

York Explore Pen Portrait

The Building

The Library was first opened in 1927, and most recently had building work in 2014: an extension and substantial work on the floor and roof. There has not been a condition survey since 2013, which found that the total cost of work over 20 years would be £1,880,223, but work has been done since then. The land and building is owned by CYC

Only disabled parking is available at York Explore but the building is well served by public transport including being walking distance from York Railway Station. Explore is a very accessible space, including a changing places facility. It is open 66 hours per week, including evenings until 8pm and Sunday opening. Situated right in the city centre it is well placed for people to visit alongside other shops and services.



Community Assets



York Explore is our flagship Explore Centre. It is on two floors in the centre of York, with 3 meeting rooms, an archive and local history centre, an ICT suite, a cafe, and a garden to the side. It is well equipped to engage the community in a huge range of ways, tackling social isolation through myriad groups, events and classes. It is the meeting point for reading groups and craft groups, guided walks, hacker projects and much more. Regular children's activities such as the summer reading challenge contribute towards children's literacy, and there is an ongoing programme of workshops addressing adult digital literacy too, alongside free PCs and wifi.

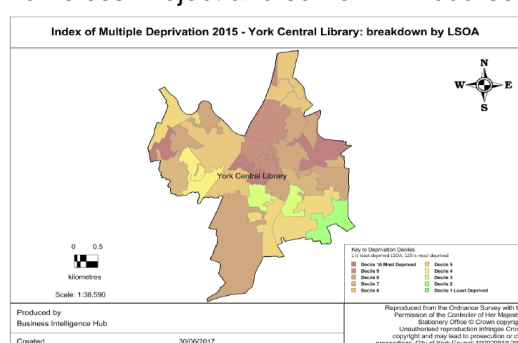
The volunteering programme at York Explore is very successful, strengthening community resilience and offering valuable work experience to a variety of people including prisoners on day release, adults with mental health problems, job-seekers, and just residents who wish to support the library and meet like minded people. The Archives Advisory Group is based at York Explore, enabling residents to get involved in decision making.

York Learning offer a variety of classes at York Explore from functional skills to art classes. Other partners offer activities from the library including York Festival of Ideas, York Literature Festival and the WEA. York Explore also fulfils an active citizenship remit with consultations and public meetings, and local community groups use the library for displays and demonstrations. Library staff work closely with schools in the area.

In central York, there are many community venues engaging people in a variety of activities. The Priory Street Centre hosts a range of groups and classes, and is home to York CVS. Clements Hall, run by a trust, offer an elderly people's lunch club, a dementia cafe, a community cinema and more. Guppy's Enterprise Club host various clubs and WEA classes, covering topics from poetry to war gaming and amateur radio. Specifically engaging older people are St Sampsons Day Centre for the over 60s, Age UK York, and The University of the Third Age. York Citizens Advice Bureau offer debt advice from the CYC offices. Mesmac have a premises in central York from which they offer some LGBT groups and services. The Melbourne Centre runs Blueberry Academy in the daytimes, offering training and support to learning-disabled adults, and general activities such as pilates in the evenings. There are many religious congregations also offering community engagement in the city centre, perhaps most notably the Spurriergate Centre which offers a cafe and counselling, and the Central Methodist Church which is home to Kyra Women's Project, Carecent Homeless Project and some WEA courses.

Population profile

York Explore's catchment area could reasonably be defined as the whole of the UK or even beyond, with people travelling long distances to use the archives in their research, and to attend events. For the core lending and IT services, most attendees are from York, and for the purpose of this portrait the catchment area will be defined as the most central wards: Fishergate, Guildhall,



Holgate, Micklegate. This area is used for analysis whilst acknowledging that 45% of visits come from people who live more than 2km away.

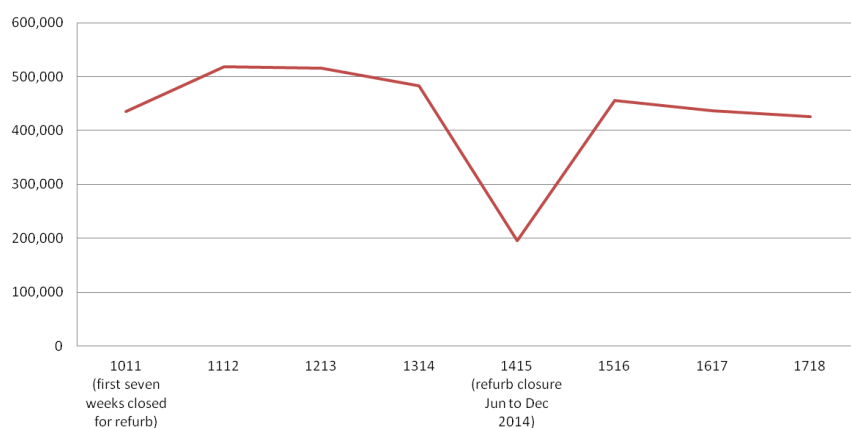
The area contains a range of neighbourhoods from some quite affluent areas to some pockets of significant need. Overall, this area has some poor scores on measures typically associated with deprivation including child poverty rates, fuel poverty, anti-social behaviour and premature mortality all of which are poorer in this central part of York than in the authority as a whole.

The population of this area is fairly diverse by York standard's with 15.5% identifying as an ethnicity other than 'White British' on the 2011 census. The age profile is younger than in York as a whole, with 28% of residents being in their 20s.

Community cohesion; 76% feeling that they "belong to their local area" and 86% being satisfied with "their local area as a place to live" in a CYC residents' survey.

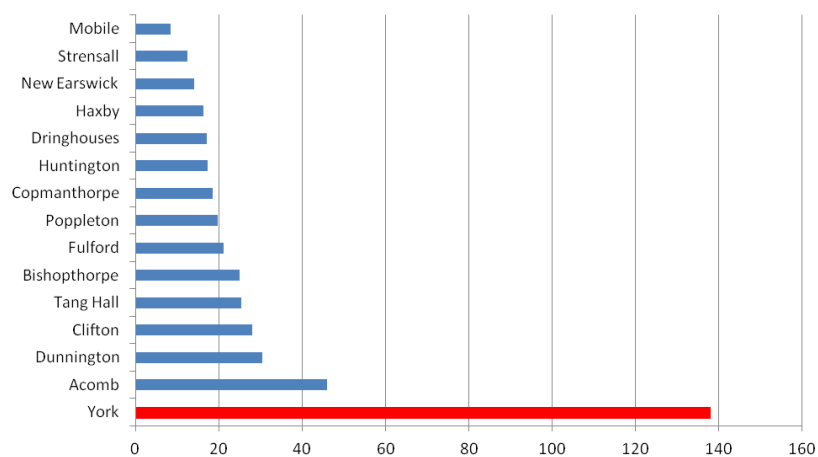
Current Usage

Physical Visits to York Explore over time



Visits including Reading Cafes		1718
1	York	426440
2	Acomb	109785
3	Rowntree Park	93253
4	Tang Hall	55352
5	Homestead Park	42693
6	Clifton	40212
7	Bishopthorpe	28397
8	Huntington	25734
9	Haxby	25337
10	Fulford	25322
11	New Earswick	24544
12	Copmanthorpe	23164
13	Poppleton	23137
14	Dringhouses	22924
15	Dunnington	20404
16	Mobile	14091
17	Strensall	13129
18	Sycamore House	255

Library visits per opening hour during half terms



(Used half term figures to exclude anomalies caused by classroom use of libraries at New Earswick and Fulford)

Equal with Poppleton, York Explore has the user base which is the least skewed towards women (54% of users, 50% of residents). However, like other libraries, the usage is skewed towards retired users (36% of adult users, 9% of the population), and to a lesser extent disabled users (27% of users, compared to 13.5% of the population whose day to day activities limited by ill health or disability in the census). York Explore has a proportionate amount of student users (6% compared to 7% in the population) in spite of there being libraries on the university campuses. There is some indication that white people are slightly over-represented in the York Explore user demographic (95% users, 91% of population) but this may be a bi-product of the older audience, if the BME people in the population are younger.