

Executive Member for Culture, Leisure & Communities Update to Council July 2022

Refugees, Migrants and Asylum Seekers

York currently has around 215 Guests and we expect that number to rise to around 300 based on the current number of visa approvals.

Guests when they arrive get a visit from a member of the team to help them apply for school places for children and for Universal Credit and to register with GPs, set up a bank account, etc. We provide a laptop, digital support and sim cards, bus passes and help with transport. Each Guest receives the £200 one-off payment on a preloaded card.

We are co-ordinating with partners to provide the “wrap-around” support that we are required to provide. Examples of this include:

- Fortnightly Thursday drop-in at York City Church (about 190 people attending)
- Fortnightly Tuesday drop-in at Gateway Church Acomb
- Weekly Wednesday RAY drop-in at YSJ
- A comprehensive and coordinated ESOL response
- Trauma and wellbeing support
- Support into employment in coordination with the Job Centre – a lot of employment has been offered
- Parenting support
- Specialist CAY advice service training Ukrainians with a view to provide permanent employment as advisors
- Parent and child sessions at York Explore
- Health Checks
- Accredited training for Ukrainians to become self-employer interpreters
- Several businesses and organisations offering opportunities to get out of the house and explore
- RAY youth project
- Support to set up enterprises through an outreach worker in partnership with YREN

There are also many other community support initiatives and activities.

City of York Council also provide support to Sponsors, for example through peer support and webinars and providing a Ukrainian Culture and Conversation Class via York Learning.

Support has been provided to schools to help them integrate Ukrainian children effectively.

City of York Council have funded City of Sanctuary to help support Sponsors and to help source accommodation. They have a database of over 400 people interested in helping. They have coordinated requests from Ukrainians wanting to come on the HfU scheme linking them with potential sponsors in York. This aspect is now reducing as the number of potential sponsors is drying up and we also recognise as a city that we are reaching the limit of manageable numbers.

A local Welcome Pack/Guidance is also on the York City of Sanctuary website. Here you can find out more about the employment support offered by DWP, Migration Yorkshire or refugee council, English classes offered by York Learning and the universities, mental health support offered by York Mind or just a social space to meet which is offered by various organisation in York such as City Church or RAY.

Next Phase

We have worked rapidly to put in place a very comprehensive and effective emergency response with lots of extra provision. In the next phase we will need to be guided by the voice of our Ukrainian guests with regard to their needs and to recognise that they will probably be staying for some considerable time and therefore we need to focus more on integration.

Ongoing accommodation is going to become a big issue. Many Sponsors and Guests are naturally beginning to think about the future. Sponsors offered emergency accommodation and will not want the arrangement to go on indefinitely. A small number of placements have come to an end prematurely and we have moved quickly to find a new Sponsor for the Guests.

We will develop a range of options for Guests. City of Sanctuary are doing an excellent job in encouraging landlords to come forward with properties to let at the Local Housing Allowance rate. This enables families to have their own accommodation that will be affordable for them longer-term and provides one of the key options for the future. The

Housing Team have offered to manage these properties through Yorhome if landlords wish.

Clearly, however, it will be difficult to house 300 people in the private rented sector at the LHA. More formal lodging arrangements will be another option. We expect there to be further government guidance on this at some point.

The HfU scheme has been extended to unaccompanied minors. This is a concerning development but we will take all necessary steps to ensure safe and successful placements should we receive any unaccompanied minors.

Our City Hub

In June, the Our City migrant hub was launched. This is run by local residents with lived experience of being a migrant. In partnership with York Explore and other organisations across York, it offers a multi-language signposting services in the morning and opportunities to engage with the local community in the afternoon. Every Saturday there are various community led cultural workshops as a way to recognising that integration requires two stages: one is awareness of the British system and values, the second, raising cultural awareness of other settled communities in York, their system and values. We have almost 50 bilingual volunteers who work closely in delivering community initiatives.

Two upcoming events will focus on celebrating diversity and recognising that we have more things in common than we think. 31st July is Friendship Day whilst 27th August is our opportunity to celebrate Ukrainian Independence Day and formally launch the Ukrainian Association in York. This one of many initiatives to support the newly arrived communities. The two Ukrainian hub coordinators are supporting the delivery of other initiatives such as Family Conversations classes (An English cup of tea with Iryna) whilst attending the Chinese Calligraphy session with Ting Ting.

The launch of the hub followed the very successful first Our City Festival at the end of March held at York Explore.





Council of Sanctuary Plan

The Council of Sanctuary plan is in development with our partners. After a final consultation event on 21 July it will come to the Executive.

Asylum Accommodation Dispersal

From 1 April, all local authorities are to be included in the asylum dispersal arrangements in order to move to a fairer distribution of asylum seekers. The government's aim is to cease using hotels (we have heard this multiple times before). We understand that York will be asked to accommodate some asylum seekers. The contract to procure accommodation, which will be in the private rented sector, is with Mears. Government funding will be available to local authorities at the rate of £3,500 per person to commission support from within the VCSE to support individuals and we will work with Mears to make sure that supportive arrangements are put in place for any individuals who are placed in York.

With regard to Linton-on-Ouse proposals, once the final proposals are announced by government, a multi-agency group will be stood up including key organisations and agencies in York to plan to deal with the implications and impacts.

Volunteering

From 1 June 21 to 31 May 22, an estimated 20,085 individuals have used the York CVS Volunteer Centre website. Supported with CYC funding, the centre has promoted 252 volunteering opportunities for 120 different organisations. It has provided advice to 272 organisations on all matters related to volunteering.

Within the council, the Environment and Community Officers continue to mobilise volunteers across a wide range of projects in the public realm, whilst the Communities and Prevention team have had 228 active volunteers over the last 12 months delivering 6,496 hours in areas such as providing one-to-one mentoring support to vulnerable young people and parents.

Beyond the Council, York Cares volunteers supported 23 Team Challenge sites across the city in 2021, giving a total of 2,139 hours in partnership with 84 community partners including schools, Independent Living Communities and local charities in the city.

The University of York impact of student volunteering metrics for 2020-21 show 1,190 volunteer opportunities adding up to 27,087 volunteering hours. Students again focussed their impact linked to volunteering strategy city priorities around health and wellbeing, loneliness and isolation, and young people fulfilling their potential. The awards ceremony took place in the Guildhall last week, celebrating the achievement, commitment and lasting impact of student volunteers with charities and the wider community.

Participants from City of York Council Duke of Edinburgh Award Centre dedicated 7,592 hours to volunteering between April 2021 and March 2022, with a social value of £35,075.

Community Centres

As part of the council's role out of community hubs, the Good Place Network was launched on Tuesday 26 April, bringing together those community champions who are operating York's community venues and community hub sessions. Andy Pope from Choose 2 Youth spoke about the success of the new Clifton Community Hall and Café at Marjorie Waite Court, as well as updated on funding and work to get ready to welcome Ukrainian families through the doors. This was an excellent catch-up session with some truly inspirational leaders who are doing fantastic community delivery.

Leisure and Sport

Stadium & New Leisure Centre:

The LNER Community Stadium (capacity 8,500) opened its doors and held its first fixture in May 2021. Since then, the Stadium Management Company has delivered match day operations for York City Football Club, York City Knights, Leeds United and Hull City – and will have hosted in excess of 70 fixtures in its first year alone. We look forward to being an official host for the Rugby League World Cup 2021 later in November this year, with York hosting five clubs including the men's and women's New Zealand teams as well as women teams from; Australia, Cook Islands and France.

As a community stadium, the concept of co-location partners to maximise use and create a vibrant community facility remains at the heart of the vision for the stadium with partners including York &

Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust using the hospitality lounges on a daily basis to train nurses, doctors and support staff, whilst delivering multiple clinics from the first floor. The library and café create a welcoming hub, with access to the two professional sports club shops and offices. York Against Cancer's new office and shop are also working well as part of the stadium complex.

Looking forward, we want to bring the York community into the Stadium so that they can experience the outstanding facilities on their doorstep for themselves. Our longer-term strategic intention is to position the LNER Community Stadium as the Region's Leading Community Sports Stadium offering access, high quality facilities and outstanding operational support to a wide range of elite and community sporting events whilst continuing to deliver high quality match day operations for York City Football Club and York City Knights.

York Leisure Centre which opened its doors in early 2021, and accessed via the LNER Community Stadium community hub has been well received by local residents with over 20,000 visits per month on average since opening. Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) who operate all the Councils leisure facilities have been very creative in programming the new facilities.

Sports Hall: Initially used as a Covid Testing Centre, the sports hall continues to be well used by local sports clubs, school groups and racquet sports customers.

Swimming Pools: Three Swimming Pools including a Toddlers' Splash Pool with interactive play equipment such as water jets and a small slide. The leisure centre currently teaches over 670 children to swim every week from the ages of 3 months and up. Other users of the swimming pools include local swimming clubs, and school swimming lesson hire.

Clip 'n' Climb Arena. The Clip 'n' Climb arena has proven to be a family favourite, and recently won Little Vikings Award for the best 'Active Class' in York. Little Vikings Awards is the only awards scheme to reward the very best of family-friendly York, from the best family-friendly attractions in York to the best days out, tours, birthday parties, classes and places to eat. The Arena hosts 6 birthday party's a week as well as private bookings for local Scout Groups and Schools.

Gym and Studios: over 50 classes per week, and 2000 members. GLL's GP referral scheme 'Healthwise' continues to grow each month with 150 members, as well as guided gym sessions, Healthwise members can also attend general and specialist exercise classes such as chair based exercise, Cancer support classes and weight management. 130 Junior members, which includes junior gym sessions, swimming and racquet sports.

These are just a few examples that demonstrate that when we provide modern, first class facilities York residents step up and use them. The final addition to the site this year has been a free to access play park.



Community Sports Development Team:

The last two years of COVID response has seen the team continue to advise sports clubs when they could and could not operate, using national roadmap guidance to advise community sports clubs and freelance instructors about restrictions and the re-opening of their activities.

The last year has seen York's participation figures for the city plateau despite the efforts the team has put in to maintain and support voluntary and community sector leisure providers. In April 2022, we received Active Lives Data for November 2020 – November 2021 showing those who are Active, achieving Chief Medical Officer Guidelines of 150+ minutes a week, to be 66.53% compared to 66.71% previously, and the Inactive, those doing less than 30 minutes a week, has gone up slightly from 21.65% to 24.18%. This is the area of work the team will focus on within the coming year, as this is the area where the most health benefits are achieved.

The Rugby League World Cup event planning has started back after being the postponement from 2021. This has involved working with the

four community clubs, Make it York, York City Knights, Masters Rugby League and host venues, to pull together a programme of junior festivals and masters Rugby League opportunities leading up to the Women's four doubleheader matches starting on 2 November 2022 at the LNER Community Stadium. We are also in the design phase of the new Westfield Multi-Use Games Area to be reinstated at York Acorn Amateur Rugby League Football Club before we continue to consult the local community and submit for planning approval later in the year.

The Sport and Active Leisure Small Grant scheme has provided the following in July 21:

Burnholme badminton Club - £447 towards reduced cost membership for 3 individuals identified through social prescribers and equipment for them.

Drifters Netball Club - £512 for equipment and coaching.

Heslington Cricket Club - £512 for a 2-lane all weather practice net.

Heslington Football Club - £512 for coaching course and equipment.

Melbourne CIC - £512 for boccia, health walk, Zumba/dance, rugby and circuit session and a mental health course.

New Earswick Sports Club - £500 for expansion of the gym.

Rowntree Park Tennis Club - £262 part funding towards steel storage box and mental health course.

Rufforth Tennis Club - £512 for junior sessions at reduced cost and mental health course.

Bishopthorpe White Rose Football Club - £512 for health and safety equipment.

Wigginton Petanque Club - £512 for health and safety equipment.

Wigginton Squash Club - £512 for a treadmill and mental health course.

Wigginton Tennis Club - £512 to expand the disability programme and mental health course.

York Canoe Club - £512 for new buoyancy aids and the Mental Health Course.

City of York Hockey Club - £512 for additional coaching sessions and the Mental Health Course.

York Minxsters - £512 for coaching and the Mental Health Course.

York RI Netball - £381 for Netball posts and the Mental Health Course.

York RI RUFC - £512 for First Aid to volunteer coaches and the Mental Health Course.

York Burton Lane Club - £1,012 for new sports equipment, improvements to the building, coaching opportunities and travelling costs and the Mental Health Course.

The Sport and Active Leisure Small Grant scheme has provided the following in October 21:

Clifton Alliance Cricket Club - £512 for new kit for the girl's team, including playing equipment.

Haxby Town Football Club - £512 for FA level 1 for 3 coaches.

Open Country - £512 for and maintenance of their fleet of bikes.

Wigginton and Haxby Table Tennis Club - £397 to improve the skills of the coach, facility hire and equipment.

York City Knights Foundation - £512 subsidising NGB approved coach education courses.

York Croquet Club - £512 for new croquet balls and a new gazebo.

York Gaelic Football Club - £512 towards equipment and cost of running the club.

YorNetball League - £512 for: an England Netball coaching course, to purchase equipment for training sessions such as bibs and balls, and to subsidise the cost of uniform. 3981

The Executive (on 21 April 2022) adopted the final draft of the York Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2022-32. The Strategy focuses on reducing sedentary behaviour and encouraging good habits from childhood, and has been designed to align with other council strategies. Its development has included engagement with residents via consultation and input from relevant partners. The Active York Partnership steering group will take responsibility for delivering the Strategy and overseeing its governance. A sub group of the partnership

has this year brought back the Active York Sports Awards and after a record entry of nominations, the 2022 York Sports Awards were held on 30th June. The judges included Keith Morris, Chair of the judges and Chair of Active York, Clint Goodchild, Owner and Chair of York City Knights; Paula Stainton Foundation Manager York City Foundation; Paul Ramskill, Community Sports Development Officer at the City of York Council and Sharon Shortle from BBC Radio York and they determined the 46 finalists across the 16 different awards. Congratulations to the winners and all nominees - it was a pleasure to attend and present the Outstanding Contribution Award to Yvette Shepherd (with Kirsty Parr and Andy Snell both receiving Highly Commended).



Over the last year, Sport and Active Leisure officers have commented on a wide range of large development planning applications. These will deliver potential S106 funding for sports facilities totalling £1,017,614.

As part the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay, we have developed a Primary School's event "13 July" which will see 600 pupils take part in a morning of multi-sport coaching delivered by community sports clubs at York St John Sports Park, Haxby Road. This will also combine with the baton bearer and a mass dance flash mob to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and Commonwealth Year.

Libraries

Explore York continue to excel in their delivery of the library and archives service on behalf of City of York Council.

Explore have recently submitted their bid to become an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (ACE NPO). This is a highly competitive and time-consuming process, but being invited to apply highlights again the quality of the services they provide and positive social impact across the city and beyond.

My congratulations again to two Explore employees received honours from the Queen; outgoing CEO Fiona Williams received a British Empire Medal and Barbara Swinn – Head of Strategy and Engagement also received her British Empire Medal in person from the Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire. This May saw the retirement of Fiona Williams as CEO of York Explore. We all wish Fiona the best of luck with her future endeavours and sincerely thank her for her enormous contribution to Explore and the city.

Future Libraries Investment Programme

Haxby & Wigginton Library

Construction works have begun to bring a much-needed new library to the local community in Haxby and Wigginton, with the arrival of diggers in recent weeks.

City of York Council, Explore Libraries and Haxby & Wigginton Youth and Community Association are working together to co-locate a new library at Oaken Grove Community Centre. The new facility will replace the old library in Haxby, which was closed in 2016 on the grounds of public safety.

Oaken Grove centre has now closed and relocation plans are being implemented for OG and Explore activities. Contractor (Parkinson's) appointed and started works on site 13 June, with works scheduled to last 15 weeks. Current working aim is for new Haxby & Wigginton library to be operational by 10 October 2022. £50k has been secured for the addition of a changing place via central government funding.

Key features of the new library include:

- A new extension to the side of the community centre which will house the new library and reading café at the front of the building, with the community rooms for hire to the rear.
- A new central entrance with improved storage space for pushchairs and buggies leading into a central café and seating area for all to enjoy.
- A children's and adult library, with new shelving, nooks and crannies for children to explore, a separate area for teenagers, PCs available for use by residents, and 10,000 books to borrow.
- A new kitchen to support the new reading café offering barista style coffee options, snacks and able to offer hot meals for specific events or if demand requires.
- An outdoor terrace area will provide space to read a book or enjoy the peaceful garden.
- Extended free public Wi-Fi.
- Improvements to the fabric and energy efficiency of the building with enhanced insulation, LED lighting throughout, new gutters and fascia, new aluminium double glazed windows to enhance the appearance and reduce future maintenance costs.
- Refurbished toilets to reflect the rest of the new build.
- A new more efficient heating system for the building.
- Reconfiguration and refurbishment of the existing community rooms with new acoustic dividing walls to improve the flexibility of use, new floor coverings and decoration.
- Two newly marked disabled bays in the car park.
- New covered cycle shelter.



Clifton Library Learning Centre

Executive agreed this January to approve a £5.3m vision to create a new Library Learning Centre at the former Clifton Without Junior School, off Rawcliffe Drive.

Explore, the Council's library partner, has led the conversation about the new library for the Clifton, Clifton Without and Rawcliffe communities. Thank you to all who responded and fed their views into the consultations. The first engagements in July and September 2021 found that 90% of residents liked the proposal to move our library to the new site (from 277 responses). The second stage of consultation, held in November and December 2021, shared the first detailed plans based on the first stage feedback and found that 84% of respondents supported the overall design proposal.

The Council have confirmed that throughout the whole build, the current much-loved library on Rawcliffe Lane will remain open, meaning no disruption to local library services.

Phase 4 detailed stakeholder engagement by Explore has commenced late May. Several Explore sessions held with a draft Explore findings. The planning application validated 28 March and live on planning portal for public to view. The current aim is to start main works from early 2023.

Our thanks continue to go to partners, stakeholders and local residents for their continued engagement in this exciting project.

Acomb Library Learning Centre

As part of an initial outline feasibility study the Project Team assessed alternative sites in and around the area for a new Acomb Library Learning Centre but concluded the current Library site was best placed to deliver the Vision and any future expansion.

Acomb was the very first Library Learning Centre, opened in 2007 after a £500k investment to include a café and create new flexible spaces, therefore it already has the core Explore vision at its heart.

It has also recently benefited from over £110k investment on replacing a large part of the main roof. There is now the potential to develop and improve the current building, further enhancing the offer to local residents. Explore will soon engage with local residents, seeking their views and ambitions for the Explore Centre to influence the next stages of its development. A benefit of the existing Acomb site is the 1265m² of vacant land to the rear of the existing Acomb Library that previously was allocated for future development alongside Acomb Library. This additional land has most recently been used as a construction compound for a neighbouring residential development which has now been completed. Further feasibility work for this additional piece of land at Acomb was commissioned at the next stage and to look at options to develop an additional community garden on the site. This work has been completed and no ground-related 'showstoppers' have been identified, however several ground-related constraints require further consideration.

Explore are already looking at some potential early wins such as closer working with other services, e.g. CYC housing teams.

York Learning

I have approved a new draft strategy which is out for consultation till the end of this month.

York Learning have been working hard to build new partnerships over this last 18 months to support this new strategy particularly related to their wider community learning programmes. This will complement their accredited programmes which focus on building skills development in English, Maths, Digital Skills, ESOL and Family Learning at all levels and working with those most disadvantaged and furthest away from the job market.

A draft plan has been submitted to the DfE in respect of Multiply (Maths) funding for around £740k over a 3-year period. This will allow York Learning to re-engage residents around numeracy through a range of topics and initiatives. Activities ran will not replicate existing provision and are not aimed at achieving qualifications but will fill gaps and build confidence in residents' numeracy ability. A large range of different providers in York are being invited to a consultation event being organised alongside partners in North Yorkshire Adult Learning Service.

Returning to face-to-face learning in this academic year has seen learners come back in person particularly in lower level skill courses and wellbeing classes. Learners and tutors are glad to be back, meeting people and engaging outside of their homes.

ESOL provision has expanded exponentially over the last year with refugees and migrants especially from Syria, Afghanistan, Hong Kong and recently Ukraine. The service has created a base at York City Church (The Citadel) and is working with partners including Refugee Action York, City of Sanctuary, the Universities and Migration Yorkshire to provide signposting, Information Advice and Guidance sessions which includes skills and careers guidance. Childcare is provided alongside the ESOL programme. Working with the teams we are currently creating a course to be facilitated by a Ukrainian on their language and culture to support host families, employers, professionals, etc.

York Learning have held their prices for next year due to the current economic situation. This will need to be closely monitored as costs are increasing.

Community Art and Wellbeing projects have continued into this year with 'Flight' and residents and various organisations have contributed 'birds' created out of recycled materials to pull together a mural being displayed

at York Explore from Friday the 1st of July. York Learning have worked with a wide variety of different organisations including; Foss Park Acute Mental Health Hospital, York Hospital Renal ward, Amitola Care Homes (adults with mental health and learning difficulties), York Art Gallery, St Nicks; Derwenthorpe Crafts Group, Door 84.

York Learning have again helped bring all local providers together to re-launch Adult Learning in York Week which started on Monday 25th June. Engagement with the offer has been well received by all and finishes with an Information Event at York College

Community Covenant

Once again we raised the flag for Armed Forces Day last month:



Our participation in Armed Forces Day is an important part of our commitment as a city to the Armed Forces Community Covenant. I am delighted that the city is continuing its close partnership with our armed forces community and that a number of new initiatives are springing from

that to the benefit especially of our veterans. The breakfast clubs and city centre drop-in that we have started are prime examples of this.

On Tuesday 14th June the city marked the 40th anniversary of the end of the Falklands War. As part of the regular 'armed forces drop-in', we joined Falklands Veterans, the wider Armed Forces Community and the civic party for a memorial service including a two minute silence and wreath laying. The city's thanks go to Councillor Martin Rowley BEM for pulling the event together and his continued advocacy of York's Armed Forces Community.



This month sees the retirement of Ian Cartwright as City of York Council's Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer. Ian has been instrumental in transforming the provision and support for the Armed Forces Community across the council and city. His work included City of York Council receiving the Gold Award in the Government's Employer Recognition Scheme for its work to support council staff who are reservists or cadet force volunteers, as well as veterans and their spouses who apply for job interviews. At the time (2019) the authority

was only the seventh employer in the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber region to have won the award.

Our thanks go to him for his tireless work in leading this agenda. I'm pleased that the recruitment for a new Community Covenant Officer has been successful. Thank you Ian.



Equalities

Discussions between the Council and the York Human Rights City Network continue with regard to assessing and developing human rights infrastructure in the city. We recognise the need for reform and we thank YHRCN for their engagement with this, including their six point plan.

The council is committed to increasing officer capacity to support Equalities and Human Rights in the City. This has been demonstrated through the permanent funding of the new Access Officer role. The existing Assistant Director for Communities has these priorities at the heart of his role and skills in this area will be recruited to when his vacancy is advertised to create high level capacity at what is a third tier role (as the Director sits on the Corporate Management Team). We are

looking at solutions for creating a further dedicated equalities and human rights role and this will be a priority for the new Assistant Director when appointed. The Communities Team do not work in isolation, however, and the re Head of Policy & Strategy and Head of HR are both involved in developing plans to strengthen the council's approach to equalities and Human Rights. Equalities and Human Rights matters are now monitored by both CMT and the Resilient Communities Strategy Group chaired by Jamaila Hussein.

It should be recognised that no one single group, board or structure can meet all the needs and that we should consider structures that provide for the following:

- Tackling the issues raised within the York Human Rights City Indicator Report and reporting back on progress
- Providing strategic direction for the Council's human rights and equalities work, increasing knowledge and awareness amongst officers and elected members
- Engaging the city's key agencies in the vision of York Human Rights City, developing human rights approaches as a means of every day problem solving for all and encouraging "translators" and "champions" who will help to institutionalise human rights values across the city's institutions

York Pride

I was delighted that after a two year hiatus, York Pride was back this June. The council invited residents to join senior staff at the brand new 'Council on the Couch' sessions at the first York Pride celebration since the pandemic.

On Saturday 18 June, council staff, councillors, schools and volunteers joined the Pride Parade from York Minster to the Knavesmire. Festival goers were invited to share five minutes with 'Council on the Couch'. Any issues and insights raised (from traffic idling to matters affecting the LGBT+ community) were noted and followed up. City of York Council's iTravel and Adoption teams also had stalls.



Tourism

The emergence of the Omicron-variant, the Ukrainian conflict and the substantial rise in the cost of living has meant that York's economy and tourism sector has faced a challenging first half of 2022. Data from the Movements Insights platform can give us an insight into how York City Centre has fared in terms of footfall.

There has been a 36% increase in footfall across the first half of the 2022 in comparison to previous year. The average weekly footfall for first 6 months of 2022 has been 122,107 in comparison to 89,496. As can be seen from Figure 1, footfall tends to pick around school holiday periods.

The total number of visitors coming to York has remained consistent across 2022, with 1.5 million visitors coming to York across both quarters. This is a smaller amount of visitors in comparison to 2021, as illustrated in Figure 2. But, international travel options were not as open as they currently are due to Covid-19 rules and guidance in place last year.

Figure 1: Weekly Footfall Data

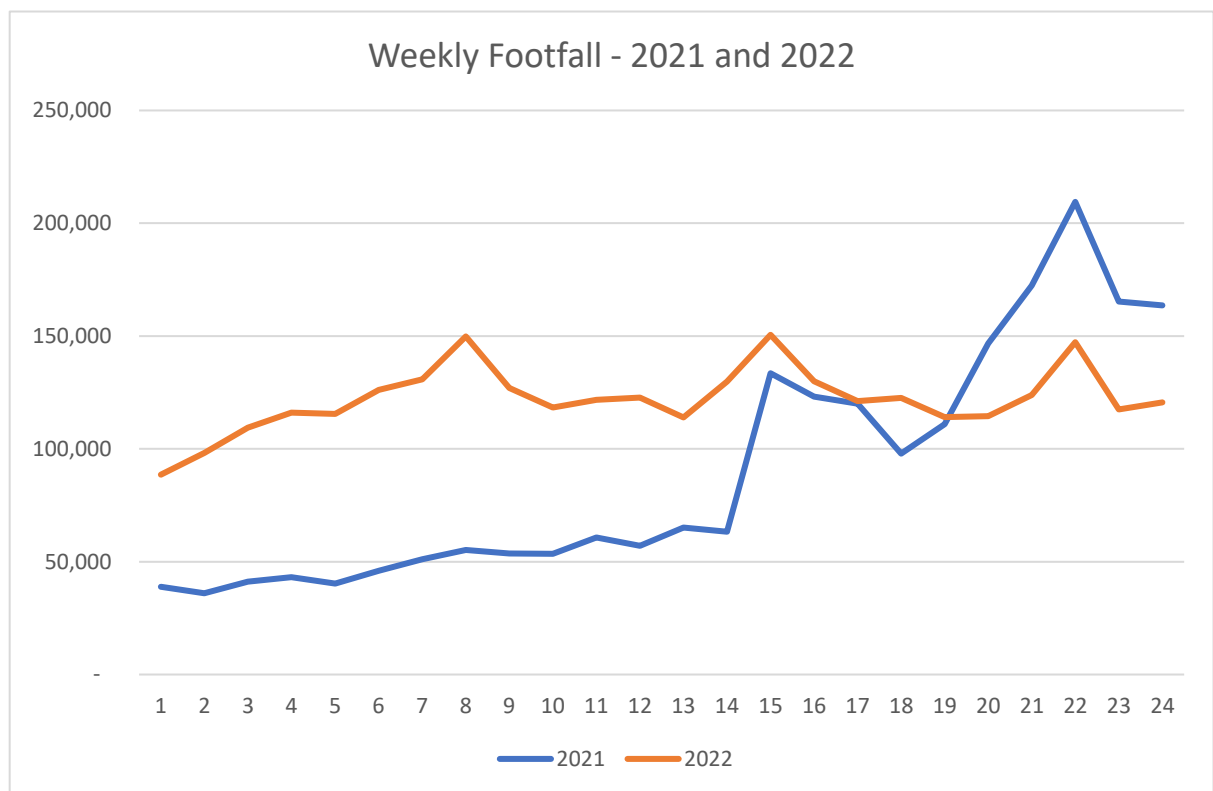
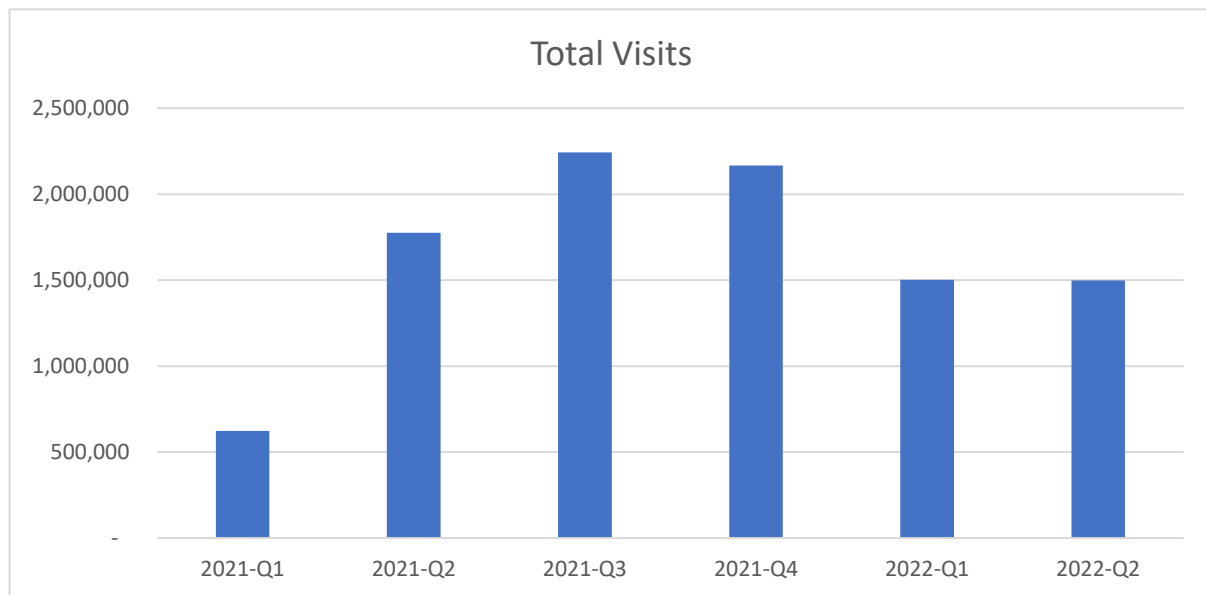


Figure 2 – Total Visits to York



It is possible to gauge the types of international visitors who visit York by looking at the nationalities of visitors that connect to the 02 Network. It shows that in comparison to the amount of locals that already live in York, citizens of Netherlands have visited York the most in percentage terms. This is shortly followed by Sweden. When looking at international visitors who are local to York, Austria leads the way in percentage terms, followed by China and Greece.

Feedback from businesses in the sector suggests that short term bookings and visitor numbers are remaining relatively strong, and that spend is holding up at levels close to pre-pandemic, but the longer term remains a concern. Customers are no longer booking in advance at the same scale as during lockdown. These issues have been discussed with the Tourism Advisory Board, which continues to be an excellent sounding board and information sharing forum for the sector.

As required in our SLA with Make It York, the Tourism Advisory Board is currently working on a new Tourism Strategy for York. This will emerge for consultation in the Autumn, and is based on work by Group Nao from last year, together with extensive input from York's Tourism Businesses.

Parish Council liaison

Parish Liaison Committee meetings continue to be held between City of York Council and representatives of the York Branch of YLCA. These

meetings are useful in sharing knowledge and highlighting issues affecting parish councils and the communities they serve. Among matters that arise, the committee oversees and assesses the implementation of the Parish Charter (which was refreshed and approved by Executive in November 2021).

Arts, Music, Culture and Heritage

Following the launch of the Culture Strategy in 2020 (a joint initiative by Make It York, City of York Council and the Cultural Leaders Group), the existing Cultural Leaders Group – which was made up of 40 leaders across the cultural creative sector in the city – has been replaced by an executive group elected by a new Culture Forum.

This will make York the first city with an elected cultural executive group in the UK. Creating a more inclusive and open forum will ensure that we make culture even more relevant and accessible to everybody in York, regardless of age, background or postcode.

Earlier this year, York based organisations negatively impacted by Covid-19 were invited to apply for a new Events and Festivals Grant Scheme to support upcoming events in 2022.

Following a successful application process, Make It York and City of York Council are pleased to award grants to fifteen York-based organisations. The purpose for this grant funding is to support the delivery of events and festivals which would have happened in 2020 and/or 2021, as well as new events and festivals led by York-based organisations who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic and therefore unable to fund the overall costs of such activities themselves.

The £50k grant funding comes from the Government's ARG fund. The fifteen events and festivals who have been awarded funding from the ARG Events and Festivals Grant are:

- 2022 Wagon Plays organised by York Mystery Plays (19 – 26 June 2022): York Mystery Plays are a unique part of York's literary and cultural heritage and allow hundreds of local people to engage with their own history. The Wagon Plays will be performed in June 2022 in outdoor locations across York. <https://www.yorkmysteryplays.co.uk/buy-tickets/>

- York Mediale 2022 Events (24 June – 18 September 2022, and November 2022): Funding will support a programme of events at York Art Gallery including the ‘Body Vessel Clay’ exhibition and the Immersive Assembly, Mediale’s international artist development programme, in collaboration with the city of Viborg in Denmark, a fellow UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts. <https://mediale.org.uk/immersive-assembly/> <https://www.yorkartgallery.org.uk/exhibition/body-vessel-clay/>
- Operation Hummingbird organised by Next Door But One CIC (August 2022): A new play by Next Door But One exploring loss, love, terminal illness and anticipatory grief. Operation Hummingbird is a conversation across the decades about a sudden family death, realising an opportunity that we all wish we could do at some point in our life; go back and talk to our younger self. <https://www.nextdoorbutone.co.uk/Operation-Hummingbird.php>
- Wilberforce Bounces Back organised by The Wilberforce Trust (August and December 2022): The trust will host two community fayres – the return of their annual Christmas Fayre and a new Summer Fayre. The events will include old style village fayres, with sideshow stalls, fairground type games, craft stalls, food, silent auction and a raffle. <https://www.wilberforcetrust.org.uk/>
- Groves Community Cinema organised by Theatre@41 (Quarterly from September 2022): A new regular community cinema with a weekend of films every quarter is coming to York. Showing a mixture of topical films relevant to the lived experiences of the local community, films from the Yorkshire Film Archive, and a more accessible and affordable cinematic environment for the young people of the Groves and York. <https://www.41monkgate.co.uk/>
- York Design Week 2022 organised by Kaizen Arts Agency CIC (October 2022): York Design Week (YDW) is an annual city-wide multidisciplinary festival offering a programme of events, workshops, talks, exhibitions, and performances. This year’s theme aims to positively shift conversation and behaviour around what design means and how it can offer innovative solutions. <https://www.yorkdesignweek.com/>

- Making Moves (previously Dance It Up North) organised by York Dance Space (October 2022): Making Moves is a community dance production which brings together the diverse communities of York and North Yorkshire to perform at York Theatre Royal. <https://yorkdancespace.com/>
- York Unlocked CIC (October 2022): Discover interesting buildings that are usually difficult to access with York Unlocked. Visitors will have the opportunity to take a look around famous York buildings including Herbert House, St Williams College, The Guildhall, Kings Manor, Old Archbishops Palace, Bootham School, De Grey Rooms, Lodge Duncombe Place, Hudson Quarter, Monk Bar, Chapel St Johns Uni and more. <https://york-unlocked.org.uk/>
- York LGBT+ Pride (18 June 2022): York's summer Pride event provides the main platform for a celebration of the diversity of the LGBT+ community through entertainment, inclusivity and fun. <https://yorkpride.org.uk/>
- BAFTA-Qualifying Aesthetica Film Festival organised by Aesthetica Magazine Ltd (November 2022): The BAFTA-Qualifying Aesthetica Film Festival is one of the key destinations for new cinema in the UK. The festival will screen new films across 12 venues in the city centre this November and provides education and learning opportunities, as well as access to new film and high-profile speakers. <https://www.asff.co.uk/>
- 2022 Yorkshire Schools Dance Festival organised by Creative Learning Partnerships (November 2022): The Yorkshire Schools Dance Festival is open to all primary schools, secondary schools, colleges, further education providers and community dance companies across Yorkshire. Over 1000 participants will create and perform fresh choreography in a large-scale venue, as well as taking part in workshops and watch performances by professional dance companies. <https://www.yorkshireschoolsdancefestival.co.uk/>
- SLAP York Showcase organised by SLAP York (SLAP Collective LTD) (November/December 2022): The SLAP York Showcase includes four creative workshops and a showcase of brand-new work created by artists living in the city. There'll be live

performances, including one to one experiences, durational work and participatory performance. <https://www.slapyork.co.uk/>

- Poetry For All organised by Stairwell Books / York Spoken Word (November/December 2022): Poetry For All welcomes newcomers and regulars to join their poetry and prose open mic, which has been going for over 16 years. Offering a platform to disabled poets, they were the first UK event BSL signed with poems also PowerPointed in an accessible venue. <http://www.yorkspokenword.org.uk/>
- Christmas Folk at the NCEM (December 2022): Based in the centre of York since 2000, the NCEM promotes high quality concerts across a wide range of music genres. Christmas Folk at the NCEM will showcase three traditional/folk concerts taking place at the NCEM in December 2022. <https://www.ncem.co.uk/>
- "The Shambles Saved Christmas!" organised by Thunk-It Theatre Ltd (December 2022): 'The Shambles Saved Christmas!' is a one person, family theatre performance, written to showcase the famous Shambles Market in York City Centre, whilst celebrating festive cheer. There'll also be opportunities to take part in crafting sessions, including make your own festive decorations. <https://www.thunkittheatre.co.uk/>

Charlie Croft

At the end of August, Charlie Croft retires from City of York Council. Charlie has been with the council since 1996, and currently serves as Assistant Director for Customers and Communities.

Since my appointment as portfolio holder in May 2019, Charlie has been a constant source of support and guidance. Conversations I've had with officers and city partners since Charlie announced his retirement have only reaffirmed the warmth and respect people have for him.

He will be much missed and we all wish him every success in his future endeavours. Few people will have made a positive contribution to York on the scale that he has.

Recruitment for a new Assistant Director is underway and will conclude in July.