



# Good Growth in Distinctive Places

Place Stories  
York and its hinterlands

# Place Stories

## York and its hinterlands



**Internationally known for its history and heritage, York serves an important function as a regional driver of economic growth. The city's highly skilled population, strong academic and research-based strengths and direct rail connections to the UK's major cities act as a major magnet for investment.**

York's economy is both diverse and rapidly growing with the city witnessing the fastest productivity growth of any area in West and North Yorkshire since 2012. The city has distinct sector specialisms in high value sectors such as rail, digital, finance and insurance and bio-tech and life sciences. However, York's popularity as a great place to live, work and visit also means that the city has strong employment in low productivity sectors such as food and accommodation, retail and health and social care, with these sectors representing over 40% of all employment. This means that despite high level occupations being the main source of jobs growth in recent years, wage levels for workers have not followed the same upward trajectory.

An opportunity exists through the York Central development and key academic and sector-based research organisations to capitalise upon the area's innovation and clean growth strengths, creating new high value job opportunities that will benefit local people and raise wage levels. However, it is important to note that York Central represents York's only major opportunity for growth and therefore York's interrelationship with its surrounding hinterland is crucial to the city's future economic prosperity.

This interrelationship extends to travel to work patterns with a dynamic exchange of labour taking place on a daily basis as commuters travel to their place of work, resulting in peak-time congestion on key transport corridors in the sub-region. Although York benefits from fast rail connections to the UK's major cities, connections to neighbouring towns such as Harrogate and Selby are slow and infrequent. Station facilities and public transport provision across the wider area need upgrading if residents are to be encouraged to travel sustainably.

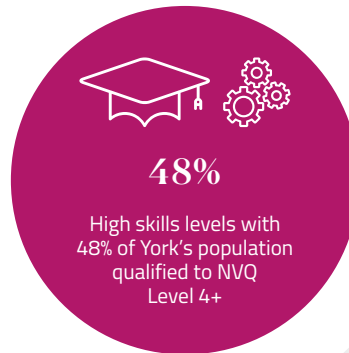


# Economic Key Facts

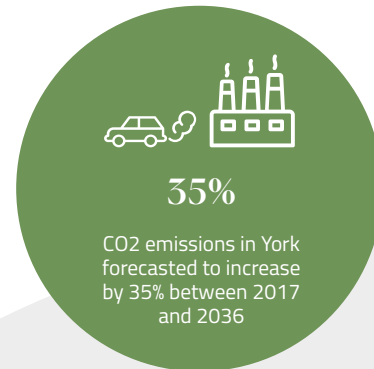


The area benefits from a highly skilled resident population and high-level occupations have been the main source of employment growth in York in recent years. However, limited graduate-level jobs coupled with rising house prices and limited supply has meant that York has seen a net outflow of young adults post-academic study.

Technological changes coupled with an ageing workforce could mean that there is a risk of reduced job opportunities for older workers in the future, whilst an ageing society puts pressure on the health and social care system which is facing labour shortages and increasing demand for staff.



With two universities, high-performing colleges and nationally significant research organisations, York and its hinterlands benefits from a strong knowledge-based economy. Specialisms in rail, agri/bio-tech and life sciences are all based upon the area's strong knowledge base. The attraction and retention of skilled young adults is currently an area of weakness and is critical to maintaining the area's innovation strengths. Opportunities exist in building stronger innovation links with the city of Leeds, as well as further developing York's bio-economy and AI strengths.



The area's green spaces and close proximity to the National Parks and Yorkshire Coast makes it an attractive place to live and provides strong health and wellbeing benefits. An opportunity exists to not only reduce carbon emissions by reducing reliance on car travel through active travel and sustainable transport, but to also capitalise upon the area's bio-economy strengths through better utilisation of natural land assets.



### 1hr 50mins

Fast rail connections to the UK's major cities from York Station - London in 1hr 50 mins, Edinburgh in 2hr 30mins, Newcastle in 1hr and Leeds in 25 mins

The area benefits from a diverse sectoral mix, with a nationally significant rail sector and innovation strengths in York and its hinterlands in construction, manufacturing and energy. Businesses located in the area have a real competitive advantage through the area's range of physical and digital infrastructure, although congestion on key transport corridors, limited local rail connectivity and pockets of poor digital connectivity represent a barrier to growth.

The availability of suitable business accommodation to meet all stages of the business journey is also a major barrier to business growth and productivity. An opportunity exists through greater partnership working between local authorities and the private sector to reduce barriers to enterprise and investment and support supply chain activity across the wider area.



### 7 million

7 million visitors to York a year, with over 30% of local employment in retail, food and accommodation and tourism.

York has a rich history of social leadership and this ethos continues today through the city's strong sense of community and thriving voluntary sector. Strong momentum has grown locally on taking action on climate change with a target set by the Council to become net carbon neutral by 2030. York already has the highest proportion of residents commuting to work by active travel in the region, although this is considerably lower in neighbouring areas. An opportunity exists to reduce transport emissions by placing a greater emphasis on active travel and sustainable transport provision that better connects housing with key employment centres.



### 92%

York's GVA output per head is 92% of UK levels

York's internationally-renowned heritage and cultural offer draws seven million visitors to the city a year, providing a significant boost to the local economy. An opportunity exists to spread the economic benefits from the visitor economy to neighbouring areas by investing in their visitor offer, whilst at the same time working with the sector in York to raise productivity levels and increase its economic value.

York and its wider hinterlands offers a unique opportunity to be the global lead on bio-economy innovation by translating this into real-world interventions that positively address sustainability and climate change. Investment is needed to scale up and support these activities, which is challenging at a time when government and local administrations are balancing political, social and economic pressures against the need for clean growth.



# Emerging Local Priorities

We need to...



Capitalise upon our academic assets and competitive strengths to create high-value jobs

What is the issue we are trying to address?



There is enormous growth potential in new technologies such as clean growth, agri/bio-tech and artificial intelligence. York and its hinterlands has distinct specialisms in these areas which offer the opportunity to stimulate high value growth whilst creating opportunities for local people and retaining young talent. Becoming a national leader in these industries would raise the area's visibility on a global scale, generating significant inward investment opportunities.



Invest in our range of infrastructure (physical, digital and built) to support business growth and encourage enterprise

What is the issue we are trying to address?



To raise productivity levels and maximise growth opportunities, the barriers to business growth need to be addressed. There is a lack of suitable business accommodation in the right locations and certain pockets of the area suffer from poor digital connectivity which impacts on business productivity. Congestion on key commuter corridors prevents businesses from transporting goods efficiently and often acts as a barrier to employers being able to recruit from the widest possible labour market. By investing in the area's range of infrastructure, we can enable our businesses to reach their potential, creating more good quality jobs and raising local wage levels.



Retain young adults in York and its surrounding area by investing in what matters to them (e.g. graduate jobs, alternative career routes, culture and housing)

What is the issue we are trying to address?



Despite being home to two universities and excellent colleges, there is an outward migration of young adults from York and its wider area. By investing in graduate jobs, promoting alternative career routes, building more affordable housing, and creating a vibrant cultural offer that appeals to young people, York and its surrounding area will be able to retain young adults whilst also becoming a destination for graduates in its own right.

## CASE STUDIES

### York Central

York Central is a 45-hectare brownfield scheme which will create new high quality commercial space, 2,500 new homes, new public space and an expansion of the National Railway Museum, all in close proximity to the city's railway station.

An Enterprise Zone site, the development will provide commercial space for approximately 6,500 jobs and grow York's economy by 20%.



### University of York

The University of York is synonymous with driving productivity and innovation.

A number of exciting research and enterprise projects are underway at the university from using its world-class research and knowledge base to drive the development of UK-based bio-industries to deliver growth, jobs and environmental benefits, to the further development of its Artificial Intelligence (AI) expertise with a new, world-leading, £35m research facility which will address global challenges in assuring the safety of robotics and other systems that use AI.



### Create Yorkshire in Church Fenton

Create Yorkshire sits on the expansive, former RAF Church Fenton airbase, and is one of the largest production spaces in the North of England. It has already housed successful TV shows like ITV's Victoria. With links into colleges, easy routes to Leeds (the new home of Channel 4) and plans to expand further, it could become the heart of Yorkshire's creative industries.