

22nd February 2010

Out with the old and in with the new

- Shoppers to swap clothes for shopping vouchers in charity drive -**
- Amnesty to help 1,000 families within Aberdeen who live on £50.00 or less week -**

Union Square is to launch a unique Clothes Amnesty during the last weekend in February (Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th) in an effort to provide support for Aberdeen's poorest families.

The shopping and leisure complex is calling on the city and shire to bring their old and unwanted clothes to Union Square and exchange them for an exclusive 10% off voucher from fashion favourite Outfit.

All items will be donated to Aberdeen charity Instant Neighbour, which provides support to some 18,000 families who live on £50 or less a week. This equates to as many 40,000 individuals, or 21% of the region's population. Support can take many guises including emergency food parcels, removal services and providing clothing for children and adults.

According to Union Square any type of clothing or accessory is welcome from bags, belts and boots, to jeans, jumpers and jewellery. Each person will be given a discount voucher to spend in Union Square's Outfit store, which is home to Dorothy Perkins, Miss Selfridge, Burton, Wallis, Evans and Warehouse.

Penny Godfrey, marketing manager of Union Square, said: "Aberdeen has a pronounced poverty issue and we are delighted to be holding our first Clothes Amnesty in support of Instant Neighbour. Union Square is a major hub for shoppers and travellers in Aberdeen so it's perfectly positioned for an initiative like this. We hope lots of people will show their support."

Union Square will install a large clothing bank in the atrium area of the centre during the last weekend in February. The voucher exchanged for donations is per person, not per item, and is subject to availability.

Dale Haden, Marketing Manager of Outfit, said: "Outfit is delighted to be taking part in this initiative. We really hope the people of Aberdeen show their support by donating any unwanted clothing and accessories to this very worthwhile cause. We will reward anyone who does so, by offering a 10% discount to spend in our new Outfit store at Union Square, where you'll find all the best high street brands in one stylish, easy-to-shop store."

Michele Binnie, business manager at Instant Neighbour, commented: "We're delighted to be working in partnership with Union Square. Last year we collected 58 tonnes of items including furniture, clothes, bikes and carpets, all of which would have otherwise ended up in landfill.

"Our aim is that the Union Square Clothes Amnesty will help over 1,000 people across the area as well as contribute clothes towards a fashion show we are hosting in September to mark our 25th anniversary, which will be full of old, but revamped clothes."

Notes to Editors:

Union Square

Union Square is new retail and leisure quarter in the centre of Aberdeen. Developed by Hammerson, the centre includes around 50 retailers across the main mall and shopping park, a variety of restaurants and cafés, a 203 bed Jurys Inn hotel and 10 screen multiplex Cineworld cinema, Aberdeen's largest cinema. The scheme also provides visitors with a new civic square.

Union Square is Aberdeen's most accessible retail and leisure offer with 1,700 car parking spaces, easily reached from all major routes and integrated with the city's bus and rail stations - providing a gateway to the region and encouraging sustainable travel to the city.

www.unionsquareaberdeen.com

About Instant Neighbour

Instant Neighbour is a local charity that helps and supports the most disadvantaged in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. It's 25 years old this year. Its core services include:

- Furniture Redistribution – providing donated items of furniture to clients setting up a new tenancy.
- Removal Service – providing a removal service to tenants of Aberdeen City Council who are moving from one home to another.
- Safe and Sound- providing baby and safety equipment to clients (free of charge)
- Emergency Food Parcels- providing non- perishable food items to clients, who find themselves in financial difficulty.
- Furniture Storage- providing furniture storage to clients who may or are in the process of being evicted from their homes.
- Adult and childrens clothes – providing donated clothing to clients
- Giving Tree Appeal –Christmas toy appeal that has been happening for 19 years. 6000 gifts were provided to children across the city and shire this year.
- Volunteering Opportunities – providing volunteer opportunities to anyone who is interested.

Instant Neighbour also has three social enterprises which currently provide an extra income, so that we can provide and enhance their core services-

- Carpet Inc – North-East's only carpet recycling initiative, selling good quality new and used carpets at competitive prices.
- BikeFit- Bicycle recycling initiative, putting used bikes to good use. The charity sells good quality donated bicycles at very competitive prices. They also offer a mobile bike servicing unit and will service bikes at your home or workplace.
- PAT Inc – Offering a Portable Appliance Testing services to businesses at very competitive prices. Free quotes available.