

# **Make It York**

**Quarterly Narrative  
August – October 2021**

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## Introduction

This report covers the period August - October 2021 and is written to reflect the deliverables in the current SLA (as detailed in the text boxes).

The report has been produced with input from the Senior Management Team following the departure of the Managing Director from Make It York in March 2021.

Greg Dyke has chaired a Senior Management Team meeting on a weekly basis. Sarah Loftus will take up the post of Managing Director from the 15<sup>th</sup> November.

We are continuing with a hybrid working model, which has resulted in a reduced office space requirement. We continue to look at options and to minimise running costs as much as possible and a review of premises will be undertaken when the new MD is in post.

While we are all very aware of current challenges, the future for York remains very bright and the opportunities for 2022 onwards.

## Visitor Economy

### Destination Management Organisation (DMO)

**DMO:**

- Leading on leisure marketing of York to make the most of York's offer and attract visitors to the city.
- Maintain and develop Visit York as a membership body supporting and developing the tourism sector.
- Work with the visitor economy sector to ensure that a quality product is offered to both visitors AND residents, and that it is accessible and welcoming to all.
- Encourage all York residents to enjoy the tourism and cultural offer of York including year-round promotion and targeted residents' events.

### Leisure Marketing

#### Summer of Sport

We launched our summer of sport campaign on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, with activities taking place through until early September. This was supported by online and social media promotion with a hub for all activity at [visityork.org/summer](http://visityork.org/summer)

This activity (and the associated marketing campaign) was a collaboration between Make It York, Thor's Tipi and First Bus York, with plans that included an interactive sporty sculpture trail, pop-up tipi bar, urban running routes, free yoga classes and outdoor ping pong tables.

Six interactive sports-themed sculptures were installed across the city centre offering photo opportunities for residents and visitors to get involved in. From celebrating on a winner's podium and driving a racing car, to posing with weights, the trail aimed to get people moving around the city to enjoy the installations and share pictures on social media using #SummerinYork. Trail sponsors included York BID, Middleton's Hotel, First Bus York, York City Knights Rugby Club and St Peter's School York.

Until September 5, a pop-up Thor's Tipi bar was located on Parliament Street offering a range of tropical-inspired drinks, cosy evenings around fire pits, and weekend DJ sets. Thor's was also joined on Parliament Street by a variety of York-based food vendors – including Yuzu Street Food, KREP, Shambles Kitchen, Sloppy's Burgers, Stam & Maria and The York Roast Co.

Outdoor ping-pong tables sponsored by Jorvik Viking Centre were located on Parliament Street, which residents and visitors could use for free. Free yoga classes also took place in Thor's tipi each week in partnership with Emperor's Gym. Kicking off from July 14, the classes ran each Wednesday (7.30am -8.30am) and Friday (8.30am - 09.30am). For runners, two urban running routes were devised in partnership with York Knavesmire Harriers.

## Hidden Gems

We worked closely with First Group who invested with us in a Yorkshire-wide days out campaign that encouraged local and regional families to use the park & ride scheme to enjoy the city throughout the summer holidays.

The focus here was on exploring ‘hidden gems’ in the city rather than well-known attractions and venues and included promotional activity with Capital FM Yorkshire, Video On Demand with ITV (see the advert [here](#)), YouTube and podcast advertising and paid social media activity across the Visit York channels.

Adam & Jojo from the Capital FM Yorkshire breakfast show also filmed content in York for the Capital FM website as part of the campaign and we also ran on-air and online competitions to win £1,000 for a day out in York.

## #LoveYork with LNER

Launched on 20<sup>th</sup> September, we worked closely with LNER in pushing out Autumn and Christmas messaging for short breaks to York across the London region.

This particular campaign promoted travel by train from London, highlighting the ease and convenience of travelling to the city by train whilst also showcasing York’s amazing offer.

We used outdoor advertising on the London Underground for a period of 2 weeks, featuring key campaign partners - York Minster, National Railway Museum, JORVIK Viking Centre, Castle Howard and The Grand.

We also ran radio advertising with both Classic FM London and Capital FM London and we purposely used 2 different radio stations with slightly different creative – Classic FM for the ‘empty nester’ audience and Capital FM for a younger ‘go getter’ audience, along with a competition element to win a 2 night stay in York.

All creative pushed people to the updated Love York hub at [visityork.org/loveyork](#) and you can see the London underground creative and listen to the radio adverts [here](#).

## Haunted York

This year, we ran a month-long ‘Haunted York’ campaign, which ran from 1<sup>st</sup> until 31 October, in partnership with both York Dungeon and First Bus.

Officially known as the most haunted city in Europe, we worked in close partnership with York Dungeon and First Bus to make sure we retained this title indefinitely.

In previous years our Haunted campaign has run for a period of two weeks to cover the school half-term, however by extending this to cover the whole of October we felt that we could hit two distinct audiences.

We targeted pre-nesters from early October onwards and families in the run up to / during the weeks when the school holidays were taking place.

We created an umbrella for all Haunted content on our Visit York Halloween hub at [visityork.org/haunted](https://visityork.org/haunted) and you can see the campaign video [here](#).

The campaign videos and photography provided content for our website and social channels, which were also boosted across our social media channels regionally (courtesy of an investment from First Bus).

### Christmas

We continue to work hard behind the scenes to put plans in place for a Christmas event that will really deliver the festive magic that York is renowned for (and we sadly missed last year). So, we were even more thrilled than we usually would have been to announce that the ever popular St Nicholas Fair will be returning to the centre of York this year between 18<sup>th</sup> November and 23<sup>rd</sup> December – with an array of local traders selling everything from handmade crafts to seasonal treats.

The announcement press release has been distributed and the campaign hub is live at [visityork.org/Christmas](https://visityork.org/Christmas). Coach and group operator promotion, along with domestic marketing activity, is ongoing to include the production and print of the York Christmas guide (50,000 copies going out via NPD, Info Display and Living North fairs and magazine). The online version is also live on Issuu and can be found [here](#).

### Visit York Tourism Awards

The Visit York Tourism Awards will be returning on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 at York Racecourse.

Sponsored by LNER, next year there will be 15 awards categories, with 13 of these categories eligible for the winners to be put forward to the national Visit England Awards for Excellence 2022. Deadline for entries was Friday 29 October 2021.

### North Yorkshire Moors

Our annual partnership campaign with North Yorkshire Moors has been confirmed for early 2022 to promote York and Beyond and twin centre breaks, including promotion of the Dark Skies Festival in February/March 2022.

### Digital Channels

#### Visit York

During the period of 1 July to 30 September, the Visit York website was visited by 405,691 users, an increase of 31% compared to the same period last year and had 1.1million page views, an increase of 1% compared the same period last year.

The ‘Christmas’, ‘What’s On’, and ‘Things To Do’ pages were the most viewed pages on the site during this period after the home page, and work continued to develop the site including introducing a new ‘Trusted Supplier’ section for B2B Visit York Members and further improvements to the functionality and usability for member logins.

Visit York social media channels received 5.1 million impressions, 203,877 engagements and gained an impressive 2,547 new followers.

### Make It York

During the period of 1 July to 30 September, the Make It York website had 13,192 page views, an increase of 12% compared to the same period last year and was visited by 5,730 users, an increase of 36% compared to the same period last year.

The 'Meet the Team' page was the most viewed page on the site during this period after the home page. Meanwhile, social media coverage on MIY platforms resulted in 150,410 impressions and 3,685 engagements, while gaining 324 new followers across all social media channels.

An updated Make It York website launched on 1<sup>st</sup> October focusing on our new priorities, whilst retaining a page signposting users to the CYC business support team.

### PR & Comms

From 1 July 2021 to 30th September 2021:

- Total news volume: 179
- Total news reach: 23.5M
- Total news value: £852799

Topics of focus for this period included Yorkshire Day, Summer of Sport, RLWC 2021, Culture Grants, new staff appointments, York's post-pandemic recovery and the Christmas Markets announcement.

National coverage was secured in titles such as The Telegraph, OK! magazine, iNews, The Sun (print & online), Woman and Home, Mail Online and Daily Mirror.

Local and regional coverage in a range of titles including York Press, YorkMix, Yorkshire Post, Northern Echo, Yorkshire Reporter, Yorkshire Business Daily, Hull Daily Mail, Nottingham Post and Yorkshire Times.

Broadcasts included BBC Radio York, YorkMix Radio and Greatest Hits Radio.

We had sixteen press trips during this period which we supported with itineraries including: iNews, The Telegraph, Fabulous Magazine (The Sun), European Business Express, Leeds Guide, Jetsetter Magazine and influencers such as You Can Travel, 'American & The Brit' and 'Hues of Delahaye'. These cover a mix of proactive invites to media and reactive requests.

### Visit York Membership

There is currently a **93%** retention rate of Visit York members, which is the best retention rate that Make It York has ever experienced.

During 2021-22, we acquired **89** new members to date, many of whom have upgraded to Gold membership, which is a demonstration of the value placed on website engagement. We are experiencing a lot of returning members from the pre-Covid period.

A minimum of one member event per week is taking place. These events include showcasing new openings, forums, networking and Halloween showcases from members.

#### **Visitor Information Centre (VIC)**

The VIC team are spending considerable time assisting visitors with pre booking of attraction tickets. Footfall and income are steadily increasing although remain significantly down on pre pandemic levels.

Merchandising income is low due to the low price point items. Popular items include books and bottled water. We are continuing to clear old product ranges.

During Halloween, York Dungeon dressed an area of the VIC and this helped to promote ticket sales in the VIC. Other attractions have expressed an interest in doing something similar with Castle Howard keen to discuss dressing for Christmas.

Volunteers have supported the VIC throughout the summer. Although a smaller team, their help has been welcomed, especially with lower staff levels and a busy Christmas period approaching.

E-shop sales remain low and discussions on whether to renew the licences are ongoing.

## Tourism Sector Development

### **Tourism Sector Development**

- Attract new business tourism to the city by providing a clear and effective process for responding to conference enquiries with high quality response and support and working proactively to attract new enquiries appropriate to the city)
- Work with tourism sector businesses to increase their productivity and help them become even better employers, paying decent wages and offering flexible employment, by promoting the adoption of the Good Business Charter. Facilitate cross-sector work to improve York centre as a destination for business, visitors and residents including:-
  - (a) leading on approaches to maximise private-sector led investment into city centre improvement; and
  - (b) working with the Council and with businesses to stimulate a stronger evening economy.

## Business Tourism Marketing

Business tourism activity has focused around positive messaging across our channels that York is open for business events, and supporting event organisers who are planning events for next year:

- Event enquiries are returning slowly and we are currently supporting four events for 2022, including a political studies conference for 700 in conjunction with the University of York and an international bee health conference for 150 with FERA. Our support ranges from venue/accommodation searches to social programme suggestions.
- We attended the ICCA conference 9-10 September in Hull, meeting with industry colleagues and other UK destinations to share best practice and recovery planning to showcase the UK to the international associations market.
- Ongoing work with our digital team to develop a venue search function within the conference section of visityork.org to replace the existing third-party search, which will give greater control over appearance and functionality.
- We've continued to host sales managers' meetings every 4-6 weeks, gathering vital intelligence from member venues about returning business, customer confidence and ongoing challenges for the sector. Leisure visitors continue to account for the majority of business, with corporate travellers being slower to return, which is in keeping with the wider picture across the sector.

## Research & Insight

Please refer to our latest research and insights report [here](#) from QA Research. This provides a snapshot of key continuities and changes in the Visit York monthly survey data since lockdown and into this financial year (the most recent data covers the June to August period this year).

The latest BID Research, as presented to the Tourism Advisory Board by Andrew Lowson in early October, also provides an insight into York's summer recovery in a national context (footfall, visitor origin, spend recovery etc.). Please see the presentation [here](#).

The latest hotel occupancy and room rates for the last 3-month period (courtesy of HAY) are here:

	Occupancy:	Rate:
August	86.6%	£133.19
September	85.3%	£119.60
October	81.3%	£108.70

The city has been very busy, notably on all weekends (Race weekends have seen strong production, demand and rate). Nearly every hotel experienced and reported record rates, and revenue during August 2021, assisting profit by the VAT reduction to 5%.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> October, VAT has returned to 12.5% on accommodation, non-alcoholic beverage and food.

There are still severe staff shortages in all hospitality businesses, which are pushing and challenging businesses. Supply/delivery challenges are ongoing, and notably massive implications with utility cost hikes – which is a major cause for concern amongst accommodation providers. Some concerns about availability of food groups, and shortages around Christmas, are also prevalent.

Conference, banqueting, group enquiries and business travel all seem to have returned in earnest during September. Lots of pent-up demand, so enquiry levels are consistently strong at the moment.

### Tourism Advisory Board

- Convene and facilitate a TAB for York, which brings together a diverse range of stakeholders in the sector and has an independent chair.
- Take a lead in the development and delivery of a tourism strategy as part of the city's new Economic Strategy.

The Tourism Advisory Board continues to meet on a monthly basis with four well attended meetings having taken place between July and October 2021.

## Culture, Wellbeing and Events

### *York Culture Strategy, York's Creative Future*

- Drive an ambitious and cohesive programme of cultural development for the city covering the arts, heritage and creative industries.
- Work with the CLG to lead on the development and evaluation of the Culture Strategy, ensuring full engagement with other city strategies and plans, including the Local Plan, Skills,
- Deliver/commission events both for the creative sector and for others, e.g. Culture Awards or equivalent that are profile raising, increase collaboration and demonstrate best practice.
- Convene and support the CLG as the strategy “owners”, providing the secretariat and driving the agenda, resourcing the partnership and co-chairing alongside an elected cultural leader.
- Develop a sustainable independent executive structure and constitution for the CLG.
- Receive regular strategic advice from the both the cultural and creative sectors maintaining appropriate liaison arrangements to inform the Make It York board of directors and to steer the company’s plans.
- Maintain positive and comprehensive relationships with national and regional strategic support bodies.
- Put together the necessary partnerships to make funding bids to deliver the Culture Strategy.
- Advise and support cultural providers with regard to new initiatives liaising with the council as appropriate.

### Cultural Leaders Group (CLG) structure

In line with the recommendations of the Culture Strategy, we have proceeded to prioritise reforming the Cultural Leaders Group into a more open and inclusive structure, which is a key priority within the strategy. This also relates to the MIY SLA outcome 5.2, that "By end of Year 1: Cultural Leaders Group (“CLG”) Executive structure in place (timing to be subject to the views of and input from the CLG Strategy Steering Group). Action and funding plans for the strategy established and agreed."

There will be two main components of this new structure, as follows:

- The Cultural and Creative Forum will be a large unincorporated group that is open to any and all working in the cultural and creative sector. This group will be referred to as the “Forum”.
- The Forum will be led by a smaller group that will be elected by the Forum at large. The smaller, leadership group will be referred to as the “Executive Group”.

It is anticipated that the Forum will be a broad and diverse group of representatives from the cultural and creative sector, which enables knowledge sharing, partnership development and network building, while the Executive Group will oversee the direction and implementation of the strategy, (being elected to have authority in this by the Forum, as their representatives). “The Executive Group of the Culture Forum will provide the citywide leadership, advocacy, direction and oversight for the strategy, including establishing a diverse investment portfolio to realise the city’s cultural ambitions.” (from York’s Creative Future)

The documentation for the new Forum and Exec structure has now been completed and signed off by the Cultural Leaders Group Strategy Steering Group, who currently lead on the direction of the strategy, alongside MIY. This includes a Terms of Reference, a Person Specification for Exec Group members, and details of how the election process, to form the new Exec Group, will work. The documentation was sent onto the full CLG in early October, for their input and feedback at the 28 October meeting of the CLG.

Following feedback, we will look to reform the CLG into the Culture Forum and open up membership across the sector – we anticipate this will take place in January 2022, with elections to the Exec then happening in February 2022 (exact timings tbc, pending feedback and uptake to new Forum).

### CLG Meetings

The Cultural Leaders Group have continued to meet on a monthly basis throughout 2021. This open and continuous communication with the culture sector has allowed us to keep up-to-date on their situations, facilitate collaboration, as well as inviting guest speakers to present.

We held our first in-person meeting since early 2020, in September 2021, kindly hosted by Explore Libraries: this focused on an update on Culture Forum and Exec planning progress, Q2 report on the Culture Strategy, and a large portion of the meeting was given over to partner updates.

### CLG Communications

MIY continues to provide a fortnightly e-news update to the CLG, detailing current culture news, funding updates, and MIY news, which we encourage the sector to contribute to, to act as a further information channel. We recently migrated this to a mailchimp platform and anticipate opening up the readership beyond the CLG when we launch the Culture Forum, so that it becomes a much broader resource across the sector and anyone who is interesting in accessing the e-news is able to subscribe to it.

We have now further developed the online Culture Hub on the MIY website, which hosts the Culture Strategy and acts as a hub for the city’s creative and cultural activity – there is now a complete web page for each of the Culture Strategy’s six Key Priorities: Engagement, Placemaking, Children and Young People, Talent Development, Culture and Wellbeing, and York’s National and International Profile. These pages share key information and progress on each priority area, as well as relating them back to the strategy’s recommendations and outcomes. We will now look to update the main Culture Hub homepage, which was created during the 2020 lockdowns – and this will soon include info on how to join the new Culture Forum.

## Action Plan

The culture, wellbeing and events team produced an action plan for the strategy in early 2021, which takes the form of a RAG report with key actions to achieve the outcomes/recommendations within the strategy and a quarterly reporting framework. From this, we also produce a quarterly written update report.

We are currently revising the reporting model for the quarterly reports, to make it more user friendly for CLG members, with an online short form to complete to submit their latest updates/ news. We are also updating the report format to make it more visually appealing, and it will be structured around key achievements and case studies. We will begin to host this quarterly report on the Culture Hub for information on strategy progress.

### Quarter three progress

The progress across each Key Priority for the strategy for the third quarter has included:

#### **Engagement:**

- Building on the research and initial meetings, MIY have become established members of engagement focused groups, including 100% Digital York, CYC's Our Big Conversation consultancy group, and the MCN network.
- Connections are now being established and built with organisations tackling racism in York and diversity specialists, including Speak Up Diversity. The York Festival of Diversity event lead has joined MIY as Events Manager (maternity cover), ensuring further synergy with this area of the strategy.
- Alongside CYC and Ways to Wellbeing, we administered culture and wellbeing grants to 19 organisations in August 2021, many of whom work with groups with protected characteristics (see wellbeing update below for more info).

#### **Placemaking:**

- Creative Workspace meetings have started between Guild of Media Arts, York Creatives, University of York, CYC, York Conservation Trust and MIY representatives, to consider availability and need of creative workspaces within the city, and to help simplify processes to access these for creatives.
- My City Centre Draft Vision published Sept 2021, with revitalising empty units through experience-based businesses and temporary arts spaces, utilising underused upper floor spaces for SMEs and gaining Purple Flag status as key objectives.
- Conversations are ongoing with regional/ national culture reps – including re-establishing links with Selby Culture Reps; new contact with Tees Valley reps; conversation with Exeter Culture leads (approx 5 years ahead of our process) - their recruitment documents informed York's new Culture Forum TOR and Executive Group Person Spec.

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

- MIY are supporting REACH, the Cultural Education Partnership, and have created and update a web page for them to showcase cultural and creative activity for children and young people in York, on the Culture hub of the MIY website, as they do not have their own website.
- Looking at how to further support the project, given limited capacity (volunteer-based).

### **Talent Development:**

- Initial meeting of University of York, York St John's, SLAP (Social Live Art Performance) and Art is My Career (York Design Week) reps held in October, to help shape the direction of this priority – they highlighted lack of skills among graduates for real world arts organisations, tension between an academic training and a vocational one.
- First meeting on culture sector data collection held in early October, with key business data pulled quickly. Developing relationship with CYC data dept.

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

- Planning for Makers and Shapers has restarted, led by York Civic Trust, with support from Make It York and other partners. Ambition is for this to be a city-wide project from 2022- 24, celebrating the anniversaries of past innovators and inspiring those of today and the future and re-introducing the role, reputation and history of York as a cutting-edge city.
- UNESCO Creative City partners packs drafted and plan to launch to coincide with York Business Week (See below in UNESCO designation update).
- Culture addition to CYC International Prospectus written and submitted with strong focus on innovation, cultural industries and media arts.

### **Culture and Wellbeing**

MIY, CYC and Ways to Wellbeing worked together to award cultural and social prescribing grant funding of £60,000 from the Better Care Fund in August, to support organisations across York's voluntary and community sector with initiatives designed to boost physical and mental wellbeing.

The objective of the grants is to help isolated people engage in their communities, combat mental ill-health, improve physical health, enable participation in culture and creativity or access to employment and learning opportunities.

Nineteen York-based charities, social enterprises, voluntary and community groups, received awards of up to £5000 each - to support a range of new initiatives for York residents. Spanning a diverse range of creative art forms and social activities the grants support activities from fairy trails and community coffee mornings to youth theatre workshops, excavation projects, craft workshops and creative cafes.

We are now showcasing case studies from the 2020 round of this grant funding on the Culture and Wellbeing page on the Culture hub of the MIY website. We plan to grow this case study resource on the web page, so that it becomes a qualitative evaluation measure that captures the impact of culture and wellbeing projects, in line with the recommendation for Cultural and Wellbeing evaluation in the Culture Strategy. We have agreed this model of evaluation with the Cultural Commissioning Partnership.

### Cultural Commissioning Partnership

The new Terms of Reference for the partnership was agreed at the meeting on 20 July. Meetings are ongoing on a regular basis, to coordinate and share information on work around culture and wellbeing in York, as well as raise the profile of the sector, and undertake joint funding bids to increase capacity to develop social prescribing projects together.

Following the completion of the ToR, the next step for the group is to create an action plan from the objectives within this, and an approach to joint culture and wellbeing communications.

The CCP group Chair and Secretariat are by Make It York.

### UNESCO designation

- Support the Guild of Media Arts as the focal point for UNESCO City of Media Arts designation by facilitating and undertaking activities that maximise the potential benefits of York's UNESCO designation and ensure sustained development in line with the Four Year Monitoring Report and Plan of 2018.
- Work with UNESCO Focal Point – the Guild of Media Arts – and the Council to deliver 2018- 22 UNESCO Creative City objectives.
- Support the focal point to convene wider stakeholder groups in the city to maximise the impact of the designation to the city.
- Communicate regularly with the creative sector e.g. through mailings and social media.
- Promote the creative sector through media channels highlighting York's profile as a Creative city.
- Monitor and evaluate progress leading to the 2022 Report to UNESCO.
- Support the Focal Point to collaborate with UK Creative Cities and other designations, UK UNESCO Commission, Media Arts Network, and Creative Cities Network.
- Promote the designation within the city, e.g. through the BID, Retail and Hospitality Forums.

The UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts working group of the Guild of Media Arts, York Mediale, City of York Council and Make It York, continues to meet on a regular basis.

As part of the designation profile raising work being undertaken by the group, MIY has now created a comprehensive partner pack as a toolkit for businesses to provide information about the designation, with input and collaboration from all. The packs include key

information on York as a UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts, the aims of Creative Cities around creative activity and collaboration, information on key media arts organisations in the city, and how partners can get involved in promoting York as a UNESCO Creative City. We are currently working on the pack design internally at MIY and following sign off by the group, anticipate that the packs will be ready to launch at York Business Week 2021 (w/o 8 November).

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

## Events

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

We are in the process of transferring the responsibility of events on CYC land including the following sites: West Bank Park, Rountree Park, Rawcliffe Country Park and Hull Road Park back to the Council. This will include transferring the premises licences, performing rights society licence and event bookings.

The events team are reviewing the current event booking systems for Shambles Market, City Centre, Eye of York, Tower Gardens and Knavesmire to streamline the process to online enquiries and support/guidance. The team are working on a draft event toolkit for event organisers for each site, highlighting the various site-specific details and required legal and health and safety permissions, including an event management plan template. The revised process will also enable a cross departmental committee approval to ensure scrutiny on quality and frequency of events and that they can match with Make It York and Culture Strategy objectives.

Following consultation with the Council's Licensing and Environmental Protection teams, an Acoustic Consultancy firm has been commissioned to produce a Noise Management plan for the Knavesmire to ensure all future events can adhere to the licensing objectives and mitigate against noise issues on the site.

The Culture and Wellbeing team plan to review both the Events Strategy and Event Framework in the first quarter of 2022. The Events Strategy will focus on alignment with both the Culture and Tourism Strategies.

## Make It York events

**Visit York Tourism Conference** – will be held on Thursday 13th January 2022 and will be held at York Racecourse. Planning is ongoing around the conference theme of 'What kind of tourism do we want in the future and how can the visitor economy create value for the city beyond visitor spending and the jobs that follow?'

**Residents Festival** – will take place over the weekend of 29/30th January 2022. Entries are now open for Residents Festival and planning is underway for a resident and family-friendly city-centre offer.

**Ice Trail** - will take place during the weekend of 5/6th February 2022. This popular trail returns with c.**40** ice sculptures across the city. CYC are supporting the event with a grant which will enable a 'headline' sculpture and features to increase the impact of the event. The grant will also enable an evaluation report, helping to secure the viability of the event for future years.

**Visit York Tourism Awards** – will take place on Thursday 3rd March 2022 and will be held at York Racecourse. Planning is ongoing for this annual event open to York businesses and organisations to submit an application and be recognised against select categories. These categories are set in line with the national Visit England criteria alongside two awards which are local awards, specific to York. The Awards event is an evening event of entertainment, a three-course meal and the awards themselves.

**Makers and Shapers Festival**- MIY are working with York Civic Trust on plans for a city-wide celebration of York's heritage spanning 2022-2024, based on the outcomes of the York Narrative. There are a large number of citywide partners engaged (Bootham School, York Museums Trust, York Philosophical Society, York Archaeological Trust, York University, York Explore etc) to create a programme of events and anniversaries. The main focus being York's heritage, community engagement and the inclusion of media arts, adhering to the Culture Strategy's key objectives.

**Rugby League World Cup 2022** - due to the postponement of the championships in 2021, revised plans are now being discussed with the steering group to look at community engagement and awareness across the 2022 incorporating partner and third-party events. The budget for 2021 will be carried over to 2022 with no costs incurred from the postponement.



## City Centre, Events and Markets

### City Centre Vibrancy

**City Centre:**

- Make proposals to the Council for any new ideas for commercial exploitation of the Footstreets, Eye York and Tower Gardens and Knavesmire.
- Contributing expertise, ideas and experiences to the MyCityCentre Project which will set the city centre strategy.
- Contribute to the Council's Retail Strategy, and join with the BID, Retail Forum, Indie York and others to attempt to attract appropriate new retail operators to the city.
- Create a high-profile calendar of city centre festivals, activities and events ensuring that partners such as the BID are enabled to contribute. Identify times when new events would add value to the York experience and work on filling these gaps.
- Promote the events calendar through all appropriate means including through highly visible city centre information.

### City Centre

The Culture and Wellbeing team are members of the My City Centre stakeholders' group, providing input into the current Vision document and consultation on events across the city and their positive impact on creating a vibrant city centre.

The team also sits on the following partnership groups: City Centre Anti-Social Behaviour, Counter Terrorism task group and Publicly Accessible locations working group.

Activations are taking place throughout the footstreets that we manage and include charity events, product launches and Council initiatives.

The Food & Drink Festival that took place 18<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> September appeared to be a success. A review will be undertaken by the MIY events team.

### Calendar of Events

The events team are currently working with the Commercial team to plan out a calendar of events for 2022 to enable a balance of cultural and commercial events across the year. Once finalised, this will be made publicly available on the Make It York website.

## Commercial Events

### **Commercial Events**

- Run safe and sustainable commercial events, including specialist markets, to generate surplus for investment.
- Maintain an up-to-date, comprehensive and publicly accessible overall list of events happening across York.
- Provide a toolkit to allow event organisers to self-serve including guidance on event management and highlighting where permissions would be required.
- Manage all enquiries from any individual or organisation requiring support / guidance with regard to putting on an event in York in the first instance
- If a proposed event falls within the Footstreets, Tower Gardens or the Eye of York:
  - decide whether to permit the event;
  - take responsibility for ensuring that the event organiser complies with all safety and other legal requirements in the planning and delivery of the event, including referring the event to the Council's Safety Advisory Group.
  - provide any appropriate management or other support to the event organiser
- If the proposed event is on land other than the Footstreets, Tower Gardens or the Eye of York determine whether the event falls within Make It York's remit and objectives, and if so:
- seek relevant Council approvals to proceed;
- provide appropriate management or other support to the event organiser; and
- if not, sign post the event organiser to web-based and other information resources as appropriate.
- Work within relevant laws and Regulations that exist and ensure compliance with all licenses and permissions associated with particular sites at all times.

## Christmas Market and Winter Lights Switch On

All Christmas Market stalls (**68**) have been sold. Suppliers are 70% Yorkshire based and are returning traders. Mulled wine pitches were approved by CYC and we have sold 2; 1 on Blake Street and another on Davygate.

The Carousel will return to King's Square throughout the Christmas period.

Plans for York Christmas Market have passed through the Safety Advisory Group. The event will take place Thursday 18th November until 23rd December. This year's revised layout takes into consideration concerns around COVID 19 and crowd management. It will feature a reduction in the number of retail huts by a quarter with the huts aligned back-to-back to ensure wider pedestrian areas along Parliament St. It will also include two additional beverage pitches on Davygate and Blake St.

To address ongoing counter terrorism measures, the market requires hostile vehicle mitigation barriers which have been revised from 2019 to follow the ongoing footstreets model to include Blake St and Lendal, avoiding the barriers in St Helen's Sq. The barriers and associated costs for stewarding are to be covered by CYC.

There will be no public event for the Winter Light switch on this year, MIY and York BID are planning an online soft-launch. We will be working in partnership with York BID on a tender for the next 3-4 years of Winter lights across the city to go out in early 2022.

#### Sponsorship and publications

**Ice Trail 2022** sponsorship has been successful with **44** sculptures now confirmed.

**2022 Tourism Awards** sponsorship deals are coming in and we will be ready for an announcement shortly.

**2022 Visit York Tourism Conference** sponsorship packages have been sent out to members. LNER have been confirmed as headline sponsor.

**Christmas Guide** is being distributed and has been well received.

**Mini Guide** sales are steadily coming in. The deadline is the end of November with print in January, ready for early distribution next year.

**Seasonal Guide** communication has been circulated and seems to be a welcome decision.

#### York Pass

Online sales continue to go well. York Pass usage equates to 4.38 visits per pass compared to 6.98 in 2019.

A smaller than usual print run has been done to promote the winter itinerary for York Pass. The publication will also be used as a free give away map over the winter months until the 2022 mini guide, with map, is printed.

There is a plan to restart the **Explorer Pass** in April 2022 which will have a 3 or 6 day duration. We have verbal commitments for participation from a number of key attractions.

We are awaiting costing and timing proposals for a York Pass web based app as the York Pass is now fully digital.

## Shambles Market

### **Markets:**

- Operate the Shambles Market and facilitate a Market Traders' Forum.
- Develop a new Markets Strategy for York which includes considering how best to use the powers in the Market Charter to support inclusive growth across the city.
- Work with traders and other stakeholders to develop the market business plan in order to maximise its financial performance and continue to develop the offer.
- Operate York's market charter on behalf of the Council (in line with the Markets Policy at Appendix 1).
- Maintain and update as necessary the Market Regulations (in consultation with the traders). The current Market Regulations are set out at Appendix 2.

## Staffing

The new Market Manager arrived on 13 September and has made a very positive start.

## Training/Development

The Market Manager attended the 2-day NABMA conference in Stratford upon Avon in October. This annual event is an opportunity for operators to network and share knowledge of all aspects of running a market. A key point from the conference is how markets are crucial to the post-covid high street. They are integral for food and independent start-up businesses, youth initiatives, other food offers and for keeping firm ties with traditional produce.

## Rules & Regulations

Meetings with the York Market Traders Forum have started to discuss amendments and updates to the Rules and Regulations governing Shambles Market. The Manager is in regular contact with the YMTF who will be the traders' representatives in these discussions.

## Working with YMTF

A stronger relationship between MIY and YMTF is already being forged with regular meetings as well as more informal sessions and exchange of feedback. Work has started to establish a date and venue for the overdue AGM.

There have also been proactive discussions between YMTF and MIY re traffic management and problem solving for the Christmas market.

## Social Media

Improved reach and number of new followers on Instagram since September when social media for the Market was taken over by the Market team for an 'on the ground' approach. Future blog partnerships have been initiated. Worked in connection with York Mumblor team for Halloween. Traders are appreciative of new focussed social media coverage.

## Partnerships

The First Bus/Shambles Market ‘Local’ partnership continues to be strong.

## Halloween

The market will be dressed for Halloween and there will be a number of free family friendly events taking place during the half term period. Collaboration with MIY members and local community groups in the activities, ensures ‘lovelocal’. York Mumblar will include Shambles Market in their Halloween trail.

## Events

As the Market is generally unused during the evening, research is underway as to what initiatives could be developed for the space that will fit with the broader MIY events programme. We aim to improve our local young traders market intake with existing traders acting as mentors and creating new exciting offers to the market for the future.

A piece of monitoring work will also be carried out in the new year to establish the market’s demographic and highlights areas that could be improved.