

York Cultural Strategy

ISSUED NOV 2025





Introduction

York's Creative Future was developed throughout 2019 to be launched in 2020 and set the strategic direction of cultural development in the city over the subsequent five years. It therefore coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic and has been delivered within the context of a fast-changing world.

Now in a post-pandemic cultural landscape that has seen significant evolution, and in the final year of the original strategy, sector leaders and City of York Council have come together to undertake a review of York's Creative Future – and what follows is a refreshed and focused plan for culture and creativity across the city of York area.

The updated strategic blueprint is deliberately undated, in-keeping with our partners in the wider North Yorkshire County. We will come together annually as sector and community members to reflect on successes and achievements of the preceding year, and to decide on priority focuses, changes and developments for the coming year based on evaluation and feedback. This will keep us focused and better able to be responsive to what our city and its communities need, and agile in response to opportunities.



Cover image: Harland Miller 2025 exhibition at York Art Gallery. © Duncan Lomax (Ravage Productions)



SIN: After Hours at York Art Gallery, 2022. © Mediale



→
 'Submergence' by Squid Soup
 at York Art Gallery. © Duncan
 Lomax (Ravage Productions)



What is Culture

→ **So, what is culture?**

For the purpose of the Cultural Strategy, it is defined as all activities involving arts and heritage, including collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts, as well as people's own creative participation in, and interpretations of, culture. Culture and creativity are also at the heart of a vital economic driver for the UK, the creative industries.

↑
 Yorkshire Museum school visit
 © Anthony Chappel-Ross

Vision & Aims

→ **Our Vision**

York is known as a city where everyone feels able to benefit from the city's outstanding, renowned heritage, which comes together with a cutting-edge contemporary approach to creativity.

→ **Our Aims**

- Culture, creativity and heritage are integral to everything that happens in York.
- York's cultural offer is inclusive and relevant: residents of all backgrounds are creative, can engage and participate in culture in their local communities
- There is an ongoing local commitment to UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts status.

York Key Cultural Assets Map

York is a unitary authority area and historic UNESCO city in the county of North Yorkshire which sits at the confluence of the rivers Ouse and Foss, roughly halfway between London and Edinburgh.

York Wards

- Acomb
- Bishopthorpe
- Clifton
- Copmanthorpe
- Dringhouses and Woodthorpe
- Fishergate
- Fulford and Heslington
- Guildhall
- Haxby and Wigginton
- Heworth
- Heworth Without
- Holgate
- Hull Road
- Huntington and New Earswick
- Micklegate
- Osaldwick and Derwent
- Rawcliffe and Clifton Without
- Rural West York
- Strensall
- Westfield
- Wheldrake

Wider York

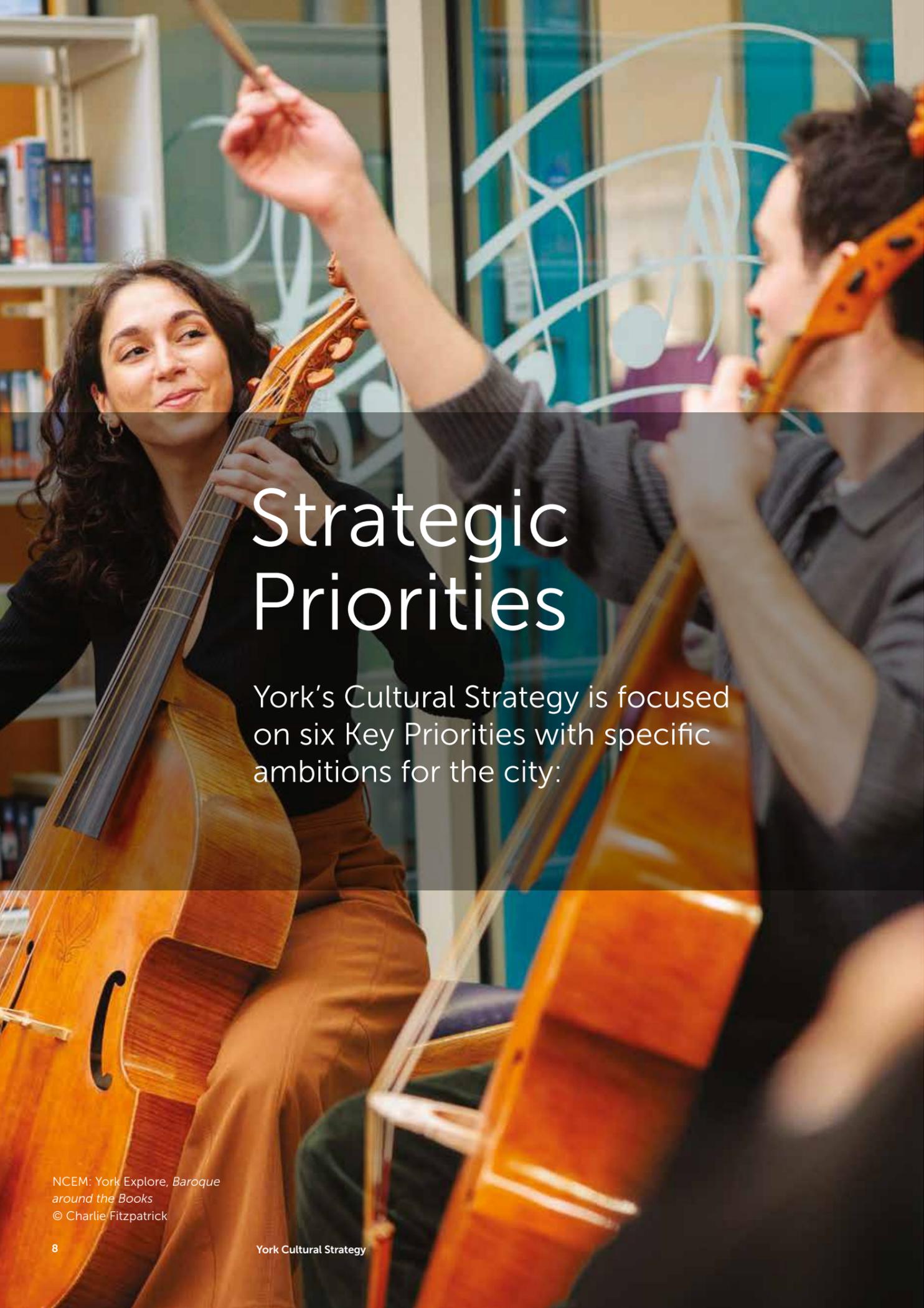
Key Cultural and Heritage Venues

- A City Centre Venues
- B Acomb Explore Centre
- C Clifton Explore Centre
- D Joseph Rowntree Theatre
- E Tang Hall Explore Centre
- F York Archeological Trust Resources Centre



York City Centre Key Cultural and Heritage Venues

- 1 Explore York Libraries & Archive
- 2 Fairfax House
- 3 Grand Opera House
- 4 Jorvik
- 5 Merchant Adventurers' Hall
- 6 National Railway Museum
- 7 National Centre for Early Music
- 8 Pilot Theatre
- 9 York Archaeological Trust
- 10 York Art Gallery*
- 11 York Barbican Centre
- 12 York Castle Museum*
- 13 York Minster
- 14 Yorkshire Museum*
- 15 Yorkshire Museum Gardens*
- 16 York Theatre Royal



Strategic Priorities

York's Cultural Strategy is focused on six Key Priorities with specific ambitions for the city:

1

Cultural Engagement, Participation and Relevance

→ **Culture is inclusive, relevant and accessible to everybody in York, regardless of age, background or postcode.**

Key outcomes:

- York's cultural offer is inclusive and relevant: residents of all backgrounds are creative, can engage and participate in culture in their local communities, and there is local commitment to UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts status.
- There is more diversity and intergenerational engagement in arts and heritage, and in volunteering, including people from the LGBTQ+ community, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, D/deaf or disabled people, and those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Participation in cultural activities in the city will be measured and evaluated to demonstrate inclusion and relevance, and this will exhibit a measurable increase.

Additional benefits:

- Organisations involved with delivering the strategy agree consistency of evaluation methods to demonstrate impact collectively
- Arts and heritage organisations benefit from an enhanced volunteer base.

2

Place Making

→ **Culture is fully embedded into local investment and city planning developments, with arts and heritage and cultural wellbeing integral to development processes.**

Key outcomes:

- New cultural leadership will deliver effective communication and advocacy in embedding culture into major infrastructure developments as a normal requirement of the city planning system.
- Engagement with residents, heritage research and exploring the meaning of place will result in redefined meanings of spaces, creating briefs for public spaces and using culture to define places.
- York will work to fund sustainable business models which underpin its creative industries while securing the future of the heritage fabric which provides the home for so many of our anchor institutions.

Embedding culture into city, town and village developments is a shared priority of North Yorkshire and City of York.

We will ensure that culture, arts, heritage and creative health are integral to place-making and reflecting the relationship our people have with their places. Together, and with national bodies, we will work to maximise the value, and ensure the sustainability, of heritage and cultural assets. We commit to increasing our focus on accessibility and inclusion, creating spaces in which everyone feels welcome and can experience culture, heritage and creativity without barriers.

Our work will contribute to Combined Authority Priorities for **Vibrant & Sustainable Places**.

3

Children and Young People

York will be the first city to achieve cultural entitlement for all children and young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds and with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Key outcomes:

- Every child and young person will have the chance to create and make culture, helping them develop a wide range of key skills and attributes, which will support their educational outcomes, health and wellbeing, and employment opportunities.
- Creativity, arts and heritage engagement will be part of the core offer within schools and informal learning environments, supported by a creative partnership between schools and learning providers, and cultural and heritage partners.
- All children and more young people, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with additional needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will participate in, and experience arts and heritage activity and sign up for appropriate arts and heritage learning and accreditation schemes.

4

Talent Development and Retention

York's creative and cultural sectors thrive and contribute to strengthening and diversifying York's economy: through universities and colleges providing clear routes to skilled employment, and creative workspaces attracting and retaining creative talent in the city.

Key outcomes:

- Increased levels of student demand for cultural activity and engagement in cultural volunteering.
- Significant collaborations between artists, practitioners and audiences/ participants from the city, with cultural initiatives and events organised by the city's universities and colleges.
- New funding secured to support culture leveraged in response to new collaborations (e.g. UK Research Council funds) and encompassing international partnerships.
- Increased number of students staying in the City.
- More start-ups with demonstrable sustainability beyond 2-5 years
- Increase in incubation support for emerging businesses and social enterprises

Creative and cultural education, skills and sector development is a shared priority of North Yorkshire and City of York.

We recognise and embrace the fact that the creative sector is one of the fastest growing economies in the UK, making significant contributions to employment opportunities, export of goods & services, and to tourism.

1 in 4 UK jobs are in creative industries, employing 2.3 million in 2021 and contributing £124bn to the economy in 2022.

Filled jobs growth rate from 2011 to 2021 in the creative industries was almost five times faster than the UK total overall – so we know how important it is to support sector development in North Yorkshire. This starts with access to creative subjects in education, and access to creative and cultural opportunities outside of school for all young people – and continues with routes to employment, support for creative businesses to access training, business development and investment. We will work together across our local authority services, with our creative education networks FORGE & CREATE, within the Combined Authority, and with our sector partners to progress, attract and retain creative talent and a thriving workforce in North Yorkshire.

Our work will contribute to Combined Authority Priorities **for Boosting Business & A Thriving Workforce.**

5

Culture and Wellbeing

York is recognised nationally for its innovative work in culture for health and wellbeing, including social prescribing, which residents can benefit from throughout their lives.

Key outcomes:

- York establishes an innovative and comprehensive system for social prescribing using arts and heritage engagement, to improve the health and wellbeing of York residents.
- Evidence indicates improved engagement and less isolation for vulnerable older people.
- Enhanced data collection demonstrates the impact the arts and heritage have on people's health and wellbeing.

Transformation of the wellbeing and resilience of our residents and communities is a shared priority of North Yorkshire and City of York.

We will be revolutionary and ambitious in our approach, embracing Creative Health as a core component of both of our cultural strategies.

We will work in collaboration across local authority care teams, creative health organisations, and Integrated Care Systems to maximise the health, life opportunities and sense of belonging for everyone that calls North Yorkshire home.

Our work will contribute to Combined Authority Priorities for **Healthy & Thriving Communities.**

6

York's National and International Profile

York's outstanding arts, culture and heritage and its status as the UK's first UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts are championed and celebrated, raising the city's profile nationally and internationally.

Key outcomes:

- Clear positioning of York's cultural offer within the York city brand achieves a wide awareness of York as a place where outstanding internationally renowned heritage comes together with a cutting edge, contemporary approach to creativity.
- Increased international partnerships bring financial resources into the city which support international exhibitions, theatre, film and music activities.
- Increased international partnerships support UK based students in their career development.
- Number of partnerships inside and outside the YCC area.
- Number of collaborations for touring exhibitions.



York Art Gallery's
'Wall of Women'
© Anthony Chappel-Ross

Delivery of the Strategy

In the process of the strategy review a new Creative & Cultural Advisory Board was created for York, which brings together key leaders from across the sector to advocate for, strengthen and champion creativity and heritage in the city.

This group, along with City of York Council directorates encompassing cultural economy and community services, will come together to provide oversight for directing and delivering strategic aims. This will include development of a delivery plan and coordinated approach to evaluation and measures of success.

Collaboration with North Yorkshire Council and the Mayoral Combined Authority for York & North Yorkshire will also be facilitated through the Advisory Board and Local Authority partnership, and together will help to shape policy, drive collaboration and unlock new opportunities.

It is envisaged cultural sector organisations and individual practitioners in York will use the strategy alongside their organisational and development plans, to identify collaborations, apply for funding, direct their work, and deliver on the priorities set out here.



Case Studies

**Demonstrating evidence of progress
2020-2025**

A range of case studies have been selected by advisory board members to demonstrate best practice in cultural delivery across the strategic priorities.



Baroque Around the Books

Who

National Centre for Early Music, and Explore York

What

In December 2024, free and accessible early music performances with the young ensemble "Intesa", was presented in four of York's community libraries; Acomb, Clifton, Tang Hall and the Central Library.

High quality early music was brought to audiences in trusted settings, reaching people who may not normally have had the opportunity to hear early music. They may face barriers in attending concerts due to access, affordability or confidence. By providing high-quality, unexpected cultural experiences, new audiences were encouraged to see libraries as creative, cultural and social spaces. The artists involved were given a development opportunity to learn new skills in engaging with the public in new ways.

"This was a delightful surprise as I just popped in to get a book. Even though I had other things to do I stayed for the whole performance which I loved. A quality experience."

Impacts:

- Attracted regular library users who came specifically for the performance
- Engaged with an audience of 320 across the 4 performances
- Reached new audiences who had attended the library for other activities
- Attracted new library users who had attended for the concert

Aligned to strategic priorities:

Cultural Engagement, Participation and Relevance
Culture & Wellbeing

"It was an emotional experience and my heart feels full. Thank you, I can't afford concerts often and feel they are too 'posh' but I loved this."



NCEM: York Explore, *Baroque around the Books*
© Charlie Fitzpatrick

Funded by Arts Council England, City of York Council, Mayfield Valley Arts Trust, National Centre for Early Music, and Explore York.



Wonderlab

Who

National Railway Museum

What

Wonderlab in the Bramall Gallery is a hands-on, architect designed interactive gallery for young people based within the National Railway Museum. The Gallery uses interactive displays to enable young people to act like engineers in their everyday lives – being creative, trying, testing, failing and trying again, working together and thinking big.

"I've spent all day in here this is my favourite part of the museum"

Wonderlab was co-developed with extensive input from local groups of young people with lived experience of SEND and disability. Access and equality were at the forefront of the brief, including the design approach, the choice of interactive displays, the way the gallery is interpreted, and the friendly, open and welcoming approach to science and engineering that the gallery embodies.



Wonderlab: The Bramall Gallery. A STEM-led interactive family gallery at the National Railway Museum. Photographer: Jody Kingzett © The Board of Trustees, Science Museum Group

www.railwaymuseum.org.uk

Impacts:

- Attracted almost 180,000 visitors since opening in July 2023
- 69% of visitors stated it was their main reason or a reason to visit
- 62% of visitors from the Yorkshire and Humber region
- Over 90,000 of the visitors are children of a wide age range

Aligned to strategic priorities:

Cultural Engagement, Participation and Relevance
Children & Young People
York's National & International Profile

"My son and I have had a truly magical day today. It was truly wonderful watching him explore everything within the Wonderlab which is incredible and stunning all wrapped up in a whole lot of fun. He did not stop smiling all day and when I said I think this is your happy place he responded 'this is happy, this is joy'... Truly inspiring the engineers of the future."



Eboracum Roman Festival

Who

York Museums Trust, York Minster, York Civic Trust, York Archaeology & University of York

What

In 2025, for the first time the Eboracum Roman Festival was a partnership event encompassing York Museums Trust, York Minster, York Civic Trust, York Archaeology and University of York. The joint programme included schools' resources and educator's professional development events, public talks, family trails and activities as well as a living history camp.

9,000 people engaged with the living history camp and parade over two days, 100% of those surveyed had a memorable experience and 670 people attended talks headlined by Roman historian and broadcaster Mary Beard.

Impacts

- 86% of attendees learned something new
- 85% of attendees felt more engaged with history
- 9 out of 10 visitors found the festival to be something out of the ordinary that will remain with them as a positive memory
- Visitors felt a strong sense of belonging and connection to the event

Aligned to Strategic Priorities:

Cultural Engagement, Participation and Relevance
Children & Young People



Roman Festival York 2025
© Gareth Buddo



Aesthetica Film Festival

Who

Aesthetica

"Thank you so very much for having me this year at Aesthetica. The festival was incredible – from screenings to the events, I was so impressed by the audiences and the mix of filmmakers you bring to York."

What

The Aesthetica Film Festival is the destination for independent cinema and is the leading UK festival for new talent. It is an opportunity to meet talented creatives from across the globe, and hear from industry experts through masterclasses, workshops and networking sessions. The festival is the first UK Film Festival to launch a Games Lab, which redefines what we mean by screen, and engaging all forms of interactive storytelling. Attracting widespread industry engagement from organisations such as Sledgehammer, Ubisoft and BAFTA Games. Other significant industry to attend includes The New York Times, Ridley Scott Associates, Framstore, DNEG, Industrial Light & Magic, alongside broadcasters such as BBC and Film4.

Impacts

- Attracts over 50,000 admissions between in-person and online events and screenings
- 300 film screenings in competition
- 100 workshops, masterclasses and panels
- Brings over £3m of economic benefit to the city and region.
- The festival has been BAFTA qualifying since 2014.
- Opportunities for filmmaking, coding and stop motion animation for up to 250 York children.

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Talent Development & Retention
York's National and International Profile

"Thank you again for the most amazing experience, for your warmth and for bringing together such a lovely family of dedicated artists, filmmakers and beautiful humans. Your mission is one of great urgency and I am so humbled to be able to have been a part of this year's festival"



Launch
© Aesthetica

www.asff.co.uk



Shush, Snip, Rip – Disability Arts & Archives

Who

Explore York, artist Stephen Lee Hodgkins & York People First

What

Artist Stephen Lee Hodgkins and representatives from York People First collaborated with Explore York archivists to create an easy-read summary about the York Union Workhouse in 1899, which was showcased at a public event during York Disability Week 2023.

“Art allows me to say what I can’t say in words. It gives me access to communicate. I looked at York archives from the workhouse and how people with disabilities were sent there and the words used to describe disability. A lot has changed but a lot still the same.”

Alfie Fox, artist

It in turn inspired “Shush, Snip, Rip” Disability Arts showcase in July 2024. This creative response was a collaboration between disabled artists, York People First, Blueberry Academy, and the Leeds-based Pyramid Arts.

Visitors to the exhibition said how it had brought untold stories to light and connected historical and current issues, highlighting the ongoing challenges faced by disabled people and the need for further progress.

“Shush, Snip, Rip” powerfully demonstrated how artistic collaboration can amplify marginalised voices and foster a deeper understanding of both historical and contemporary disability issues.

Impacts

- Enabled inclusive participation through co-creation with disabled artists and disability advocacy organisations.
- Fostered emotional connection and empowerment through creative expression.
- Deepened understanding of disability and identity by linking past and present.
- Supported disabled artists development and developed partnerships across cultural and disability advocacy organisations across York and Leeds.

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Cultural Engagement, Participation & Relevance
Talent Development & Retention
Culture & Wellbeing

“Absolutely fabulous powerful and moving”



The 44, Stephen Lee Hodgkins. Photography © Louis Wong www.exploreyork.org.uk/york-disability-week-2024



York Early Music Festival

“Well organised events, international standard and packed with music that was new to me as well as old favourites.”

Who

The National Centre for Early Music

What

The York Early Music Festival is one of Europe’s key early music festivals, working to celebrate the City of York and to keep its musical reputation flying high. Supported by BBC Radio 3, concerts from York are heard throughout Europe.

Established in 1977 and celebrating its 50th edition in 2026, the festival attracts visitors and artists into the city from across the world, celebrating music from the medieval through 500 years of history to the classical – sharing the music of the past through the canvas of York’s extraordinary built heritage.

At the heart of the festival – and the work of its sister organisation the National Centre for Early Music – is an overwhelming commitment to sharing the joy of music making with the young people of the city, with emerging professionals from across the UK and beyond, and with our audiences.

In 2024 the Flanders Government recognised the festival’s importance to European culture at a reception at York Mansion House, and by supporting a

series of Flanders ensembles within the festival. In 2025 the festival celebrates a new three-year partnership with the Institute Cervantes & Embassy of Spain and throughout 2026 development of the relationship with the French Institute will continue.

Impacts

- Attracts long-stay visitors into the city from across the world
- Concerts are regularly broadcast on BBC Radio 3 clearly identifying York as THE place for early music
- Supports a youth instrumental ensemble, a student ensemble and showcases emerging musicians from across Europe.
- Brings international musicians into York – who are themselves ambassadors for the city
- Celebrates York’s historic environment through music of the period

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Cultural Engagement, Participation & Relevance
Talent Development & Retention
Culture & Wellbeing
York’s National & International Profile

“Incredible value”



NCME: York Early Music Festival *The Sixteen*, York Minster © Christopher Roberts

www.ncem.co.uk



Reignite

Who

Aesthetica & Make It York

What

A major initiative launched in 2023 to ensure that the city was engaging with the UNESCO city of Media Arts Designation. This is about ensuring that the sector is not siloed, but to create a place where all sectors – retail, hospitality, transport, services, heritage and creative could come together to network and collaborate. Each event has a key theme and citywide partners for delivery. Events have included the following topics: reframing the creative industries through the economic impact, large scale cultural programming, global stages, the next generation, unexpected collaborations, and culture makes places.

“Reignite is all about bringing together our amazing creative talents, and working out how we can do even more to make York and North Yorkshire a brilliant place to live and work.”

Impacts

- Attracting on average 250 people per event
- Playing a major role in shifting perceptions and galvanising the entire city around the UNESCO City of Media Arts Designation

“The thing I really love about Reignite is how inspiring it is for the next generation.”

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Place Making

York’s National and International Profile

“Reignite brings the creative people together with the business people. Everybody who is here can find out what technology and art can do for their businesses, and that only happens because of Reignite. It is a fantastic thing to do, and it is a great way to consolidate York as a UNESCO City of Media Arts.”



Aesthetica Film Festival 2024
© Aesthetica

www.reignite.org.uk



The Producing Hub

Who

Next Door But One

What

Across 2024-2025, Next Door But One has supported local creatives with 1:1s, coaching and mentoring, and a programme of bespoke professional development workshops. Local performing arts professionals were assisted to address gaps in opportunities to develop. Practice-based workshops run by directors, writers, dramaturgs and composers, and career development sessions exploring casting, fundraising, marketing, producing, equality, diversity and inclusion and touring models were all delivered through 13 workshops delivered in partnership with York Theatre Royal. A year’s programme of coaching was delivered to 3 emerging/developing theatre companies to advance their work, invest in the growth of their business and realise new ambitions. This provision was driven by next Door But One sharing their areas of best practice with the three companies so they could develop similar infrastructure.

Impacts

- 59% of participants developed an existing skill or interest
- 54% developed a new idea or something they wanted to explore or develop further
- 43% gained more confidence in their own abilities
- 41% appreciated most the insight/knowledge into the business of the arts
- 35% had a noticeable increase in confidence over how to maintain/grow a career in the arts
- 90% would agree or strongly agree with the statement “I know I will apply what I have gained from this professional development to my career and/or personal development”

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Talent Development & Retention

“I find these workshops so vital for developing my knowledge within different sectors of the arts. It equips me with confidence, ability and clarity to go forward and develop my creative fields and find new avenues of work to explore so thank you”



Next Door But One
© James Drury

www.nextdoorbutone.co.uk



Monet in York

Who

York Museums Trust

What

Claude Monet's famous painting "The Water Lily Pond" (1899) formed the exhibition centrepiece which encompassed themes of open-air painting, the celebration and enjoyment of nature and connected the Gallery with York Museum Gardens through a family friendly trail and wildflower garden. Key loans brought together from regional and national galleries were displayed alongside collection works. Creative events and activities included yoga, watercolour painting, family drop-ins, sound bathing, talks delivered in partnership with the university of York, online guided meditation, and creation of tactile objects by neurodivergent students from Pinc College.

Impacts

- 140 artist boxes distributed to community groups
- Monet's "The Water Lily Pond" loaned by the National Gallery
- 32 high-quality loans from national and regional collections
- 70,900 visitors
- 51,500 social media engagements on York Art Gallery accounts

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Cultural Engagement, Participation & Relevance
 Children & Young People
 Culture and Wellbeing
 Talent Development and Retention

"We left feeling inspired and thankful to have had the opportunity to learn more."



National Treasures: Monet in York 'The Water-Lily Pond' at York Art Gallery. © Charlotte Graham Photography.

Supported by:
 The National Gallery, J M Finn, The Little Greene Paint Company, Friends of York Art Gallery and Priory Vodka.



Insight to Impact: Student Placements at York Minster

Who

York Minster

What

York Minster's Department of Collections and Interpretation hosts a range of placements for postgraduate students studying at the city's universities and beyond. Students are involved in voluntary internships, placements integrated within degree programmes, and specific projects designed to expand research beyond academia. The students bring rich and wide-ranging bases of knowledge, and each placement project is targeted to address key strategic priorities. The work undertaken by the students increases the capacity and outputs of the departments. The placements provide the students with the opportunity to hone their research skills in a real-world environment. Where possible, cross-departmental work will be embedded within the placements, which brings the students into contact with the breadth of activity that happens across the organisation.

Impacts

- 100 days of engagement work recorded across 2024
- 130,000 impressions across social media campaign
- Measurable skill development for the students

Aligned to Strategic Priorities

Children & Young People
 Talent Development and Retention



© Sam Ward

www.yorkminster.org



Closing Comments

Culture fuels creativity – through music, art, history, literature, and performance, people express their thoughts, emotions, and experiences in unique and powerful ways. It gives people a sense of identity and connects individuals to their community, their heritage and their traditions, helping them understand where they come from and who they are, and as such it should be accessible to all.

Culture, heritage and the arts also **play a vital role in maintaining health, aiding recovery, and improving life outcome** – when access to culture is open to all it ensures these benefits are shared widely and fairly.

Similarly, **culture fuels our economy, supporting growth and regeneration**, development of creative industries and attraction of visitors to our vibrant city.

Culture resonates throughout York, creating a distinctive place where outstanding, world-renowned heritage comes together with a cutting-edge contemporary approach to creativity.

Thanks to

We would like to thank the various organisations that have taken the time to participate in the review of York's Creative Future; your enthusiasm, insights and passion for cultural development for the benefit of communities in York and visitors to the city, has enabled this renewed strategic focus and provided the conditions for ongoing success.

Kathryn Blacker York Museums Trust

Jenny Layfield Explore York Libraries & Archive

Delma Tomlin & Cherry Fricker National Centre for Early Music

Chris Edwards CREATE

Andrew Morrison York Civic Trust

Cherie Federico Aesthetica

David Jennings York Archaeological Trust

Esther Richardson & Mandy Smith Pilot Theatre

Helen Rawson & David Colthup York Minster

Charlotte Kingston & Andrew McLean National Railway Museum

Laura McMillan Grand Opera House

Matt Harper-Hardcastle Next Door But One

Owen Turner United by Design

Paul Crewes York Theatre Royal

Rachel Bean York BID

Tom Higham Mediale

Ben Porter ACollective





Glossary

Accessibility

Ensuring that cultural spaces and activities are available to everyone, regardless of physical, economic, or social barriers.

Arts Council England (ACE)

The national development agency for creativity and culture in England. Responsible for championing, developing and investing in arts and cultural experiences to enrich people's lives.

Co-creation

The process of jointly developing cultural content or experiences with communities or stakeholders.

Collaboration

Working together to plan, develop and produce.

Combined Authority

Formed of two or more local councils, either led by a directly elected Mayor (Mayoral Combined Authority) or without a Mayor (Combined Authority). North Yorkshire and York is a Combined Mayoral Authority.

Cultural Assets

Buildings, locations and other features considered historically or socially significant. Physical and intangible resources that contribute to the cultural life of a region, such as museums, galleries, historic sites, artworks or traditions.

Cultural Engagement

Participation or active involvement in cultural activities such as arts, heritage, and creative experiences, often with a focus on inclusivity and relevance to diverse communities.

Cultural Entitlement

The right to take part in cultural activity. The principle that everyone, regardless of age, location, or personal circumstance, should have the opportunity to engage with and be inspired by a wide range of cultural activities.

Creative Health

Creative and cultural activities and approaches that benefit health and wellbeing, including social prescribing and therapeutic engagement.

Creative Industries

Economic sectors that include advertising, architecture, design, fashion, film, music, publishing, software, TV, and video games, driven by creativity and intellectual property.

Creative Partnership

A collaboration between individuals, stakeholders or organisations to deliver a shared creative vision and associated cultural or artistic projects.

Cultural Offer

Activities or spaces (online or in person) provided by a cultural organisation.



NCEM: York Early Music Festival
The Gesualdo Six Chapter
House, York Minster
© Guy Tudor

Cultural Strategy

A strategic plan that outlines a clear vision for how culture can improve an area with priorities, goals, and actions to support and develop its cultural activities and infrastructure.

D/deaf

An inclusive term that refers to both deaf (lowercase 'd') individuals with hearing loss and Deaf (uppercase 'D') individuals who identify with Deaf culture and use sign language.

Growth Rate

Basic growth rates are expressed as the difference between two values in time in terms of a percentage of the first value.

Heritage

Cultural legacy, history and historical assets, including buildings, traditions, natural and built landscapes and artefacts that are preserved and celebrated for their significance.

Inclusive Participation

Ensuring that cultural activities are accessible to all, regardless of age, background, ability, or socioeconomic status.

Integrated Care Systems (ICS)

Collaborative partnerships between health and care organisations to improve population health and wellbeing.

Intergenerational Engagement

Interaction and activities that bring together people of different age groups to share, learn, and create.

Lower Socioeconomic Background

Individuals or communities with less access to financial, health and education resources, and opportunities.

Media Arts

Creative disciplines that use digital technology and media platforms, including film, animation, gaming, and interactive storytelling.

Place Making

A collaborative planning and design approach that uses arts, culture, and heritage to shape public spaces and foster community identity.

SEND

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities; refers to children and young people who require additional support to access education and cultural activities.

Social Prescribing

A healthcare approach where individuals are referred to non-clinical services, such as arts and cultural activities, to improve wellbeing.

Start-up

A newly established business or organisation, often innovative and entrepreneurial in nature.

Strategic Priorities

Key focus areas identified in the strategy to guide cultural development:

- Cultural Engagement, Participation and Relevance
- Place Making
- Children and Young People
- Talent Development and Retention
- Culture and Wellbeing
- York's National and International Profile

Sustainability

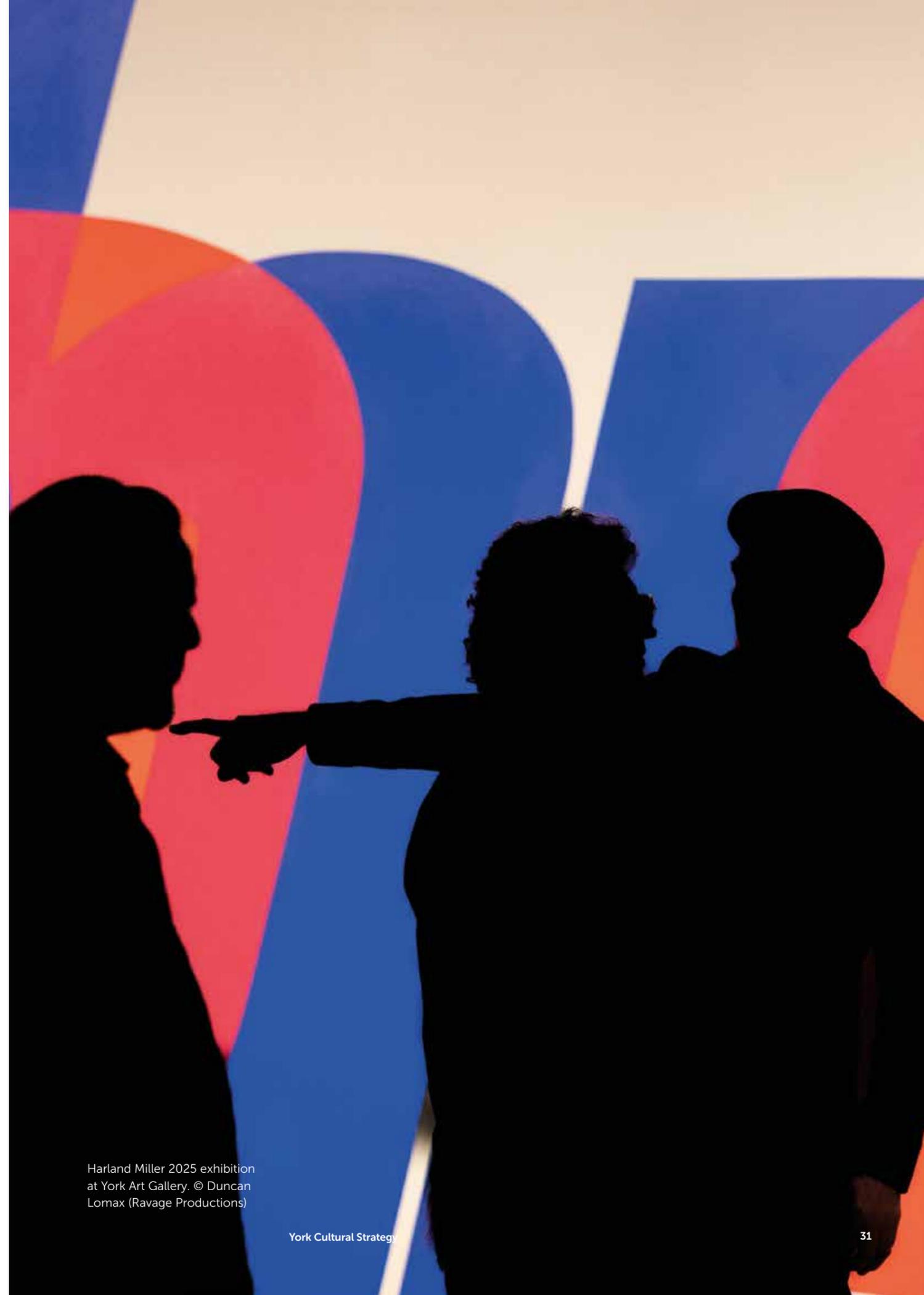
Ensuring that cultural activities and assets can be maintained and developed over the long term, both financially and environmentally.

UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts

A designation awarded by UNESCO recognising cities that promote creativity and innovation in media arts.

Wellbeing

The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy, which can be enhanced through engagement with cultural activities.



Harland Miller 2025 exhibition at York Art Gallery. © Duncan Lomax (Ravage Productions)

