

## **Annex F – Summary of Consultation Responses**

1. This Annex summarises the consultation responses collected during the trial period. In summary it includes the following elements.
  - Early public consultation events
  - Email communications, including Sample comments
  - On line and hard copy feedback surveys written responses
  - Business Surveys and general feedback
  - Stakeholder Responses
2. Throughout presentation of the consultation responses we have maintained anonymity by removing person/company names where possible.

## **Lendal Bridge - Public Consultation – Initial Results**

Three public consultation events were held in York city centre. These were:

- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> (12:00-19:00hrs) / Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> August (07:30-13:30hrs)
- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> (12:00-19:00hrs) / Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September (07:30-13:30hrs)
- Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October (10:00-16:00hrs)

The August consultation event was undertaken prior to the implementation of the trial restriction on Lendal Bridge and was predominantly for officers to provide information to the public about the reasons for the trial and details of the restriction and how it would be enforced. A brief feedback form was provided for members of the public to fill in and hand in at the event.

The September and October consultation events were undertaken after the trial restriction was implemented. Officers also provided information regarding the trial and sought feedback. As these events were fairly early in to the start of the trial a brief feedback form was also provided for members of the public to fill in.

More detailed feedback survey forms were subsequently available at CYC's offices, local libraries and on line, with more detailed evaluation of all feedback undertaken.

### **Feedback Forms**

Two key questions were asked at each event to determine the initial thoughts of the public and how the trial restrictions impact on them.

Q1: The impact of the Lendal Bridge Closure on me will be/is:

- Very positive
- Positive
- Neither negative nor positive
- Negative
- Very Negative
- Not affected

Q2: The idea to restrict access for private vehicles to improve public spaces and create a better environment is:

- Very good
- Good
- Neither good nor bad
- Bad
- Very bad

The September / October feedback form also asked for information regarding why people come in to York city centre and what mode of travel they use. In all feedback forms space was available for any additional comments that respondents wanted to make. A brief summary of the results of the feedback received is provided below. Details of the further comments are not provided as part of this review.

## **Results**

The number of feedback forms handed back to officers at each event is as follows:

- 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> August – 74 responses
- 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> September – 36 responses
- 5<sup>th</sup> October – 45 responses

The main reasons respondents cited for accessing the city centre were for shopping (23%), leisure (20%), commuting to/from work (16%), access to services (16%) and access to the rail station (15%). The main modes of travel in to the city for respondents were by car (38%), on foot (24%), by bus (17%) and by bicycle (16%). It is noted that for each of the above questions some respondents gave multiple answers.

In August, before the start of the trial, 60% of respondents felt the impact of the Lendal Bridge restriction would be negative or very negative on them whilst 34% thought it would be positive or very positive. In September, once the trial was underway, 38% of respondents felt the impact of the Lendal Bridge restriction was negative or very negative on them whilst 51% thought it was positive or very positive. In October 60% of respondents felt the impact of the Lendal Bridge restriction was negative or very negative on them whilst 33% thought it was positive or very positive.

Overall, there was a slight shift in responses from before the start of the trial compared with once it was underway. Before the trial 60% of respondents felt the trial impact would be negative (August feedback). This reduced to 50% of respondents once the trial was underway (September and October feedback). There was an overall increase in respondents feeling the trial impact would be positive from 34% in August to 42% in September/October.

In August, before the start of the trial, 54% of respondents felt the idea to restrict access to improve public space and create a better environment was bad or very bad whilst 42% thought it was good or very good. In September, once the trial was underway, 22% of respondents felt the idea to restrict access to improve public space and create a better environment was bad or very bad whilst 61% thought it was good or very good. In October 55% of respondents felt the idea to restrict access to improve public space and create a better environment was bad or very bad whilst 40% thought it was good or very good.

Overall, there was a slight shift in responses between responses from before the start of the trial and those given once the trial was underway. Before the start of the trial 54% felt the ideas was bad, whilst this reduced to 40% of respondents once the trial was underway. The percentage that felt the idea to restrict access was good was 42% before the trial which increased to 50% once the trial was underway.

This slight shift in opinion indicates that public perception of the trial before it was implemented was worse than the actual experience. The views of respondents were reasonably balanced with no overall positive or negative opinion.

It is noted that the results of this feedback are based on relatively few individual responses and are also the views of those that attended the consultation events only, ie felt strongly enough to attend and fill in a feedback form. The results therefore are not necessarily representative of the general public as a whole.

## Lendal Bridge Emails

CYC has set up an email address to enable the public to contact them specifically in relation to the Lendal Bridge trial restrictions ([lendalbridge@york.gov.uk](mailto:lendalbridge@york.gov.uk)). This has been promoted to the public on the CYC website and on Lendal Bridge leaflets distributed throughout the city. Emails have been received directly from members of the public and responded to where necessary. In addition CYC customer services ([ycc@york.gov.uk](mailto:ycc@york.gov.uk)) and CYC customer complaints ([haveyoursay@york.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@york.gov.uk)) have forwarded related emails to the Lendal Bridge email address for a response and to include in the scheme evaluation. Councillors and CYC officers have forwarded emails, letters and summary of phone calls to the same address where a specific response is sought or comments made need to be included within the scheme evaluation.

The emails have been reviewed for different periods as follows:

- Pre trial – from approx May (announcement of trial) up to and including 26 August 2013
- Month 1 – from 27 August to 30 September 2013
- Months 2 & 3 – from 1 October to 30 November 2013
- Months 4 – 6 from 1 December 2013 to 28 February 2014

*It is noted that the results of this feedback are based on the views of those that feel strongly enough to contact CYC. The results therefore are not necessarily representative of the general public as a whole.*

## Summary

The tables below provide a summary of responses received. It is noted that we have recorded the total number of emails received, however the majority of people have raised more than one comment or query. We have identified the key themes arising from the comments made and summarise these below. More detail is subsequently provided. It is noted that not all comments received fit into the below categories (some are comments/observations, neither negative nor positive, or suggestions). In addition, there is some overlap between some categories (those against the scheme may also have stated concern regarding traffic congestion). The percentages therefore do not add up to 100%.

Key Themes	Pre-Trial	Month 1	Months 2 & 3	Months 4 - 6	TOTAL Months 1-6
Total email comments received	208	210	525	633	1,368
Scheme Enquiries	88 (42%)	58 (28%)	28 (5%)	29 (5%)	115 (8%)
Vehicle Exemption Requests	25 (12%)	13 (6%)	8 (2%)	5 (1%)	26 (2%)
General support for scheme	16 (8%)	19 (9%)	12 (2%)	48 (8%)	79 (6%)
Generally against the scheme	50 (24%)	32 (15%)	38 (7%)	109 (17%)	179 (13%)
Concern regarding traffic congestion	33 (16%) perceived	14 (7%)	32 (6%)	74 (12%)	120 (9%)
Received a PCN	N/A	57 (27%)	377 (72%)	391 (62%)	825 (60%)

As the trial has progressed there have been some changes in the types of emails received. Before the trial started there were a high proportion of emails enquiring about the scheme and requesting vehicle exemptions. These types of emails continued in Month 1 to a certain extent but tailed off from Month 2 onwards.

General support for the scheme has stayed relatively consistent from its announcement and throughout the trial. It is noticeable that those

generally against the trial was significantly higher before the trial (24%) than once the trial was underway (13%). Similarly those raising concern regarding traffic congestion was almost double before the trial (16%) than once the trial was underway (9%).

From Month 2 there have been a significant number of emails in relation to drivers receiving Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs). The proportion in Month 1 was less due to not issuing PCNs during the first 10 days of the trial and the lag in notices being sent out. This high proportion of emails relating to PCNs results in lower proportions in other areas, particularly in Months 2 and 3. Months 4 to 6 are slightly more balanced as people wrote in voicing their opinions towards the end of the 6 month trial.

## **Summary**

Almost 1,400 emails have been received with a range of comments and questions over the 6 month trial period.

60% of all emails received relate to drivers receiving PCNs. Of these, a high proportion wrote in to make an appeal or ask for a refund on the penalty paid. The key themes from drivers receiving PCNs are that the signing of the restriction is inadequate and often drivers were following their SatNavs which directed them over the bridge. A high number of those receiving PCNs stated that they were visitors to York and were unlikely to return as a result of the PCN. Many of these drivers stated that CYC were unfairly making money, particularly from visitors who don't know the city or details of the bridge restriction. In addition a number of drivers wrote in regarding payment problems they were experiencing or incorrect issue of PCNs and charge certificates.

13% of emails received were from people generally against the restriction. The sentiments of drivers who had received a PCN were echoed in emails from drivers who hadn't received a PCN but do not support the restriction; the signing of the restriction is poor, the trial is a money making exercise and that this creates a poor image of the city and will put visitors off coming to York. In addition, those against the restriction are predominantly concerned with the traffic congestion caused around the city, particularly Water End, Clifton, Foss Islands Road and Skeldergate Bridge. It is considered that the additional traffic in these areas is causing congestion and delay for all drivers. Drivers

that previously used Lendal Bridge now have longer journey distances and journey times. Concern has also been raised with regards to the impact on businesses. This comes from the potential impact as a result of visitors staying away from the city because of the bad publicity from PCNs as well as the time/cost implications for drivers not being able to use the bridge.

6% of emails received were from people generally in support of the restriction. The key themes from these emails were that there is less traffic in the Lendal Bridge area creating a more pleasant environment. People commented that they have experienced bus service improvements and a safer, more pleasant environment for cycling. Despite supporting the restriction there were a number of comments raised regarding its poor implementation, specifically with regards to the information and signing for drivers.

### **Non-PCN Related Emails**

Since the start of the trial, the majority of email correspondence received relates to drivers receiving PCNs. Drivers that have received a PCN generally feel negative towards the PCN, rather than the restriction itself. On this basis a separate analysis of opinion has been undertaken that excludes PCN related emails, as set out in the table below.

<b>Key Themes</b>	<b>Month 1</b>	<b>Months 2 &amp; 3</b>	<b>Months 4 - 6</b>	<b>TOTAL Months 1-6</b>
Total email comments received (excluding PCN related emails)	153	148	242	543
Scheme Enquiries	58 (38%)	28 (19%)	38 (16%)	124 (23%)
Vehicle Exemption Requests	13 (9%)	8 (5%)	5 (2%)	26 (5%)
General support for scheme	19 (12%)	12 (8%)	48 (20%)	79 (15%)
Generally against the scheme	32 (21%)	38 (26%)	109 (45%)	179 (33%)
Concern regarding traffic congestion	14 (9%)	32 (22%)	74 (31%)	120 (22%)



The results of this separate analysis show that general support for the scheme is 15%, which is less than half those generally against the scheme (33%). 22% of all non-PCN related emails raise concern regarding traffic congestion, although this is not explicitly against the restriction. Just under a third of all non-PCN related emails were scheme enquiries or vehicle exemption requests.

### **Total – Months 1-6**

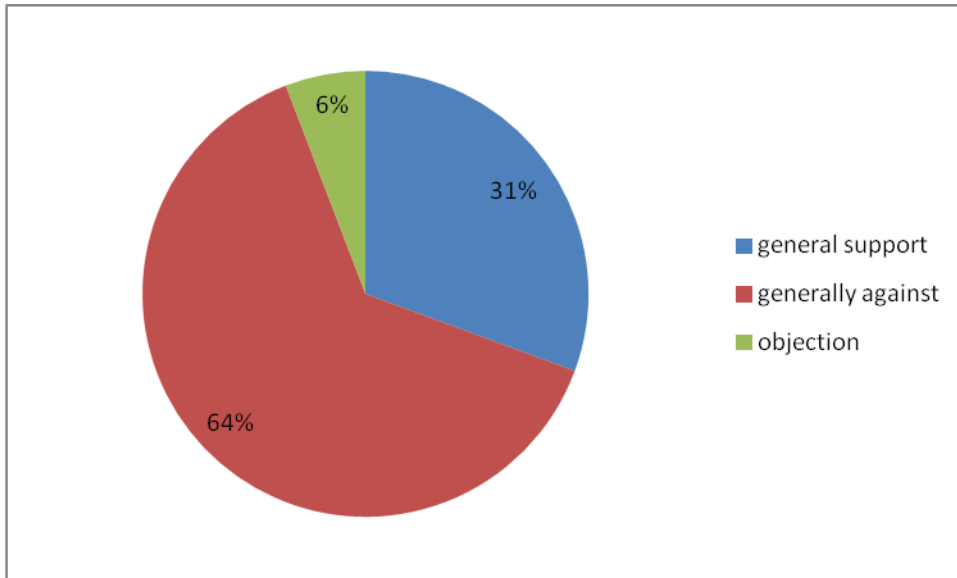
A total of 1,368 emails were received between 27 August 2013 and 28 February 2014. 825 of all emails (60%) received were from drivers who had received a PCN. Of all emails received, 115 emails (8%) were enquiries regarding the scheme. A further 26 emails (2%) were requests for vehicle exemption over the bridge. Excluding the emails received in relation to PCNs, 179 emails (13%) specifically stated that they were not supportive or objected to the scheme and 79 emails received (6%) were supportive of the scheme.

### **General Enquiries / Exemption Requests**

83 emails were general enquiries regarding specifics of the trial such as the timings of the restriction, the general exemptions and how monitoring and evaluation of the trial is being undertaken. A further 41 emails were more specific enquiries asking about access issues, including how to access the station and hospital and asking for directions from x to y. In addition to these general comments and queries there were 26 specific requests for vehicle exemptions, including from drivers of delivery vehicles, taxis and wedding vehicles.

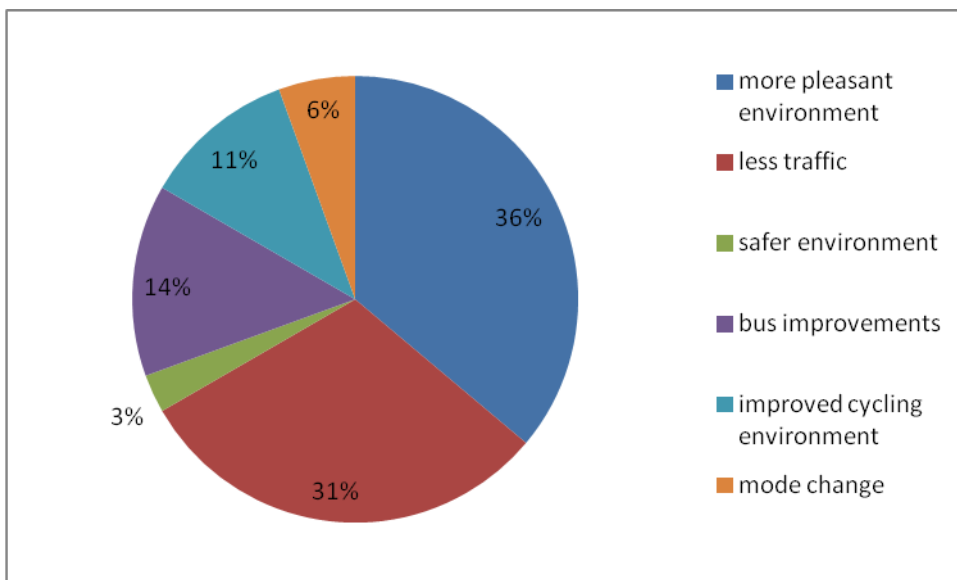
### **Overall Support for the Restriction**

79 emails highlighted their general support for the restrictions. 164 emails specifically stated that individuals thought the restriction on Lendal Bridge was a bad idea or weren't in support of it. In addition, 15 emails stated a more formal objection to the trial.



### Reasons for Support

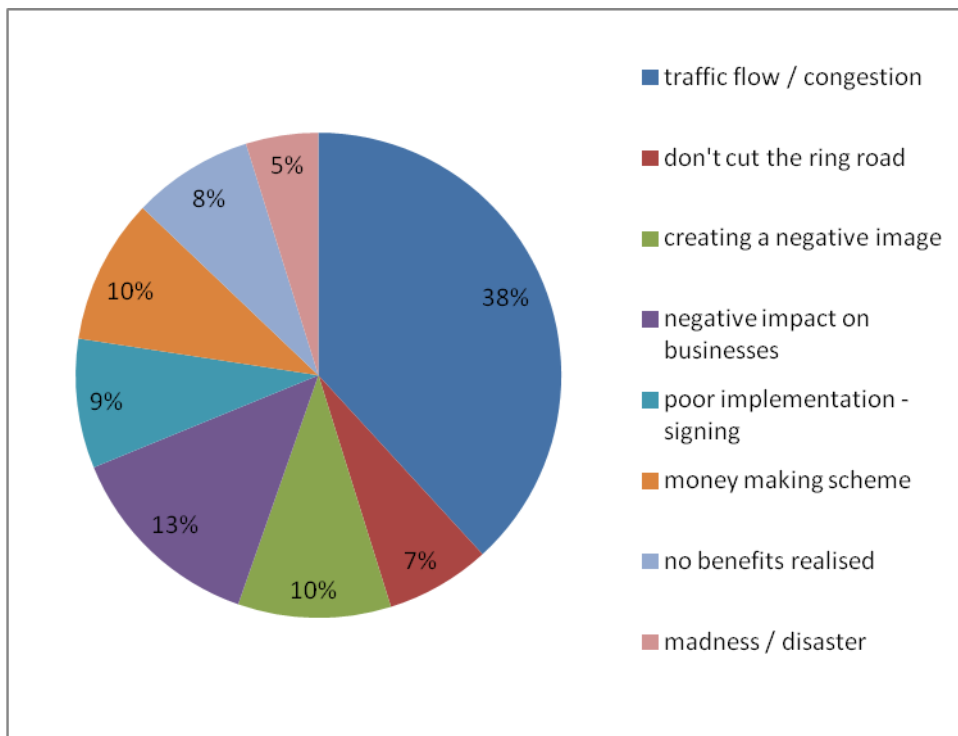
Of those that are supportive of the scheme, the majority commented on a more pleasant environment, including noting less traffic and a safer environment. Respondents commented on bus improvements and more pleasant and safer cycling conditions. Respondents also commented on their mode share away from car use on to more active modes and felt that this was positive for them.



### Reasons Against

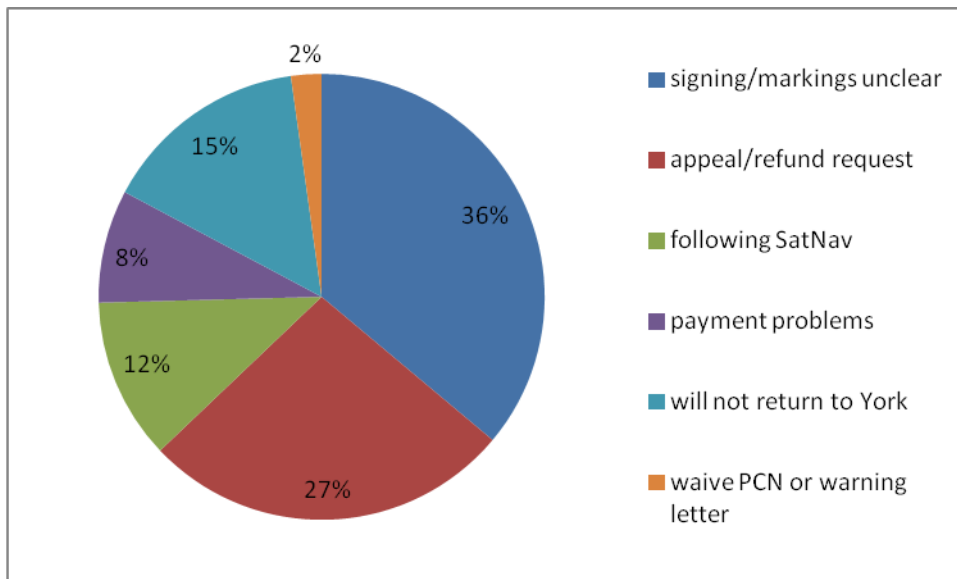
Of those that are against the restriction and want the restriction lifted, the majority have stated that it is having a negative impact on traffic flow, congestion and journey times around the city. Specific locations where

this is highlighted include Water End and Clifton as well as the Inner Ring Road at Skeldergate and Foss Islands Road. A number of comments are made that the Inner Ring Road is a main route around the city and should not be cut. A number of people consider that the restriction is creating a negative image for the city and will stop visitors coming to the city. The restriction is also having a negative impact on businesses, with visitors being put off coming or delivery journey times were affected.



### PCN Related Comments

The vast majority of emails received were as a result of drivers receiving PCNs. 825 emails were received from drivers that had received PCNs and were not happy. Of these, 392 stated that the signing/road markings were unclear, 291 were asking for a refund or wanting to appeal the PCN, 127 stated that they were following their SatNavs and 89 were having problems making a payment. 163 emails specifically stated that as a result of the restriction and receiving a PCN they will not return to York. 24 of the drivers that received a PCN suggested that the first PCN should be waived or warning letters issued initially.



### Other Key Comments

A total of 472 emails were received stating that the signing and road markings of the restriction were inadequate or unclear, with 392 of these from drivers that had received PCNs.

A total of 205 emails were received stating that visitors will / are put off coming back to York, with 163 from drivers that had received a PCN, and as such the city will lose tourist income.

94 of all emails received stated that the restriction was a money making scheme.

24 emails were received from disabled drivers. Of these, 6 requested information regarding how to access disabled parking areas and 18 complained that the restriction was unfair to disabled drivers.

A variety of additional comments were received in relation to the Lendal Bridge restrictions including:

- emails suggested CYC officers were idiots
- emails questioned why CYC are undertaking the trial
- emails identified that drivers may not know where Lendal Bridge is
- emails raised concerns regarding pedestrian safety as a result of vehicles speeding on the bridge or undertaking u-turn manoeuvres.

- emails asked why motorcycles / mopeds are not permitted across the bridge and others asked why taxis are permitted
- emails suggested that some form of physical barrier or bollard should be provided
- emails suggested that Ouse Bridge should be closed rather than Lendal Bridge
- emails asked about where the income is being spent

There were a range of other comments received, that are not directly related to the Lendal Bridge restrictions although were generally made following other comments on the restrictions.

- emails included a general complaint regarding traffic problems and congestion throughout the city.
- emails commented that city centre parking provision is poor and expensive
- emails commented that general signage around the city is poor
- emails voiced general annoyance / anger at buses
- emails voiced general annoyance / anger at cyclists

## **Sample Comments from Emails**

We have received a range of comments, both in support and against the restrictions on Lendal Bridge. Due to the numbers of comments received we are not able to publish and comment on all, however, below are some extracts from emails / letters received. These cannot give detail of all comments but provide a flavour of what is being said.

### **General - Positive**

“The volume of cars on York's roads is what causes the congestion that their drivers complain about. Unless you reduce the number of car journeys into the city by modifying people's behaviour, the problem will never be solved. To make any progress in tackling York's chronic traffic problem, the Council has to be prepared to stand up to the vociferous pro-car faction and now is the time to do it.

“I wish to express my SUPPORT for the Lendal Bridge closure trial. The City must do everything to discourage City Centre traffic (and hence pollution) and to make it a healthy and enjoyable environment for pedestrians (visitors and locals). The Bridge closure is a step in the right direction, and I trust other limitations on car use in the City will follow. (N.B. I am a car driver!).

“The closure of the bridge has been a delight. Not only is packed Lendal Bridge now safe and pleasant to cross, but its closure has had a welcome knock-on effect around the station and in Blossom Street... Yes it causes some inconvenience at times. We plan around it and go another way if we're going by car...More power to you. It's a brave and imaginative experiment and I hope it becomes permanent.

“I support making the trial permanent on the grounds that it has dramatically improved the environment around the Museum Garden entrance area, greatly enhanced the City Walls walk over Lendal Bridge, presented the Minster view for pedestrians to and from the Railway Station one to be savoured and admired...Something to be proud of.

“I live in Wigginton and often use the number 1 bus to and from town. Going in to town before the bridge closure the bus was frequently held up for long periods on Clarence St and Gillygate. When Lendal Bridge is

closed this no longer occurs due to the reduced traffic. Waiting for the bus home in St Leonards is much pleasanter with less traffic, less noise and less pollution.

### **General - Negative**

“Whilst I totally applaud your approach to making the city more pedestrian and cycle friendly, I fail to understand the closure of Lendal Bridge. I am not sure who it benefits at all. It makes no difference to myself or anyone I know in terms of being a cyclist or pedestrian in and around the city centre. It makes car journeys from south York difficult to the hospital and has made the traffic worse on Tadcaster Road and *totally* appalling going round Bishopthorpe Road around the inner ring road.

“One consequence of dislocation is that displaced traffic is relocated to alternative places taking with it associated and unwanted congestion and pollution to the new position. This is not reducing pollution and congestion, but simply increasing them in another place, and generally exacerbating them in a different environment.

The ban unfairly imposes on drivers who cannot abandon use of their vehicles some of the cost of the restrictions in terms of additional time and extra petrol needed to make a longer journey by an alternative route.

There is no direct and unbroken bus route from Bishopthorpe Road and Clementhorpe to Wigginton Road, and people from these areas who need to make regular or frequent journeys to the Hospital are disadvantaged by the restrictions. The extra time needed by no longer being able to make a direct journey between the two locations generates a new level of anxiety.

Removal of non public service traffic may speed up buses and taxis crossing the river on Lendal Bridge. But it slows down and impedes buses and taxis elsewhere on their routes where they become caught up in the congestion of traffic displaced from the normal route.

The restrictions have generated a high level of ill-feeling amongst visitors who have unwittingly incurred high fines for crossing illegally. Their dissatisfaction has resulted in bad public relations and lost trade.

“How you can possibly expect anyone from out of town to safely take in the information about the operational hours of a bus line driving through the centre of York when its busy, there are pedestrians and cyclists weaving in and out of the traffic.

I accept that the city has a perfect right to impose traffic restrictions and penalties for the overall public good; and I applaud the policy of traffic restriction and pedestrianisation, which makes York a delight to visit as a tourist. But such restrictions and penalties should be fair, effective, and lawful.

“The signage is not working effectively and does not alert motorists sufficiently (especially those from outside the city) to warn them that they risk a penalty, and to offer an alternative route.

This is an unfair discriminatory measure which has a disproportionate negative effect on one section of the population – those who live outside York (70% of ‘offenders’ do not have YO postcodes), and is therefore an unfair road tax on non-residents.

## **PCNs**

“I recently had a wonderful over night visit to York. It was a magical two days then I received a fine for driving over a bridge. As I live in North Wales and was very nervous to drive that far I purchased a satnav and followed the instructions. It seems to me this is a money making scheme for the council. I'm sure you will have a sign that I clearly missed as I was cautious of the unfamiliar road system. I feel very soured and will definitely NOT visit again. Disappointed tourist.

“She saw no signs at the time as it was very busy with traffic, buses and raining hard. The bridge was full of other traffic (guess these drivers have all been fined to!) This all a money making con trick but will back fire when visitors such as my daughter stay away!

“I am just complaining that as visitors to York and not knowing the roads, not being used to city driving we found it very harsh to fine a genuine mistake made by two older and very weary visitors to your city.



## **Traffic - Positive**

“Before Lendal Bridge was closed to most traffic during the day it was so bad it was almost impossible to get out into Bootham because of the amount of traffic that was queued up, and most unwilling to leave a space to let even one car out, this meant that we could be waiting sometimes up to thirty minutes before getting into Bootham, Now what a difference, after ten am what a joy to find Bootham almost traffic free and Gillygate too. No lorries clogging up our beautiful city. Please do not open Lendal Bridge again, keep it as it is now or better still close it earlier and for longer. York is undeniably one of the best places to live. Let us all enjoy its beauty without all the city centre traffic.

## **Traffic - Negative**

“Prior to the Lendal Bridge closure her journey home took approx. 10 to 15 minutes, now the same journey takes 50 minutes due to the increase in traffic congestion on Leeman Road and in particular on Fulford Road. In fact Fulford Road and Cemenry Road are now virtually gridlocked from 3.30pm onwards for outbound traffic, with the knock on effect of congestion on Foss Islands Road and Foss Bank.

“I live off Shipton Road and have experienced much higher level of traffic. Commuting around the city has been much more difficult. It seems madness to me to close one of only two bridges passing through the centre of York.

“The closure of Lendal bridge during daytime hours has caused massive extra traffic and congestion on other routes mainly Foss Islands Road, this results in the areas with extra traffic becoming much higher polluted and very unpleasant places to visit and drive through as a result, so closing Lendal Bridge has just moved the congestion elsewhere and made it much worse. Visitors stuck in the extra traffic or fined for driving over Lendal Bridge just won't return due to their bad experience

“The buses and taxis now travel much faster down Museum Street, making it a much more hazardous place to be for pedestrians...

## **Information and Signing**

“The signposting, particularly at the Bootham end of the closure has been very poor. I frequently see cars, with presumably visitors to the city, appearing very confused on reaching the bridge. Some try to do a U turn at the museum garden entrance, others will complete the journey, only to receive a later fine. I think this sends a very bad message to visitors. Tourists have always been welcomed in our city and provide much needed income for many.

“After a super visit for the first time to York last October our experience was sullied by our lack of knowledge of the local roads and inadequate signage. As a consequence we inadvertently drove over Lendal Bridge on three occasions in two days resulting in three fines. Had we been aware there were restrictions, we would not have even considered this, given we were on holiday and had no time constraints or any other pressure which might have induced us to flout the law. Each time we didn't see any signage for these restrictions... I am sure you receive a lot of contestations and whinging about such fines, however, I think you should take a broader view of the possible damage that can be done to such an attractive city as York and its tourist trade.

## **Businesses**

“The closure cost my Business around £200 per month in lost time due to extra traffic around Foss Islands Road, the bypass & Clifton Bridge. I set off from Clifton moor today at 3.30pm today heading to Acomb and I still have not arrived yet at 5pm for my last job. I won't be able to charge for this lost time. I run a small business that is suffering due to the Council's actions.

“On the very busy run up to Christmas, some of my deliveries were delayed by up to one week. If they were too late to cross the bridge, they would spend hours in the grid-locked inner ring road, so would do other deliveries and run out of time to deliver mine... Another problem, is that throughout the day, I have a constant stream of delivery vans parking on the pavement outside my shop (who then do u-turns after the delivery) - I realise that they have to get as close to the location to which they are delivering to, but this makes it very dangerous for pedestrians,

and surely puts people off walking on our side of the road? Footfall has fallen dramatically for us

“Shop Traders in the town are losing business as a result of people staying away from York City Centre. Tourists make up a percentage and students a higher percentage although their spending power is not high. Market Traders have also said that since Lendal Bridge closed their takings have gone down too with many of the market stalls now remaining empty. Once Marks and Spencer pull out of York in favour of using the Retail park site there will be even less in York City to attract residents.

### **Disabled drivers**

“My main concern is for disabled car users with Blue Badges. My husband is in this category, and has considerable difficulty sitting for long in the car, mainly due to back pain, but also because of stress from traffic. We need to cross Lendal Bridge during the restricted times to get to medical appointments on the south side of the river. It now takes us at least twice as long, having to go round to Clifton or Skeldergate bridges, and each journey feels like a marathon! It was bad enough before, but now it is doubly bad, with the increase in pain, and the frustration of more traffic on these routes. It is also harder of course when we need to get to the railway station or Rougier street area for shops etc... For people like my husband, this is not just a matter of inconvenience, but of increased pain. I strongly feel that more attention should be given to the needs of disabled people.

### **General Scheme / impacts to users**

#### **Work – Deliveries / Health services**

“I’m a Paramedic working in York and I use Lendal Bridge on a daily basis many many times! I think the bridge closure has made my journey time to hospital shorter, it has certainly made it easier with the lack of congestion on the bridge.

“I drive a delivery van into the city centre 5 days a week delivering supplies to shops, hotels, pubs. I’m local and know how the city’s traffic flow works. I appeal to you to abandon the trial for the sake of all drivers trying to get supplies to the city centre businesses whether local or not.

“I am a community midwife in York and I have found the closure of Lendal Bridge during the day to be very disruptive. Some of my clients are at Gillygate Surgery and live on both sides of the bridge and find myself in the ridiculous situation of having to drive round the houses to get over to the other side of the bridge, which is a waste of time in my already busy day. I also find that the ring road seems busier as well and I am spending even more time stuck in traffic.

## **Summary of Written Responses on Lendal Bridge Trial Feedback Survey**

CYC set up the Lendal Bridge trial feedback survey in order to understand public feeling towards the restrictions on Lendal Bridge and the impacts these would have upon individual journeys around the city. The Institute of Transport Studies (ITS) at Leeds University are providing a quantitative analysis of the survey results. This document will summarise the written responses given in the survey. Due to the high volume of replies received, it is not possible to provide a summary of each individual written response, however, they have all been read and categorised according to the general opinions expressed. Reported below are the categories which made up more than 1% of the opinions expressed.

### **Question 22**

For Question 21, respondents were asked to answer Yes, No or Unsure with regard to whether or not they believed that the trial would work toward the respective objectives of improving bus reliability throughout the city centre, improving the daytime environment for pedestrians and cyclists, and creating a more attractive and thriving city centre. For Question 22, those who responded either No or Unsure were asked to explain why. It is noted that as question 22 provides the first opportunity to provide a written response, some responses do not specifically answer the question but provide general views towards the scheme. All responses have been included. 1,758 written responses were received.

367 (20.88%) of respondents reported a general increase in traffic congestion in other parts of the city. Additionally, 57 (3.24%) reported that Clifton specifically had seen an increase in traffic volumes, while 52 (2.96%) specified Foss Islands.

243 (13.82%) commented upon the impact of tourists being fined for crossing the bridge during restricted hours. Some were concerned that these had a detrimental effect upon York's image as a city, some referred to bad publicity in the Press, while others were tourists who reported having been fined and consequently felt discouraged from returning to York.

241 (13.71%) believed that visitors were staying away from York as a result of the trial, either in response to the fines, or because the closure had made accessing the city too difficult.

165 (9.39%) reported that they had not experienced or were not aware of any improvements to the bus services. Many stated that buses were getting caught up in congestion elsewhere in the city.

161 (9.16%) reported that they did not believe that there had been any significant improvements for pedestrians as a result of the trial. Danger from exempted traffic was commonly cited as a reason for this. Others felt that conditions would not improve by closing the bridge as pedestrians would be expected to remain on the pavements at all times regardless.

157 (8.93%) reported that there had been an increase in their journey time as a result of the closure.

146 (8.30%) stated that Lendal Bridge itself was not clearly signed, and that this was likely to be a problem for those not familiar with the area.

142 (8.08%) stated that they viewed the trial as a money making scheme designed to generate revenue for the council via PCNs.

134 (7.62%) voiced general objections to the trial.

123 (7.00%) expressed negative opinions upon buses in general. These included buses being overpriced or unreliable, or having a tendency to create further congestion by blocking smaller vehicles. Others believed that buses were a greater source of pollution than cars.

120 (6.83%) reported that exempted traffic was moving faster across the bridge, thus creating more of a danger for pedestrians.

112 (6.37%) reported that they preferred to do their shopping elsewhere or online as a result of the closure, or that they believed that more people were doing this.

109 (6.20%) believed that the closure was only of benefit to a select number of buses that passed over Lendal Bridge, and that improvements were not being experienced elsewhere.

98 (5.57%) reported that pollution had gotten generally worse around the city as a result of the trial.

94 (5.35%) stated that local businesses were losing money as a result of the trial, or expressed concern that this might be happening.

90 (5.12%) stated that the signing for the scheme was confusing, not making it clear when the restrictions were in place or to whom.

86 (4.89%) stated that bus services had gotten worse as a result of the trial.

83 (4.72%) believed that the local environment had not improved as a result of the trial.

81 (4.61%) of respondents were abusive toward the council in general or toward specific councillors, accusing them of being stupid or similar sentiment.

59 (3.36%) reported that access to the city centre had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

57 (3.24%) felt that the needs and opinions of York residents were not valued by the council.

55 (3.13%) reported that pedestrians now had more of a tendency to step out into the road on Lendal Bridge without watching out for traffic. Many felt that they were confused about the extent of the restriction and were being lulled into a false sense of security.

54 (3.07%) felt that the restriction had not been necessary in the first place.

46 (2.62%) suggested that the area should be fully pedestrianised.

40 (2.28%) reported that traffic on Lendal Bridge had decreased as a result of the trial.

40 (2.28%) believed that the restriction was only of benefit to tourists.

37 (2.10%) reported that access to the railway station had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

35 (1.99%) expressed negative opinions upon parking around the city in general, commonly that it was overpriced.

35 (1.99%) felt that alternative routes around city were not obvious, or wanted them to be signed.

31 (1.76%) reported that access to the hospital had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

28 (1.59%) felt that there was a need for further incentives in order to encourage more use of the city's bus services.

26 (1.48%) felt that there was a need for further improvements in order to make the environment safer for pedestrians.

24 (1.37%) felt that the Council was not listening to public opinion on the closure.

23 (1.31%) suggested that Ouse or Skeldergate Bridge be restricted instead of Lendal Bridge.

22 (1.25%) felt that the restrictions placed upon disabled drivers who may be dependent upon their cars for mobility was unfair.

22 (1.25%) reported that their Sat Navs did not indicate that the bridge was closed to them.

20 (1.14%) felt that the restriction was frequently being ignored.

20 (1.14%) felt that signing around the city was generally poor.

19 (1.08%) reported that drivers were attempting to U turn in order to avoid the bridge, creating a hazard in the process.

18 (1.02%) reported that cycling around the city had become more dangerous as a result of the closure.

### **Question 23**

For Question 23, respondents were asked to explain the impact of the Lendal bridge restriction upon themselves personally. 1,799 written responses were received, and contained a variety opinions.



530 (29.46%) of respondents reported that there had been an increase in their journey time as a result of the trial.

377 (20.96%) reported a general increase in traffic congestion in other parts of the city. A further 56 (3.11%) reported that Clifton specifically had seen an increase in traffic volumes, 40 (2.22%) specified Foss Islands, while 21 (1.17%) specified Leeman Road, and 21 (1.17%) specified Skeldergate.

136 (7.56%) reported that they found the local environment to be more pleasant as a result of the trial.

132 (7.34%) reported an increase in the amount of traffic fuel they were using as a result of the trial.

115 (6.39%) voiced dissatisfaction with the signing, stating that it was unclear or confusing with regard to when the bridge could be used and by whom, easy to miss, or did not give motorists sufficient warning until it would be difficult to find an alternative route.

114 (6.34%) reported that access to the railway station had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

112 (6.23%) voiced general objections to the trial.

88 (4.89%) reported that traffic on Lendal Bridge and Museum street had decreased as a result of the trial.

76 (4.22%) reported that access to the hospital had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

71 (3.95%) commented upon the impact of tourists being fined for crossing the bridge during restricted hours. Some were concerned that these had a detrimental effect upon York's image as a city, while others were tourists who reported having been fined and consequently felt discouraged from returning to York.

71 (3.95%) reported that they felt that visitors were avoiding York as a result of the trial, or that they had first-hand experience of this.

70 (3.89%) reported that they found the environment at Lendal Bridge and surrounding areas to be safer as a result of the trial.

68 (3.89%) reported that cycling had become a safer and more positive experience since the bridge closure.

65 (3.61%) reported that they felt that pollution around York in general had gotten worse as a result of the trial.

62 (3.45%) voiced general support for the trial.

57 (3.17%) stated that businesses had been negatively affected as a result of the trial. Reasons cited included reduced footfall, difficulty in accessing clients around the city, or having to readjust business hours in order to cope with the closure.

48 (2.67%) stated that they preferred to do their shopping outside of York as a result of the trial.

46 (2.56%) of respondents were abusive toward the council in general or toward specific councillors, accusing them of being stupid or other similar sentiments.

45 (2.50%) stated that they believed that the trial's primary purpose was to generate revenue for the council via PCNs.

44 (2.45%) expressed negative opinions upon buses in general. These included buses being overpriced or unreliable, or having a tendency to create further congestion by blocking smaller vehicles.

43 (2.39%) reported that access to the city centre had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

35 (1.95%) reported a general decrease in traffic congestion.

32 (1.78%) reported that bus services had improved since the trial.

32 (1.78%) stated that they or someone they knew had been negatively impacted by the closure as a result of disability.

28 (1.56%) stated that they were unaffected by the trial.

22 (1.22%) reported that deliveries had been negatively affected by the trial.

22 (1.22%) stated that as residents of York they did not feel valued by the Council, and that the scheme was more within the interests of tourists.

20 (1.11%) expressed negative opinions upon parking in general, chiefly that they found parking around the city to be overpriced.

19 (1.06%) stated that they did not believe that the current restrictions went far enough, and that the area should be fully pedestrianised, or that further restrictions should be implemented.

19 (1.06%) felt that alternative routes around city were not obvious, or wanted them to be signed.

## **Question 24**

For Question 24, respondents were asked to explain what they saw as the impact of the Lendal bridge restriction upon the city in general. 1,672 written responses were received, and contained a variety of opinions.

467 (27.93%) of respondents commented upon the impact of tourists being fined for crossing the bridge during restricted hours. Some were concerned that these had a detrimental effect upon York's image as a city, some referred to negative publicity in the Press and on travel websites, while others were tourists who reported having been fined and consequently felt discouraged from returning to York.

407 (24.34%) felt that visitors were avoiding York as a result of the trial, either in response to the fines or because the closure and/or traffic congestion had made accessing the city too difficult.

324 (19.38%) reported a general increase in traffic congestion in other parts of the city. Some were concerned about the increase in traffic volumes in residential parts of York which were being used as a diversion by motorists.

210 (12.56%) stated that businesses had been negatively affected as a result of the trial, or expressed concern that this might be happening. Reasons cited included reduced footfall and difficulty in accessing clients around the city.

187 (11.18%) voiced dissatisfaction with the signing, stating that it was unclear or confusing with regard to when the bridge could be used and by whom, easy to miss, or did not give motorists sufficient warning until it would be difficult to find an alternative route.

155 (9.27%) voiced general objections to the trial.

123 (7.36%) reported that they found the local environment to be more pleasant as a result of the trial.

95 (5.68%) stated that journey times were increasing for motorists in general as a result of the trial.

83 (4.96%) voiced general support for the trial.

78 (4.67%) reported that there had been less traffic upon Lendal Bridge and Museum street as a result of the trial.

72 (4.31%) stated that they believed that the trial's primary purpose was to generate revenue for the council via fines, or that the council had another self-serving ulterior motive for the closure (eg: to improve the environment around the new council offices).

67 (4.01%) stated that they preferred to shop elsewhere or online as a result of the trial, or that they believed that other people were doing this.

61 (3.65%) reported a general increase in pollution as a result of the trial.

60 (3.59%) reported that access to the city centre had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

58 (3.47%) of respondents were abusive toward the council in general or toward specific councillors, accusing them of being stupid or other similar sentiment.

53 (3.17%) felt that the needs and opinions of York residents were not valued by the Council. Some expressed dissatisfaction with the perceived lack of consultation that had taken place prior to the trial. Others believed that the trial had created a degree of mistrust among residents for the Council.

28 (1.67%) felt that alternative routes around city were not obvious, or wanted them to be signed more clearly.

27 (1.61%) felt that the Council was not listening to public opinion on the trial.

25 (1.50%) reported that they found the environment at Lendal Bridge and surrounding areas to be safer as a result of the trial.

24 (1.44%) believed that the scheme had been conceived mainly in the interests of tourists, with fewer benefits for residents.

22 (1.32%) reported that access to the railway station had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

22 (1.32%) reported that deliveries had been negatively affected as a result of the trial.

21 (1.26%) reported a general decrease in traffic congestion.

20 (1.20%) reported that their Sat Navs did not indicate that the bridge was closed to them.

20 (1.20%) reported an increase in the amount of traffic fuel being used.

19 (1.14%) reported that conditions for cyclists had improved as a result of the trial.

18 (1.08%) reported that they did not believe that there had been any significant improvements for pedestrians as a result of the trial. Danger from exempted traffic was commonly cited as a reason for this. Others felt that conditions would not improve by closing the bridge as pedestrians would be expected to remain on the pavements at all times regardless.

17 (1.02%) reported that access to the hospital had become more difficult as a result of the trial.

17 (1.02%) expressed negative opinions upon buses in general. These included buses being overpriced, dirty or unreliable, or having a tendency to create further congestion by blocking smaller vehicles.

17 (1.02%) expressed negative opinions upon parking around the city in general, mainly that it was overpriced or difficult to access.

## **Question 27**

For Question 27, respondents were asked to give any other comments they had regarding the trial. 1,600 responses were received, and contained a variety of opinions.

509 (31.81%) of respondents voiced general objections to the trial, many demanding that the bridge be re-opened as soon as possible.

188 (11.75%) voiced dissatisfaction with the signing, stating that it was unclear or confusing with regard to when the bridge could be used and by whom, easy to miss, or did not give motorists sufficient warning until it would be difficult to find an alternative route.

162 (10.13%) felt that the Council had already made up its mind and would force the restriction to become permanent regardless of the actual outcome or of public opinion. Some commented that the Council was at risk of alienating voters in the process.

158 (9.88%) voiced general support for the trial. Many of these asked that it become permanent, while others stated that they supported the general objectives behind the trial, even if they disagreed with certain aspects of its implementation.

130 (8.13%) stated that they believed that the trial's primary purpose was to generate revenue for the council via PCNs, or that the council had another self-serving ulterior motive for the closure (eg: to improve the environment around the new council offices, deals with hotel chains or bus/taxi companies, etc).

115 (7.19%) commented upon the impact of tourists being fined for crossing the bridge during restricted hours. Some were concerned that these had a detrimental effect upon York's image as a city, some referred to negative publicity in the Press and on travel websites, while others were tourists who reported having been fined and consequently felt discouraged from returning to York.

71 (4.44%) were critical of the Council's public communication regarding the trial. Some felt that there had not been sufficient consultation with the public and businesses before the trial, while others felt that the details of the restriction and how the Council intended to achieve its objectives had not been widely publicised.

71 (4.44%) stated that as residents of York they did not feel valued by the Council, and that the scheme had been conceived more with the interests of tourists in mind.

69 (4.31%) reported a general increase in traffic congestion.

65 (4.06%) stated that there was a need for further road improvements in other areas of the city in order for the closure to be successful, or that these would be more effective alternatives for reducing traffic congestion around the city. A common suggestion was to dual the outer ring road.

63 (3.94%) stated that businesses had been negatively affected as a result of the trial, or expressed concern that this might be happening.

63 (3.94%) of respondents were abusive toward the council in general or toward specific councillors, accusing them of being stupid or other similar sentiment.

61 (3.81%) felt that visitors were avoiding York as a result of the trial, either in response to the fines or because the closure and/or traffic congestion had made accessing the city too difficult.

41 (2.56%) suggested that the Council should disclose what the revenue from fines was being put toward, or that it should be refunded to the drivers.

37 (2.31%) wanted the area to be fully pedestrianised, or for further restrictions to be applied.

27 (1.69%) wanted to see the restriction times extended to peak hours, or for the restriction to take place at different hours.

25 (1.56%) reported a general increase in pollution as a result of the trial.

23 (1.44%) reported that there had been an increase in their journey times as a result of the trial.

21 (1.31%) stated that they did not want to see the restriction hours extended to 7am to 7pm.

20 (1.25%) expressed negative opinions upon buses in general. These included buses being overpriced or unreliable, or having a tendency to create further congestion by blocking smaller vehicles. Others believed that buses were a greater source of pollution than cars.

16 (1%) suggested that Ouse Bridge should be closed as an alternative or in addition to Lendal Bridge.



## **Analysis of Business Survey Responses**

CYC has provided a short survey form on line specifically for businesses to fill in. The aim of the survey is to understand what businesses feel regarding the Lendal Bridge restriction. All businesses within the city centre have been invited to fill in the survey form, although it is noted that there was no necessity to do so. It is likely that only those that feel strongly one way or another will fill in the survey and therefore the results are not necessarily a balanced representative sample of all business views. We have asked questions in relation to changes in customer numbers and transactions but have not asked for specific evidence to support the answers provided.

It is noted that there are a number of factors that influence city centre businesses, including national and local economic trends, weather, local competition, marketing strategies and other city centre issues.

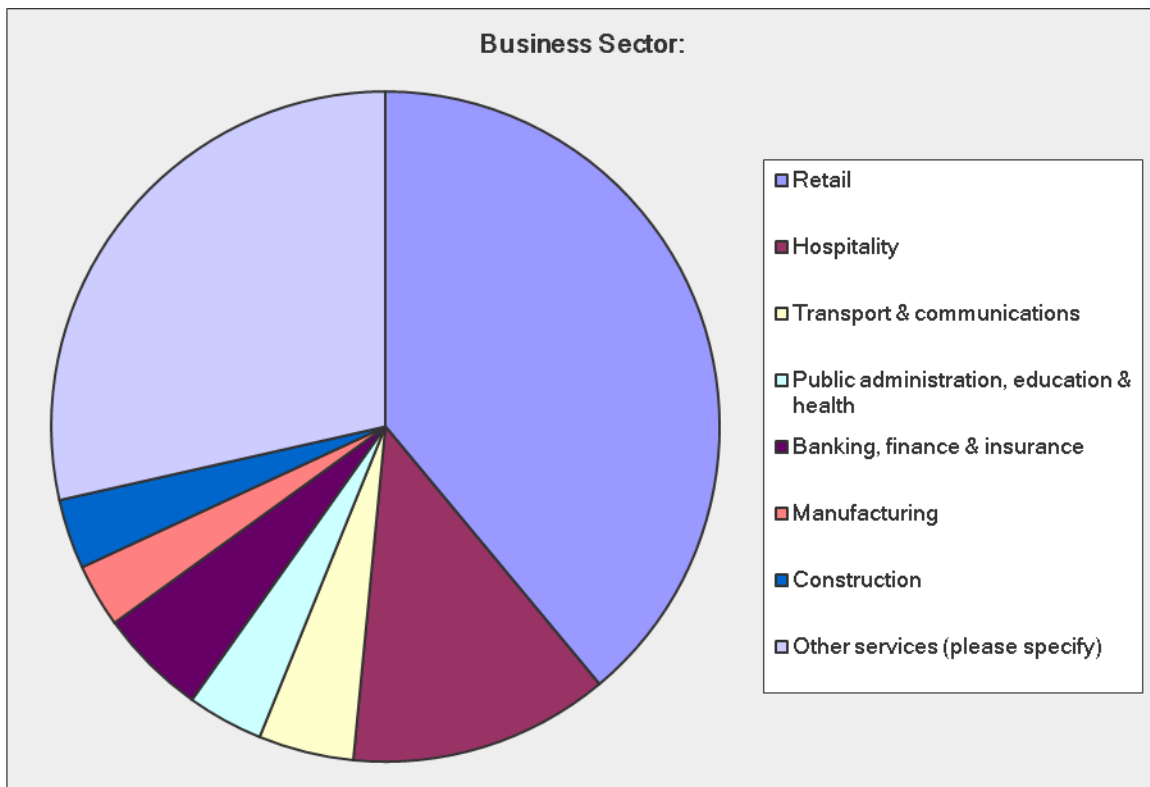
The first business survey was available to fill in from November 2013 after 3 months of traffic restriction. This enabled businesses to provide information up to the end of November 2013. The survey was updated in February 2014 to enable information to be provided to the end February 2014, ie for the full 6 month trial period. The two sets of completed surveys have been combined.

A total of 326 respondents completed the survey form. Not all respondents completed all questions.

### **Survey Responses**

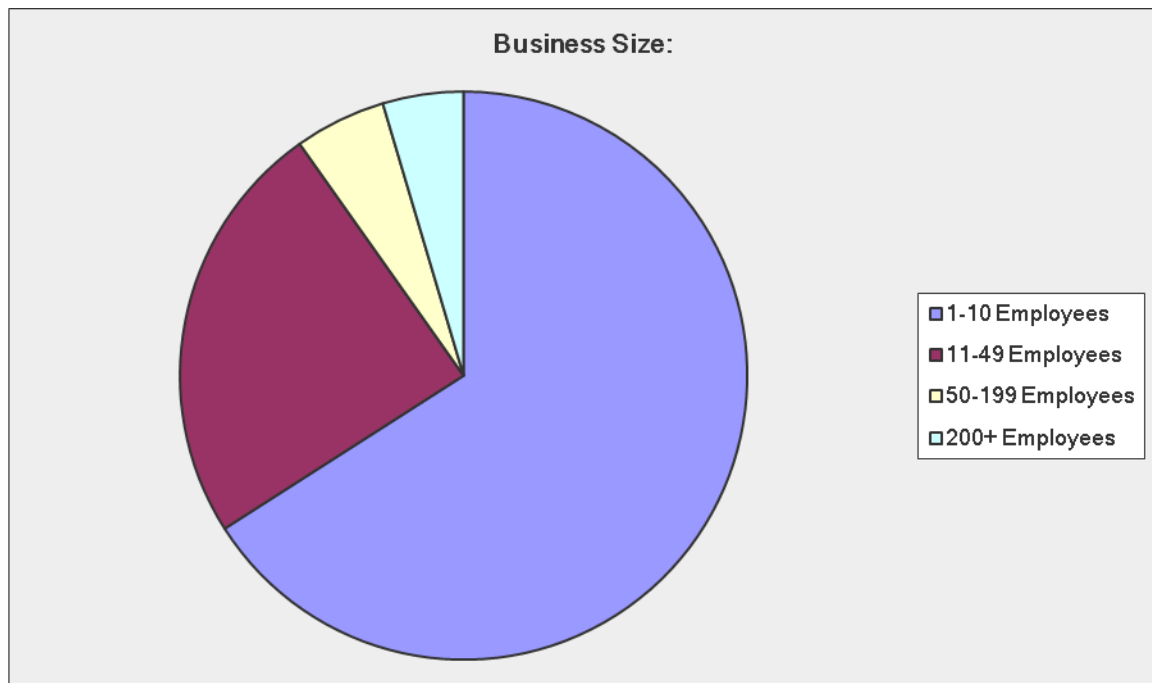
**Question 1** asked respondents to fill in their business sector details. Almost 40% of respondents are from the retail sector and 13% from the Hospitality sector. A large proportion of respondents stated 'other services' with a wide range of services identified. Within these there were a high proportion of legal, hairdressing, estate agency and property, IT consultancy and health service businesses listed as well as a range of other services.

## Question 1 – Business Sector



**Question 2** asked respondents about the size of their business. The majority of respondents (66%) work for small businesses with 10 or less employees. 24% of businesses have 11-49 employees, approximately 5% of businesses are categorised as having 50-199 employees and 5% have 200+ employees.

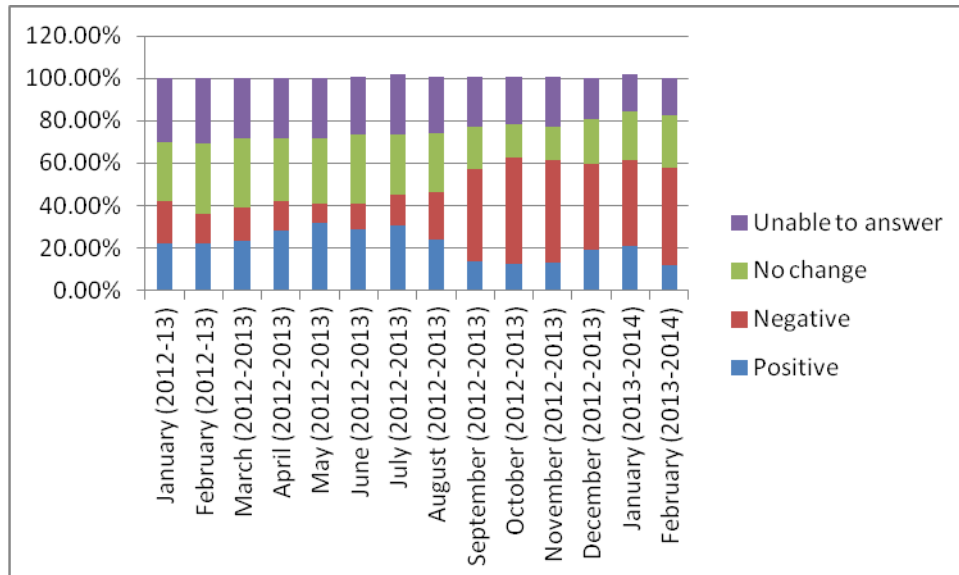
## Question 2 – Business Size



**Question 3** asked for detail regarding year on year revenue changes. The number of respondents providing an answer to each question varied for each month. Approximately 110-120 respondents answered the initial survey and provided answers for changes from January 2012-13 to November 2012-13. Just over 50 respondents answered the updated surveys providing answers for changes from March 2012-13 to February 2013-14.

The combined answers are tabulated below. From January to August 2013 approximately 22%-32% businesses have reported a positive change in year on year revenue, with 10%-20% reporting a negative change and 20%-30% reporting no change. From September 2013 to February 2014 approximately 12%-20% businesses have reported a positive change in year on year revenue, with 40%-50% reporting a negative change and 15%-25% reporting no change.

### Question 3 – Change in Revenue Year-on-Year



**Question 4** asked respondents what they believe to be the main (internal or external) factors in this change in revenue.

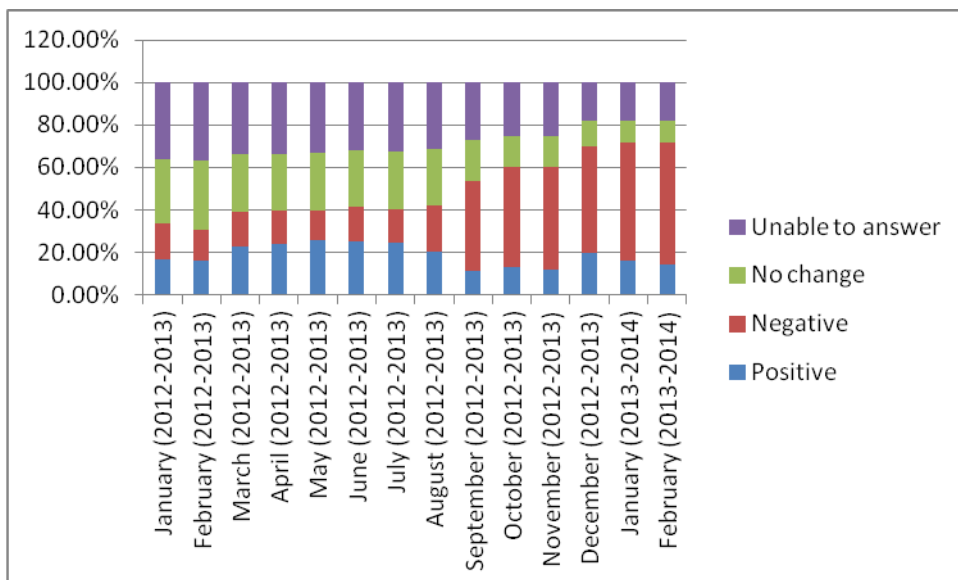
In total, 131 responses to this question were provided with a wide range of factors cited. 30 respondents stated that the Lendal Bridge restriction was the main factor, although limited detail was provided. Another 30 were more specific, identifying the worse traffic conditions and additional time spent driving (to make deliveries/get to appointments) as a key factor. 17 respondents stated that clients or customers were no longer driving into York and 12 stated that there was less footfall. Factors not related to the bridge restriction included the economy, both positive and negative (15), high parking costs and difficulties in parking (9), good weather (7), general effort and innovation from the business (6) and general growth in the market sector (4). 3 respondents identified local competition and 2 identified that online shopping was impacting their business.

**Question 5** asked for detail regarding changes in customer/transaction numbers year-on-year. The number of respondents providing an answer to each question varied for each month. Approximately 110 respondents answered the initial survey and provided answers for changes from

January 2012-13 to November 2012-13. 50 respondents answered the updated surveys providing answers for changes from March 2012-13 to February 2013-14.

The combined answers are tabulated below. From January to August 2013 approximately 15%-25% businesses have reported a positive change in year on year customers or transactions, with 15%-20% reporting a negative change and 25%-32% reporting no change. From September 2013 to February 2014 approximately 12%-20% businesses have reported a positive change in year on year revenue, with 40%-58% reporting a negative change and 10%-20% reporting no change.

**Question 5 – Change in customer/transaction numbers year-on-year**



**Question 6** asked what changes have been experienced in relation to receiving deliveries.

In total, 165 responses to this question were provided. The main response, from almost a third of all respondents (51) was that deliveries were arriving later than previously as a result of the bridge restriction and increased traffic congestion. 18 respondents stated that it was more difficult for drivers to get to them and 11 stated that on occasion deliveries were not arriving at all. 14 respondents stated that delivery times had changed and were either early morning or later in the afternoon/evening. A number of these commented that as a result of this staff need to work longer hours resulting in increased costs. 17

respondents stated that delivery drivers were noticeably unhappy and agitated about making their deliveries. 8 respondents stated that it was more difficult to schedule / manage deliveries and 5 stated that suppliers were complaining with some changing dates, frequency or costs of their deliveries.

42 respondents stated no change to their deliveries received and 11 stated N/A to the question.

**Question 7** asked what changes have been experienced in relation to making deliveries.

In total, 152 responses to this question were provided. The main response, provided by almost 40% of respondents (60) was that traffic conditions are worse and this is making deliveries take longer and creating delays. Many respondents highlighted that in consequence this was adding to their costs both in time and the cost of fuel. They also feel that as a result they are providing a poorer customer service which isn't good for business. A few respondents (5) stated that they were now making later deliveries, after 5pm, as a result of the restriction and others highlighted that deliveries are now inconvenient and made at more difficult times (5). 2 respondents stated that they are no longer making deliveries and 1 stated that they are prioritising jobs outside of York as these are easier. 1 respondent stated that deliveries on foot are easier and another stated that improved traffic flows on Bootham have made deliveries easier. 28 respondents (18%) stated that they have not made any changes to their deliveries and 35 respondents (23%) responded N/A to the question.

**Question 8** asked what changes businesses have made in relation to operation or staffing arrangements as a result of the Lendal Bridge restrictions.

In total 162 respondents provided a comment in relation to this. 49 (30%) stated that they had not made any changes to their business operations. 18 respondents stated that they had had to make staffing cuts, including redundancies as a result of loss of business/sales etc. 16 respondents have made changes to their staffing, including changing shift patterns, staff starting earlier or finishing later or in general working longer hours. 12 respondents stated that they allow extra time for getting to

appointments / making deliveries etc. 8 respondents, specifically noted that they are making less deliveries or appointments. The majority noted that the extra time and reduced deliveries / appointments is resulting in less turnover or loss of business. An additional 8 respondents stated more generally that the restriction was resulting in additional time and expenses for their business.

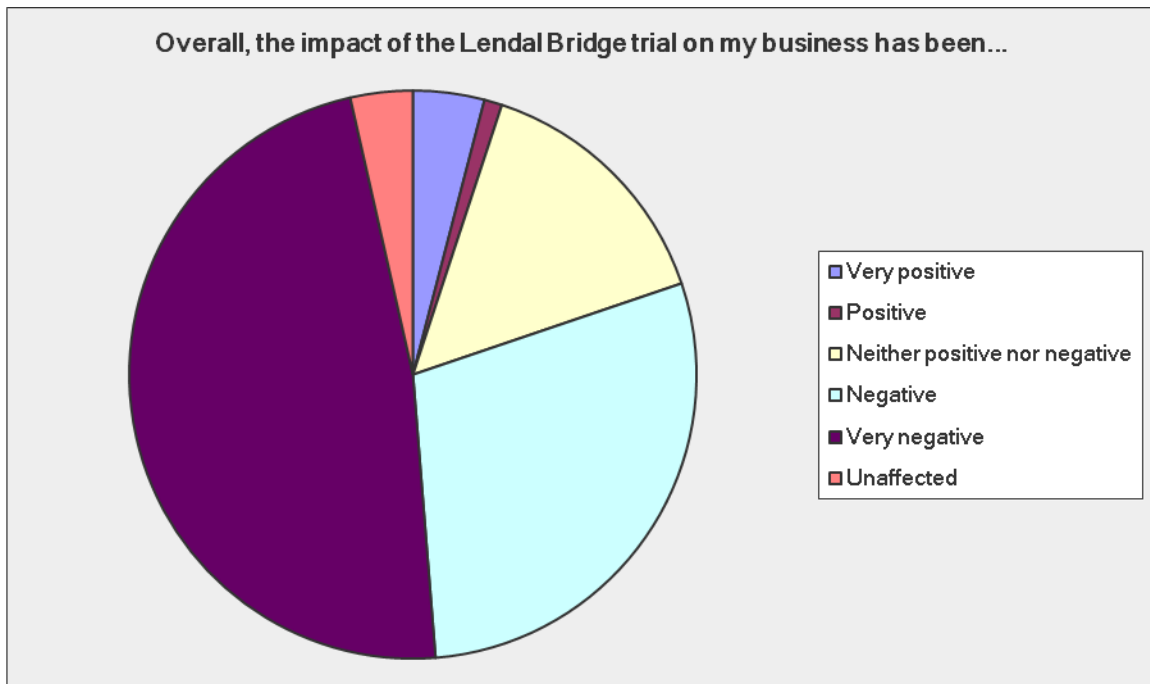
13 respondents stated that staff were experiencing longer journey times using alternative routes and weren't happy with the adjustments. 6 respondents commented that both staff and/or customers are arriving late. 6 respondents, from hotels/guesthouses, stated that they have had to explain the restriction to tourists/visitors and felt they needed to apologise for the inconvenience.

4 respondents commented that they are unable to make any changes and 6 answered N/A.

2 respondents noted that Lendal bridge is now more pleasant and safer for staff walking into the city centre.

**Question 9** asked respondents to identify the overall impact of the Lendal bridge restrictions on their business. 197 respondents answered this question with 129 providing no answer. 5% of respondents answered that the impact of the restriction was either very positive or positive with 77% answering that the impact has been negative or very negative. 15% answered neither positive or negative and 4% answered that their business was unaffected. Almost half (48%) of all respondents feel that the impact of the Lendal Bridge restriction on their business has been very negative.

**Question 9 –the impact of the Lendal Bridge trial on my business has been...**



**Question 10** enabled respondents to provide any other comment in relation to the trial restriction.

A wide range of comments were received from 163 respondents. 29 respondents (18%) stated that the trial restriction should be ended immediately, with numerous negative comments regarding the impact on businesses and the detrimental image of York. In contrast, 3 respondents thought the restriction should be made permanent and a further 2 stated it was an excellent idea.

Many comments echoed those from the general feedback surveys and email communications. 25 respondents feel that the bridge restriction has caused traffic problems and congestion elsewhere in the city, 22 respondents complained about the signing for the restriction, 14 complained about issuing PCNs and 4 complained that SatNavs do not include the restriction. 16 respondents stated that the restriction is providing a poor impression of York and 17 others specifically stated that the restriction is putting visitors and customers off coming to York which is/will have a damaging impact. 13 respondents stated that the scheme is a money making scheme.

10 respondents feel that the aims of the trial are not being achieved. 3 respondents stated that they have noticed air quality and noise



improvements in the vicinity of the bridge and 1 respondent stated that the cycling environment has improved.

5 respondents stated that the Council should do more to help local businesses, 3 respondents feel that the restriction is an attempt to 'kill off' local businesses and 3 respondents feel the business impacts will be worse next year.

4 respondents raised concerns regarding the speed of buses and taxis on the bridge and/or the unsafe turning manoeuvres at the junction with Lendal.

Other comments received by 2-3 respondents include; the detrimental impact on footfall, the poor scheme implementation, poor consultation, the business may not remain in York, the restriction to disabled drivers is unfair, that permits should be issued to businesses and that taxis should be banned from the bridge.

## **Stakeholder Responses**

Written responses have been provided by

- Visit York and its Members
- Friends of the Earth
- North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- North Yorkshire Police
- York Hoteliers' Association
- York Museums Trust
- York Older People's Assembly
- Federation of Small Businesses

1 April 2014

Darren Richardson

City of York Council

**By Email**

Dear Darren

### **Visit York's response to City of York Council – Re: Lendal Bridge Trial**

In response to your request for feedback in respect to the Lendal Bridge traffic trial, Visit York would like to set out our views and offer feedback from visitors and businesses who have been in touch with us on this matter. Visit York welcomes initiatives which seek to investigate ways of improving the city centre environment and this is the reason we supported the principle of having this trial. However, Visit York remains concerned about the impact of fines being issued to visitors who inadvertently use Lendal Bridge when closed. We are also concerned about issues raised by Visit York members who have advised us they believe the trial has had a negative impact on their business.

It's crucial all visitors to York have an enjoyable stay, without their visit being marred by a follow up fine and it's also vitally important to protect York's reputation as a welcoming friendly city. Whilst we appreciate that signage has been improved since the trial closure began, any fines issued to visitors remain a major concern. Signage is still confusing in some areas of the city; for example a temporary 'diversion' sign on Blossom Street directs drivers to turn right at the traffic lights facing Micklegate Bar, however, in the evenings this sign is still in place. It would be helpful to have more welcoming, helpful signage for anyone not familiar with the city, directing drivers to the city's car parks and helping visitors to find their way into the city when driving in. We believe we need to more to help visitors to find their way in the city.

When a visitor arrives here for the first time, they are usually concentrating on not getting lost and current signage doesn't help in finding alternative routes. In addition to this if you do realise you've made a mistake, for example by turning onto the bridge, it's then too difficult to turn around to rectify it. (Several motorists have been seen doing three point turns on the bridge for example).

Some motorists rely on Satellite Navigation systems and an added complication of the trial has been that these currently direct drivers over the bridge when closed; understandably people feel the fines are unfair when they've followed these instructions.

All feedback from visitors to the city, which has been emailed to Visit York, has been forwarded on to the City Council team reviewing the Lendal Bridge trial on a weekly basis. Several visitors have advised us directly, or written directly to the York Press newspaper, to say they would not visit York again. Complaints have also been widely read on social media channels. Clearly the

city must listen to these visitor views; we must do all we can to ensure every visitor returns home with a fantastic impression of the city and that every visitor wants to make a return trip in the future.

Since the Lendal Bridge trial began, Visit York has continued to see a mixed response from member businesses; some against the changes and some in favour. For example the idea of improving the streetscape and environment; 'greener' with less CO2 emissions and supporting cycle/bus usage has been welcomed. Other businesses have expressed their concern that traffic may have simply been displaced.

Businesses have also told us that the trial has caused inconvenience for access around Lendal Bridge/Minster Yard/North Street, that they are concerned about the signage problems, Sat-Nav problems, costs of re-printing brochures/access maps etc. Visit York members feel a lot more work would need to be done to ensure awareness and direct visitors if the trial were continued or made permanent. Several business members have also advised us they have seen significant drops in revenue as a result of the bridge closure; these views we believe must be fully discussed and addressed through the trial review process.

Getting into and moving people around a heritage city like York will always be challenging and we need to achieve the right balance between having a pleasant city centre for pedestrians and not creating barriers to access. We all need to work together in the city to find solutions to traffic congestion; one of Visit York's priorities for example, is to encourage greater use of travel to York by train and increased use of the excellent Park and Ride services. We believe city wide we all need to work together to address the issues of congestion and at the same time put in place measures to help increase the use of public transport for non essential car journeys.

Clearly the Lendal Bridge trial has caused mixed opinion across the business community in York and Visit York has a duty to represent the views of both visitors and our 700 business members. To sum up visitor feedback has been largely opposed to the trial (note: all visitors who have fed back to us are those who have received a fine). Opinions from the wider tourism sector have been mixed – both for and against - with a range of issues and possible solutions offered. We hope that by sending a comprehensive list of visitor and business feedback to the City Council review team in charge of the trial, that solutions for the benefit of the city as a whole can be found. Attached with this letter is a resume of feedback from Visit York member businesses. We look forward to hearing the results of the Lendal Bridge Trial in full.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate McMullen". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kate McMullen  
Head of Visit York

*Responses from Visit York Members to a request for feedback on the Lendal Bridge Trial collected 12<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> March 2014*

Visit York is a membership organisation with around 700 business members. To gain a view from the tourism business sector, an impartial email was issued from the company to request feedback on the Lendal Bridge Trial. Below is the full response we received.

We are strongly in favour of restrictions on Lendal Bridge being kept in place or even increased; York needs to be a greener city if we are to maintain our visitor levels.

If possible could I just add my vote to be against the car restrictions on Lendal Bridge as it effects me visiting clients and attending meetings more easily back and forth across the city. I hope that is ok.

I have read the official response from Visit York to York City Council and whilst I agree in principal with the comments made I think some facts have not been addressed at all, for example:

1: Improving the City Centre. Lendal Bridge is not in the city centre the only bridge that can be deemed in the city centre is Ouse Bridge. As Coppergate is not available for use by the taxpayer who owns it, thereby stopping access already to Ouse Bridge as a direct route begs the question as to what the real agenda is.

2:Co2 emissions: The most and worst Co2 emissions come from buses not modern cars, Lendal bridge has far fewer residents to be affected by emissions than Ouse Bridge, proving that cheap political points are being used to support a spurious argument for the closure and on my many convoluted journeys to York Station from Monkgate I can assure you that all you have done is move this problem to other highly populated areas.

3: The inner ring road was built specifically to link all forms of transport from one side of the City to the other, an inner ring road is no place for pedestrians and a pedestrian bridge should be built with the money extorted from the over taxed taxpayers that were fined during the trial.

4:Where were the rights of the disabled and elderly in this debacle, who decided that the majority of people who need to use the bridge could either cycle or walk and that's supposing they want to or that if you are a young mum with a couple of kids that you want to struggle on and off buses with pushchair, shopping bags and of course your children.

5: The arrogance of some of our councillors who deem that what they want and can do is what the rest of us must have beggars belief.

6: The signage as you approach Station Road from Leeman Road has on more than one occasion had lots of lights out on the message board giving no instructions whatsoever which makes a mockery of the signage.

7: I have spoken to many small business proprietors in the City centre who have all noticed a drop in footfall to their businesses and some who have told me that their clients have found other places to go to in order to avoid York city centre. Hope this comments are of some use. Anita Adams - Chair of Education Licensed Trade Charity

Due to our location at Monks Cross, most of our customers from afar tend to use the ring road to reach our venue. However, I have had feedback from a small minority of customers who have turned off too early at and come through York via Tadcaster Rd/Blossom Street. As a result they have been redirected past the railway station and over Lendal Bridge or through Coppergate via Micklegate which resulted in a penalty charge. This clearly impacts customers' overall experience when visiting our facility. It is in my view, based on conversations I have had with other York based businesses, that the Lendal Bridge closure provides more of an inconvenience to local tradesmen than adds any conceivable benefits.

my own view isn't very scientific, but I think it would be better open than closed during the day. Two issues I had recently – one with the conference I was going to have at the Royal York, and was obviously worried that delegates might not be able to time their arrival very well. The other – which has happened several times now – is as I'm going for a train at York Station, usually to London between 7am and 9am. Although the bridge isn't closed at that time, it has certainly seemed since the trial began, that the queues on Nunnery Lane to get through the traffic lights and down to car parking at the station, are far longer than they used to be, due to back-logging near the station and the Railway Insitute.

The principal of the idea is useful for all the reasons cited by the City of York Council. In my opinion the issues, as a consequence, that could be addressed are: Approximately 47% of tourist foot traffic arrives by train of which a large proportion will use Lendal Bridge for access to the city centre, therefore a decreased speed limit for authorised users may improve safety and pedestrian awareness. A 'first warning' system for offenders who inadvertently, either by SATNAV instruction or lack of awareness of the signage, travel across the bridge. The administration for this may be prohibitive but hopefully would be worth discussing. Case in point one of my clients whom I did not inform were rather 'upset' causing derogatory comments against the city in general. Finally, regarding traffic displacement the possibility of reducing the hours of restriction would potentially ease congestion in peripheral boundaries and may make a useful compromise to both bridge access and traffic flow around the city.

In terms of the Lendal Bridge trial, I believe the principal of reducing traffic on Lendal Bridge, which is a major focal point and gateway into the city for pedestrians, is a desirable one. However, I think many questions need answering regarding the trial. E-mails between council officers have revealed that the DVLA's website could have been used to give drivers a warning on their first violation of the trial. I don't accept the excuse given by the council, that the DVLA initially misinformed the council. The council should have researched that (and probably did) well before the trial started and the trial has been running for six months. London operated a warning system during the Olympics, I know because I was a recipient of a letter. Therefore in my opinion the council must explain why they didn't initiate a warning system either pre trial or part way through the trial. Any failure to answer this question strengthens the suspicion that the council intended to generate revenue from the exercise and profit from or more accurately tax York's visitors. I also think the results of an independent survey on all aspects of the trial, should be published on the council website, as part of a consultation with the public, before any decision is made at council level. I don't get the impression the council have entered this with an open mind and I believe they must demonstrate that they have before the people of York support the permanent adoption of a traffic free Lendal Bridge. I feel that measures need to be taken to slow down taxis and buses if the trial becomes permanent. I would second all of the recommendations that Lionel Chattard made in the Press, that he would want to see introduced if the trial does become permanent.

I have not voiced much via yourselves in terms of Lendal Bridge as I have been involved in other ways, but have just read the media statement, it's really succinct and balanced, a challenge I am sure, and while I do not personally have the same concerns regarding getting around the city in congestion in other areas around the city, but we do not rely on personal vehicles. I think it has been really well written to sum up the types of views that I am hearing around in a very constructive way. We have not had any problems from any of our delivery drivers and our customers have not expressed anything to us either as part of their visit or following it. My concern as a Visit York member has always been about the effectiveness of the communication issued to make the change have the desired effect to reduce the traffic and not to increase the income generated via fines. I appreciate there are a number of challenges of implementing changes to signage, sat nav and marketing literature while a trial period is required by law - one of the replies from the Council regarding getting sat nav systems changed. I think particular stress must be put on the requirement for a fully analysed and swift response on the future of the bridge so that adequate and appropriate measures can be taken to implement permanent and effective signage and communications to those visiting the city and that all effort is being put in to ensuring fines do not happen in the first place. Secondly that those VY businesses in the city that can demonstrate spend on literature that needs reprinting can be supported by some mechanism to ensure they are not carrying the full burden of permanent re-prints. From a personal point of view I am supportive of the bridge remaining closed at the times it has done, but I would not support an extension of those hours. I have been encouraged at the obvious differences it has made to the space and general feeling of the area and see this as a positive step to improving the general upkeep of the approach to the Minster. The points I mention above are my general views as a concerned business in the city wanting the best for York for the longer term, but not anything that I can say has specifically impacted our business over the trial period. Our trade has continued to see year on year growth and there feels to be a general increase in footfall not only to the Blake Street area of town but to York in general. Please use components of the above as you feel most useful.

Great to see that VY is taking a stand on this. Very briefly, my comments are below:

- I support the idea of reducing traffic flow and the proposals to develop Exhibition Square
- I suspect those against would have also opposed / presented the same arguments against pedestrianisation of the centre (which has been a great success)
- The signage needs to be much simpler - there is little point in telling visitors that Lendal Bridge is closed as they won't know what that is. It needs simply to say "Road ahead closed"
- There needs to be some kind of barrier, at least a couple of metres in to the road, with a stop / no entry sign - visitors to the city are trying to find their route and avoid pedestrians. When they see vehicles crossing the bridge, they simply follow (I've observed this).
- I've no idea how but somehow the issue of satnav systems not being able to cope with a closure between certain hours needs to be resolved. Most people rely on their sat nav and, even if the signs are improved, the additional complications of having to turn around and find another route make York seem unwelcoming.

I found that whilst the bridge had restricted times that my movement around York was much easier. It was so much quicker to get to one side of York to another if the bridge was closed, particularly Lord Mayors Walk, Gillygate and Bootham.

Causing unacceptable traffic congestion on Northern city routes and increased delays on the bypass at A59 & A19 roundabouts. **Please reopen asap.**

Despite our holiday let being in Skipwith 4 guests even though they gave Willowside glowing reviews said they wouldn't come back due to traffic flow situation on Lendal bridge and the lights at the designer outlet. I would like to congratulate York city council on succeeding where the Romans and Vikings failed in making York fortified and impenetrable.

I would like to submit some comments below on behalf of myself and our Director. The Lendal Bridge trial has not had a significant impact on ourselves due to our location slightly outside the main area of the city. We have been able to run the Road Train during its usual hours of operation and this has been easier due to the reduced traffic. We have, however, received a few comments from our visitors and our supporters regarding its impact. We have received around 5 comments expressing concern at the charges and that it will impact negatively upon their future decision to visit both the National Railway Museum and the city. Although the number of comments received have been relatively few, we are concerned that the charging and perceptions around this will negatively impact upon the number of tourists visiting York, which may longer term impact our business.

In response to your e mail, we have these points to make.

As guest house owners in the Bootham area of the city, we feel really let down by COYC, regarding the Lendal Bridge Trial. We feel our area of the city has been isolated from parts of the city on the other side of the river by effectively closing Lendal bridge during the day. It seems to us they COYC councillors no longer listen to the residents who elected them, and make decisions regardless of public opinion. They have closed what is the inner ring road, and basically shifted traffic to other parts of the city, and making them much busier. They told us at the start, that the trial would end in February, yet it is still closed. We have had several guests who, on returning home have received a fine through the post, and have called us to say, they will never return to York. We feel like we are being blamed by the guests for something outside our control.

With all the great things that have been achieved in York in recent years, namely, the beautiful improvements to the areas around York Minster, Kings Square, the fantastic gardeners in the Museum Gardens, the Barbican re opening, the brilliant new Visit York bureau, and many more, the COYC then spoil all this with the Lendal Bridge fiasco. No matter what residents like to think, York is now a world class tourist destination, and why the COYC would risk all the hard work done by everyone with such an unpopular decision. We voted for the Labour councillors at the last local election, but we feel they have let us down on this important matter. Surely closing a road that is the main artery into York from the A19 should be a Department of Transport decision, and decided at government level. As you can tell, we feel strongly about this, and hope that common sense prevails, and the COYC councillors don't go against public opinion.

Please see my note to the council below, which makes my views clear. A significant consequence of the trial is that it's just redistributed traffic flow into other areas, causing longer delays, more emissions due to greater congestion, and a less timely bus service along Bootham and Clifton and around the Water End area. I'm very sceptical about any real benefits, none of which have been apparent to me.



Dear Councillors

As a resident of York, and a businessman bringing income to our city through our ownership of The Bloomsbury guest house, I would like to reiterate my frustration, annoyance, and feeling of 'bloody mindedness' on the part of the Labour Party in seeming to pursue their intent to keep Lendal Bridge closed. We have endured over 6 months of heavier than usual traffic, unacceptable congestion, slower and less regular busses, and had to endure the angst of many visitors to our city, as a result of this trial. This is epitomised in the mail below from someone out to discourage visitors from York, and echoing the frustrations of the majority of visitors, residents, and business folk from taxi drivers to those like myself in the tourism industry. How can I defend a situation where official tourism signage near Shipton Road tells drivers to 'go straight on' when it will lead them over the Bridge, and result in a fine? How can I assure them that it is not a scam on the part of the Council to increase revenue, into whatever income stream? I would encourage you to use your powers to ensure that evidence shows that this trial has proven to have failed in its objectives, and ensure that the city gets back to a position of normality, as soon as possible to avoid further damage to York. It takes a big and strong person to make any fundamental changes, however it takes a bigger and stronger person to admit they've made a mistake. I trust that each of you will vote according to the wishes of your constituency, and avoid any possible political pressures. Finally, I should make it clear that as an immigrant to York, with roots in the South Yorkshire colliery heartland, my natural tendency is towards the Labour Party. However this ill thought out, pointless, and failed exercise makes me think very differently should we find that the trial becomes the norm. It makes me question the Party's ability to manage many of the other issues pertinent to making York one of the best places to live and visit.

The below email also submitted by the Bloomsbury Hotel:

you all forward this email to as many north eastern people (and beyond) as possible to boycott the city of York. Just to put you all in the picture the immoral councillors of York are operating an immoral, underhand, deceitful and possibly illegal racket to take money off people. There are 2 places in York where the roads are closed to cars and apparently are bus lanes only. Its not well signed, its a road your very likely to travel down if you visit York and it will cause you to end up with a £60.00 fine coming in the post. It's all over the internet so please search it and above all do not visit York. Middlesbrough, the Metro Centre, Dalton Park, the beautiful city of Durham, Newcastle and Sunderland offer great alternatives. Forward this email to as many people as possible. York businesses: I have copied you in on this email to highlight the damage your elected councillors are doing to the tourist industry in your city. May I suggest you contact your local councillors and whats more vote them out at the next local elections. I used to come to York a handful of times throughout the year and will now never visit again out of principal. Unfortunately for you I am the designated driver so the other 3 people I would bring will not be staying in your accommodation, eating in your restaurants, buying from your shops or visiting your tourist attractions. I apologise for this but I feel very strongly about your cities disgusting bus lane antics which is clearly and obviously in place to steal money off hard working people.

Further to your email about this, I personally think the closure is brilliant and should be made permanent:

- It significantly enhances the city centre environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- It sends a message to motorists that the right to drive a vehicle anywhere and anytime is not god-given and that we have to take steps to control the number of cars coming into York for environmental as well as aesthetic reason.
- The air in York is often highly polluted and quite unhealthy to breathe. This measure improves air quality in this area.
- It makes cycling into the city from where I live (South Bank area) a real pleasure - cleaner, faster, and much less stressful and hazardous.

To cap it all, I was able to stop and listen for several minutes not so long ago to a robin singing just by the bridge and to hear the response of another robin on the other side of the river. I don't know whether they would have heard each other above the usual traffic noise but I certainly would not have been able to do so. This is a wholly progressive measure. York desperately needs to release itself from the stranglehold of traffic logjams and air pollution. This is one step in the right direction. Many more are needed. Best wishes, Steve Flinders.

Don't really have a big opinion on the bridge closure even though we are one of the closest hotels, but then again we are probably better served by the railway than most. However, one observation, several of our conference guests and organisers have commented on how snarled up and congested the roads are and they would really think twice about repeating conferences as delegates waste so much time trying to access the City (this situation has got far worse since the closure of Lendal Bridge). I was a bit shocked yesterday that 80% of all fines have been levied against tourists, it seems a tragedy that our online reputation is so bad in such a little amount of time suggesting that we rip off our visitors.

We have submitted some comments to the Council regarding this trial, but not as fully as your media statement discusses. So I would like to submit the following observations to you from our point of view at Maude and Tommy (Grape Lane). Our business partially relies on good visitor footfall. We have seen a rather alarming decrease in footfall since January. March is proving especially quiet. We know this because we can compare figures from previous years. Our turnover for the same period over three years has shown a good consistency, but this year there is a sharp dip and a visible decrease in foot traffic. Of course, there could be a number of reasons for this and we are hoping it is temporary, however, the Lendal Bridge trial may well be a contributory factor if people are driving to other parts of the city to park, or worse, not coming into the city at all.

My observation is that traffic is being displaced. My view is that people don't simply start to use public transport because a route has been restricted. Certainly, the vehicle journeys I am required to make would be impossible by public transport. Journeys at the other side of town are now taking much longer during the day than previously and anecdotally I see this as traffic simply being displaced. I totally agree with the points made by Visit York that fines and local variations in restrictions are contrary to a friendly city for visitors. I would suggest the vigorous nature of administering parking fines also falls into this category. I am still not clear on the benefits this trial

has had - if it is to reduce air pollution, clearly it's a nonsense and is causing longer journeys for people who will never use public transport (and this is not always an option). It doesn't make life easier for pedestrians as there is still permitted traffic. People still need to reach this side of the city and it seems futile to me to restrict a major route to this side of the city. We would all like to live and work in a traffic free environment, but unless there is a huge change in culture and transport policy a gesture such as this simply makes life a little more difficult for those of us who live and work in York without a major benefit. Those are my thoughts from the perspective of Grape Lane. Hope they are of use.

The prospect of this area/"square" (St Leonard's/Exhib Square/Duncombe Place/High Petergate) being landscaped in a similar vein as the Minster's beautiful Piazza - i.e. an extension of the existing REINVIGORATE plans for Exhib Square and the junction of Duncombe Place/St Leonards /Blake Street (and Fossgate) - is very attractive to us. I am on record as saying that it would be one of the most beautiful "precincts"/"squares" in Europe. The Lendal Bridge (LB) closure also nods to the Simpson plans for City Beautiful- as the proposed Avenue of Duncombe Place to Station Rise would/could be fantastic too. The problem with the LB closure has been the total lack of planning to alleviate the dispersed traffic - and inadequate (the understatement of the year!!) signage of course. No stranger knows where the Bridge is. The signage should be clear and should be positioned on all approaches - both in and out of (the City) allowing drivers to detour before it's too late. There is no signage before approaching the traffic- lights for drivers leaving Duncombe Place to get in the RIGHT TURN lane!! And the Bridge is only 200 yds further on!! If all of these closure/signage/congestion problems were, albeit belatedly, sorted then I for one, have been and remain, on balance, in favour of the closure being made permanent. Then the SatNav issue would be sorted too.

As a multiple business owner in York, I would like to give you a formal valuation of the Lendal bridge closure. Overall the closure has not helped York City Centre businesses. Traffic on the outside of the city centre has increased substantially, making it much harder for businesses to operate quickly and respond to increased demands in businesses. Particularly restaurants need easy access to transport food items, supplies and even labour at peak hours of operation. Furthermore, businesses in the outer skirts of the city have suffered from a lack of mobility by customers. Longer times have dissuaded people from driving through from one side to the other. Coming from the train station is now much longer and longer winded to arrive in any destination. With the Races coming up this summer, the disaster I can see is jams like mega-cities and no one spending any time in the actual city centre.

We need people to be attracted to drive in quickly for business meetings, visitors to not be confused with what's going on and fines charged with no adequate reason. I know the council have profited much money from the closure, but this is not in my eyes any long term gain. Help the businesses flourish, to meet the rates bands the council are charging with ease. Everyone has to apply for discounts, flooding problems have not made it easy either. I believe that out of all my restaurants, the restaurant with most potential is King Street Jaipur Spice, but is not in any profit due to flooding and lack of visitor access to the city. Open up the gates to the city and watch how strong the businesses can perform. York is too much of a weekend city, we need the access to open up and allow it to be a 24/7 buzzing city centre. London don't have this problem, they might have a congestion charge, but at least they pay that once a day. If I drive several times in a day due to business needs, I'm paying 30 each time. This has slowed me down. I also get a lot of taxi-journey time has actually increased. Yes maybe over the bridge is now 30 seconds quicker in the taxi, but as

soon as I'm over it. No joy! Open the gates, let the people in. Let's make money through businesses. We are tired of seeing so many smaller retailers close with To Let signed everywhere. Take note, if this carries on its only going to get worse.

Yes the Lendal Bridge issue is quite interesting when you go on Tripadvisor you can see some very negative reports about the Bridge and for some people they will not return to York which is potentially not a great advert for York. We received an email from a Bod Stockholm as did you yourselves asking people to boycott York this again is not a great way for the City to be advertised. We understand the need to ease congestion around the City but are there other issues underpinning the Council's decision to close the Bridge during certain times? Maybe the Council has a long term plan in mind closing the road completely from the Museum gardens up to the Minster making it easier for pedestrians to get around this is our view we may be wrong. Let's not forget without the money generated by Tourists York would not be what it is today as a service industry we provide jobs for local people to keep the local economy going.

On balance I welcome the Lendal bridge closure from a tourism point of view a few people have complained but they clearly disregard statutory traffic signs which are clearly in place at least 3 times approaching the bridge!

From City Guest House York. I have to admit that in general conversation with our guests discussion of Lendal Bridge never comes up, other than the odd warning. I myself have rarely crossed it lately, the locals have got used to going around it. One of the advantages of York is that people can walk everywhere, so the only likelihood of tourists falling foul of the restriction would be during arrival or departure, and we (or they) would not necessarily be aware of any contraventions whilst they are here. That being said...

We have been visited many times by the Rushforth family over the years. Whilst parking them up on their last visit they told me of an incident in 2013, when they spent a day in York, travelled by car, and crossed Lendal Bridge in complete ignorance of the closure. Twice. Whilst I cannot speak for the Rushforth's powers of observation, I was struck by their claim that they received two separate fines posted in two separate weeks for two contraventions that took place on the same day.

Though obviously not calculate to insult, it just did that anyway. The first they paid grudgingly. The second they were less happy about. As keen race-goers it is unlikely they will avoid coming to York in future, but how many have been fined and chosen not to come back, on the principle of 'don't trust the council there, they're robbing' b\*ggers!' (an expression I once heard expressed against NELinc's Council on a matter in Grimsby). When I worked in the ground floor office in the telephone exchange next to Stonebow's celebrated rising bollard, it struck me that despite the number of warning signs in front of it there were still regular piles of broken bumpers and pools of antifreeze and oil in front of the bollard; there will always be someone who cannot see the signs. A recent TV program on the subject of how we think tells us that this is part of the human condition; just get over it. This then suggests the only solution that will protect the public against itself; out of ignorance, lack of observational powers or just being human. It clearly requires a man at each end of the bridge with a clearly visible rising barrier. This will ensure that no fines are issued unnecessarily, the public are protected from themselves, and that the City has it's controlled traffic flow. Of course, the City's coffers will be emptier for not being able to charge the blind or the ignorant (or at least the ones who don't wish to object to paying for whatever reason), but that will be a small price

to pay for the benefits. Or am I just having a rant...? Draw your own conclusions...Hope they get it sorted out to everyone's satisfaction, compromises can be so messy.

As frequent users of the trains from York, not being able to drive across Lendal Bridge to reach the station has been a nuisance. We have to drive further on alternative routes and frequently find congestion and queues of cars, so that driving time is longer.

The closure of the bridge is of course ridiculous for all businesses based in the centre. All delivery companies are struggling and many don't have time to get down Stonegate so we don't receive our orders on time, congestion between 8-9am in the centre is worse than ever. The traffic jam is just pushed around Skeldergate / Fishergate. Our guest check out time is 10.00 am so it now takes us half an hour to drive from Monkgate to Stonegate in order to clean or collect laundry. The majority of guests struggle to get to the apartments to collect permits and drop off luggage, they have to get to the minster by car. The bridge signage is not obvious enough for people driving, sat navs are not up to date and always lead people across the bridge. It always spoils the holiday when you arrive home to a parking fine and you will always remember the fine, its very negative for York. There are other ways to raise council funds than to fine visitors, the town is not big enough to close one of the main bridges.

It is difficult for me to comment on the closure of Lendal Bridge as the park was closed for much of the time so didn't affect our guests too much. Personally, I wasn't happy with a £60 fine but that's only because I thought it was still open on Sundays. We always advise our guests to use the park & ride system and will continue to do so. Beki.

The closure of Lendal Bridge has had no direct effect on our business. Positive Holgate Road is a lot quieter and less noise. However our guests have had used sat nav to guide themselves to the Apple House which meant they drove over Lendal Bridge and were fined.

I understand that the signs have been improved to notify tourists. Overall I think it is a positive step to improve our city.

I have nothing to add to your excellent media statement other than to pass on comments from visitors who have stayed with us during the six month trial. When our guests have settled in we give them tea and scones and explain about the Lendal Bridge closure. This can have a negative effect on visitors who have chosen to stay nine miles north of the city and has prompted some to decide not to visit the city at all, but use the ring road instead to avoid crossing Lendal Bridge during the day. One Australian couple were alarmed to discover that they had driven over Lendal Bridge during the daytime, within minutes of picking up their hire car and had not realised they would be fined, until talking to us! Whilst your statement acknowledges the possible benefits of closing the bridge during the day we would support the view that it is having a serious detrimental effect on visitors who choose to drive in the city and we would urge the City Council to remove the restrictions urgently.

Thank you for your email and copy of your media statement. As an hotelier in the heart of York my main concern is the visitor travelling to York, our and other Hotels in the City. We have welcomed many guests who have been 'caught out' by the signage vs sat nav! As you quite rightly point out for many of them it is too late by the time they reach the bridge and cannot turn round, for this York

City welcomes them with a fine. I do understand the need to reduce traffic in the city but there does need to be a 'clear' restriction such as a rising bollard similar to Stonebow and a turning point for those unable pass. Maybe for those visitors who are staying in the city and are 'caught out' some leniency could be shown with proof of an accommodation bill for a stay in hotels within the city walls!? I hope a suitable compromise/solution can be reached for the sake of the wonderful welcoming reputation we have all managed to build over the years.

Thank you for your email. I am personally in favour of the bridge closure. As a main thoroughfare for pedestrians from the train station into York city centre, and especially those with luggage walking to central accommodation, the bridge can be extremely congested requiring some pedestrians to walk on the road to pass others, as well as those stopping to admire the view from the Bridge.

Anything that eases the ability for pedestrians to pass each other with less risk of traffic incidents, is in my view beneficial.

the city is in real danger of throwing out the baby with the bathwater. In principle closing the bridge is entirely the right thing to do. It vastly improves the experience of visitors walking into the city from the Station and the hotels in that area. It enhances the pedestrian experience of visitors, who we know see walking around among the architecture as a key aspect of their visit. It integrates the Museum Gardens and Exhibition Square within the city centre and will both improve their potential as event spaces and helps justify investment in them. These are specifically tourism benefits over and above those about air pollution and bus timetables offered on a more general basis. My view is that the rise in Visitor numbers to the VIC may also be related. What we should be concerned about is the ad hoc way the trial was just landed on us (and everyone else) with minimal preparation, given notice Visit York could have adjusted the maps within publications so they do not continue to show the bridge as a full part of the road network.

The wider implementation was breath-taking hasty and poorly judged, including a very ill judged set of warning signposting naming the bridge (I'm sure less than 1% of visitors have any idea which bridge is Lendal). Half way through the trial an "alternative route" approach was finally and half-heartedly implemented in Blossom Street. The signs in Bootham are often obscured by traffic. There remains no diversionary (alternative route) offered to those who find themselves at the approaches to the bridge and consequently many visitors through lack of realistic alternative, just drive on. I found myself in exactly the same position in Oxford and ended up with a similar penalty. I did not write an "I'm never coming back" letter to the Council or whoever is the local equivalent of Visit York. Clearly other locations also have similar issues and the signage in Oxford was also poor. We can over-estimate the long term damage of issues like this. How many letters does Boris Johnson get about the congestion charge? The key point to make here is that Visit York should be keen to offer assistance to reduce the negative impact on Visitors perceptions, offering better information to Visitors preparing to come etc. We should also press very significant improvement, including better signage, but also the implementation of a "first offence = warning" approach that would vastly reduce the damage to our reputation among visitors. In short, the damage being caused is the product of the poorly prepared trial. The problem is how to keep the bridge closed, which will work well for the visitor economy, while resolving the (very damaging) issues that the trial has demonstrated.

The feedback from our guests is, that the closure of a major thoroughfare in the centre of York is not only annoying and confusing for locals, but the degree to which tourists are disorientated trying to negotiate an unfamiliar environment was not even considered, as it is arrogantly assumed they will put up with anything to visit our town. Some have stated that they feel they are tolerated rather than welcomed by the town hierarchy.

With regards to the Lendal Bridge Trial I can confirm that a great many of our guests have been caught out with regards to closure (even with the information provided at the bottom of all our emails!). The majority confirming that their satnav systems brought them over the bridge and that the signage is either inadequate or obscured when travelling directly behind buses. This has caused frustration upon arrival at the hotel and then leaves a lasting impression of having been used as a money making exercise by our council, many have said that they would never return. However my point of emailing you is with regards to the final paragraph of your media statement where you advise that one of Visit York's priorities is to encourage greater use of our excellent Park and Ride services. These Park and Ride sites are only useful to those visitors coming into York on day trips. For those staying overnight or for longer periods where their hotels do not offer car parking facilities and they find that the few secure (the NCP at Tanner Row for example) City centre car parks are fully booked or priced way over their budget the Park and Ride system is useless as over night parking is not permitted. We have learnt from our guest that leaving their cars in City centre open air none secure car parks is not an option. I would like to see one of the Park and Ride sites offer overnight parking allowing a safer alternative for our visitors. The barriers could be locked in line with City centre car parks late evening and re opened in the morning in accordance with their current operating times. This is a topic of conversation raised many times by visitors and I do believe is a viable option for City of York council to consider.

Perhaps York's council could take a leaf out of Oxford Park and Ride system that opens one of their sites until around midnight (office closed) each evening but reduces the number of busses to approximately one every half hour from 10.00pm onwards. This flexibility not only allows better access to visitors but also to the residents wanting to enjoy all that Oxford has to offer and having used this service myself during last summer it does put York's Park and Ride system to shame! The infrastructure is in place it just takes a little forward thinking from the council about what is right for York and for the many thousands of visitors that want to enjoy our City and travel to it in their cars! Having just one of our sites opened in this way can only be a good thing for York.

I am the owner of a store in York and since we are on Lendal you will not be surprised to know I have a view on the closure of the bridge. When the trial was announced, I was open-minded. I could see the arguments for and against. I was happy to wait and let the facts speak for themselves after the trial. Turnover could go up, down or be unaffected. The store is in its third year in York and I should have seen 5% growth in the period since the bridge has closed. Sadly, I have experienced a 20% drop in footfall and a 10% drop in sales since bridge closure. The net effect is a 15% reduction in turnover. High street retail is under incredible pressure with unrealistic costs including a business rates system unfit for purpose and competition from out-of-town retail parks and on-line business' each with a completely different cost basis. The only dynamic that has changed for us this year is the bridge, so it is difficult to look for excuses elsewhere. Our brand awareness is up and our Leeds store has achieved all its targets for growth. If sales in York City Centre don't improve, I will have have no option but to re-consider our position. I hope this information is helpful.

Re Lendal Bridge closure - I cannot for the life of me understand who is actually benefitting from the closure of Lendal bridge?

1 Not pedestrians

Due to the increased speed of the still significant volume of traffic, one has to take care when crossing the road. The serenity and freedom of totally pedestrianised areas is clearly not being achieved here.

2 Not business

Most commentators are reporting a noticeable downturn in retail business since closure

3 Not public transport

Most taxi drivers I've spoken to report any benefits gained from closure are more than offset by increased delays in other areas of the city.

4 Not visitors

The sheer number of unsuspecting tourists who have innocently followed their sat navs and mistakenly crossing the bridge by car. They are hardly likely to make a return visit or recommend York to their friends

5 Absolutely not the poor York car commuter We all know to our cost the frustration of trying to cross east to west or vice versa

I'm sure someone will benefit from closure but I've yet to meet them!

Dreadful scheme, accumulating horrendous fines many no doubt from Tourists who will not return. Open the bridge again as soon as possible. A DISASTER.

The question of the permanent closure of Lendal Bridge has, as we who live and work in York know has been controversial, however as a business owner in the City, I do believe that the closure has not unduly affected our business. Return business from customers who have been fined for inadvertently crossing the bridge after shopping or visiting York however, is difficult to quantify for a small business. I also work for a national and international estate agency firm and from my point of view, getting from one side of the City to the other, Clifton side to say Fulford I have seen an increase in journey times, I do think the trial has pushed traffic elsewhere in the City. Bootham/Gillygate has always been busy, but a journey that would have taken 20/25 mins is now taking up-to an hour at some times of the day. Unfortunately I do need my car for work as I can be in the City and then an appointment could take me into the North Yorkshire countryside. I also suffer from both osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis - not badly enough to warrant a disability badge, but the condition is debilitating enough for me to struggle to walk from one appointment to the other, even within the city walls. I live in an outlying village - 8 miles from York, the bus service is poor, one an hour until 6.30pm, so using public transport for say a night out in the City is, with the exception of a "late" bus 8pm and 11pm on a Saturday, cost prohibitive. The cost of a taxi is around £17.00 each way, and of course I would not wish to drink and drive, however, if I do take the car I know have to pay for parking in the evening as well, which again puts up the price of supporting business in York. The Council do need to think carefully with regard to the transport system as a



whole and the costs entailed by users - I have just this week returned from Frankfurt where an integrated bus/tram/train system is around 8.00 euros for a weeks journey on any mode of transport, with frequency on the trams around 1 - 5 minutes waiting time. Frankfurt is a big city and does not have the historic core that York has, however if other countries can manage their systems so well why are we so lacking in developing a long term strategy that really works for York, its citizens and visitors, at a cost that is affordable and offers a real alternative to using the car, freeing up the City properly from the increasing use of personal transport. I do not know if any of the above is pertinent to Visit York's involvement with the trial closure but trust it offers a personal view of a business owner, employee, physically challenged York born and bred individual.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion on the Lendal Bridge trial. Here are a few stats to put my plight into perspective. Between the end of March 2013 and the bridge closure, my weekly growth in turnover ranged between **+5% to +55%**. From the moment the bridge closed until the end of 2013, my business declined by between **-4% to -25% per week**. Since the turn of the year, my decline has ranged from **-4% to -34% per week**.

My footfall has declined by an average of 38 customers per week on the same period when the bridge was open. For my business, January to March 2013 was the worst period for the effects of the recession. As mentioned above, the economy improved significantly at the end of March 2013. Between January and March 2014, my business between Mondays to Fridays has been down by up to **70%** on last year's debacle. It is the weekend visitors who are clawing back the deficit. During the week, it is noticeable that the locals no longer shop in the city centre, yet at the weekend, those coming from far afield and by train have significantly increased their spending on last year and we are seeing more of them. James Alexander, in a personal email exchange with me and at a FSB meeting, indicated that the reason for the decline in business was the move of the council offices. This man does not know or understand my customer profile/business, is deluding himself, is plain thick or he's spewing out a politician's web of lies and deceit...quite likely all of these. I appreciate the council part funds your organisation so you have to tread carefully about your comments.

Only this week, I have prevented two vehicles going over the bridge when at the Museum Street lights on my bike and seen two more go through on to the bridge, when in the vicinity of the bridge. I can only surmise that visitors are oblivious as to the name of the bridge as they approach it. It should not be left to chance that these valuable visitors get snapped by the ANPR cameras. Whether the bridge closure is down to the clause in the sale of the old offices – and the vast majority of York's residents and taxi drivers think so – or it was decided on to divert traffic up to the new development at Monk's Cross as part of the deal to build it, there is no ecological justification for the closure or empathy for the beleaguered businesses in York who have witnessed a steady decline for the last few years. Is it beyond the capacity of James Alexander and Dave Merrett to understand the long-term effects on York's independent small traders who are going out of business on a weekly basis? Take a walk down Goodramgate or any York city centre shopping street and see the rapid decline in retail occupancy. What exactly will there be in a few months/years to draw visitors to York, when the quaintness and individuality of our shopping experience has been removed for ever? If they want a sterile typical 'High Street' then that is what they will achieve.

Our view on the closure of the Lendal Bridge is York City Council are happy to up business rates and yet we had a number of visitors fined for driving over the bridge, you try to encourage visitors to

York, and its bad publicity for them to leave the city with a fine, especially foreign people. A business in York was told someone the old council offices were to be bought by a big hotel – for which they would pay a lot of money but did not want a lot of traffic passing by and they said this was what this exercise was all about.

Firstly we agree with the Visit York Media Statement - Re Lendal Bridge Trial. We hope our comments below add weight and we are not too late in them being taken into consideration before you submit them to the Council. Located, as we are, off Lawrence Street one might assume that the bridge closure has made little difference, at least to our guests. Not so. In general, the queueing of traffic on Lawrence Street has become much worse over the course of the trial, with queues stretching back from Walmgate Bar a full quarter-mile, sometimes more, even outside peak times. This does seem to happen in both directions, although not both at the same time, and our belief is that the situation is linked to traffic having to take alternative routes. Specifically, one guest was vastly inconvenienced recently when a water main burst at Piccadilly/Fishergate. He was due to collect a disabled person from the railway station and was delayed for around two hours.

We tried to find a sensible alternative route for him, to no avail. We contacted Council officials at the time (around 11.30 am) who could not advise us. Eventually, of course, Lendal Bridge (and Coppergate) were re-opened to all traffic, but this was far too late after the incident. There is another factor in this scenario and that is dissemination of information on what is happening and alerting people to the problem, we often listen to Radio York in the morning but many will not. When unpredictable events do happen such as that described above the Council must have contingency plans in place and be prepared to act far more swiftly than it did on that occasion.

I am writing to give my feedback on the Lendal Bridge traffic trial. My business moved into a retail unit at Low Petergate in October 2013. After a while we became aware of the Lendal Bridge trial and were careful to avoid the restricted periods. However, we encountered a number of problems.

- The signs were difficult to understand.
- When pressurised by other traffic there was insufficient time to read the signs.
- As newcomers to the city we had planned our route into the city carefully, but on encountering the restrictions for the first time we were thrown into total confusion with nowhere to pull over and study the map for an alternative route.
- Having entered the centre of York on the A59 we found the alternative route round the city took up to an extra 30 minutes.
- Much of the time spent in the diversion was spent in standing traffic, considerably increasing pollution in the city.
- Despite our best efforts we still received a fine for being in a bus lane somewhere around Lendal Bridge – the photo and description were so uninformative that we still have no idea where we were caught and therefore how to avoid another fine.

It is worth recalling an experience my wife and I had in Reading a couple of years ago. We were attending a large party at Henley-on-Thames but the nearest we could find a hotel was in the centre of the Reading. We found the city centre was a maze of bus lanes and restrictions but being new to the city we could find no other way of reaching the hotel and it was 7.30pm. At the party locals were surprised we were stopping in Reading as they considered it a horrible place. We, on the other hand, found Reading to be a vibrant place with great shopping, hotels, restaurants and street entertainers. We returned home singing the city's praises and looking forward to returning. Then

we received the £30 fine for unwittingly contravening a bus lane. We protested but had to pay the fine. The council made £30. We have vowed never to return to Reading. The £400 we spent while we were there will be the first and last money the businesses of Reading will see from us. We will not be recommending Reading to others and we can now see why the locals might have had such a low opinion of the place. With some 45,000 fines issued on Lendal Bridge I wonder how many thousands of visitors will now have a similar opinion of York? York City Council need to understand that peoples love of personal transport will not go away. In time, petrol and diesel cars will be replaced by electric or hybrid cars. The strategy should not be to ban cars from the bridges of York so that they can be used for pedestrians but to create dedicated pedestrian bridges. The success of this approach has been clearly demonstrated in London. York should keep the existing bridges for unrestricted mixed traffic and build dedicated pedestrian bridges between Lendal Bridge and Ousegate, and between Ousegate and Bishopgate. The £700K the council has raised should be enough to fund a feasibility study at least. The restrictions on Lendal Bridge will have had significant impact on trade in the city centre.

This will only help to encourage shoppers to move to out of town shopping, which in turn will increase vehicle use around the city and accelerate the decline in town centre retailing. I urge the Council to end the damaging restrictions on Lendal Bridge as soon as possible.

31<sup>st</sup> January 2014

Dear Councillor Alexander

### **Lendal Bridge Trial**

I'm writing to you because of the strategic importance of the outcomes of the Lendal Bridge trial not only to the City of York, but also nationally.

York has gained a well earned reputation as a UK pioneer in creating a healthy and attractive city centre environment through its pedestrianisation schemes through the years. The bold decisions the council made to close roads around the Minister and subsequently in adjacent areas have been vindicated. The fact that there are no calls now to reverse these decisions, and the popularity of York city centre, are ample proof that decisions that are unpopular at the time can at a later time be recognised as visionary. We suggest that making the Lendal Bridge restrictions permanent will, in time, also be seen as visionary.

The international and national contexts to this decision are also important to recognise.

- Internationally cities are competing for employers to locate to them. They are also competing for tourist revenue. It is recognised that a quality environment is one of the criteria businesses use to judge the appropriateness of a location, especially those businesses that need to attract a highly mobile and highly educated workforce. Although the closure of Lendal Bridge could be seen as a small measure, the decision to make the restrictions permanent (or not) sends an important signal about future intent. In addition, as other cities within the UK and Europe pedestrianise, York needs to constantly improve its attractiveness as a destination.
- Nationally, the reversal of the extension of the London congestion charge extension, and the failure of the Edinburgh referendum were set-backs in efforts to create healthy city-centre environments across the UK. If York were to choose not to make the Lendal Bridge closure permanent this would have negative ramifications across the country, as well as damaging York's reputation.

These reasons are, we suggest, good enough reasons for you to be bold and make the Lendal Bridge closure permanent. But we would argue there are also strong environmental reasons as well.

Air pollution in York, although much improved from the past, still needs to be reduced further. And York needs to play its part in curbing greenhouse gases. The last administration rightfully committed York to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent by 2020. This is the minimum necessary if the worst impacts of climate change is to be averted. The Lendal Bridge closure, together with efforts to improve public transport, can contribute to this goal.

To conclude, we ask that the City of York Council make the Lendal Bridge restrictions permanent. We suggest that this makes sense for the City from social, environmental and economic perspectives. But we also suggest that the city must recognise that the decision it makes will have ramifications beyond York. York could again demonstrate its leadership.

Yours sincerely



Mike Childs

Head of Science, Policy & Research

Friends of the Earth

p.s. you should know that I also have an interest as a York resident (37 Frances St) but that this letter is being written in my capacity as Head of Science, Policy & Research for Friends of the Earth

cc Councillor Dave Merrett

Thanks for getting in touch regarding the closure to Lendal Bridge and the impact on our Service.

In terms of the impact on the Fire Service please note the following points:

- Initially we were included in the ban from driving over the bridge and this had a substantial impact on the delivery of our Service. Our appliances were frequently delayed in heavy traffic conditions increasing the amount of time that they were taking carrying out their daily work routines (Fire Safety Inspections, Training, Risk Inspections etc.)
- I requested that the ban be lifted for our appliances and this was granted and this did ease the delays for us somewhat.
- The traffic that would have used the Bridge has been diverted into other areas of the City and as such we are finding traffic conditions heavier in certain areas, especially around Foss Islands. This is slowing our progress in responding to incidents, as there is more traffic congestion to negotiate. (This is the perception of the crews and we have not conducted any analysis to confirm or deny this)
- If the restrictions were to remain in place moving forward, we would request that access across the Bridge is maintained for our appliances as per the current situation.

Regards,

Paul.

Paul Bennett

Station Manager

York and Huntington

York Telephone: 01904 616100 / DDI: 4842

Huntington Telephone: 01904 735360 / DDI: 2342

Mobile:07740 301443 (\*60)



**NORTH YORKSHIRE**  
**FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

Please consider the environment before printing this email

The closures have not caused the NYP issues with regards to on-going operations, however, there are one or two points which would assist the police if they could be addressed:

1) The legislation was incorrect for the police, fire and ambulance services exemptions. This states that there is an exemption for police, fire and ambulance vehicles used in an 'emergency'. This is incorrect as the police, in particular do not just go to 'emergencies', but the role involves patrolling, monitoring and other uses.

We (NYP) are in receipt of a letter of exemption issued by CYC, but we would wish to see the legislation updated to incorporate the wording; '**any vehicle used for police purposes**'.

This re-wording would negate the need for any 'special' letter of exemption and simplify matters considerably, when answering challenges by members of the public.

2) There are issues around our use of 'hired in' vehicles and visiting forces. These create us a problem as the units are not necessarily aware of the restrictions and can collect a ticket without it being picked up locally. With a 'hired in' vehicle this can cost the NYP up to £55 (the fine, plus a £25 handling fee) from the hire firm. I am not sure how we get around this as the vehicles are not always marked up as police vehicles.

The effectiveness of the scheme, personally speaking, is sound. I do not think that the impact on other traffic routes is as severe as some parties make out.

There are mixed responses from other staff, many of whom are less enthusiastic.

I do think that the legality needs to be addressed (as highlighted). I was concerned at the outset and did suggest that the signage needed to be as robust as could be, to reduce the numbers of drivers inadvertently infringing the closure and ensuring as high a compliance rate as could be reached, thus reducing the likelihood of legal challenge.

I am concerned at the reputational damage done to York by visitors being handed a ticket and I think that this is a big issue.

Hope this helps,

Regards,

Steve

**Steve Burrell** Dip ASM MCIHT MSoRSA

**Collar Number 5157**

**Traffic Management Officer,**

**Fulford Road,**

**York**

**YO10 4BY**

**Tele: Int 2352 or Ext 01904 669352**

**Wrks Mobile : 07890 907035**

**[steve.burrell@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:steve.burrell@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk)**

**Dial 101, press option 2 and ask for me by my full name or collar number.**

**If using my collar number, please state each number individually.**

**[www.northyorkshire.police.uk](http://www.northyorkshire.police.uk)**



Dear Sirs,

Please find below the York Hoteliers' Association's comments/views on the Lendal Bridge trials:

The York Hoteliers' Association welcomes the City of York Council's plans to further improve our City's appearance and tourism appeal by: - re-designing the 'streetscape' around the York Art Gallery, the Library, York Minster and Blake Street, and also by facilitating pedestrian access to the historic core of our City from the railway station. We believe that the 're-invigorating York' campaign is crucial to its future prosperity, so that the whole precinct can rival any other European City. We also support the council's efforts in transforming our City into a more pleasant and environmentally-friendly one, with a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions and by supporting cycle and public transport usage.

However, we consider that the 'Lendal Bridge restricted access trials' should be aborted as the reputation of our City as a 'visitor friendly' destination is in jeopardy: - all the efforts that the tourism industry and the retail sector place into ensuring that our guests leave York with wonderful memories, risk being annihilated by unexpected fines received afterwards. Negative messages on social media and regrettable coverage in the press have also had a detrimental effect, possibly deterring visitors.

Furthermore, businesses located on both sides of the river have suffered during the trials: - insufficient signage on the bridge and on the alternative routes, lack of clear information and satellite-navigation systems unable to be updated. All these leading to frustrated guests arriving to our hotels and restaurants with a negative first impression. Suppliers have also reported additional costs and delivery delays due to the extended mileage and increased traffic on the alternative routes. We are also surprised that the 'high-season' summer traffic has not been taken into consideration and fear worsened traffic conditions from the first race meeting onwards.

Should the 'Lendal Bridge restricted access trials' were to be confirmed, we would insist that the time restrictions remain unchanged – they should not include peak hour traffic – as any such amendment would render the trial criteria obsolete. We would also want to work constructively with the council on this matter and would recommend that the following actions are taken:

- A dedicated 'car turning area' should be created to the North side of the bridge to avoid dangerous car manoeuvres from drivers late realising their mistake and having to reverse into the Museum Gardens entrance and over the traffic island;
- The Bridge should be resurfaced in red tarmac, as for a bus lane, to make the restriction obvious;
- 'first offender' non local drivers should receive a 'warning letter' first, with fines being issued from the second offence;
- Visit York Mini-guides and city maps should clearly indicate the restrictions and pin-point the city centre hotels' location;

- Access to hotels and restaurants should be permanently signposted (Minster Yard, Clifton/Bootham, North Street...);
- Flexibility to easily reopen these restricted areas to traffic should be considered, in case of problems on the alternative routes (floods, road accident, traffic light failure...)

Yours faithfully

Lionel A. Chatard

Director & General Manager

[Hoping you can join us for one of our upcoming events](#)



Tel: 01904 687643  
26 March 2014

**Frances Adams  
City of York Council  
West Offices  
Station Drive  
York  
YO1 6GA**

Dear Frances Adams

### **Lendal Bridge Trial**

York Museums Trust welcomes the trialled traffic restrictions for Lendal Bridge and the positive impact it has made for pedestrians using and visiting this area of the city. The significant reduction in traffic has created a safer and more amenable environment for those making their way to and from the York Museum Gardens and Exhibition Square to the city centre. The York Museum Gardens in particular have become more connected to the rest of the city, with the noise and air pollution also being dramatically cut. If the trial was made permanent we would expect to see the number of people who use and enjoy this space increasing from the 1.7 million that already visit every year.

Exhibition Square is now also much quieter and safer for pedestrians, while the 27 per cent of visitors arriving by train enjoy a much more positive introduction to the city centre.

York Museum Gardens and Exhibition Square are both set to be developed in the next few years with significant changes that will enhance the visit to the area for people on foot. The Trust plans to expand the gardens to the rear of York Art Gallery, creating more pathways to Marygate and Exhibition Square, while the City of York Council plan to develop the Square itself. We believe that the traffic restrictions imposed on Lendal Bridge will play a key part in making sure these projects are enjoyed to their full potential.

The Trust recognises there have been a number of problems with the trial, most significantly the issue of signage. However we are in support of making the restrictions permanent as we believe this part of the city will significantly benefit as a result.

Yours sincerely,



**Janet Barnes CBE**  
Chief Executive

CC – Kate McMullen, Visit York

# York Older People's Assembly

The Garth, White Rose Avenue, New Earswick  
York YO32 4TZ  
Registered Charity 1101018  
761240



Tel 01904

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City of York Council  
Lendal Bridge Consultation  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
YORK  
YO1 6GA

Dear Sirs,

## **Lendal Bridge Closure**

York Older People's Assembly, a recognised body representing older people in York discussed the Lendal Bridge trial at its Open Meeting on Monday 3 February. The meeting was attended by some 60 people with the vast majority (72%) supporting the aims and objectives of the Council, but would wish to add the following comments.

For those accessing the City Centre from 10-30 a.m and after 5 p.m. there is no change. There was however no support for extending the hours of the restrictions which currently link with the revised times applicable to the Pedestrianisation of the City Centre..

There was major concern about the total inadequacy of the signing arrangements put in place. Whilst acknowledging they comply with the Department of Transport requirements they clearly do not, and will not meet the information needs particularly of those visiting the City as tourists. Reference to "Lendal Bridge" on the yellow signs means nothing to those unfamiliar with York. The fact that Sat Navs have not been amended and new routes maps at Tourist Information Centres and on the CYC website should be a pre-requisite if the scheme is to continue. Whilst the large illuminated sign in Station Road should lead to some improvements no similar provision has been installed at the northern end of the scheme in Gillygate.

Members experience of bus reliability for those routes using Lendal Bridge i.e. (No. 1, 5, 5A, 6 and Rawcliffe Park & Ride) has improved significantly. If the scheme is to continue then some existing bus routes might well be directed over Lendal Bridge rather than being routed via Rougier Street and therefore

benefitting from the improvements. Members mentioned particularly those routes using Tadcaster Road to Clifton Moor.

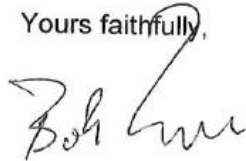
In respect of air pollution, whilst recognising the reduction in traffic usage in the immediate area, Members questioned whether there had been a transfer of pollution to other areas of the City. Has there been an overall reduction in car usage?

No robust reliable information was available concerning the "knock on" affects elsewhere in the City. Anecdotally there appears to have been a significant build up of traffic in Bishopthorpe Road and Skeldergate Bridge. Doubtless the independent research by Leeds University will quantify these issues.

Members consider the exemption categories should be revisited. This would include the impact on disabled badge holders and home carers.

Finally, the publication of the evaluation report should be widely available for comment **before** any final decision is taken by Members of the Council. Interested parties should have the "facts" before them to allow further informed comment.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Towner', written in a cursive style.

Bob Towner  
Chair



## FSB Member Comments

I wanted to be asked:

Should Lendal Bridge be reopened? Yes.

Have you been inconvenienced by the closure? Yes.

Have you seen any benefits as a result of the closure? No.

Has the closure been implemented well? No. Signage has been abysmal and has changed consistently throughout the trial (I notified them of 'ring road' signs on Huntington Road back in November).

Do you believe that anyone is going to take a blind bit of notice about your opinion? No.

So, has writing to the council and completing surveys been a waste of your time? Yes.

The effect the closure has is in the additional time taken, traffic congestion, co2, etc. in picking up and dropping off at the station, and other business journeys around York. These are roughly once per week.

I strongly oppose the closure of Lendal Bridge, but think that if I returned the survey, the city council would deem that the closure has little or no effect on our business.

My business York Marina is too far south of the City to be affected by the bridge closure. However if this was the first stage of an Inner City one way loop ( like Leeds has ) round York to improve traffic flow I think it should be supported .....!!!

I appreciate the need for statistics but as well as the Council looking for negative impacts they also need to show us some positive impacts!

The main reason for the closure to continue must be proof that the positives far out way the negatives.

At present it appears they are only considering negatives irrespective of any positive benefits.

If they can't prove any major improvements or benefits it should be re-opened.

I believe the biggest impact will be on shoppers and tourists not returning to the city either as a result of a fine or word of mouth from family and friend about fines/potential fines.

These stats are very difficult to prove and will not be known until we see a drop in visitor numbers over the next few years.

Ashberry of York was situated in the centre of York, near the Minster for nearly 16 years. It has recently re-located to an out of town location. The cost of car parking, difficulty in 'getting around' York driving and lack of parking have meant alot of our regular customers are happy if we are away from the centre. Not everyone wishes to take the Park 'n' Ride if they are making a special purchase that doesnt require a half day shop! This is very disappointing. As we are a jewellers we had many reps from companies (many from Germany) visiting our shop and York, many have had the fine due to the poor information given on signs leading upto the bridge. If local people ie York, Selby, Harrogate etc find this 'U turn' of not using Lendal bridge a problem what chance do our other visitors and tourists have?? This was quite embarrassing. They are decent people trying to do their best with their work and best in the economic climate. One rep actually 'gave up' as not only did she go over a bridge, she couldn't easily 'U Turn' as there was no help with that and the car parks were full in the 3 she tried. So not only did we miss our on our meeting, York did too as she was supposed to be staying in the centre.

Talking about congestion, how about looking into the whole of York? The Monks Cross next stage with John Lewis etc, the roads along the A1237 is already heavily congested. This is definitely an area which would benefit from all this concentration with dual lanes. People are going to visit these out of town shopping centres as they are so well planned for access.

Please look after the York centre and its businesses. It is too late for now, however if things improve we may consider moving back in the future. Another point is I have noticed when events are on in York (eg St Nicholas Fayre) bus drivers supplying much needed tourists to our city are having to park occasionally in our out of town parking areas or parking along the A64. I am unsure if this is due to charges, lack of parking or just the difficulty in getting around our city?

**Q6 Any other information you wish to pass on ?**

We moved out of the city centre in 2008 having got tired of the lack of foresight by the Council in relation to our type of business with deliveries, collection & parking. Particularly in relation to the fact that they don't seem to understand that the car is here to stay for the foreseeable future & that people actually like using them.

Lendal bridge closure doesn't affect us out here although I can imagine it would if we were still City centre based.

I feel sorry for the people who live in Leeman Road who will be currently having to cope with all the additional traffic passing through a residential area.

Isn't it a bit of a coincidence that as soon as the council move office that they try to close Lendal Bridge?

Deliveries have not been too much of a problem as I'm always in early and delivery drivers know this so can drop off to me early, but the bridge closure and the extended pedestrianisation hours have caused problems for customers who need to pick up larger items in their cars

Footfall In the same period of the trial between August 2012 and March 2013 when the bridge was open, we served 19,925 customers. During the bridge closure, we have served 18,808 customers; a decrease of 1,117.

The increase in business is NOT because the bridge is closed it is because the hard work put in DESPITE the extra problems involved.

Levels of business change for different reasons, so to say the closure of Lendal Bridge is the only reason for change is incorrect but the closure HAS had a significant and negative effect on my business.

The one question which is very relevant is Q1. Having lost customers makes me very cross, these losses are due to Lendal Bridge closure - delays in deliveries were the reason for loss of customers.

No logical reason can be seen for this bridge being closed, it is the natural inner ring road to York City centre and should be reopened immediately.

If the council wants to improve air quality and pedestrian safety then the logical bridge to close is Ouse Bridge and this should be to all vehicles except Buses and emergency vehicles

From being open from 8.45am till 10.30am we have a 59% of customer into the retail premises, from 10.30am until 5.00pm we have 26% then from 5.00pm until 5.30pm we have 15%. This has been take over a 6m





FSB Lendal Bridge business survey March 2014

Years Established	Customers Increase/decrease	Customer Numbers	Customer %	Turnover Change YoY	Business Costs	Business Hours	Fuel Costs
2.5	N	N	N	(+) 13%	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged
20	N	N	N	(+) 2.5%	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged
25	Decreased	(-)30	(-)7%	0%	0% sole trader	increase 2 hrs	0%
134	Decreased	(-)636	66%	(-) 5.6%	0	0	0
7	Decreased	(-)2	(-)5%	(+)4%	increase 8%	Increase 9%	Increase 5%
3	No change			N/A	Increase Approximately £1.50 per week per vehicle due to extra mileage being covered. This is with 8 vehicles on the road	Increase. Approximately 30 minutes added to each journey that involves going from one side of the bridge to the other, as to total time this is hard to quantify as different number of journeys are made each day by different number of vehicles.	Increase Approximately £1.30 per vehicle per week so about £10.40 per week
50		N/A	N/A	Increase (Mainly due to supply issues with stock in prior year)	No Change	No Change	No Change

56	(- 16.3 ON LAST YEAR OF NEW CUSTOMERS) 42.7% fall in foot fall of customers.	(18.63 ON LAST YEARS FIGERS)	8% WAGES	18 Hours +	Increase some weeks £60.00 other £83.00
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