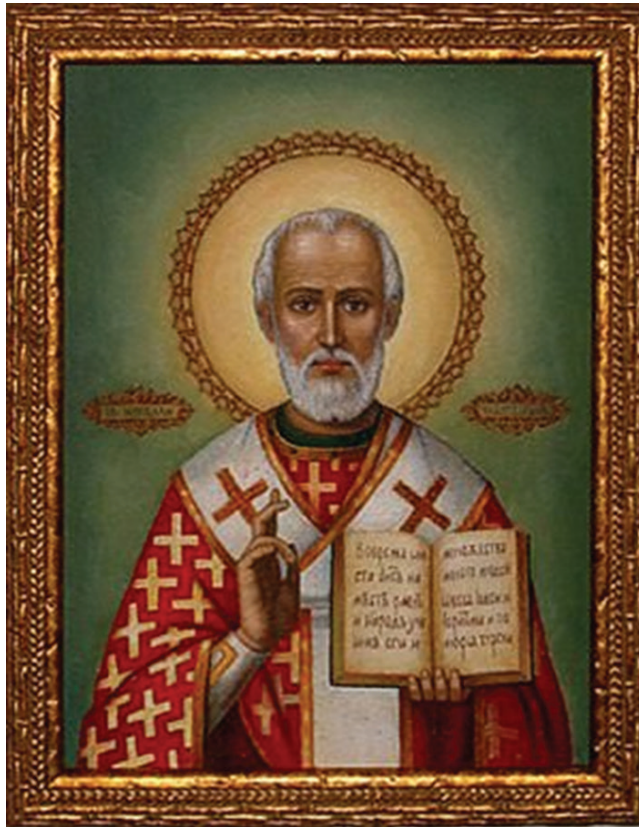
The traditional Dutch celebration of Santa Clause, “Sinterklaas” in Dutch, is an example of such a discrepancy. The character of Black Pete, “Zwarte Piet,” in the Sinterklaas holiday has been a very controversial issue in The Netherlands. Many believe the depiction of Black Pete is racist.

And this is why. The Dutch story of Santa Claus is based on the story of St Peter who travelled by ship accompanied by a ship full of black slaves. St Peter [who became known as SinterKlaas] visited every house leaving presents for good children. Parents would tell their children, “If you are naughty you will not get a present but a good spanking!”

Guess who became the beater of children? You guessed it - Black Peter.

The story that Black people want to ban Christmas emerges because a national debate has been held about whether this tradition is offensive and should be banned. Traditionalists see it as a bit of harmless fun and very much part of Dutch history and culture; and so stories emerged that Black people wanted to ban Christmas. This has led to an increase in racist attacks on Black people across Holland.

Of course we Brits are not so stupid that we would want to hold onto racist traditions; and given our “British Values” it’s hard to think we would start beating up on folks just because the press told us they wanted to ban Christmas. Would we? The Dutch crises got me thinking about our own Father Christmas; where he came from, and is he really that good a guy. Of course I’m old enough to realise that he isn’t really



real – despite the mass marketing of him as a Character and so many parents going along with the mythology. I have however never rally thought about who Father Christmas really is.

The British Father Christmas was based on the story of St Nicolas, a Bishop who lived in a place called Myra in a region that is now called Turkey. He was a very rich man due to his parents leaving him a lot of money. But he was also a very kind and humble man who used his wealth to ease the suffering of the poor. He also used to give gifts in secret to people who needed help.

One famous story about him tells how the custom of hanging up stockings to get presents first started. It goes a little like this. A poor man had three daughters and was so poor he could not feed them sufficiently or have enough money to support them to get married. Nicolas heard him crying one night as he passed their house and secretly dropped money down the chimney and this fell into a stocking hanging out to dry by the fireplace. And the family lived happily ever after. If we look at who Father Christmas is today rather than being a secretive figure he is known the world over – marketed as some type of pop star. And rather than focusing our attention on the need to redistribute our wealth to aide the poor and those suffering; Santa today is all about encouraging us to spend as much as possible to make the rich richer.

And this is why I ask my question Will the real Father Christmas please StandUp? How we behave this Christmas, the stories will tell our children all go to shape the Luton and the world we want to see in the future.

So rather than being a racist slave owner; or a businessman who wants our money wouldn’t it be nice if we told our children of the Father Christmas who gave up his wealth to help the poor; who cared for children, and who did this with out craving to be recognized or praise.

So look out for your neighbours and the people around you because this is a period of festivity and family but it is also a period of great loneliness and isolation for many Samaritans has published figures showing the extent of loneliness and isolation people feel over the festive period, with nearly a quarter (23.6%) believing problems feel worse at Christmas and 1 in 6 (17.3%) saying it’s the loneliest time of year. The survey, of all ages, also reveals that 1 in 15 (6.8%) have often spent Christmas alone, and 1 in 25 (3.8%) of those questioned have said they are with friends and family, but really spent it alone.

Samaritans CEO Ruth Sutherland says, “For many the holiday period can be a thoroughly enjoyable time but, sadly, as our research shows, for a startling amount of people this is not always the case. This time of year can bring up painful memories, or worsen difficult feelings often related to family or relationship issues, financial or health worries, to name just a few. The pressure to be having a good time or comparing your life with someone else’s can be too much. Even with friends and family around you, that sense of being alone with difficult thoughts or feelings, can make it seem as if you have no one to turn to.”

So this festive period why not think about those around you and take some time to check that they are alright

And let’s start our own campaign to ban the fake Father Christmas and get the real Father Christmas to StandUp in Luton.

# AIM

without Violence

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*One Town One Community One Voice*



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# StandUp People

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Vinette HOFFMAN-JACKSON  
Speaker/Author/Life Coach/Teacher  
Managing Director of TTZ Limited  
[www.thetransitionzone.co.uk](http://www.thetransitionzone.co.uk)

24 hours makes a day! No one gets anymore, not even an extra second. Then how is it that some people can achieve greatness and change the world with their 24 hours while others barely achieve anything. This was the reasoning behind Vinette's recent drive to achieve her dream of becoming an International Motivational Speaker and she is getting there. Within the course of 12 months she has managed to achieve quite a lot and is within touching distance of her ambitions.

Vinette has spent many years teaching in different schools and different countries. She has been motivating children to succeed, encouraging them to pursue their dreams and challenging them to be the very best at whatever they choose to do. Teaching has been her passion for many years.

However, last year Vinette made a radical change and decided to not only be the vehicle for her students dreams but to start pursuing her own dreams as well. Within a year she has achieved many awards for public speaking. She is the current champion of Toastmaster Area 20 public speaking competition and the Winner of London 2016 'Speaker Factor' Competition 2016. Vinette is also the Managing Director of the Transition Zone, a company providing coaching and workshops

in Personal Development. The company provides you with the skills and confidence to make the connections between your current position and your goals. It helps you to discover your 'Inner GPS'

In addition to being a business woman and accomplished speaker, Vinette also finds time to write. She is the author of the book 'Did the right Sperm Win?' The book is comprised of 30 short stories, personal reflections and anecdotes cleverly crafted to motivate and inspire. The books help the reader find hidden messages in life's everyday occurrences and is available on Amazon.

She was born in Jamaica and emigrated to the UK and settled in Luton in 2002. Her parents were both teachers and she followed in their footsteps and became a Mathematics and Science teacher. When asked about her greatest strength she replied 'I know who I am'. She goes on to explain that she was born for a purpose she knows it is to motivate others towards excellence. Her pet peeve she says are time wasters and her weakness is her three (3) sons.

*Vinette's personal philosophy is 'Life is like a box of jig saw puzzle, there are no extra pieces made, try and find exactly where you belong'.*

## StandUp Events

**With Christmas just round the corner, it's time to start planning your Christmas outings and Luton Culture is offering a multitude of family fun.**

Enjoy Christmas at Stockwood from 12 – 23 December as you walk down the starlit street of Stockwood Discovery Centre to meet Santa and his elves. Along the way, say hello to a friendly snowman, create a Christmas ornament, decorate a gingerbread man, make some food for Rudolph, party in the bubble disco and enjoy classic Christmas tales.

Full House Theatre is set to dazzle with family show The Night Before Christmas at Luton Library Theatre, 12 – 24 December. On the most magical night of the year three Santa super-fans have come together to catch a glimpse of the elusive Saint Nick. Will they succeed in their quest to find him? Previously, Full House have delighted audiences with A Christmas Carol, and The Elves and the Shoemaker.

If you're a film fan then The Hat Factory Arts Centre is inviting you to discover your inner elf at a screening of family favourite Elf on Saturday 10 Dec, 4pm. Full of Yuletide cheer, Elf stars Will Ferrell as Buddy, a human raised by elves, who is determined to find his father whilst bringing some much-needed Christmas spirit to New York City. You can even enjoy a free mince pie at Connors before the film screening!

The Hat Factory Arts Centre also pays host to rather

unorthodox production of A Christmas Carol on Sunday 4 December, 7.30pm. This uniquely comic stage version of Dickens' classic comes complete with silly songs, pitiful puppetry and more Dickensian daftness than you can shake a selection box at.

Tickets for all these events are available at [lutonculture.com](http://lutonculture.com) or by contacting the Box Office on 01582 878100

Luton libraries are also getting into the Christmas spirit with a seasonal Family Fun Time of Merry Christmas, Big Hungry Bear on 10 & 17 December. Come along, share stories and make gifts for your own 'Big Hungry Bear. The sessions run at Luton Central Library, Saturday 10 December, 11am - 11.45am; Stopsley Library, Saturday 10 December, 2.15pm; Leagrave Library, Saturday 17 December, 11am and Marsh Farm Library, Saturday 17 December, 2.15pm

There is something to keep all the family entertained with Luton Culture.

Committed to maintaining and safeguarding arts, culture and heritage for future generations, Luton Culture is a local charity with a core mission to deliver high quality engagement through museums, arts centres and libraries. Their three heritage sites are The Hat Factory Arts Centre, Stockwood Discovery Centre and Wardown Park Museum – soon to become Wardown House Museum and Gallery. In addition they look after Luton Libraries and The Library Theatre.





# StandUp Stories

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***Stories have been one of the most engaging forms of disseminating information and teaching life's lessons. We remember more and are more likely to change or adapt behaviours to imitate characters. Do you remember acting or pretending to be a movie or sports star? Can you remember your favourite movie scene?***

***Stories engage and get the hormones pumping. The following is a story about our most priceless possession.***

***Beware!***

## The Silent Thief

"He's coming, he's coming!" Mark whispered nervously switching from one leg to the next. For a moment he reminded me of a little child desperate to use the toilets. "I'll delay him while you guys search the place." Tony quickly suggested.

"Go ahead. We will whistle when we are done." I replied. Tony quickly exited via the side door we had used to gain entry earlier and as soon as Tony was outside, we started searching frantically, conscious that we had very little time to complete our mission.

The first drawer I opened in the study yielded 6 gold watches. 'Kerching!' I whispered and waved my discovery for Mark to see. In the second drawer I found a huge wad of cash, at least £20 000. That was the most money I had ever seen in real life. I kissed it and hurriedly placed it in my coat pocket. "Mark?" I whispered, "Where are you?"

"Come here George" he whispered and I could sense the urgency in his voice. Quickly I rushed to the room he was in. I opened the door and stood with my mouth wide open in disbelief instinctively putting my hands over my mouth in fear any sound should escape. We both stood staring for what seemed like hours. We were staring into certain retirement; inside the little room attached to the study, stood an open safe, full of diamonds.

"Mother of glory! " I finally managed to whisper, my hand now on top of my head.

A few seconds after the initial shock had worn off, greed quickly took over. We hurriedly stuffed every pocket and space we could find on our person. We were rich, very ,very rich. We could not wipe the grin off our faces. Our days as small time crooks were finally over, we had had struck the big lottery.

After we had packed all we could carry, we slowly tip toed to the window at the front of the house. We could see Tony busily chatting to the old man. I was just about to place my two fingers in my mouth to give the signal whistle when I thought I heard a low, almost inaudible sound. I quickly looked at Mark to check if he had heard the sound too. His panicked expression confirmed my fears.

We slowly turned towards the stairs and putting my index fingers to my lips, we froze to listen but could hear nothing. Mid way through turning back to the window, from somewhere upstairs the sound came again, a low painful groan. We looked at each other puzzled. "I thought the house was empty" I whispered. We had been staking out the house for months and we knew the old man lived alone. The housekeeper only came Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays. Today was Thursday.

"Me too "Mark replied.

We slowly tiptoed in the direction of the stairs walking slowly towards the sound. We crept up the stairs and came to a door that was slightly ajar .Slowly I pushed the door open just so



we could have a peek inside.

Lying on a bed in the centre of the room was a woman. She looked like death itself. Her skin was pale, her eyes sunken and all her hair completely gone; the only sign of life was the low groan of pain that escaped her mouth. "Dad" she moaned. Slowly we closed the door and stepped back outside the room. Neither of us said a word just exchanging a look of pity and a shake of head.

We quietly retreated to the window where we could see Tony and gave a low whistle. Tony glanced in our direction, quickly gave the old man a gentle slap on the back and jogged off towards the waiting car as we made our way through the side door.

The old man looked at Tony with bewilderment and you could see he was slightly irritated at being delayed, but Mr Marron was glad to help the lost young man.

The old man walked as quickly as his frail legs would allow him towards his house. He open his door and entered and noticed through his periphery field of vision that the door to his office was slightly ajar and thought it was strange but he was more preoccupied with getting to his cancer stricken daughter upstairs. He had rushed out to the book store to purchase her favourite storybook, The Day Time Stood Still, so he could read it to her just like he did when she was a small child. He gently touched the door handle and pushed it slowly ajar. He saw her chest heaved then slowly came down and never rose again.

The three men in the car heard the piercing scream and thought their crime was discovered and hurriedly drove off. The driver was momentarily distracted and drove straight into the back of a police car.

-----  
The old man slowly dragged himself to the front door after trying to ignore the persistent ringing of the doorbell for the past ten minutes hoping whoever it was would go away; only to be greeted by the lost jogger, two other strangers and two police officers. As the police explained the situation, the old man looked at all three men with deep sadness and pain in his eyes.

"Would you like to press charges sir?" the officer enquired for the second time as the old man slowly tried to mentally process the scene that was unfolding before him.

The man hung his head as if lost in thoughts for a while. Slowly he lifted his old tired head "Yes" the old man replied "but only against one man. These two men" he said, pointing at Mark and me, "I gave the jewellery, the money, watches and diamonds you found on them, because I no longer have any use for them. My precious daughter died today and they were her inheritance; but this man" he pointed a bony finger at Tony," this man, I want to be prosecuted to the full extent

of the law because he's the worst of all thieves. I will spend the rest of my fortune to make sure he rots behind bars "he spoke with strength and conviction.

"B-B-ut" Tony exclaimed, puzzled and bewildered as the police officers dragged him off before he could utter another word.

Mark and I lingered in disbelief, afraid to move from the spot. We stood as if rooted to the doorstep. We nervously looked from Tony to the old man, back to Tony again, and then back again to the old man.

Bravely Mark finally asked or attempted to ask the obvious question "W-what? W-why? How...?"

The old man looked at us with tears and lost hope clearly visible in his eyes and replied. "You stole things I could replace, but your friend took my most precious possession, he took my time and so my daughter died alone"

He quietly turned and closed his door.

Mark and I stood silently for a while staring at the closed door. Slowly without a single spoken word, we both emptied our pockets of everything we had stolen and left them at the door and slowly walked away.

Summary

***It has always amazed me how people treat the greatest asset they own and how carelessly they allow others to use and abuse it. Most people will spend huge fortunes to protect their material wealth but are reckless with their use of time. They invest time with people who show no real appreciation or allow their time to be wasted with idle chatter, gossip, hours watching television or on the telephone just speaking about any and every irrelevant thing.***

***Try this for me please. The next time someone asks you 'Do you have a minute?' Answer and say no and note their reaction. Most people are quite taken aback if you tell them no, even complete strangers feel they have a right to demand a minute from your limited time on earth.***

***As in the story of Beware !The Silent Thief, regardless of whatever material things you lose or is stolen from you, you must always remember it can be replaced. The thing that you must always be conscious of is your time.***

***People will steal your time without you even realising it. These are the worst kind of thieves as they are stealing your most priceless possession, one you will never ever be able to replace. Time lost cannot be retrieved. Write off what you have already lost but be careful with what is left, most importantly since no one knows exactly how much they have left.***

***Be careful with your most valuable possession. Beware the thieves of time!***

### The Chefs Hot Plate

Wedding & Parties Catered for by Grant the Chef  
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# REFLECTIONS ON LESSONS LEARNT FROM SREBRENICA

I was privileged to visit Bosnia & Herzegovina with a delegation, which was organised by Remembering Srebrenica. I hope what I am about to share with you, will help you to understand the physical and mental journey that I have taken to understand what it really means to hate, forgive and survive the Srebrenica genocide.

Srebrenica is a lecture to the whole of the world, what happens when the powers fail their exams. The Serbians would never have systematically massacred 8,392 Bosnian Muslim men and boys, if they were not allowed by the powers such as the UN. As the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan wrote in 1999:

“Through error, misjudgement and an inability to recognise the scope of the evil confronting us, we failed to do our part to help save the people of Srebrenica from the Serb campaign of mass murder.”

My journey to Srebrenica was an eye opening experience. One of the hard-hitting realisations was that the only difference between the two sides was their religion. As one of the survivor of the Srebrenica genocide, Hasan Hasanovic said “They didn’t care that we were unarmed. Their primary concern was that we were Muslim and they wanted us dead.”

Those mothers, who had lost most of their loved ones, had bought tears to our eyes. Almost 20 years after the genocide, they are still fighting for justice for their relatives.

There was not a dry eye after our meeting with the Mothers. It was moving just to be in their presence. Their words and message were inspirational. They had a message of hope and strength in the face of overwhelming suffering, and for our own communities back home in the UK a lesson that all of us as individuals must speak out against hatred. For such thoughts and words can so easily spill over into violence. In Bosnia there is no visible difference between the



Muslim and Orthodox Christian populations. Nor do they speak a different tongue. Yet violence so easily overtook this area.

When I asked the surviving mothers, what I can do to help, they said to me, “spread love and not hate. Share what you have learned here with others because every life is precious”

Therefore, I have learned that hate is a very powerful human emotion that can lead people to do very evil and unimaginable inhumane acts. But love can lift the human spirit to endure pain,

loss and struggle to become a survivor and a positive energy that can in turn heal the hearts of many. Love can help people to see the good in our differences, regardless of religion, gender or nationality, just like the mother who said to us that she sees us as her children.

*Kind Regards,  
Dawood Masood*

# StandUp Love

## Why I Love Luton

**Si Phili** is a rapper from Luton, Known for being a solo artist as well as part of the former UK Hip Hop Group Phi-Life Cypher, which split in 2012. Since the split of PLC, Si Phili has progressed on a solo career and also started another group with UK Battle Rapper Dotz to form “Phili N Dotz” The duo released the album “Phil N the Dotz” in May 2014 and have not looked back since. The two have been touring across the UK and Europe and are expected to be touring a lot more in the next year.

Phi Life Cypher was a hip hop trio composed of two MC’s, Si Phili and Life MC, and DJ Nappa all from Luton UK. The trio started making music together around 1996, and since have had much success on the UK underground circuit. Phi-Life Cypher made it to

the final of Tim Westwood’s Talent 2000 competition and ripping the mic on DJ Skitz’s seminal posse cut ‘Fingerprints of the Gods’ projected them to the upper realms of the UK Hip Hop scene.

Si Phili along with Phi Life Cypher released “Clint Eastwood” the track on the Gorillaz G-Sides, a compilation of the B-sides from the first three singles was released in Japan and quickly followed with international releases in early 2002. The new year also saw a complicated performance at the 2002 Brit Awards, featuring the band in 3D animation, weaving in and out of each other on four large screens along with rap accompaniment by Phi Life Cypher.

*Why I love Luton.  
I love Luton because of its  
diversity and wealth of talent.  
And its my hometown.*







## Panthers Netball Team

- Location: Luton
- Home Venue/Training: Denbigh High School
- League: Luton Dunstable and District Netball

*Panthers are a local community netball team based in Luton, with its players living in and around Luton and surrounding areas. Panthers was affiliated to England Netball UK on 2nd July 2011, without selecting a team!! Four born and bred Lutonians decided to put together their own team and by the end of July 2011, a squad of 13 players had carefully been selected after a day of trials. They recognised that the women were made up of single parents; women from low income families; women that wanted to return to netball, having not played since school; women that wanted to engage in keeping fit; and women who wanted to get back to sport, and gain social interaction, without it being too costly.*

At the start of Panthers first season the team were involved in several fundraising events which provided the team with income so that equipment and kits could be purchased. Team members were involved in attending School and Community Fete's where they provided hair plaiting, nail and face-painting, hot food and sweet stalls.

In their first season Panthers entered the fourth division of the Luton and District Netball League. The team went onto win the League, the Divisional Cup, and the Defenders Shield.

Much of income generated through fundraising and weekly subs, pays for court hire, umpire fees, training, umpiring, coaching, first aid courses and relevant personal development.

Five years on and Panther is still going, although we have not been able to replicate all the successes of yesteryear the community family vibe is still strong. Some of our member's volunteer for community projects, have fitness and coaching certificates and are accredited England Netball UK umpires at beginner level. The team have also been selected by Luton Dunstable and District Netball Committee to support GCSE PE students at Denbigh High School with their practical studies.

The ethos of Panthers Netball Team is to get women back into sport, which in return help to build up self-esteem, teach aspects of fitness and give advice on health, nutrition and wellbeing. Our team is a mixture of ages ranging from 13yrs – 50+ yrs. of age, with mixed ethnicity and social standings, some of whom have come from deprived backgrounds.

Luton has a great community cohesion and through sporting activities encourages people to come together. Panthers Netball is proud to be part of a town that is trying to make a difference.



Hello Readers.

So privileged to be asked to do a monthly column for StandUp Luton.

This month is all about the big local charity event I organised and held on Sat 8th October 2016 at Lea manor recreation centre. Luton's 12 hour charity spinathon. What a memorable and amazingly wonderful fundraiser day it was.

With cries of "when's the next one!"

I was truly overwhelmed with Emotion on the day. The event had taken months to plan and everything just fell into place. More than 100 people took part raising money for local dementia sufferers, Luton Foodbank and Signpost for homeless teens.

The day was a tremendous success. Together with participants, live local DJs and local, fitness coaches we collectively spun for 12 hours. Special thanks. To my husband Colin Neufville and my sons, Carl and Joshua for their unending love help and support.

Sue McFarlene spun for the whole 12 hours - massive well done. Bazza Patrick cycled 28:4 miles from London to Luton -massive well done.

Special thanks to Ian Hobdell and Tara Bonnett for giving their time and continued support.

Thanks to all the DJs who kindly gave up their time to motivate and encourage participants to cycle. Thank you to all the fitness coaches for your great workouts.

Thank you to David Pauling and Grace Foods for keeping us hydrated and the beautiful raffle hamper. Thank you to all the helpers and volunteers on the day.

Thank you to Kelly, Barbra, Georgina, Carol, Carolyn and Tracy for the cake donations.

I'm still waiting sponsorship money to come in but I'm so encouraged by the amazing amount raised from slot fees; The Just Giving Page (still live ); raffle prize money; and donations from truly amazingly great friends.

*By the Xmas edition of Stand Up Luton final figures will be in. Fittville Uk Ltd will be able to give something to those that really need it through the festive season.*

Till next time. Keep standing up for Luton

Love...  
Jackie Neufville



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*If we don't know it, it's not worth knowing!*