

Council Plan Annual Update, September 2024 – September 2025

Introduction

One City for All, the City of York's Council Plan 2023-2027, sets a strong ambition to increase opportunities for everyone living in York to live healthy and fulfilling lives. The Council Plan describes the actions we will take to achieve our vision of a healthier, and fairer city which is, more affordable, more sustainable and more accessible.

Our four commitments, known as EACH are:

- Equalities and human rights
- Affordability – tackling the cost-of-living crisis
- Climate and Environment
- Health and Wellbeing

Every 6 months, we'll also share a snapshot of progress against our priority actions under the four Core Commitments (EACH), [View our Snapshot of progress on the Council Plan](#).

None of our work would be possible without the support, contribution and commitment of the partners, businesses, residents and communities that make York such an incredible place.

Council Plan Progress Report

This is the second annual Council Plan Progress Report since Council approved the new [Council Plan](#) in September 2023. It provides an update of actions, set against the [7 priorities](#) delivered over the period September 2024 to September 2025.

This Council Plan Progress Report complements the quarterly [Finance and Performance Monitor](#) which sets out progress against key performance metrics. The data shown in the following report is the most recent data available (as of September 2025). Not all Council Plan performance metrics are shown within this report, and these are available in the [Performance Monitor](#) and at [York Open Data](#).

Priority a) Health and wellbeing: A health generating city, for children and adults

Our work in this area is driven by the evidence-based goals to reduce health inequalities in our [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). The [Health and](#)

[Care Partnership](#), focus on actions and progress on these goals each time they meet.

Over the last year, we have seen fantastic work on smoking cessation, doubling the number of people setting a quit date. 381 of those setting a quit date (62%), went on to successfully quit smoking.

We have also invested in improving physical activity rates, with York showing as one of the most active cities in the UK in [recent data](#), as well as increasing high blood pressure detection, particularly in our more marginalised groups.

Our school-aged vaccination rates improved markedly in 2024/5, and uptake of the 2 - 2 ½ year-old review undertaken by our Healthy Child Service, has increased to well above the national average, at almost 90%.

The health trainer service has used additional funding from government to run a highly successful outreach model, building relationships in communities such as the Gypsy and Traveller community. The service is supporting more people than ever, to quit smoking, connect with others, be more active, eat healthily and reduce alcohol consumption.

Partnership working

We have been working with our partners to explore and respond to the Government's 10 Year Plan for the NHS, ensuring that the services we provide are central to developments in this area and meet the needs of our residents.

Health and wellbeing at all ages

Under the York Health and Care Partnership, a 'Section 75' agreement was finalised in May, allowing us to formally pool resources with the [Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board](#) and get better value for money wherever appropriate. This allows us to make collaborative decisions around early intervention and prevention, joint funded care packages and integrated commissioning for things like community equipment.

We worked closely with health colleagues with the development of a York Frailty Hub, which was highlighted as an area of good practice in the government's 10-year plan for the NHS. In addition, Mental Health Hubs have also been developed offering a safe, non-judgemental, and friendly space to people over the age of 18.

We developed a [Homelessness and Rough Sleepers' Strategy](#) to support a system wide approach that works with partners, stakeholders and citizens to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

Back in March 2022, the Ofsted inspection of Children Services found the service 'Required Improvement' across all areas. Following rigorous scrutiny in February/March 2025, we are delighted Children's Services has subsequently been found 'Outstanding' across all areas. We are the first Local Authority nationally under the current ILACS inspection framework to have moved from Required Improvement to Outstanding, within a single inspection cycle – a fantastic achievement and critical for supporting the city's children.

Inspectors said, *'A relentless drive by senior leaders has led to significant improvements, on a considerable scale, in the standard and quality of services to children'.*

And, *'There is an unrelenting concentration and focus on children remaining within their kinship networks, and their voices are pivotal to planning and decision-making'.*

The full report can be found [here](#)

We have worked hard to embed corporate parenting, so children in care and care leavers can thrive, the 2025 inspection report stated, *'The local authority has a determined focus on its role as corporate parent. Leaders act as corporate parents, advocating and championing children and young people'.*

The corporate parenting board is now co-chaired with care-experienced young people, evidencing how York values the voice of children and young people in holding leaders to account.

We are developing our fostering service with well-defined plans to increase the number of foster carers and choice of homes for children. We established a [Family Hub](#) model, a network of people, places and online support. The hubs support children, young people and families from pregnancy to adulthood.

Case Study One: SEND Central Hub [NB This will include images and quotes from recent CYC comms]

[SEND CENTRAL](#) is Yorks SEND family hub. It is a dedicated space where families can drop in or contact a Navigator for support in accessing the Local Offer. The vision is to bring the online local offer platform to life in a physical place.

Through engagement sessions and ongoing dialogue with York's Parent Carer Forum, families have expressed a strong desire for face-to-face support. In an increasingly digital world, many parents and carers value the opportunity to speak with someone in person. SEND CENTRAL embraces this feedback and places physical presence and personal interaction at the heart of its offer.

In response to family requests, SEND CENTRAL provides a flexible model that includes both bookable appointments and drop-in sessions. A wide range of groups and services operate from SEND Central, offering a holistic approach to support. Whether attending a Portage-led early years playgroup, a preparation for adulthood session, or a youth group, families are connected to a broader network of agencies and services. This multi-agency model promotes early intervention, peer support, and timely access to information—addressing the concerns we've heard from families who often feel lost or unsure where to turn.

Health in All Policies

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Board approved prohibiting the advertising of nicotine pouches in all Council advertising spaces, in order to bring them into line with other products such as cigarettes and vapes, with similar associated health risks.

We engaged and consulted with residents to co-produce a draft [Adult Social Care Strategy](#). To support this work, and future work, we also developed a co-production and research strategy.

We have delivered an extensive programme of work over the last two years on Domestic Abuse, which includes the recommissioning of support services, refuge provision and a perpetrator service. Hundreds of professionals have attended awareness sessions, and processes have been improved in statutory services including housing, which is working towards Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation. We can see in our data that we are identifying Domestic Abuse at an earlier point where prevention is more effective.

Our community of people in recovery in York are front and centre of our work around Drugs and Alcohol, leading projects such as the Inclusive Recovery Cities work and launching the Community Recovery Hub in June 2025. Our teams continue to work to tackle stigma and promote visible recovery, as well as taking a compassionate, supportive and evidence-based approach to smoking cessation, leading to some of the highest successful quit rates in the country.

What we plan to do over the next three months

In October 2025, the Council are publishing an All-Age Autism and ADHD Strategy 2025-2030

We will complete the consultation on anti-poverty and incorporate feedback into an Anti-Poverty Strategy later in the year. Once agreed and adopted the strategy will form the basis of action plans for tackling risks associated with falling into poverty, effectively supporting people experiencing poverty now, and creating lasting change to prevent future poverty.

Making a positive difference

The number of children in care was 235 in Q2 2025-26 compared to 240 in 2024-25. The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 135 in Q2 2025-26, compared to 126 in 2024-25.

The % point gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers achieving 9-4 in English and Maths at Key Stage 4 has reduced from 43.6% in 2022-23 to 31.1% in 2023-24.

The absolute gap in percent of children reaching the expected level of development for 2 to 2.5 years of age, between the highest and lowest York wards, was 9.6% in 2024-25, compared to 10.5% in 2023-24.

Priority b) Education and skills: High quality skills and learning for all

We've taken action to provide opportunities from early years to adult education.

Supporting children and young people

We were delighted to achieve the milestone of 50,000 free school meals served as part of the York Hungry Minds initiative in July. This scheme has seen three schools in York, first as a pilot and more recently as part of a planned rollout, offering free school meals to children who really benefit from a nutritious start to their day.

The SEND Hub, [SEND Central](#) had a formal opening in September. This will be a flagship Family Hub for young people with SEND aged 0 to 25 years and their families. Everyone will be welcome to pop-in and access information, advice, be signposted to additional support, or find out more

about the Local Offer, whether or not their child has an Education, Health and Care Plan.

September 2025 saw the publication of the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and we await publication of the Schools White Paper in the autumn. Both will focus on the importance of inclusive mainstream education. York has one of the lowest levels of permanent exclusions in Yorkshire and Humber and the consistent delivery of inclusive mainstream education is a priority for the York Schools and Academies Board in the academic year 2025-26.

York's Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes continue to be above the national average with 70% of 5-year-olds achieving a good level of development (68% nationally).

Skills for Life

We've worked with partners, including the [York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority](#) on the development of the Get Britain Working Trailblazer programme, including a [Work and Skills Interchange](#). The Interchange will offer advice and make connections for people seeking work or trying to stay in work. The focus is on supporting people who have significant health conditions and are economically inactive.

The David Forbes-Nixon Charitable Foundation's Project Search internships at Aviva, York College and the City of York Council saw 4 out of 5 interns progressing on to employment. The programme will be expanded in 2025-26 to include internships provided by the council and LNER and six new internships will start in September.

We continue to work with York's Construction Skills Partnership on shared skills and employment priorities - raising the profile of the sector, providing opportunities for York's current and future workforce to develop relevant skills and experience, and connecting individuals into good jobs with local employers.

We continue promote routes into social care and raise awareness around the skills needed to enter this workforce. We offer Level 2 and 3 fully funded (where eligible) programmes in adult social care and around 15% of these learners also go on to a Level 4 or 5 qualification in adult social care.

Our aim to increase knowledge of transferable skills has been embedded right across York adult learning, 16-18 year olds and our SEND offer. This is about learners understanding how their skills and

experiences transfer into different jobs. When asked, 'What are your transferable skills?' 71% of learners can now articulate this.

We have seen an increase in participation in careers information, advice and guidance (in 2023/24 this was at 45% and has increased to 53% in 2024/25) meaning that more people are accessing information on options to improve their personal economic opportunities.

As part of our Boot-camp provision, one of our accountancy courses aimed at those who were currently not in employment, has delivered 88% course completion and half of these have been offered paid employment within the financial sector.

We delivered successful work in supporting pathways into careers in childcare and supporting employers in the sector to be ready for the government expansion of free hours funding.

York Learning was awarded a 'Good' rating in their latest Ofsted inspection, which took place in December 2024. The report highlighted how tutors appreciate the barriers that many learners and apprentices face in their lives and are proactive in providing support while promoting high expectations.

We continue to work with York Central developers and the wider Construction Skills Partnership on the potential for a Construction Skills Centre in the city, taking into account the findings of a feasibility study (funded by UK Government) that was completed earlier this year.

What we plan to do over the next three months

We are working closely with head teachers across academy trusts and maintained schools to develop a schools poverty framework that will help support schools and their associated communities to better support children and young people living in poverty.

We are expanding the York Hungry Minds, Free School Meals Offer and developing fundraising capacity to support this work.

We will be welcoming our first drop in visitors to the SEND Central hub and developing the visibility of this service right across the city.

Making a positive difference

The number of Free School Meal eligible children, who took a Free School Meal on Census Day was 3,278 in January 2025, compared to 3,289 in January 2024.

The percentage of working age population qualified to at least [level 2](#) and above was 93.3% in 2024-25, compared to 90% in 2023-24 and the national benchmark of 86.7%.

The percentage of working age population qualified to at least [level 4](#) and above was 59.6% in 2024-25, compared to 53.8% in 2023-24 and the national benchmark of 47.6%.

Priority c) Economy: A fair, thriving, green economy for all

We are now three years into our 10-year Economic Strategy for York, and work is continuing at pace.

Developing the city

Acomb

In March we completed improvements to Acomb Front Street, which included newly designed benches featuring work by local artists, a community mural, new planters, improved Blue Badge parking, wide and level pedestrian crossings, wayfinding signs and upgraded public toilets.

York Station Gateway

Visible improvements are already in place at York Station, including new bus stops, wider footpaths and better views of the historic walls, greeting people as they arrive in the city. These modernisations are vital to support growth, unlock the full potential of York Central, and provide a gateway to the city and the region to fully leverage economic growth and business ecosystems.

York Central

York Central has outline consent to deliver 2,500 new homes (at least 20% of which will be affordable) and will offer up to one million sq ft of office, retail and hospitality space, along with improvements to the York Railway Station and an enhanced National Railway Museum. It will also include a new government funded hub, housing up to 2600 civil servants.

The city celebrated the grand opening of the new [York Central travel routes](#), a highlight of which is Hudson Boulevard, a 480-meter-long landscaped public realm space featuring wide cycling and walking paths, comfortable benches, a stunning rain garden and better bus connectivity.

194 local residents were welcomed to the latest in a series of community engagement events to find out more about the plans for York Central, one of the largest regeneration projects in the UK.

York Castle Gateway

Progress at Castle Gateway continues to gather momentum with an ongoing commitment to bring more family friendly, accessible green space into the city centre.

In July 2025, the council submitted amendments to the existing planning application for new public spaces and blue badge parking at the current Castle car park and the Eye of York. The design was informed by extensive engagement with residents and stakeholders about what they want to see in the area. Castle Gateway will include a dedicated Blue Badge carpark and you can view a flythrough of the design [here](#). The next steps for entering delivery phases will be agreed later this year.

Supporting our economy

Over the past year, York has strengthened its position as a national leader in the rail sector through a coordinated programme of support and engagement. The York Rail Innovation Community (YoRIC) was successfully reestablished, providing a platform for collaboration and innovation, while a dedicated rail sector focus group was convened to shape the vision for the York Central Innovation Hub.

Partnership working with Network Rail and the Eastern Region Partnership has facilitated the presence of major national rail companies in York, further embedding the city's role in the industry.

Tailored support has been provided to local rail businesses, including participation in the Innovate UK scalability programme, helping them grow and thrive in a competitive market.

The City of York Council's Economic Growth Team has been instrumental in supporting additional office space providers investing in the city, such as [Patch York](#), from the planning stage to the day-to-day

operations once they are open.

Case Study Two: York Top for Business Growth [NB this will include images from Comms]

York has been ranked 1st place out of 50 UK cities in PwC's 2025 Good Growth for Cities Index, which measures a range of social and economic indicators such as skills, housing, jobs and work life balance. We are dedicated to building on our existing strengths and helping drive economic growth, making York a great place to live, work, visit and do business.

In September 2025 the Demos-PwC Good Growth for Cities Index revealed that York was top for growth in terms of a place that feels invested in, future-focused and full of opportunities. The places that succeed were those that make smart choices to deliver the outcomes that matter most. Each place had to show a tailored approach, shaping its own path, determined by local strengths and challenges.

According to PwC, prioritising the foundations of thriving communities and businesses will be key for place-based growth. As will a focus on local strengths with tangible economic potential and outcomes people can see and feel. In 2024/25 the percentage of vacant shops in the city centre was only 6.5%, compared to the national benchmark of 13.8% and the percentage of working age population in employment (16 to 64 year olds) was 77.8% in Q3 2024-25, compared to the national benchmark of 75.5%.

Working at a regional level

We work closely with the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to unlock opportunity for businesses and residents. This includes contributing to the development of the Local Growth Plan and working to shape programmes that help residents grow their own economic opportunities.

Over the past year, the council has had over £34m funding committed by the Combined Authority to deliver a range of programmes covering affordable housing, transport, economy, net zero and culture.

The combined authority awarded the council £604k UKSPF and £1,038,250 Trailblazers funding to help improve economic opportunities across the city. UKSPF focuses on business growth and support, whilst Trailblazers focuses on supporting people into work or to remain in work.

We continue to share best practice, co-designing business support programmes and events with the [Growth Hub](#). We have held numerous joint business support events within the city – for example at the University of York St John Business Festival in November 2024 and the Growth Hub Roadshow in March 2025.

Good business

We were delighted to gain re-accreditation of the Good Business Charter earlier this year. The [Good Business Charter](#) recognises organisations that share values around things like paying the real living wage, fairer hours and contracts, environmental responsibility and paying fair tax. The Combined Authority have funded the council to promote the charter across York and North Yorkshire.

York is the first Good Business Charter City, which means that the GBC is promoted across all sectors in the city as something to aspire to, and sign up to. You can watch some short video case studies, created by us [here](#).

We currently have around 7500 businesses based-in York and when businesses are considering relocating to York, they will often contact us for support and advice around things such as, carbon reduction, skills, digital transformation, manufacturing, and start up support. These businesses bring valuable employment into the city as well as other economic benefits. Our team provides 1-to-1 support and are currently refreshing online presence and materials, which aim to attract interest in York as well as signposting useful avenues of support. We also continue to facilitate a Flexible Workspace Group to support York's flexible workspace offer to existing and incoming business and we support this with media and PR to increase visibility.

What we plan to do over the next three months

The Castle Gateway project will progress through planning and take first steps to delivery. At York Central, phase 1 development planning application will be submitted. The stopping-up of Leeman Road will progress, and linked to this, commencement of pre-delivery on the National Railway Museum's Central Hall project.

In partnership with the Combined Authority and city partners, we have been raising York's profile within the UNESCO Creative Cities network and we will build on this going forward.

York's Prospectus, setting out our ambitions to secure future investment in the city will be scrutinised before adoption later this year.

The [Rail 200](#) event will take place on in September in York, drawing together industry and stakeholders.

Making a positive difference

There were 767 business start-ups (year to February 2024).

The percentage of vacant shops in the city centre was only 6.2% in Q2 2025-26, compared to the national benchmark of 13.7%.

The percentage of working age population in employment (16 to 64 year olds) was 77.9% in 2024-25, compared to the national benchmark of 75.4%.

The percentage of total employees working for an accredited [Living Wage](#) Employer was 16.4% in 2023-24, compared to 16% in 2022-23.

GVA per head was £41,162 in 2023-24, compared to £37,748 in 2022-23.

Priority d) Transport: Sustainable accessible transport for all

Transport in York

We are delighted to have reached over 1million £1 bus tickets for young people under 19 since September 2023 in York, with the biggest savings seen by 16-18 year olds who would otherwise pay adult fares. The scheme was launched as part of the city's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funded by central government.

This year we ran the biggest ever, sell-out, Active City Conference, which took place in July 2025 at York's Barbican and saw over 600 delegates, 140 Speakers, our sponsors and the 34 exhibitors exploring the walking, cycling and wheeling opportunities created by wide-ranging changes in mobility, social, environmental and economic trends in our City.

We recently completed a public consultation around proposed improvements to our Park & Ride sites around the City and we are now, in a position to move forwards with the improvements, which will include provision of overnight parking, EV charging points and various upgrades

to facilities such as toilets and ticket office areas. Visitors to the Park and Ride sites will also see improved signage, pathways and lighting with a more modern design. We have, with the support of First Group, also extended the hours of operation for the Park and Ride to 5.30am to 10.30pm Monday – Saturday across all sites.

We secured funding to increase the number of 20mph limit zones in the city, focussing on areas with the highest need for road safety and free and safe movement of all road users.

A more accessible city

The Acomb front street developments, have resulted in improved accessibility including, improved Blue Badge parking, wide and level pedestrian crossings, wayfinding signs and upgraded public toilets.

We will be launching the community toilet scheme, ‘For Your Convenience’ in the coming months. We have also been working with York Accessibility Forum, York Disability Rights Forum and the CYC Disabled Staff Network, to develop a staff training module on accessibility, which we hope to launch early in 2026.

[Revised plans](#) have been submitted as part of the York Castle Gateway project to turn the Castle Car Park and Eye of York area into a new public space, including a blue badge carpark.

Sustainable transport

We completed an assessment of all primary schools in the city and are working towards introducing the national ‘School Streets’ initiative in four pilot schools over the coming year. The scheme is intended to improve road safety and air quality around schools, encouraging families to choose active and sustainable travel wherever possible.

Residents and visitors can now enjoy safer, greener journeys into York via the newly opened routes through York Central. Hudson Boulevard, a standout walking and cycling route complete with high-quality materials, seating, and a striking central rain garden.

What we plan to do over the next three months

We will be consulting on the Sustainable City Centre Corridor and look forward to having further conversations with stakeholders, residents and visitors about how we can improve bus reliability in York City Centre. Transport projects such as the improvements to Clifton Backies,

upgrades to the Park and Ride sites across the city and the development of school street zones and 20mph zones will continue to progress towards completion.

Making a positive difference

The number of council electric vehicle recharging points in York was 103 in Q2 2025-26, which is the same as in 2024-25.

Area-wide traffic levels, excluding the A64, from 7.00am to 7.00pm, reached 2.03 million in 2024-25, which is the same as in 2023-24 (from the 2009-10 baseline).

The percentage of customers arriving at York Station by sustainable modes of transport was 78.7% in 2024, compared to 78% in 2023.

Park and Ride passenger bus journeys totalled 3.77m in 2024-25, compared to 3.6m in 2023-24.

Priority e) Housing: Increase the supply of good quality affordable housing

City of York Council [adopted the City of York Local Plan](#) at an extraordinary [Full Council](#) meeting on Thursday 27 February 2025. The adopted Local Plan forms part of the city's statutory development plan, sets out the vision and strategy for York until 2033 and provides the basis for decisions on planning applications.

Affordable housing

Central to the success of the Council's Housing Delivery Programme is the belief that a high-quality, affordable, comfortable home is essential for residents to thrive. Good quality housing impacts all areas of life from increased educational attainment and better health outcomes to improved economic outcomes.

The Housing Delivery Programme is actively building affordable homes and disposing of land for 100% affordable housing. We have undertaken an independent review of the financial capacity within the Council's Housing Revenue Account, with the aim of building a strong future pipeline of affordable housing.

Supporting the council's ambitions for more affordable housing across the city, the Combined Authority has provided £4.5m of brownfield funding to unlock more sites.

Key Sites

At the Willow House site, in the South Walmgate area, works are progressing with an imminent planning application. We have established a resident engagement panel along with a youth engagement panel and open drop-in events to ensure local people's voices are reflected in the design from initiation. The emphasis is on the provision of 1,2 and 3-bedroom social rented and shared ownership homes that meet our residents' needs. Woolnough House, Morrell House and the 68 Centre are being marketed to the sector to be delivered as 100% affordable housing. These sites will deliver a minimum of 24 new affordable homes.

The Duncombe Square site is delivering 34 new homes and completed in Autumn 2025. Engaging with local communities has been key to developing the plans. Residents and pupils from Clifton Green Primary School were involved from the outset to help to develop an understanding of the local context and to develop a brief used to design the proposals. The site will encourage social interaction with communal plant growing areas, and a new central green space with natural play for children as well as a small public square in front of St Luke's church, as well as improved transport links.

The Burnholme Green housing development site is part of a major council regeneration project which has already delivered a new library, community facilities, and care home on the former Burnholme College site in the Heworth Ward. Burnholme will deliver 78 new homes across 11 terraces and like Duncombe Square 60% of these new builds will be affordable housing. More than a quarter of the homes are designed to be fully wheelchair adaptable and first handover of completed affordable homes at Burnholme is anticipated in November 2025.

The site team have successfully achieved the required airtightness on all plots which is significant milestone in the delivery of Passivhaus projects.

The Ordnance Lane site will provide 101 affordable, Passivhaus homes. The process to date has included various public engagement events, which generated lots of valuable feedback and ideas. Groundworks will begin in Autumn 2025.

After the success of the Lowfield Green Site, where 140 new houses were completed in 2023, we have been progressing work on Lowfield Phase Two sites A and B. Lowfield A, which will consist of approximately

15 homes for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism, is in the design stage with a Planning submission expected in early 2026 and we have held some very positive and useful engagement events for local people, key stakeholders and those with lived experience of learning disabilities and autism.

Lowfield B is earmarked for accommodation for over 55s. The development of the site will be subject to a competitive flexible process, which is in the pre-market engagement phase at present.

Sustainable housing

During the last year we launched [Yorenergy](#), which offers comprehensive retrofit solutions to optimise energy efficiency in people's homes. With our free expert guidance and personalised energy saving tips, the aim is to empower people to make informed decisions that reduce energy bills and create warmer homes for everyone.

We have also been busy installing upgrades to some of our Independent Living properties, Alex Lyon House and Honeysuckle House have been fitted with Solar Panels, additional radiators in communal areas and Air Source Heat Pumps.

The Retro-Fit One Stop Shop York project received £3m from Innovate UK and has been progressing well. Our first demonstrator home on Vine Street, opens for bookings in September 2025 and local businesses, local landlords and members of the public will be able to visit and learn more about the benefits and possibilities of retrofitting.

The Local Energy Advice Demonstrator Project finished in April 2025 and we have received a positive letter from the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) with congratulations and commendation for our work in this area. As part of this project, in person advice was provided to 475 people and 50 homes had measures installed. Importantly, DESNZ say the project has also significantly enhanced their understanding of how to advise consumers on home retrofit in the future.

Housing those in need

The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was approved in December 2024 and was formally launched in partnership with the University of York in July 2025. A partnership group has started to meet, to oversee the implementation of the strategy and deliver a plan to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. The Strategy takes a Housing First approach for those who are single and homeless,

focusing on rapid re-housing, reducing or avoiding time in a hotel or temporary accommodation. Fundamental to this approach will be tailoring the support packages needed once someone with complex needs is in their own home rather than needing to navigate agencies before securing their accommodation.

What we will do over the next three months

We will begin work on our second Retro-Fit One Stop Shop York property.

We anticipate groundworks will begin at the Ordnance Lane site.

Making a positive difference

The percentage of repairs completed on first visit was 82.9% in 2024-25, compared to 80.3% in 2023-24.

The net additional homes provided was 712 in 2024-25, compared to 528 in 2023-24.

The net housing consents was 739 in 2024-25, compared to 658 in 2023-24.

The number of new affordable homes delivered in York was 153 in 2024-25, compared to 122 in 2023-24.

The number of people sleeping rough in York was 32 (snapshot) in September 2025, compared to 20 people in September 2024.

475 residents were advised and 50 retrofit works completed under the LEAD programme.

45 homes had 115 measures completed to improve insulation and reduce carbon, under the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) programme

Case Study Three: Winter Fuel Payments [NB this will include images from Comms]

Last winter, City of York Council embarked on a focused campaign around raising awareness of Pension Credit, which provides eligible pensioners with over £3,700 per year to help with costs. Low awareness of the scheme means that over £3.7 million in Pension Credit goes unclaimed each year in York. Income Services and Community Teams

came together to launch a Pension Credit campaign to maximise income for vulnerable residents using the Policy in Practice's Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) platform's built-in expert policy engine, to identify over 470 households that were missing out.

The Income Services team then contacted 150 pensioners who had social care packages and were eligible for Pension Credit. The Community team worked with the remaining 320 residents without care packages. They partnered with voluntary community sector partners like Citizen's Advice York, Age UK York, and Older Citizen's Advocacy York to contact residents identified as eligible for Pension Credit offering advice at community hubs, by appointment, face to face, phone and home visits.

Between the campaign's launch in Autumn 2024, up to March 2025, 246 pensioners claimed £1.7m in Pension Credit and passported support.

- 83 pensioners with care packages are now claiming over £489,728 in Pension Credit
- 163 pensioners across the city are now claiming over £912,942 in Pension Credit

An extra £32,00 in Winter Fuel Payments (using £200 as the average value of WFP) was given to pensioners.

Priority f) Sustainability: Cutting Carbon, Enhancing the environment for future generations

Progress to net zero

The Council retained A - rating for climate leadership and action for the third year running from the global independent disclosure non-profit, CDP, and we have seen a reduction in direct Greenhouse Gas emissions across the city of 16% (148ktCO₂e) between 2021 and 2023 (the latest year for which data is available).

We completed a Heat Network Zoning Market Prospectus to identify areas of the city where a heat network would be the lowest cost solution for decarbonisation.

We secured funding from the Combined Authority to install rooftop solar at Yearsley Pool, Joseph Rowntree School and Acomb Explore Library. We have also installed rooftop solar on an additional 4 schools in York

through our partnership with Solar for Schools and York Community Energy

We have provided decarbonisation plans for 63 businesses in York and launched a £1.3m grant programme with the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and North Yorkshire Council to support businesses in delivering environmental and financial benefits.

We had approval to progress the Harewood Whin Green Energy Park to Full Business Case, with planning permission granted for a 16MW scheme.

We completed the upgrade of over 1,000 street-lamps to LED with funding from the Mayor's Net Zero Fund.

We were delighted to be highly commended at the Community Energy Awards 2024 for the Supportive Local Authority award.

We were also pleased to receive highly complimentary feedback from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero on our Local Energy Advice Demonstrator Project, which completed in April. The work we have done in this area will be used to inform national retrofit advice in future.

Climate risk and adaptations

We are working with York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and North Yorkshire Council to deliver a climate change risk and opportunity assessment for the region to inform policy and practice relating to climate change.

For the first time, the council has reported on progress in responding to climate change through the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs' Adaptation Reporting Power 4 process.

Our natural environment

York Green Streets has completed planting of over 2,700 trees in York's urban environment, including 2 new micro-woods at Burnholme and Rawcliffe, which means we have now reached a total of 5,300 trees and exceeded the Council Plan target of 4,000 trees by 2027. This work was fully funded by over £450,000 of external grants. Where any new planted trees have failed, they will be replanted at the cost of the council's contractor.

To encourage increased tree planting across the city, a York White Rose Forest District Group has been established to support wider tree planting action with partners and stakeholders.

We developed a new riverside route highlighting how nature-based solutions are supporting climate adaptation across the Swale, Ure, Nidd and Upper Ouse catchments.

We committed £500,000 of investment over the next two years to revitalise parks, play areas, and public green spaces across the city, with four of York's parks (Rowntree Park, West Bank Park, Glen Gardens and Clarence Gardens) already receiving the prestigious Green Flag Award. This sum will be enhanced by over £400k of developer contributions, bringing total parks and open space investment closer to £1m.

With North Yorkshire Council, we supported the production of the draft North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which is currently being finalised following consultation.

Our new dedicated team of neighbourhood caretakers have started work, to improve public spaces, support community-led action and increase pride in our city. They will be working closely with residents, volunteers and councillors, focussing on priorities identified through ward walkabouts, ensuring that local knowledge and community voices will shape the work being done.

Funded by the Green Corridors project, the National Lottery Community Fund and sponsored by local businesses, the York Walls in Bloom project delivered spectacular floral displays with many different pollinating insects able to thrive. Inspired by projects such as the Tower of London 'Moat in Bloom', carefully managed wildflowers around the City Walls offer stunning visuals as well as increased sustainability, better habitats and healthier soil.

Flora has an important role to play in the conservation of the ramparts, and the walls that stand upon them. They regulate the rampart's moisture content, and temperature as well as protecting them from the mechanical effects of people's feet. Along with the binding effects of deep rotting grasses this helps maintain stable and healthy slopes even in the face of with increasing extreme weather.

Air Quality

We met national targets at all monitoring points for the first time (barring covid, when national restrictions on travel were in place). We ran a consultation on expanding the Smoke Controlled Area to the whole of York in line with our commitments under AQAP4, which we continue to work on alongside the actions in our Local Transport Plan and upcoming Movement and Place plan.

What we plan to do over the next three months

Market engagement will commence on the potential establishment of a Strategic Energy Partnership for York and North Yorkshire.

We will begin work on the Full Business Case for the Harewood Whin Green Energy Park and progress other renewable energy generation projects across the city.

Begin the installation of rooftop solar PV at sites funded through the Mayoral Renewables Fund.

Publish the latest emissions figures.

Making a positive difference

We planted 2,705 trees in 2024-25, compared to 2,666 in 2023-24.

Results from the Q1 2025-26 Talkabout survey found that 64% of panellists had given unpaid help to any group, club or organisation within the last 12 months. The government's Community Life Survey 2023-24 recorded that 54% had taken part in either formal or informal volunteering at least once in the last 12 months.

The latest provisional data for the proportion of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting was 41.6% within 2024-25, which has remained at a similar level to 41.7% in 2023-24. The latest national benchmark is 42.3% (2023-24). We are planning work in this area, to ensure levels rise over the coming year.

The average of maximum annual mean value of nitrogen dioxide concentrations was 30.7 in 2024-25, compared to 38.8 in 2023-24 (recorded across three areas of technical breach, at points of relevant public exposure). Measured in micrograms (one-millionth of a gram) per cubic meter air or $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

How we operate

We were very pleased to gain re-accreditation from the [Good Business Charter](#) in June 2025. To receive Good Business Charter accreditation, organisations must meet the requirements for all 10 components (9 for public or third sector) which collectively cover care for employees, suppliers, customers and the environment whilst paying your fair share of tax.

The Council has responded to the Fair Funding Review Consultation on the reform of local government funding. We are updating our medium-term financial forecast to reflect the estimated impact of Fair Funding Review. Work with Chief Officers to pull together options for efficiencies, income generation and budget reductions is ongoing.

Open and honest

We were delighted to welcome our new Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion earlier this year and they have wasted no time in getting a new strategy for development in this area off the ground. We now have a cross-organisational network of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Champions who will help to ensure that everybody in our organisation is valued, supported and included.

We continue our support for important events in the city such as York Pride and Armed Forces Week.

We've been a Dementia Friendly Employer since 2017. Refreshed communications and training information has been communicated to the workforce and an informal target of 300 employees to be signed up as Dementia Friends by March 2025 has been set.

We continue to highlight progress regularly through our [snapshot reports](#).

Building relationships

A key relationship is with the [York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority](#). This relationship will enhance York's role at a national level and has already seen funding amounting to over £34 million committed for all projects within York at time of writing.

A regular calendar of partnership meetings takes place where we are the lead organisation, or a key member. These support the wider ambitions of the city in addition to delivering the [Council Plan](#). These partnership

meetings include but are not limited to, City Leaders, Place Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Financial Inclusion Steering Group, Economic Partnership, Skills Board and the Schools Forum.

We believe that International partnership work is of great importance. We are supporting a new Humanitarian Network for those people in York who are offering ongoing support to the people of Ukraine and we are undertaking work with The Mayor of Lviv, Ukraine to provide practical support around resilience and rail tech. We have welcomed visitors from our two twin cities Dijon and Munster this year too.

We've implemented new approaches that have increased resident engagement with the content on our 'owned' digital channels, as part of our work to ensure people have key information about the council and their services. Our suite of e-newsletters remains the most effective way for us reach a significant number of residents. We're now developing an updated communications strategy to ensure we can support and reach everyone in the city, regardless of access to digital channels.

Supporting our staff

In Spring 2025 we completed our new Managing Customer Relations Policy, which sets out clear guidelines and expectations for customers and staff, using the Poverty Truth Commission and trauma informed approaches.

Our ongoing programme of Transformation work aims to improve efficiency and innovation within the organisation to ensure it is fit for the future. Staff support and resilience is key to how we function as a council and there is an ongoing programme of development and support detailed in the Workforce Development Strategy and action plan.

What we plan to do over the next three months

As part of York Cares' 'Project Dare', we plan to welcome students from York High to learn more about the work of our Active Travel team, challenging pupils to think about how more people might be persuaded to choose active travel to-and-from school in future.

In September, jointly with LNER, the Council welcomed a cohort of interns for supported work placements. This scheme is specifically for young people aged between 16 and 24 who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP). The placements are designed to assist the

interns to gain skills through on-the-job training with the support of a job coach to transition into paid employment.

Work also continued on promoting work placements for care experience young people alongside the core offer of work experience within Council directorates. The 2025 Summer work experience programme was the largest to date and deemed a success from students, schools and managers who participated.

Making a positive difference

The percentage of Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Requests responded to 'in time' was 96.5% in August 2025 (latest data). This figure remains high.

In March 2025 we completed our annual staff survey. The results show that 73% of respondents would recommend the Council as a good place to work and 80% are aware of our four core commitments and values. In line with previous surveys, employees feel very supported by their line managers with 87% saying they their manager is approachable and easy to talk to. 80% feel their work gives them a feeling or sense of personal achievement.
