

YMT Scrutiny Review

Online Consultation Responses

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| 1. | <p>I attended the York residents' weekend with my children, as I do every year. I was really saddened this year to see a huge queue at the art gallery. The gallery was rammed. I understand it was the same at the museums. Locals want to have access to these venues, and should be able to 'pop' in with their children for educational visits over the year.</p> <p>As I understand it, numbers have dramatically fallen for visits to the art gallery since these charges have been brought in.</p> <p>Would it not be possible to agree / write in to the contract free access for York residents to the York Museums Trust properties one weekend a month? There is much evidence that people who get into a gallery or museum free then make a donation, buy a cake, or something from the shop. This would be a 'win win' – locals are happy, the gallery and museums still get some revenue.</p> |
| 2. | <p>It would be a gesture of goodwill to allow those of us that work in York to have free admission too. Our shopping in the main is done in York, we park our cars in York, we work for York employers but we get no benefit at all.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Thoughts on York City Art Gallery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside of the controversy surrounding the decision to charge an exorbitant fee of £7.50 for entry to the Gallery, not enough has been done to heighten awareness of the Gallery, currently a modest-looking building on the York street scene. More could be done to involve the public in the life of the Gallery. The York public feel excluded and visitors are not encouraged to visit. • The display of old master painting on the old City wall section to the right-hand side of the Gallery should be a useful pointer as to what can be found inside the building. There are no posters or banners (unlike the neighbouring King's Manor, which has a sizeable banner attached to its railings) to attract the attention of passers-by. • Inside the Gallery, there are no "What's On" information or direction signs to any of the exhibition spaces and the atmosphere is not inviting. The activity room is a useful facility, but compared to other galleries in the region, it could be more |

family-friendly. Usually, galleries provide “props” such as clothing, hats, brollies, etc, for parents and children to dress up as characters in the Gallery`s paintings, or for life drawing practice. The current Portraits exhibition would be a logical place for these.

- Art students at the York College, St John`s University and the University of York could be asked to provide volunteers to go out into Exhibition Square and the neighbouring streets with leaflets advertising Gallery events. Does the Gallery make the effort to place posters and leaflets in local university Art departments, or to give seminars on the York collection?
- The Gallery has always turned its back on the thriving artist`s community in York. Hull, Scarborough and Leeds Art Galleries all hold Open Exhibitions, which in addition to recognising local artists also raise funds from entry fees and commissions from sales. Separate Open Exhibitions can be arranged for painting, print-making and ceramics. The City Gallery could host the annual taster exhibition for York Open Studios.
- York has been home to many artists and craftspeople who have become renowned in their fields and the gallery should be aware of local artists other than Mark Hearld, notwithstanding the good job he does. There should be retrospective exhibitions by such artists as Sally Arnup, Mick Arnup, Neil Willis, Austin Hayes, Harold Gosney and the York Four (David Lloyd Jones, Reg Williams, Russell Platt and John Langton). The Art College, previously part of the Gallery building before moving out of the City centre, was a jumping-off point for many who are currently world-renowned: Paul Wilks RA (painting, prints); Bruno Rominelli RCA (glassware, designer of “Rising Star” trophy for BAFTA TV Awards ceremony each year for the last decade); Andrew Gifford RCA (painting); Neville Astley OBE (BAFTA Award-winning film animator), etc, etc. Look them up to see how well-regarded they are!
- There seems to be no interaction between the York City Art Gallery and the private art galleries in the City, which have survived as commercial entities for many years. These gallery owners are valuable resources of knowledge and expertise and could be invited to curate exhibitions- Ails and Greg McGee, Terry Brett, etc.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are some major private companies in York which support the arts in various ways, not least financially. These include Harrowells, with a close association with York Open Studios for many years and Hiscox, which works in association with the Schoolhouse Gallery. |
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