



# York's Tourism Strategy

## Interim Document

### **York - Compelling, Exceptional World City**

Tourism is one of York's most successful and important industries. The competition however is fierce and there is no room for complacency.

In recognition of this, City of York Council and Visit York are working together to produce a new business strategy for tourism to drive the city forward.

We are very grateful to those of you who have given your time to contribute to the consultation. This document provides an update on the progress we are making towards the strategy and sets out the direction of travel. You have told us that putting York at the heart of everything we do is key to achieving your ambitions. The approach is outlined in the following pages.

**Over the summer we will be engaging with you as we start to produce detailed action plans for the strategy. Please continue to send us feedback on your views via: [tourismstrategyfeedback@visityork.org](mailto:tourismstrategyfeedback@visityork.org).**

# After extensive consultation with York's businesses, key tourism partners, the travel trade and customers, we believe that the strategy must be built on three core principles:

## 1. York is the Brand

Our strength is that the 'York' brand name and brand values have high level recognition within the UK and internationally. So put York at the heart of what you do and the rest will follow.

## 2. Grow the Sector

Helping to make York a top five UK city economy and a top 10 European city, delivering GVA (gross value added) and high quality jobs.

## 3. Business Proposition and Perspective

Led by strong sustainable businesses, success will be measured in terms of business growth.

## What's our aim?

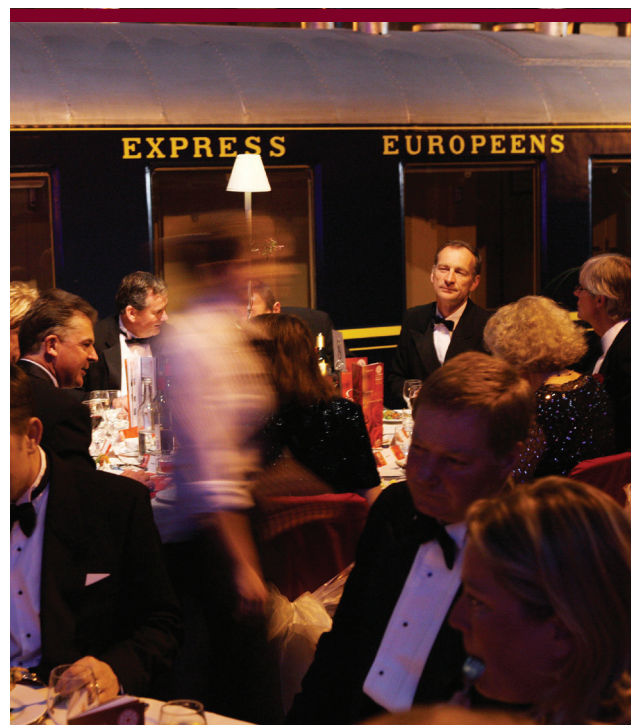
Our aim is ambitious but realistic. Starting from our current baseline and working through co-ordinated sector action plans, we believe we can deliver **a doubling of the value of tourism to the economy**. This means a £1billion industry creating an additional 2,000 high quality jobs.

## How will we do this?

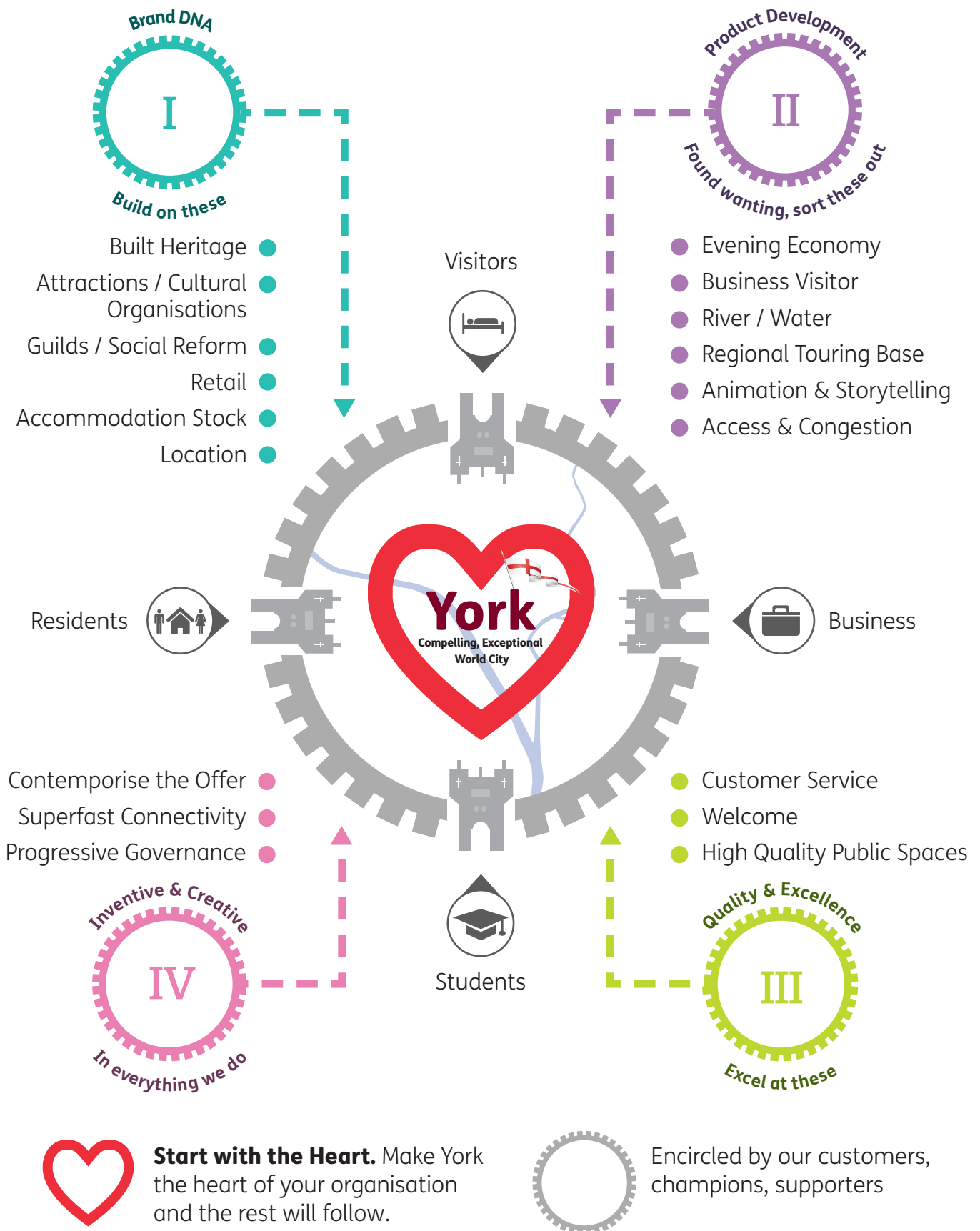
It's all about customers and there will be different approaches for each market segment.

We will:

- ▶ Tackle seasonality
- ▶ Encourage more business visitors for conferences and meetings
- ▶ Extend length of stay – both business and leisure customers
- ▶ Increase spend of domestic day and staying visitors
- ▶ Increase overseas leisure and business visitors



# The Approach



## Some of your suggested actions

### Brand DNA

#### Build on these

- ▶ Re-focus on aspects of the visitor offer that can be promoted as new visitor attractions in their own right such as the city walls and street markets
- ▶ Make known York's distinctive character:
  - ▶ 2,000 years of history
  - ▶ World class attractions
  - ▶ Eclectic mix of independent retail and high street brands (fully integrating retail into the tourism offer)
  - ▶ Vibrant festival programme
  - ▶ Sustainable walking and cycle friendly city
- ▶ Exploit York's unique mix of modern day and historic entrepreneurship and radical reforming traditions (e.g. the York Guilds, the Quakers, the Joseph Rowntree legacy)

### Product Development

#### Found wanting, sort these out

- ▶ Grow the evening offer, for example, initiate a 'First Fridays' concept as the initial step in encouraging new entertainment choices

- ▶ Unleash the potential of York's contemporary offer – harnessing the innovation of our SMEs to make York the 'beating heart of the region'
- ▶ Prioritise the business tourism sector to position York as a world class destination, generating more conference and meetings bookings
- ▶ Address the January to Easter low point with new products such as a winter festival
- ▶ As a major driver of repeat business, focus on high impact events with a national / international profile that will create a quality, year round calendar
- ▶ Develop York's rivers for leisure and navigation, for example, Park and Sail, river trails, new access to the river and improved gardens
- ▶ Remove barriers to access by getting Park & Ride services running later with overnight parking, introduce pay on exit car parks and digital car park space information
- ▶ Position York as the key gateway and touring base for Yorkshire making it a one-stop shop of connections and easily accessible from the rest of the UK and Europe

## Quality and Excellence

Excel at these

- ▶ Actively manage the visitor destination by bringing together the city centre, public realm improvements, investment in toilets, public art, lighting and way-finding
- ▶ Encourage 100% of York's tourism businesses to sign up to Smarter York to ensure the best quality public spaces. For example pavements outside premises are kept clean
- ▶ Create a 'York Welcome' with all businesses going out of their way to deliver exceptional customer service. By taking the lead from London 2012 we should recruit our own *York Makers* and offer the highest quality training for businesses

## Inventive and Creative

In everything we do

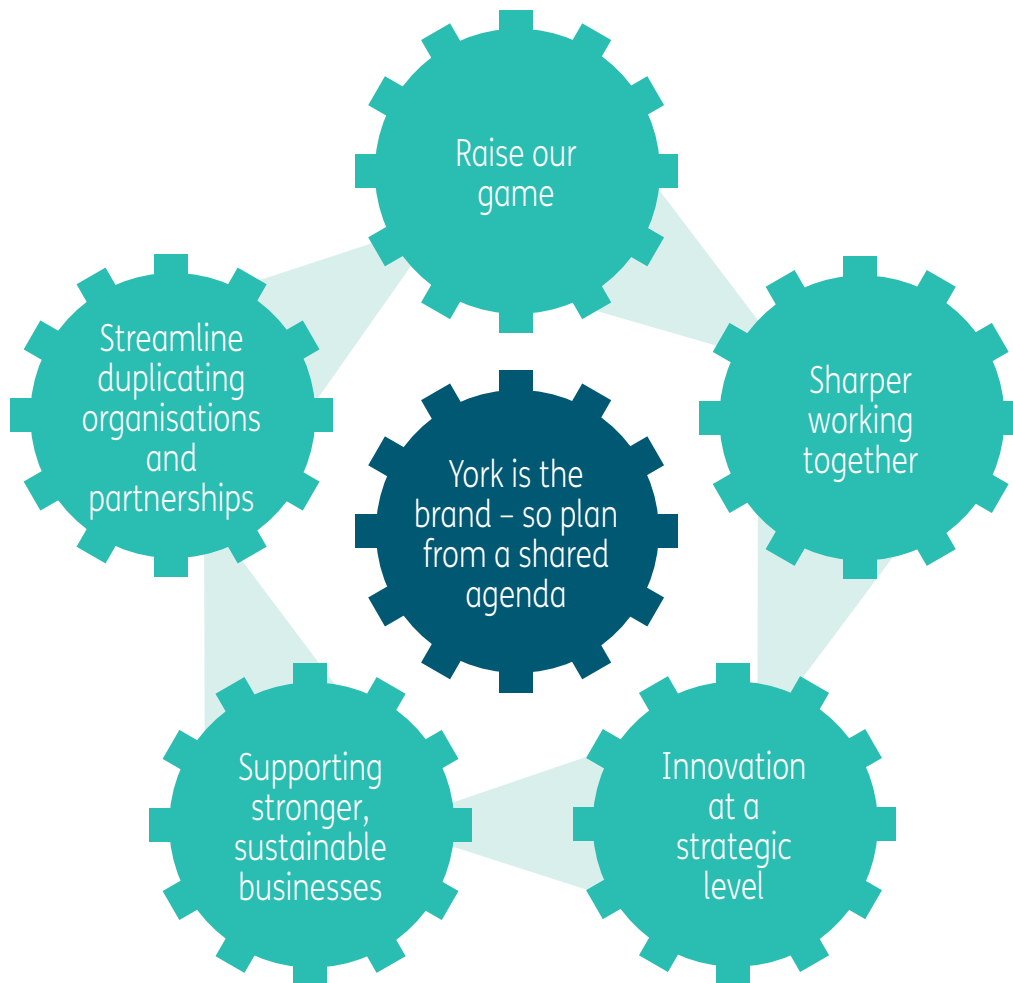
- ▶ Be at the forefront with technology, especially mobile, social media, mapping, apping and geocaching - augmenting reality to bring the city to life and making the most of our superfast connections
- ▶ Challenge and support businesses to develop high quality products and attractions that establish York's cultural offer as truly international
- ▶ Develop new ways of ensuring visitors make the most of what's on in the city, for example, using digital screen technology and a re-packaged York Pass
- ▶ Develop creative marketing campaigns for consumers and groups



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## Next Steps

To deliver the ambitions set out in this document, we must explore new ways of working together, underpinned by the following:



**Your input would be very welcome.  
Please email your views to:  
[tourismstrategyfeedback@visityork.org](mailto:tourismstrategyfeedback@visityork.org)**

Jane,  
Lady Gibson

Chairman,  
Visit York



City of York  
Cllr. Sonja Crisp

Cabinet Member for Leisure,  
Culture and Tourism