

Make It York

**Quarterly Narrative**

**May – July 2022**

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## Visitor Economy

### Destination Management Organisation (DMO)

#### **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.

### Leisure Marketing

**Summer guide:** Produced 50,000 copies, now in distribution via InfoDisplay, NPD and Take One Media and the VIC.

**2022 Events calendar (printed):** Finished and distribution has taken place across the city.

**New £1 shopping map:** Created for sale in the VIC. 3,000 copies for now with a view to creating a new one when we move location.

**Vintage York:** Campaign launched in the lead up to the Jubilee with a new 1950s postcard style video, the campaign was sponsored by York Park & Ride and City Cruises York. Paid for social activity promotion, Twitter competition and YouTube advertising took place.

**Kyiv City Ballet:** An amazing opportunity to fundraise for UNICEF arose with a ballet performance at York Theatre Royal by the Kyiv City ballet who were stranded in Paris when the war broke out, a city-wide collaboration helped to raise over £30K for children in Ukraine. A VIP reception at York Mansion House also took place with the new Lord Mayor. Members and partners supported with free hotel rooms and train tickets and a whole range of food and drink whilst the company were in the city.

**Summer in York Campaign:** Launched on 17 June in partnership with York Park & Ride, Minster, JORVIK, City Cruises and Thor's Orangery. A full activity plan was created with a new summer postcard style film for Video on Demand on ITV hub from 25 July to 31 August and Capital FM Yorkshire from 18 July for one month with Adam and JoJo creating a new promotional video of their day out in York.

**Haunted York / Guy Fawkes:** Building the new campaign for an even spookier Halloween this year, working with York Park & Ride and York Dungeon and looking to incorporate the new 'Tragedy of Guy Fawkes' at York Theatre Royal.

**York Christmas:** Work has commenced on selling adverts into the new guide to be ready for the beginning of October. Adverts are placed already for coach and group tour magazines this summer to push coach bookings for Christmas.

## Digital Channels

### Visit York (Website)

During the period of 1 April to 20 June, the Visit York website was visited by 270,603 users, **an increase of 6.83%** compared to the previous highs of 2021.

There were 742,456 page views of the site during this period, the most viewed pages being 'Things to Do', 'What's On', and 'Attractions'. An accommodation booking tool is set to launch on the site in the coming weeks, along with a year-round 'Haunted York' hub page, expanded B2B 'Trusted Supplier' content and numerous small improvements to the website and CMS login system.

### Visit York (Social Media)

Visit York social media channels received a record 5.4 million impressions during this period, 248,843 engagements and gained 4,436 new followers.

Visit York now has a total of 146,721 followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Video content is set to be utilised much more in the coming months, with our new in-house design and content executive producing engaging Summer in York videos.

### Make It York (Website)

During the period of 1 April to 20 June, 4,623 users visited the Make It York website which resulted in 12,543 page views. The news article detailing the return of St Nicholas Fair was the most viewed page on the site during this period after the home page, closely followed by 'Shambles Market', and 'About Us'. New content was developed for the website during this period with a York Culture Forum Discussion going live, additions to the Culture Hub and a number of news posts and case studies.

### Make It York (Social Media)

Meanwhile, social media coverage on MIY platforms resulted in 82,224 impressions, 3,420 engagements, and 1,410 link clicks to the Make It York website, while gaining 168 new followers across all social media channels contributing to a total follower count of 10,717 followers.

## PR & Comms

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 20<sup>th</sup> June there were:

Total News Volume:	112
Total News Reach:	18.4 million
Total News Value:	£1.53 million

Campaigns/topics of focus during this period included Easter, Chocolate Festival, Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, VisitEngland Awards, Ukraine's Kyiv City Ballet charity gala performance and culture grants.

National coverage was secured in titles such as: BBC News Online, Yours Magazine, Mirror Online, The Sun, iNews and Food & Travel Magazine.

Regional coverage was secured in Yorkshire Post, York Press, YorkMix, Living North, Absolutely Yorkshire, Yorkshire Live and Northern Echo.

Broadcast coverage included ITV News Tyne Tees, Channel 5 News, ITV Calendar, BBC Look North, YorkMix Radio and BBC Radio York.

We have had seven press trips during this period, which we supported with itineraries including: The Telegraph, Luxury England, A Bear Called Paddington (social media influencer) and Alan X El Mundo (Mexican YouTuber with over 3m subscribers).

## Visit York Membership

Membership retention currently stands at 71%, with 406 memberships having renewed and 136 yet to pay.

Since the beginning of April, **60** new members have been recruited. This is a record number consisting of a mix of hotels, restaurants, self-catering and business services. The membership team are currently working through 100 prospective members as well as processing high numbers of organic enquiries.

Engagement with some members is still proving to be a challenge, however, the implementation of a new Key Account Management model should improve how we work with them. We will be ensuring that all members receive direct one on one contact, enabling us to gain a greater understanding of member requirements which will also help us to showcase Visit York marketing plans.

Since April, the team have hosted 10 membership events with over 600 attendees.

Membership figures from previous years are shown in the table below:

Year	Total no of members	Total no of new members gained	Note
2019/2020	575	134	
2020/2021	423	141	103 lost due to Covid
2021/2022	597	144	Record year since membership began

## Publications

The Spring/Summer guide sales process went well with a range of different sectors included.

Sales for the Autumn/Winter guides are steady. The deadline for booking a space is August 2022.

## Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

Footfall remains steady with more international visitors starting to return, especially from the US, Northern Europe and Australia. Footfall figures from 2019-2022 are shown in the table below:

	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	18,551	17,306	0	7,925
February	27,890	21,526	0	10,969
March	23,982	7,476	0	15,791
April	33,138	0	774	15,955
May	30,031	0	4,293	17,398
June	28,998	1,756	12,052	17,109
July	34,303	8,291	17,703	18,682
August	38,216	13,609	22,084	
September	29,450	10,966	21,418	
October	31,588	7,143	20,414	
November	21,986	0	14,186	
December	20,619	2,292	7,867	

YTD	2019	2020	2021	2022
January	18,551	17,306	0	7,925
February	46,441	38,832	0	18,894
March	70,423	46,308	0	34,685
April	103,561	46,308	774	50,640
May	133,592	46,308	5,067	68,038
June	162,590	48,064	17,119	85,147
July	196,893	56,355	34,822	103,829
August	235,109	69,964	56,906	
September	264,559	80,930	78,324	
October	296,147	88,073	98,738	
November	318,133	88,073	112,924	
December	338,752	90,365	120,791	

The VIC team complimented the events taking place in the city by:

**Platinum Jubilee:** Decorating the VIC with Union Jack flags and life size cut-outs of Her Majesty the Queen, selling Jubilee merchandise and signposting visitors to Jubilee events.

**Jorvik Viking Festival:** Decorating the VIC with Jorvik Viking shields, wearing Viking Festival t-shirts (supplied by Jorvik), housing a giant axe in the leaflet room, selling Viking merchandise and signposting to the various events taking place across the city.

**Pride:** Decorating the VIC with rainbow flags, selling Pride merchandise (with part of the revenue being donated to charity) and supporting local events including the march on the Saturday.

In July, we started to sell York Gift Cards (one of only three locations in the city to do so) working in collaboration with York BID. This should help to increase footfall into the VIC.

## Volunteers

Our Volunteers have been incredibly helpful over the past few months. Some of them continue to provide information to visitors in the leaflet room of the VIC, covering for staff lunches etc. Others have manned the 'visitor information pod' at York Station, distributing the Summer Guide and Mini Guides and providing information to visitors arriving by train.

Our volunteers and VIC team have done a magnificent job of distributing the MIY Business Plan and Events Calendar to over **600 businesses** in the city during the past 6-8 weeks. The feedback from businesses was excellent, with many appreciating the personal interaction and having access to an events calendar to share with customers/colleagues.

## York Pass

York Pass sales are above average with the main sales channel being direct web bookings

Yorkshire Museum Trust are now included in the York Pass.



Discounts were available on both a 3- and 6-day Pass, to help to promote a longer stay and support those members who are included 'beyond York'. 1- and 2-day Passes remain the most popular for consumers. Sales have slowed a little, which we believe is attributed to international markets. Research into buying patterns within the city will provide us with an insight as to whether to discount 1- and 2-day products to increase sales.

We have seen an increase in the number of affiliate partnership requests. 31 affiliates are now set up, with plans in place to work with and manage increased performance.

We have a limited number of trade partners including Get Your Guide, Trip Advisor, Virgin Experience and Railbookers, who are now requesting high commissions.

Sales within the Visitor Information Centre are increasing again, and further promotion of the Pass within this area is being explored.

York Pass has featured as a Key Partner in our Summer campaign which will help to promote the pass to a wider audience.

## 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

Business tourism activity this quarter has seen more of a return to ‘normal’, with trade show activity, ongoing larger enquiries but still seeing shorter lead times than pre-pandemic – a trend reported by many VY members.

An unexpected project during this quarter has been the collaboration with York Theatre Royal supporting the Kyiv City Ballet fundraising gala on 14 June. 100% of ticket sales were being donated to UNICEF’s Ukraine Appeal. We worked with the YTR team for 6 weeks in the run up to the event, reaching out to VY members to secure free accommodation, travel, food and drink for the company, and supported with the Mansion House civ reception and co-ordinated media activity. A true collaborative effort and city-wide welcome.

Active enquiries include:

- International bee health conference for 150, organised by FERA – multi-venue proposal including gala dinner in York, social activities at various city venues plus a day excursion to Castle Howard, October 2022.
- Crime Writers’ Association annual conference, spring 2023 for 70-100.
- Medical charity, research conference, spring 2024 for 500.

Liberal Democrat Spring Conference 2023:

This will be returning as an in-person event in March 2023 to York Barbican. We have secured delegate rates at a selection of hotels, which are now live to book via [visityork.org](http://visityork.org).

## Trade events and related activity:

- We returned to the Conference and Hospitality Show Leeds (24 May 2022), with two VY members joining as partners – Castle Howard and York Gin. Follow up with the new leads generated has been positive, and it was good to get back out at face-to-face events. Several people stopped to complement our stand design too.



- We joined other smaller destinations on the MeetEngland stand at The Meetings Show, London (ExCel), 29-30 June 2022. Reaching out to former clients to rekindle interest in returning to York, and targeting new connections and association contacts.
- We hosted the first in-person sales managers' meeting on 16 June, kindly hosted by the York Conferences team at the Guildhall; a chance for new members to connect and network, lots of positive conversations over future collaborations as a result.
- The agents' education visit with the Association of Independent Event Agencies took place on 14 July 2022 with 5 participants, hosted by The Grand, York.

## Conference web content development:

- Ongoing work developing the 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.
- New page to showcase exclusive hire opportunities, still reaching out to members to encourage them to participate in the delegate welcome offer and a new event planners' toolkit will go live shortly.

## Research & Insight

### Tourism Intelligence Update

The T-Stats platform continues to be updated monthly with the following information:

- Sessions on visitYork.org, new followers and impressions on VY social media channels, VIC footfall and visits to attractions using a York Pass using internal data
- City centre footfall – from Springboard / York Open Data
- Hotel occupancy, average daily rate, and RevPAR - from STR data provided by HAY
- Airbnb occupancy – from AirDNA data provided through T-stats
- Visits to attractions – provided by attractions
- Weather – from the Met Office provided through T-stats

Automated reports are now available to download covering any time period e.g., monthly, quarterly, or annually. Monthly reports are being circulated to the Marketing and Comms team.

Attraction data is not currently included in the monthly report due to the time lag between month end and the data being received from attractions. In addition, a number of attractions have not yet responded to requests for visitor numbers.

T-Stats can be updated with any tourism data, as long as it is collected at least monthly.

We are assured by York BID that we will receive access to their movement insight data from Visa and O2.

### Visitor Survey

Visitor Survey results are sent by QA research quarterly. A quarterly report for January-March was produced but has not been circulated in case the figures are used as definitive, rather than as a seasonal snapshot, given that visitor profiles and behaviours change over time.

Each quarter, CYC are provided with the following KPIs from the Visitor Survey:

- ◆ Average party size
- ◆ Average spend per person per day excluding accommodation
- ◆ Activities taken part in during visit
- ◆ Overall experience rating
- ◆ Likelihood of returning in the next 2 years
- ◆ Likelihood of recommending a visit to York

A quarterly tracker report showing the results of these KPIs and other measures from Q1 2019 to Q1 2022 was presented to the TAB meeting on 13th May. At the meeting, some TAB members raised again the long running criticism that the Visitor Survey is not representative of all city centre users. The methodology is designed to only include day and overnight visitors to York and is currently the only way of tracking tourist attitudes and behaviour as a distinct group as opposed to those of residents, commuters, business travellers, or visitors on a

routine shopping trip. This distinction proved useful recently when, following the news of rail strikes, there was an enquiry about the use of public transport amongst tourists.

### **Economic Impact Model – Cambridge**

Every year (except 2020 due to Covid), Tourism Southeast (TSE) run the Cambridge Model to estimate the volume and value of tourism to York. Tourism Southeast are currently working on an updated version of Cambridge 2 in conjunction with Bournemouth University and will be piloting it in September. The cost will be more than the current Cambridge Model as it will produce a lot more data, but TSE are still working on exact numbers. TSE will aim for this to be completed by the end of September, but it is dependent on VisitBritain supplying their data and us supplying our local data by the start of September.

Among other things, the report estimates the volume and value of:

#### Overall day visits

Overnight visits split by UK and domestic, and purpose of travel e.g., holiday or business  
As day visitors are calculated using the VB day visits survey, the Cambridge Model is likely to underestimate the volume of overseas visitors on a day trip to York but staying in accommodation outside the city. TSE admit that inherently overseas visits are always underrepresented even in the national data but weighting in the Cambridge Model helps counterbalance this. Nevertheless, given the importance of overseas visitors to York, data from the annual Visitor Survey has been used annually to estimate overseas visitors falling into this category, and these have been added to the Cambridge Model data.

Similarly, business day visitors are not accounted for in the current Cambridge Model but will be considered in the updated version. Up until 2018, estimates of business day visits were added to the Cambridge Model data using results from the UK Conference and Meeting Survey (UKCAMS) survey, which is conducted annually by RJS Associates. In addition to the national research, local analysis can be run for any destination with a minimum of 10 responses. There has been no York specific business tourism data since 2018 as only 3 businesses responded in 2019 and 6 businesses in 2021.

In 2019, the Cambridge Model estimated there were 6.6-million-day trips and 1.6 million overnight visits to York, a total of 8.2 million trips. Using 2018 UKCAMS and 2019 Visitor Survey data, overseas and business day visitors increased the number of day visitors to York to an estimated 7.2 million, or an estimated 8.8 million trips overall.

For the 2021 modelling, our contact at TSE has not returned requests for clarification over the data to be submitted by early September, however, based on previous years, the data required is likely to include:

Serviced accommodation occupancy data – this year, STR data will replace the Visit York Occupancy Survey data

Self-catering occupancy data – using AirDNA data provided through T-Stats

Attractions visits – so far 14 of 23 attractions have submitted annual visits data for 2021. Reminders will be sent out until all data is collected or the deadline for submission is reached

Visitor spend and length of stay – from Annual Visitor Survey

Bedstock data – this is a huge task using desk research to try and measure the total number of rooms available to book across hotels, B&Bs, guesthouses, serviced apartments, self-catering cottages, hostels, campsites, and any other accommodation in York. The last bedstock audit was in 2018

Given the lack of clarification from TSE, David Calway at Global Tourism Solutions (GTS) UK was approached about the possibility of moving to the STEAM model.

### Events and festivals

**York Life Festival:** A short festival report was produced but this was limited due to a low response rate. Only 25 responses were received despite an incentive being offered.

**Jorvik Viking Festival:** We agreed to analyse data collected by the Jorvik Group during the Viking Festival as part of the money invested in the marketing partnership with Make It York. Once the survey data has been received, reporting will begin.

### Good Business Charter

Make It York have recently become a member of the Good Business Charter and will include the logo on the website and in the VIC. We will continue to promote the value of joining via social media.

### Tourism Advisory Board

1. Convene and facilitate a TAB for York, which brings together a diverse range of stakeholders in the sector and has an independent chair.
2. 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 throughout 2022 and the minutes from the Jan-June meetings are available on request. The focus of the tourism advisory board continues to be planning York's new tourism strategy.

## 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

A key priority within the Culture Strategy has been to create more democratic and open structures. Make It York have worked closely with the culture sector to create and launch a new Culture Forum, to enable a broader and more diverse group of representatives to contribute to future direction of the Strategy.

The York Culture Forum opened in December 2021, replacing the previous York Cultural Leaders Group meetings, with meetings taking place bi-monthly, and alternating between zoom and face-to-face meetings to accommodate the broadest range of members. The Culture Forum has 153 members signed up to date, representing a broad range of creative freelancers, as well as members from a wider range of cultural and creative organisations.

The next stage for the Culture Forum is to elect their Culture Executive, who will oversee the direction and implementation of the Culture Strategy, as their representatives. The Executive will be led by two co-chairs – Head of Culture and Wellbeing at Make It York and a chair appointed from and by the incoming Executive. There will be eleven Executive members in total, with a representative for each of the six Key Priorities in the Culture Strategy (Engagement, Participation and Relevance; Placemaking; Children and Young People; Talent

Development and Retention; Culture and Wellbeing; York's National and International Profile) as well as a representative from the Guild of Media Arts, several General Members, and the Executive Member for Culture.

We held an extraordinary meeting of the Culture Forum in early May, on the Executive Group nominations and election process. From May through June, interested candidates can contact MIY for initial conversations about the Executive Group. Then on 19 July, the Nomination Period opens, where candidates may nominate themselves (or another member may nominate them) to stand for election to the Exec. On 1 September, nominations close and voting opens online. Every member of the Forum has one vote per vacant electable position and must cast their vote by 14 September. An online Hustings meeting will be held at the start of this period for candidates to introduce themselves further. The election results will be announced at the Culture Forum AGM on 15 September, and the candidates can assume office.

We believe this model is the first of its kind in the UK.

### **Culture Sector Communications**

MIY provides 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. The e-news currently has a readership of 157 people, and growing.

The Culture Hub on the MIY website hosts the Culture Strategy and acts as a hub for the city's creative and cultural activity. We continue to develop this area of the website, and have recently added an online Culture Forum discussion board, available to Forum members, which was requested to enable members to share information and skills. We have also added a 'Latest Culture News' section to the Culture hub page – where culture posts will appear, as well as in the main news page and home page.

### **Action Plan**

The MIY Culture, Wellbeing and Events team produced an action plan for the Culture 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. We host this quarterly report on the Culture Hub for information on strategy progress. It can be accessed here: <https://www.makeityork.com/culture/yorks-creative-future-york-culture-strategy-2020-2025/>

Recent progress across each Key Priority for the strategy has included:

### **Engagement:**

- Much engagement work is focused around attracting new participants to the Culture Forum, with 153 freelancers and organisations now members. MIY have now outlined the election process to the Culture Exec, which will open in the summer, with



appointees confirmed in September. We will hold the next Forum meeting in real life in July, to facilitate knowledge sharing and networking.

- Plans for York Trailblazers (formerly known as Makers and Shapers) have progressed with York Civic Trust and partners, with community engagement at the heart of the design process and a legacy project to ensure future engagement. A bid is being finalised, which will be submitted by July, to support the programme of events and activities planned for 2022 -25.
- Building on 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 York Multiple Complex Needs network.

### **Placemaking:**

- Make It York are currently developing case study evidence on local authority funding for culture, in response to a call for evidence from the Commission on Culture and Local Government, to investigate the role that publicly funded culture can play in national recovery post-pandemic.
- York's investment plan for the Shared Prosperity Fund, once approved by Government, could see over £5m shared amongst projects in the city over the next three years. The Investment Plan will reflect the city's priorities and will be based on the My City Centre strategy, Culture strategy and York Skills Plan, together with the emerging York Economic Strategy, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Climate Change strategy.
- As part of our placemaking work, MIY has developed a guide for creatives looking to find space in and around York within vacant shop spaces, to make the process easier to navigate. This will launch on the Culture hub on the MIY website soon.
- 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 and national culture representatives. Links are also being developed across the north as part of MIY's role on the Northern Culture Consortium, which advocates together for the importance of northern culture.

### **Children and Young People:**

- MIY are supporting REACH, the Cultural Education Partnership, and have created a web page hub for them to showcase cultural and creative activity for children and young people in York, on the Culture hub of the MIY website. REACH has secured funding through IVE and City of York Council, part of which will go towards the development of this webpage hub, and MIY are working closely with them to facilitate this.
- Make It York are working closely with REACH to develop their offering, with the MIY Creative and Cultural Development Manager sitting on the REACH Steering Group.

Part of the IVE funding will secure a Programme Manager position for REACH, and the C&CD Manager is involved in this process.

#### **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 developed an artist accelerator programme, to support new artists in the city, covering everything from project management to tax assessments, managing social media and marketing and more. 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:**

- The application process for the Cultural Wellbeing grants, co-led by MIY and City of York Council, has now closed and grantees have been shortlisted. We are currently finalising details and grant agreements, before announcing successful grant recipients in mid-July. A total £30K is available to local charities, social enterprises, voluntary and community groups.
- Evaluation is now underway on the projects who received funding in 2021, and these have begun to feature as Culture and Wellbeing case studies on the MIY website, as we continue to build the qualitative evidence bank for culture and wellbeing.
- The Culture Commissioning Partnership (CCP), with Chair and Secretariat by MIY, leads on the Culture and Wellbeing Priority within the Culture Strategy. An action plan across communications and engagement, funding, people and strategy, has now been created, following workshops in late 2021, and has been presented to the CCP, to ensure a joined-up citywide approach to culture and wellbeing for partners.
- We are implementing key deliverables from this action plan, which include a range of activities from site visits (our most recent meeting took place at York Archaeology, visiting the award-winning Archaeology on Prescription programme), best practice review, to future joint funding bids and building engagement.

#### **York's National and International Profile:**

- Make It York ran an Events and Festivals Grants scheme this year, for York based organisations negatively impacted by Covid-19, to support upcoming events in 2022. The £50k grant funding came from the Government's ARG fund, and was kindly provided by City of York Council to Make It York, supporting York's economic recovery from Covid-19. 15 events were awarded the grant funding in May, including York

Pride, the York Mystery Plays and York Design Week. Full details here: [15 organisations awarded ARG Events & Festivals Grants \(makeityork.com\)](#)

- Work on York's bid for UNESCO World Heritage Status for the city is ongoing. In April, the Council Executive accepted the recommendation of the York UNESCO World Heritage Steering Group (WHSG) that York should bid for World Heritage status. WHSG are now finalising the application for this, which will see York applying to join the UK Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The deadline for submission is 15 July 2022. A list of the recommended sites for the Tentative List will then be submitted to ministers for approval before being registered at UNESCO later this year. Should York join the Tentative List, the Steering Group will then make a full application to UNESCO for World Heritage status. The Head of Culture and Wellbeing represents on the WHSG. More information here: [Agenda item - York as a World Heritage Site](#)
- The Culture team are working together with the Marketing team on the development of the Tourism Strategy, to ensure that it's focus on Culture aligns with the Culture Strategy and the work currently being developed in the city.
- Planning for York Trailblazers (formerly known as Makers and Shapers) is ongoing, led by York Civic Trust and Make It York, with support from other partners, and we submitted a bid to support project work in July. Ambition is for this to be a city-wide project from 2022-25, celebrating the anniversaries of past innovators and inspiring those of today and the future and re-introducing the role, reputation and history of York as a cutting-edge city.

## 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.

Mediale's Immersive Assembly artist residency with fellow UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts, Viborg in Denmark, has now launched and runs till September 2022, for emerging to mid-career artists and studios working in animation, performance, and play.

In May, Mediale ran a two-day programme in York for artists from both countries, working alongside local organisations including XR Stories and York Museums Trust. Arts Council England, the Danish Embassy, Make It York, the Guild of Media Arts and Mediale held a partner meeting as part of this activity, with all reporting the initiative was well received. Henrik Holmskov, Viborg's International Project Manager and UNESCO Focal Point also visited several the city's cultural organisations during this visit to share knowledge and discuss partnership working, facilitated by Chris Bailey, Clerk of the Guild of Media Arts.

The Immersive Assembly has been made possible through funding by Arts Council England and the Danish Embassy, and has been supported by Make It York, on behalf of the city, and by the Guild of Media Arts. Make It York were also able to fund some of Mediale's activity for this through the ARG Events and Festivals Grant Scheme. Arts Council England, the Guild of Media Arts, City of York Council, and Make It York, have now met to discuss potential next steps for the UNESCO Creative Cities collaboration.

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, to collaboratively work together to profile raise for the city's media arts designation. The group are now looking to develop an overarching engagement plan for the designation, and identifying further events and opportunities to take part in, to further raise the profile of the designation together.

The MIY Head of Culture and Wellbeing attends Guild of Media Arts Court Meetings as an Observer.

## Events

- Work with business, visitor economy and cultural sectors in developing the Framework to ensure its fit with wider city strategies / objectives.
- Bring the Framework to the Council for approval, and put in place systems to evaluate the success of the Framework.
- Take the initiative in building coalitions and partnerships for specific initiatives to fill identified gaps in product e.g. to deliver the York Mystery Plays.
- Engage businesses and visitors in mass participation sporting events commissioned by the Council.
- When the need arises, take a lead in supporting cultural events of strategic significance e.g. Rugby League World Cup 2021.

With the new Events team in place, holding weekly meetings to update on planning and city centre commercial bookings, planning for the Events Strategy and Event Framework will commence over the coming months. 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 events delivery partners and to advocate for forthcoming cultural events.

## Update on Make It York events

### **Residents Festival**

City of York Council supported the development of a city centre offer, the York Life Festival, to enhance the impact of the current Residents Festival. This took place on 2 - 3 April (rather than alongside the traditional offer, due to covid considerations). It featured a programmed stage of local mixed acts, curated by the York Venue Network, and an entertainment hub area on Parliament St., featuring stand -up comedy, spoken word poetry and theatre, as well as a number of family-friendly initiatives including face painting, drumming, ukulele, arts, crafts, magic, and beatboxing. Evaluation is currently underway to deliver key metrics, but the event was very well attended, with a high turnout of locals and families and feedback from partners and cultural stakeholders has been very positive.

### **York Ice Trail**

We have launched the 2023 York Ice Trail (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2023) with the theme, 'A Journey Through Time'. The theme is seeking to include ice sculptures from prehistoric through to futuristic with two key zones that are animated and themed to immerse visitors a little more. We have contracted Ice Box to complete the ice production and installation. At this stage we are recruiting sponsors and going through design stages. We intend to have all sculptures secured by October 2022 to generate any logistical plans required for the delivery of the event. The press launch will be held in January once again and a pre-event launch during the evening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

### **Visit York Tourism Awards (VYTA)**

The VYTA launched on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July. All applications are online with the OpenWater system set up and approved by VisitEngland. To mark the launch, we hosted an event on the 4<sup>th</sup> July at York Marriott Hotel. This event featured VisitEngland themselves, past winners, the chair of our judges and Susan Briggs who is leading on the entry workshops. The entry workshops were scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> July (3 sessions, 1 hybrid).

Applications ran until Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August and then judging will commence with finalists being released on the 26<sup>th</sup> September. We can then pull out any seasonal attractions and ensure they are mystery shopped by the end of their season. All mystery shopping is to be completed by the end of November and winners selected in December. The awards themselves will be held at York Racecourse on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023.

### **Rugby League World Cup 2022**

We are progressing with RLWC in terms of volunteers, wayfinding, city dressing, match day entertainment etc. We held a Host Impact Day on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June alongside the Day of Inspiration, facilitated by the University of York. At present we are producing various promotional materials that will be circulated to boost ticket sales across the city. We are also exploring the production of a city-wide video called 'Pass the ball' which will see a custom purple ball being passed to key people, businesses, attractions, and landmarks before making its way to the LNER Stadium. This video will be released for the 50 days to go marker (October) and be screened on match days.

York will hold the trophies for two days on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> October to mark the 50 days to go marker also. We are currently looking at opportunities to make the most of hosting the trophies during this period.

MIY are hosting two civic welcomes, one for the New Zealand Men's team on the 11<sup>th</sup> October and one for the Women's Teams on the 31<sup>st</sup> October. Both events will be held at the Mansion House. In addition, York is housing the official RLWC Women's welcome event (organised directly by RLWC) at the Hospitium on 28<sup>th</sup> October.

## City Centre, Events and Markets

### **City Centre:**

- Make proposals to the Council for any new ideas for commercial exploitation of the Footstreets, Eye 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 Vibrancy

#### **City Funding Support for Culture and Events**

Make It York ran an Events and Festivals Grants scheme this year, for York based organisations negatively impacted by Covid-19, to support upcoming events in 2022.

The £50k grant funding came from the Government's ARG fund and was kindly provided by City of York Council to Make It York to support York's economic recovery from Covid-19. The purpose of the grant funding was to support the delivery of events and festivals which would have happened in 2020 and/or 2021, as well as holding 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. Grant funding was delivered in consultation with the Executive Members for Culture & Communities and Economy & Strategic Planning.

15 events were awarded grant funding in May, including York Pride, the York Mystery Plays and York Design Week. Full details here: [15 organisations awarded ARG Events & Festivals Grants \(makeityork.com\)](#)

City of York Council has confirmed a further £45K of ARG will be provided to Make It York which will support the delivery of local projects designed to improve city centre footfall, support a vibrant city centre and boost trade and economic recovery. MIY are also delighted to receive additional ARG funding which will help to support an Art Trail in York. We will be working with partners to develop the trail and will unveil the plans over the coming months.

## City Centre and Open Spaces

### Knivesmire

The Events team have worked closely with Balloon Fiesta organisers and CYC departments to address previous concerns raised by CYC councillors and Environmental protection. The event is due to take place during the weekend of 23-25<sup>th</sup> September.

Blue Sky Acoustics were commissioned to produce a noise management plan for the Knivesmire, in line with the premises licence. The report will ensure that all future events will adhere to agreed noise levels. Site planning, to future proof the site for events and mitigate against previous noise issues, will be improved.

MIY are in discussions with the organisers of 'Pub in the Park' about the possibility of hosting an event in 2023, similar to events that are taking place across the country this year. Further details can be found here: [Pub in the Park with Tom Kerridge | Pub in the Park with Tom Kerridge | Pub in the Park Festivals \(pubintheparkuk.com\)](#)

### St Sampson's Square

MIY commissioned a structural survey of St Sampson's Square to investigate the feasibility of the square hosting a 35m Big Wheel for the whole of October and during future dates. If feasible, this will become a strong attraction in the City Centre and would be in situ during quieter periods of the year to help to increase footfall.

### Tendering

In line with our Scheme of Delegation and to secure value for money and promote fair and transparent processes, Make It York has a tender process to award major contracts to suppliers. Details of current tenders, including instructions on how to submit a tender, are published on the MIY website.

We undertook a tender process for Christmas food & drink offers and summer activity:

**Summer** – the contract was awarded to Fabler (formerly Thor's) to produce an 'Orangery' on Parliament St during the Summer (24<sup>th</sup> June – 4<sup>th</sup> September). Further details are below.

**Christmas** – the contract was awarded to Coopers Marquees (working with Jamboree Entertainment). Further details below.

### May-July events

Between May and July, the Events team supported several city wide events, namely the Jorvik Viking Festival (city centre), York Waggon Plays (city centre), York Pride (Knivesmire) and York Cycle Rally (Knivesmire).



The Events team worked with partners at CYC Active Leisure, York Minster and North Yorkshire Police to host the Queens Baton Relay on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July as it passed through York as part of the international tour of the Commonwealth. The Relay and nominated Baton bearers had a photo opportunity on the Bar walls and in front of York Minster before heading to York St John's University Sports Campus. On arrival, they were joined by over 600 school children engaging with over 20 local sports groups to promote taking part in sport across the city.

Our very own MD, Sarah took part in the Queens Baton Relay in Hull after being nominated by her son.

### **Summer 2022**

Fabler (formerly Thor's) built an 'Orangery' on Parliament St, which is in situ from 24<sup>th</sup> June – 4<sup>th</sup> September. The brand-new rustic structure for 2022 includes its very own courtyard and reclaimed wood stage with a programme of music and live events throughout the summer. All details can be found on the Visit York website.

### **Christmas 2022**

Christmas 2022 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the St Nicholas Christmas Fair. As mentioned above, a Winter Hutte' will be built on Parliament St, replacing last year's Thor's Tipi. This will be a new, two-storey feature and will include a menu produced and in partnership with Andrew Perne, who is a Yorkshire based, Michelin starred chef.

All trading spaces on Parliament St and St Sampson's Square have now been fully allocated with over two thirds of traders coming from York/Yorkshire. We also have a substantial waiting list, should anybody drop out beforehand.

We are also investigating the feasibility of a number of additional activities/destination opportunities in the Eye of York and Castle Mills car park area, which would help to spread the Christmas offer across the City.

Working in partnership with York BID, we have awarded a four year contract for the Winter Lights to be supplied by LITE. We will be ensuring that the city wide scheme provides points of interest across the city.

### **MyCityCentre and other groups**

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.

## 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.

See sections above.

## Shambles Market

### Shambles Market

#### **Economic Health of Shambles Market**

Consultation has recently concluded on standardisation of rents for retail traders and an increase on rent for food traders and took effect in July. It is proposed that Inflation will automatically be applied each year in line with inflation commencing 2023. Moving forward periodic rent reviews will be undertaken to ensure that the market operates on a sustainable basis.

Shambles Market needs to be more commercially minded to deliver best value and facilitate a service that is sustainable where businesses can go and thrive as market trends continue to evolve.

To support delivering a sustainable market planned work in the near future includes:

- Options for revitalising the short- and medium-term performance of the market including a
  - a review of all service policies, procedures and protocols to ensure they are up-to-date, relevant and fully documented
  - enhanced staff training
  - a proactive approach to marketing and promotion maximising stall occupancy, trader mix and footfall
- Long term strategic outlook for the market
  - market Health Check
  - delivery of an investment plan
  - delivery of a succession plan to attract, encourage and recruit future market traders particularly young traders
  - development of a programme of added value markets ie Night Markets, and speciality markets
  - effective procurement and contract management is in place and delivers value for money
  - health and safety arrangements, including training, are in place, effective and compliant
  - Review of licencing system for traders to ensure the market can change and adapt
  - development of an Enterprise Programme to bring young people as traders to the market

Occupancy continues to be a challenge, particularly during the week. Saturday and Sunday are achieving 100% occupancy. Work is underway to actively seek out new traders for the market and this will further be enhanced by a marketing campaign

### **Improving relationships with traders**

Regular meetings are scheduled with YMTF where key issues are addressed and discussed. Further trader liaisons with Food traders are being developed to drive improvement and inform business direction.

### **Marketing**

A marketing subgroup has been established and is progressing some key initiatives in partnership with traders.

The MIY website has been improved to include trader spotlights, how to become a trader, application forms, FAQ's and history of the Shambles Market.