

Make It York

Quarterly Narrative

October 2021 – January 2022

Content

Visitor Economy	4
Destination Management Organisation (DMO)	4
Leisure Marketing.....	4
.....	4
#LoveYork with LNER.....	4
Haunted York.....	4
Christmas in York.....	5
Digital Channels	5
Visit York	5
Make It York.....	6
PR & Comms	7
Visit York Membership	7
Publications	7
Visitor Information Centre (VIC)	8
York Pass	8
Tourism Sector Development	9
Business Tourism Marketing	9
Meetings and conference enquiries.....	9
Website development	9
UNESCO toolkit.....	10
Research & Insight	10
Tourism Advisory Board	10
Culture, Wellbeing and Events	11
York Culture Strategy, York's Creative Future	11
Culture Strategy governance and new Culture Forum.....	11
Culture Sector Communications	12
Action Plan.....	12
UNESCO designation	15
City Centre, Events and Markets	17
City Centre Vibrancy	17
City Centre and Open Spaces	17
Events	18
Events and Programmes Committee.....	18
Make It York events	18
Calendar of Events.....	19
Events Strategy and Events Framework.....	19
Commercial Events	20
.....	20
Tenders.....	21
Shambles Market	22
Christmas.....	22
Training/Development	22
Rules & Regulations	22

Working with YMTF..... 23
Social Media..... 23
Partnerships..... 23
Events..... 23

Visitor Economy

Destination Management Organisation (DMO)

Leisure Marketing

DMO:

- Leading on leisure marketing of York to make the most of York's offer and attract visitors to the city.
- Maintain and develop Visit York as a membership body supporting and developing the tourism sector.
- Work with the visitor economy sector to ensure that a quality product is offered to both visitors AND residents, and that it is accessible and welcoming to all.
- Encourage all York residents to enjoy the tourism and cultural offer of York including year-round promotion and targeted residents' events.

#LoveYork with LNER

Launched on 20 September, we worked closely with LNER in pushing out Autumn and Christmas messaging for short breaks to York across the London region. Promoting travel by train from London, highlighting the ease and convenience of travelling to the city by train whilst also showcasing York's amazing offer. Incorporating outdoor advertising on the London Underground for a period of 2 weeks, featuring key campaign partners - York Minster, National Railway Museum, JORVIK Viking Centre, Castle Howard and The Grand, York. We also ran radio advertising with both Classic FM London and Capital FM London and we purposely used 2 different radio stations with slightly different creative – Classic FM for the 'empty nester' audience and Capital FM for a younger 'go getter' audience.

Over 13,000 competition entries with 4,000 new contacts gathered. E-newsletter to over 100,000 contacts on the Classic and Capital databases.

Haunted York

We ran a month-long 'Haunted York' campaign from 1 - 31 October, in partnership with both York Dungeon and First Bus. Officially known as the most haunted city in Europe, we worked hard to make sure we retained this title. By extending the campaign to cover the whole of October, we targeted pre-nesters from early October onwards and families in the run up to / during the weeks when the school holidays were taking place. We created an umbrella for all Haunted content on our Visit York Halloween hub and developed a spooky new campaign video and photography.

We achieved a #hauntedyork social reach of 386k, with 92k views of the video we produced in conjunction with York Dungeon and First Bus.

Comparing with 2019, we witnessed a 54% increase in webpage views and a 1021% increase in Haunted campaign traffic from social.

York won Group Leisure's Best UK Destination Award.

Christmas in York

50K copies of the Christmas guide were produced and a brand new Christmas set of videos for sharing via social and digital channels. We advertised the festival from September onwards as part of our national campaign with LNER in London and to coach operators throughout the UK via Group and trade magazines and trade PR. Guides were also circulated via the Living North Christmas Fairs in both York and Newcastle. Really positive feedback on the layout and content of the market. Christmas research took place and is currently ready to be evaluated for key outcomes.

Digital Channels

Visit York

During the period of 1 October to 1 January, the Visit York website was visited by 630,031 users, an increase of 16.37% compared to the previous highs of 2019.

There were 1.6 million page views of the site during this period, the most viewed pages being 'Christmas' and its sub-pages, 'What's On', and 'Things To Do'. The site was developed with the introduction of a new 'Membership login' module with improved usability for Visit York members and work continued on other developments including a new accommodation booking service and improved media news feed.

Visit York social media channels received a record 6.4 million impressions during this period, 233,470 engagements and gained 6,312 new followers – numbers aided by the new and hugely popular #VisitYorkAdvent social media giveaway ran with gifted prizes from Visit York members throughout December.

Looking at December specifically, 174,705 users visited the Visit York website, which is a **94.31% increase on** December 2019 and a **13% increase** on the previous record high from December 2019 (153,248 users). The most popular pages were:

1. Christmas Market event page (104,776 page views)
2. Christmas Hub
3. Home
4. Christmas Market Trader List
5. What's On
6. Things to Do
7. Search
8. Things to do – Attractions

9. Christmas Events
10. Shopping

We've also recently launched an updated membership login which makes it easier for members to edit their listings, and we're continuing to work on new features such as an integrated accommodation booking service and updated media news feed.

In December, **Visit York social channels once again broke the record for the most new followers gained in a single month - 2,636 and** beating last month's previous high of 2,229.

Much of this was down to the hugely popular #VisitYorkAdvent giveaway, which ran on Visit York social media channels and required users to retweet the giveaway post and follow both us and the Visit York member in question. It resulted in:

- **5K** unique entries
- A potential reach on Twitter of **5.4 million (!)**
- **17.3K** engagements
- Reach of **150,000** on YorkMix radio – as each day's prize was announced to their listeners
- Thousands of new followers for Visit York members!

Visit York now has a total of **132,619** followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The **102 posts** on Visit York channels throughout December generated the following:

- **1.7 million impressions** (up from the previous record high of 1.1 million in December 2020)
- **74,036 engagements** (up from the previous record high of 38,763 in December 2020)

Make It York

During the period of 1 October to 1 January, 4,336 users visited the Make It York website which resulted in 8,745 page views. The 'Meet the Team' page was the most viewed page on the site during this period after the home page, closely followed by 'Work with us'. New content was developed for the website during this period detailing Make It York's role in events run in the city, and a number of digital forms were created to allow businesses and organisations to easily submit relevant information regarding their applications.

Meanwhile, social media coverage on MIY platforms resulted in 72,008 impressions, 2,243 engagements, and 970 link clicks to the Make It York website, while gaining 207 new followers across all social media channels.

PR & Comms

Between 1st October and the 1st January, there were:

Total News Volume: 228

Total News Reach: 31,495,556

Total News Value: £1,411,008.17

Topics of focus for this period included Haunted York and Halloween activity, VYCON announcement, Visit York Tourism Awards finalists announcement, intro interviews with Sarah Loftus, York Christmas Festival and St Nicholas Fair.

National coverage was secured in titles such as: The Sun, Woman & Home, Daily Mirror, Prima, i Newspaper, City AM, Mail Online, Best, Woman and The Daily Telegraph.

Local and regional coverage in a range of titles including York Press, York Mix, Yorkshire Post, Northern Echo, Harrogate Advertiser, Yorkshire Live, Newcastle Journal, Hull Daily Mail and Leicester Mercury.

Broadcast coverage included BBC Breakfast, BBC Radio York, York Mix Radio, Greatest Hits Radio, YO1 Radio, Jorvik Radio and ITV Tyne Tees.

We had five press trips during this period which we supported with itineraries including: The Daily Telegraph, Hearst Magazines, Postcards Magazine (Travel Leaders), TravelWise and Express & Star.

Visit York Membership

We had **37** new members join between October and January, **11** in December, making this the best ever December total. This gives a yearly total of **116** new members, which is the highest level of new members since the membership model started.

Retention rate for this year is **93%**. We now have **832** members in total.

Member events have been held weekly, examples include, a Christmas showcase at Fairfax House, Carol Services, B2B member forums and a Van Gogh experience.

Member health checks were offered along with training sessions on Google my business, social media etc.

An annual member survey will be distributed in February with analysis being presented before the new financial year.

Publications

The Christmas Guide was distributed with an 80% pick up rate. Distribution channels included NPD, Info Display, VIC, Shambles Market traders, Christmas market, F and B options and Park and Ride sites.

Mini Guide will have a reduced number of pages (48-72 pages) due to a diminished interest in advertising. The increase in pricing for print paper is volatile and changing daily, therefore it was felt best to stick to initial deadlines. Advertisers include flagship attractions, smaller attractions, retailers, food and drink outlets, and a limited number of hotels.

Spring/Summer guide – sales are now open and the guide will be published in April.

Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

Footfall is steady and we are operating with reduced opening hours (10am until 4pm) until February half-term. The leaflet room is currently closed but reopened during Residents Festival and will open again during February half-term. Our Volunteer Co-ordinator is exploring options and roles for our Volunteers including distributing literature at York Train Station, as LNER has granted us a licence to do this.

York Pass

Online sales continue to be steady with trade sales starting to show signs of reigniting.

The Pass usage amounts to 5.2 visits per pass v 6.51 visits per pass in 2019.

Increased costs at flagship attractions will result in increased YP pricing, particularly child passes and one day adult passes. Increase amounts are yet to be confirmed, but it is anticipated that it will be c. 10% per pass.

Work is underway to develop an attraction pre-booking facility within the digital York Pass, which will allow pass holders to have a smoother and easier pre-booking process. It is hoped this will be live in late March.

Onboarding new attractions and an Explorer Pass are also being explored.

Tourism Sector Development

Tourism Sector Development

- Attract new business tourism to the city by providing a clear and effective process for responding to conference enquiries with high quality response and support and working proactively to attract new enquiries appropriate to the city)
- Work with tourism sector businesses to increase their productivity and help them become even better employers, paying decent wages and offering flexible employment, by promoting the adoption of the Good Business Charter. Facilitate cross-sector work to improve York centre as a destination for business, visitors and residents including:-
 - (a) leading on approaches to maximise private-sector led investment into city centre improvement; and
 - (b) working with the Council and with businesses to stimulate a stronger evening economy.

Business Tourism Marketing

Meetings and conference enquiries

Business tourism activity continues to focus on supporting event organisers planning meetings and events in York this year and beyond. The majority of current enquiries are for domestic events, with international interest slower to return. These are a mixture of rescheduled events postponed during the pandemic, new enquiries from organisers exploring York as an appealing option to encourage in-person attendance rather than virtual and some existing clients keen to return based on positive previous experiences, e.g.

Feedback from Newcastle University (organiser of a student and staff event with external visitors from industry) *“My experience of the Visit York team was so rewarding in early 2020 that I returned to them without any hesitation for another event I am organising in 2022. The team are so efficient and friendly that they make the whole experience much less time consuming and take any unnecessary stress away from you as the organiser.”*

There are 8 active enquiries at the moment for 2022, including a political studies conference for 700 in conjunction with the University of York, an international bee health conference for 150 organised by FERA, smaller bookings from Newcastle University and a workshop series with the Royal Association of Engineering. Visit York support includes venue/accommodation finding, delegate travel deals, gala dinners and social programme suggestions.

Website development

Ongoing work is being undertaken with our digital team to develop a venue search function within the conference section of visityork.org to replace the existing third-party search, which will give greater control over appearance and functionality.

UNESCO toolkit

Content creation and design liaison for the new UNESCO toolkit, launched in conjunction with a virtual event during York Business Week. The [toolkit](#) contains information, links and [digital assets](#) to encourage businesses to find out more about York's UNESCO designation and get involved. More social assets will be added on a regular basis to refresh and update content.

Upcoming January activity:

- The first sales managers' meeting of the year, with a presentation by LNER to highlight business travel product and benefits to key Visit York member venues.
- Ongoing preparation for MeetGB (15 February), Visit Britain's flagship event for UK DMOs and suppliers to connect with international buyers in the meetings and events sector. This event will be virtual again this year.
- Continuing conversations with members regarding stand partnership opportunities to return to domestic trade shows such as the Conference and Hospitality Show Leeds (24 May 2022) and The Meetings Show (London, 29-30 June 2022).

Research & Insight

Our face-to-face visitor surveys continued to take place via QA Research on a monthly basis, and we carried out 200 Christmas markets specific surveys and a Christmas markets trader survey.

We have also received the 2020 data in the correct format from QA Research to pass through to Tourism South East, who can start working on our 2020 economic impact modelling.

Helen Wilkinson started with MIY as our new Research and Insights Executive on 11th January and her first priority was to focus on analysing and reporting back on the Christmas market surveys.

Tourism Advisory Board

- Convene and facilitate a TAB for York, which brings together a diverse range of stakeholders in the sector and has an independent chair.
- Take a lead in the development and delivery of a tourism strategy as part of the city's new Economic Strategy.

The Tourism Advisory Board has continued to meet on a monthly basis and the minutes from the November meeting are available on request. The December meeting was an informal in-person networking session, so no minutes were taken. The February meeting took place on the 11th February.

Culture, Wellbeing and Events

York Culture Strategy, *York's Creative Future*

- Drive an ambitious and cohesive programme of cultural development for the city covering the arts, heritage and creative industries.
- Work with the CLG to lead on the development and evaluation of the Culture Strategy, ensuring full engagement with other city strategies and plans, including the Local Plan, Skills,
- Deliver/commission events both for the creative sector and for others, e.g. Culture Awards or equivalent that are profile raising, increase collaboration and demonstrate best practice.
- Convene and support the CLG as the strategy “owners”, providing the secretariat and driving the agenda, resourcing the partnership and co-chairing alongside an elected cultural leader.
- Develop a sustainable independent executive structure and constitution for the CLG.
- Receive regular strategic advice from the both the cultural and creative sectors maintaining appropriate liaison arrangements to inform the Make It York board of directors and to steer the company’s plans.
- Maintain positive and comprehensive relationships with national and regional strategic support bodies.
- Put together the necessary partnerships to make funding bids to deliver the Culture Strategy.
- Advise and support cultural providers with regard to new initiatives liaising with the council as appropriate.

Culture Strategy governance and new Culture Forum

The governance documents and process to change the Cultural Leaders Group (CLG) into an open and inclusive Culture Forum have now been completed, with the CLG Strategy Steering Group signing off the final Culture Forum and Exec Terms of Reference in November 2021. This then passed to the CLG and has now been ratified. It is anticipated that this change will enable a broader and more diverse group of representatives to contribute to future direction of the Culture Strategy, and to enable knowledge sharing, partnership development and network building.

Membership to the Culture Forum opened in December 2021, with cultural and creative partners sharing through their networks and PR launching about the forum in early January. The Culture Forum has thus far attracted 60 new members, representing a broad range of creative freelancers, as well as members from a wider range of cultural and creative organisations. This makes a total membership of c.100 and counting.

There will be two introductory ‘taster sessions’ for new Culture Forum members in early January to provide background on the Culture Strategy and to answer any questions they might have. The first Culture Forum meeting will then take place on 27 January 2022.

Once forum members have had the chance to establish themselves, we will start the process to elect an Executive Group, who will oversee the direction and implementation of the strategy, (being elected to have authority in this by the Forum, as their representatives). This group will take over from the existing CLG Strategy Steering Group. We anticipate beginning the election process in late spring.

Culture Sector Communications

MIY continues to provide a fortnightly Culture e-news update, with latest culture news, funding updates, and MIY news, which we encourage the sector to contribute to, to act as a further information channel. We have now expanded its readership – while previously being a resource for CLG members, it is now open to anyone across the sector and beyond who is interested in signing up to it (which can be done via the MIY website). The e-news currently has a readership of 130 people, and growing.

We have now completed the Culture Hub on the MIY website, which hosts the Culture Strategy and acts as a hub for the city’s creative and cultural activity. In addition to complete web pages for each of the Culture Strategy’s six Key Priorities - Engagement, Placemaking, Children and Young People, Talent Development, Culture and Wellbeing, and York’s National and International Profile – we now have an up-to-date main Culture Hub homepage, a page with information about the new Culture Forum and how to sign up, and a new page for the Culture Strategy itself, which we are also using to upload and share quarterly updates on strategy progress.

Action Plan

The culture, wellbeing and events team produced an action plan for the strategy in early 2021, which takes the form of a RAG report with key actions to achieve the outcomes/recommendations within the strategy and a quarterly reporting framework. From this, we also produce a quarterly written update report.

Quarter four progress

The progress across each Key Priority for the strategy for the fourth quarter has included:

Engagement:

- Building on the research and initial meetings, MIY have become established members of engagement focused groups, including 100% Digital York, CYC’s Our Big Conversation consultancy group, and the MCN network.
- Connections are now being established and built with organisations tackling racism in York and diversity specialists, including Speak Up Diversity. The CLG publicly supported the motion for York to become an anti-racist and inclusive city in October 2021.

- Much engagement work is focused around attracting new participants to the Culture Forum, with over 60 freelancers and new organisations signed up to join so far. MIY are running taster sessions throughout January to introduce the Culture Strategy and Forum to new members.
- Plans for Makers and Shapers have progressed, with community engagement at the heart of the design process and a legacy project to ensure future engagement. A bid is being prepared to support the programme of events and activities planned for 2022 - 24.

Placemaking:

- Creative Workspace meetings continue between Guild of Media Arts, York Creatives, University of York, CYC, York Conservation Trust and MIY representatives, to consider availability and need of creative workspaces within the city, and to help simplify processes to access these for creatives.
- Conversations are ongoing with regional/ national culture reps – including re-establishing links with Selby Culture Reps; new contact with Tees Valley reps, and new contact with Harrogate reps following the opening of the Culture Forum.
- Links are also being developed across the north as part of the Northern Culture Network, which is a consortium of northern cultural consortia, which shares information and is advocating together for the importance of northern culture.

Children and Young People:

- MIY are supporting REACH, the Cultural Education Partnership, and have created and maintain a web page for them to showcase cultural and creative activity for children and young people in York, on the Culture hub of the MIY website, as they do not have their own website.
- REACH have been offered a temporary home by York Theatre Royal and are working to unlock funding from IVE to progress and expand their work. MIY continue to look at how to further support the project, given limited capacity (volunteer-based).
- MIY partnered with St Barnabas Primary School, Leeman Road, to decorate a Christmas Tree in the Minster Christmas Tree Festival. Children designed baubles on the theme of their favourite thing about York.

Talent Development:

- Ongoing conversations with organisations and higher education providers to help shape the direction of this priority, including meeting with University of York Careers department to discuss changes in talent development during the pandemic and issues facing students in the city.
- Developing relationship with CYC data department to facilitate up-to-date data on the cultural and creative sector, including number of people it now employs in the city.

- SLAP have gone live with their artist accelerator programme, to support new artists in the city. This is supported by an Arts Council England grant, which MIY wrote in support of and we are providing support in kind.

Culture and Wellbeing

- Two workshops were held for the Cultural Commissioning Partnership in late 2021, facilitated by MIY (who chair and act as secretariat to the group) - to create an action plan across communications and engagement, funding, people and strategy, to ensure a joined-up citywide approach to culture and wellbeing for partners.
- Next steps will be to finalise the action plan and start to implement key deliverables, which include a range of activities from site visits, best practice review, to future joint funding bids and building engagement.
- Nineteen York-based charities, social enterprises, voluntary and community groups, received cultural wellbeing grants in the summer, spanning a diverse range of activities, including fairy trails, youth theatre workshops, excavation projects and creative cafes. These activities continued over this period. Evaluation will begin when the funding period ends at 31 March, with case studies developed for the Culture and Wellbeing hub on the MIY website, to build the evidence bank for how culture supports wellbeing.

York's National and International Profile:

- The UNESCO Creative City partner packs launched during York Business Week (please see UNESCO section below for full update).
- The cultural leaders have been supporting and inputting into the listings guide process.

UNESCO designation

- Support the Guild of Media Arts as the focal point for UNESCO City of Media Arts designation by facilitating and undertaking activities that maximise the potential benefits of York's UNESCO designation and ensure sustained development in line with the Four Year Monitoring Report and Plan of 2018.
- Work with UNESCO Focal Point – the Guild of Media Arts – and the Council to deliver 2018- 22 UNESCO Creative City objectives.
- Support the focal point to convene wider stakeholder groups in the city to maximise the impact of the designation to the city.
- Communicate regularly with the creative sector e.g. through mailings and social media.
- Promote the creative sector through media channels highlighting York's profile as a Creative city.
- Monitor and evaluate progress leading to the 2022 Report to UNESCO.
- Support the Focal Point to collaborate with UK Creative Cities and other designations, UK UNESCO Commission, Media Arts Network, and Creative Cities Network.
- Promote the designation within the city, e.g. through the BID, Retail and Hospitality Forums.

The UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts working group of the Guild of Media Arts, York Mediale, City of York Council and Make It York, continues to meet on a regular basis.

A new toolkit and social media assets have been created for York's UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts designation, in partnership by Make It York, City of York Council, The Guild of Media Arts, and York Mediale. The packs include key information on York as a UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts, the aims of Creative Cities around creative activity and collaboration, information on key media arts organisations in the city, and how partners can get involved in promoting York as a UNESCO Creative City. This launched in November, as part of a York UNESCO Creative City event at Business Week, organised by MIY and the Guild of Media Arts, which attracted a small, but highly engaged audience of c.25 participants. The packs and event promotion were shared across MIY and partner organisation channels.

The event featured a panel discussion with experts who had benefitted from the designation, discussing its benefits for the city and local businesses. The panel included Oswin Wan, Lead Digital Artist, Viridian FX; Olivia Chatten, Business Development Manager, York Science Park, and Master of the Guild of Media Arts; Tom Higham, Creative Director, York Mediale; Dee Patton-Statham, Headteacher, St Georges Roman Catholic Primary School, and was Chaired by Prof. Chris Bailey, Clerk of the Guild of Media Arts.

The next steps for the UNESCO working group include producing an engagement plan and identifying further events and opportunities to take part in, to continue to profile raise for the designation.

The Guild of Media Arts and Mediale have been speaking with colleagues in Viborg, Denmark, a fellow UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts, about joint working and collaboration. This has

been supported by MIY, and very positively received by both countries' arts councils. Plans for a digital residency exchange are now in the early stages.

The Head of Culture and Wellbeing attends Guild of Media Arts Court Meetings as an Observer. Louise Saw, Business Growth Manager at CYC, will also be joining the Court as an Observer from 2022. The business team have been very supportive of the new toolkits and helping to share communications about them across CYC channels.

City Centre, Events and Markets

City Centre Vibrancy

City Centre:

- Make proposals to the Council for any new ideas for commercial exploitation of the Footstreets, Eye of York and Tower Gardens and Knavesmire.
- Contributing expertise, ideas and experiences to the MyCityCentre project which will set the city centre strategy.
- Contribute to the Council's Retail Strategy, and join with the BID, Retail Forum, Indie York and others to attempt to attract appropriate new retail operators to the city.
- Create a high-profile calendar of city centre festivals, activities and events ensuring that partners such as the BID are enabled to contribute. Identify times when new events would add value to the York experience and work on filling these gaps.
- Promote the events calendar through all appropriate means including through highly visible city centre information.

City Centre and Open Spaces

Blue Sky Acoustics were commissioned to produce a noise management plan for the Knavesmire in line with the premises licence. This will ensure all future events can adhere to agreed noise levels and site planning to future proof the site for events and mitigate against previous noise issues. This will be in place by the end of the first quarter of 2022.

We are currently working with the Council to create an event booking process to transfer enquiries about local council land (West Bank Park, Rowntree Park, Rawcliffe Country Park and Hull Road Park) working with Friends groups and Environment and Community officers. This will also include the transfer of premises licences back to CYC as well as the Performing Rights Society licences for these sites.

The Culture and Wellbeing team are members of the My City Centre stakeholders' group, providing input into the current vision document and consultation on events across the city and their positive impact on creating a vibrant city centre.

The team also sits on the following partnership groups: City Centre Anti-Social Behaviour, Counter Terrorism task group and Publicly Accessible locations working group.

Activations are taking place throughout the footstreets that we manage and include charity events, product launches and Council initiatives.

Events

Events and Programmes Committee

A cross-departmental Events Committee has now been established to oversee the delivery of MIY's annual calendar of events, review applications for third-party events, raise the profile for events, review tenders and ensure a responsive and coordinated internal approach.

This group is currently meeting on a weekly basis to ensure close oversight of event planning and agree necessary adaptations to events, in light of the continuing uncertainties around Covid and potential restrictions.

As part of the Committee's work, an Events section is now available on the MIY website, which outlines MIY's role in delivering, attracting and facilitating events and festivals, profile MIY-led events, and explains how to book an event/hire city centre space – along with associated online documents and booking forms. The website can be viewed [here](#)

Alongside the improved events booking processes, a City Centre Space Rate Card was approved by Senior Management Team and was implemented from January 2022. This has allowed for a fairer, more streamlined approach and is competitive in relation to other cities.

The Committee has also implemented policy relating to the use of city centre space by local charities and community groups, allowing for 2 days per month to be offered free of charge and use of the King's Square area.

Make It York events

Visit York Tourism Conference was held on **Thursday 13th January 2022**. This was moved to an online virtual format given the current uncertainties around Covid and high rates of transmission. Participants for the event stands at c.280 virtual attendees. The event scrutinised what kind of tourism we want for the future, how can we get more from York's visitor economy and ensure we create value for the city, and what the future of international tourism looks like. Speakers included Group NAO, VisitBritain, and Glasgow Convention Bureau. MIY MD Sarah Loftus opened the event and Chair Greg Dyke closed the event.

Residents Festival the traditional Residents Festival went ahead across the weekend of **29/30th January 2022**, with offers and discounts for residents from attractions and local businesses. In addition to this, City of York Council are supporting the development of a city centre offer to enhance the impact of the current offer, with a programmed stage of mixed acts, curated by the York Venue Network in the city, and an entertainment hub area on Parliament St. This will go ahead on 2nd and 3rd April, rather than alongside the traditional offer, due to covid considerations.

Ice Trail has been moved from February to the weekend of **5/6th March 2022**, to ensure a safe and successful event, given present uncertainties with Covid and based on guidance from the city's Safety Advisory Group, Public Health and City of York Council. There will be over 40

sponsored sculptures across the city, curated to an 'Around the World' theme. Sponsors consist of retailers, attractions, business services, restaurants and bars. CYC are supporting the event with a grant which will enable a 'headline' sculpture and evaluation report, helping to secure the viability of the event for future years.

Visit York Tourism Awards will take place on **Thursday 3rd March 2022** and will be held at York Racecourse. Judging has now finished and applications were submitted by York businesses and organisations, against select categories. These categories are set in line with the national VisitEngland criteria alongside two local awards, specific to York. The Awards event is an evening of entertainment, a three-course meal and the awards themselves. Sponsorship is requested for each category and is now finalised. LNER are headline sponsors.

Trailblazers Festival MIY are working with York Civic Trust on plans for a city-wide celebration of York's heritage spanning 2022-2024. Current partners are a broad coalition of heritage, voluntary and cultural groups, with over twenty organisations and societies, committed to developing and delivering a programme of events and activities that will celebrate and build links between the past and the present in the city. Our ambition is to make York Trailblazers city-wide in its action and international in its impact and collaboration by utilising existing networks, especially York's UNESCO Creative City status and creating new ones.

Rugby League World Cup 2022 due to the postponement of the championships in 2021, revised plans are now being discussed with the steering group to look at community engagement and awareness across the 2022 incorporating partner and third-party events. The budget for 2021 will be carried over to 2022, with minor costs incurred from the postponement.

Calendar of Events

The Events Committee will oversee the delivery of MIY's annual calendar of events.

The Committee are currently working on a calendar of events for 2022, but given current uncertainties around Covid we have had to adapt our spring events offer and this has affected forward planning for the annual offer (given postponements of events early in the year and needing to keep back-up dates free in case of further Covid waves/ government restrictions).

Events Strategy and Events Framework

Planning on the Events Strategy and Event Framework will start in the first quarter of 2022, when the events team has capacity, following the Christmas period. The Events Strategy will focus on alignment with both the Culture and Tourism Strategies.

The team continues to build and maintain partnerships for specific initiatives through both our events and cultural work, to ensure engagement with event delivery partners and to advocate for forthcoming cultural events.

Commercial Events

Commercial Events

- Run safe and sustainable commercial events, including specialist markets, to generate surplus for investment.
- Maintain an up-to-date, comprehensive and publicly accessible overall list of events happening across York.
- Provide a toolkit to allow event organisers to self-serve including guidance on event management and highlighting where permissions would be required.
- Manage all enquiries from any individual or organisation requiring support / guidance with regard to putting on an event in York in the first instance
- If a proposed event falls within the Footstreets, Tower Gardens or the Eye of York:
 - decide whether to permit the event;
 - take responsibility for ensuring that the event organiser complies with all safety and other legal requirements in the planning and delivery of the event, including referring the event to the Council's Safety Advisory Group.
 - provide any appropriate management or other support to the event organiser
- If the proposed event is on land other than the Footstreets, Tower Gardens or the Eye of York determine whether the event falls within Make It York's remit and objectives, and if so:
 - seek relevant Council approvals to proceed;
 - provide appropriate management or other support to the event organiser; and
 - if not, sign post the event organiser to web-based and other information resources as appropriate.
- Work within relevant laws and Regulations that exist and ensure compliance with all licenses and permissions associated with particular sites at all times.

The St Nicholas Christmas Fair was a huge success. The new layout of the stalls was well received by traders, visitors and the Safety Advisory Group (SAG). Every day saw a steady flow of visitors including increased footfall during weekdays.

Following on from the success of the 2021 market, evaluation and planning for this year has begun. Discussions with York Minster and York Museums Trust, to see how the Christmas offer can develop in future years, continue to take place.

MIY will hold monthly cross-agency meetings including CYC and York BID, the first one having been held in February. The remit of the meetings will be to review Christmas 2021, ensure communication is consistent and to anticipate any issues that could arise during the 2022 Christmas period.

Evaluation of feedback is currently being reviewed. Initial feedback from 35 traders is that they have all stated that they would like to return in 2022 and that the York Christmas Market offers value for money.

Debrief meetings with local businesses such as Marks and Spencer's and Browns are taking place to ensure that all feedback from city partners is taken into consideration for the 2022 period.

Tenders

The tender process has been reviewed by the Events Committee and a new template proforma has been produced. All tenders will be published on the MIY website and potential suppliers will be able to register to receive alerts when tenders are published.

A number of tenders relating to the Christmas 2022 offering will go live at the end of February.

Shambles Market

Markets:

- Operate the Shambles Market and facilitate a Market Traders' Forum.
- Develop a new Markets Strategy for York which includes considering how best to use the powers in the Market Charter to support inclusive growth across the city.
- Work with traders and other stakeholders to develop the market business plan in order to maximise its financial performance and continue to develop the offer.
- Operate York's market charter on behalf of the Council (in line with the Markets Policy at Appendix 1).
- Maintain and update as necessary the Market Regulations (in consultation with the traders). The current Market Regulations are set out at Appendix 2.

Christmas

The market was at full occupancy and had excellent footfall for around 5 days each week leading up to Christmas. Traders were very happy. Many of the high-quality gift/homewares stalls had to fully restock mid-season. To decorate and animate the market, the Yorkshire Workshop Theatre Company built a Santa sleigh for Instagram moments, which caused quite a stir and plenty of photographs were taken with the backdrop of the Shambles Market. The only negatives to report were that some traders complained about where the sleigh was situated and sadly, it was damaged during the night during its last few days. The sleigh is now in storage awaiting repair.

We arranged pop up community choirs on different weekly days which received great feedback and passing audiences thoroughly enjoyed it. After initial concerns about traders leaving the market during the evening, the staff and traders worked well together.

Training/Development

A member of the team has completed a Fire Marshall course and another staff member has completed the IOSH certification with our Health and Safety providers.

Rules & Regulations

Meetings with the York Market Traders Forum (YMTF) have now been completed and updated Rules and Regulations relating to governance of Shambles Market have been produced. The Market Manager is in regular contact with the YMTF who represented the traders during these discussions.

Working with YMTF

A stronger relationship between MIY and YMTF is already being forged with regular meetings taking place, as well as more informal sessions and exchanges of feedback. The long overdue AGM was held on 16th January. Voting was casted on Zoom and 'on the ground' with a ballot box for those unavailable to access zoom.

Access times for the winter market traders has been agreed with CYC Officers. The market will now close at 4pm with waiver permits created. Silver Street administrators have gone above and beyond to ensure that traders are happy and receive said permits.

Social Media

Since September 2020, when social media posts for the market were taken over by the Market team 'on the ground', there has been an ongoing, improved audience and the number of new followers on Instagram has increased. Meetings with local bloggers/influencers have taken place to update them about new year and spring/summer collaborations. The Shambles Market website needs to be updated with clearer directions and this will be done in the next couple of months.

Partnerships

The First Bus/Shambles Market 'Local' partnership continues to be strong. We have met with them to discuss some of the food traders' plans for future investment and further collaboration, which they are keen to see happening.

The company that provides MACCS, the market admin system has recently gone into administration, so the team is researching an alternative method of daily logging of accounts.

Initial invites for a Shambles Market Working Group have been sent to lead partners we work with daily and we are excited to be involved in future development discussions. This group will include 6 traders who are not YMTF leads.

Charlie Croft from CYC and the Market Manager have met to start identifying new projects for regeneration and improvements for the market.

We continue to abide by national guidelines relating to Covid and are actively discouraging crowding.

Events

Ideas for events to be held in the market during 2022 are beginning to take shape. These events will benefit the evening economy and wider community and will create a dedicated space for York's various local and tourist demographics during the spring and summer months.

We aim to improve our local young traders market intake with existing traders acting as mentors. We are creating exciting offers to attract new traders to the market to futureproof it. Partnership and complementary working with Parliament Street for future events is

underway. Farmers Markets are also being researched to ensure their productivity can continue for the city.

A piece of monitoring work will be carried out this year to establish the market's demographic and highlight areas that could be improved.