

York Access Forum
23rd January 2024, 10:30–13:00
Hudson Room, West Offices and on Teams
Notes

Attendees

Name	Organisation (if applicable)
Dave Smith (DS)	Access Officer, City of York Council (CYC)
Jan Tuson (JT)	Support Worker (CYC) – note taker
Diane Roworth (DR)	Independent
Lauren Talbot (LT)	YorSensory
Srish Jain (SJ) [Online]	Independent
Dionne Grover-Jacques (DG) [Online]	York ME Community
Anna Baldwin (AB) [Online]	York Macular Society
Flick Williams (FW) [Online]	Independent
Hannah Hardcastle (HH) [Online]	Accessible Arts and Media
Matthew Boxall (MB) [Online]	Head of Public Protection, CYC
Helen Kane (HK) [Online]	Access Consultant Access Included
Dominic Berry (DB)	Make It York

Apologies

Alison Wheatley	York Carers Centre
Marilyn Crawshaw	York Human Rights City Network
Iain Mitchell	Thomas Pocklington Trust/York Sight Loss Council
Scott Jobson	MySight York

No.	Item
1	Welcome and introductions
	<p>DS Welcomed people in the room and on teams and introduced the purpose of the meeting. General housekeeping.</p> <p>FW noted that the next meeting (8th March) is on a Friday and clashes with the Bus Enhanced Partnership meeting.</p> <p>DS explained that room availability was limited to this day only due to the pre-election period, and that he is unable to attend on the 8th. To consider further, including holding an online only meeting in March.</p> <p>Introductions by people in the room.</p>
2	Presentation – Matt Boxall – CYC Enforcement Policy Consultation
	<p>MB: went through slides. Policy last reviewed in 2016 (further review delayed due to pandemic).</p> <p>DS: agreed to send out consultation link to YAF members.</p> <p>Comments/Questions:</p> <p>FW: Pavement Café Licencing — Government guidance has been updated to inform CYC’s process guidance (which includes enforcement guidance). However, due to financial pressures, officers are often not available to enforce. Example given of Liverpool café, where the local authority sent out officers immediately on report of a breach.</p> <p>Weekends are a particular issue as a) this is when busiest and likely to cause the most obstruction and b) licence holders know there will be no enforcement at the weekend.</p> <p>Economy takes precedence over accessibility.</p> <p>DR: Echoed the need for a quick response to ensure the public have clear and safe pavements. Similarly with the A-board policy, which is not effectively enforced.</p> <p>Also not effective enforcement of illegal parking on pavements, potentially resulting in a guide dog taking a blind person into the road.</p> <p>DS: Even if no immediate response, businesses need to know that enforcement action can and will be taken, irrespective of</p>

the day. This is one of the biggest issues for the disabled community.

Would having a more robust response initially save ultimately on resources? Can we bring the Business Improvement District (BID) into this?

FW: Onus always on disabled people to constantly report. An issue with repeat offenders.

MB: Licencing conditions set by Highways. Aware team responds but may not result in an immediate visit due to lack of resources.

MB Recommends members feedback importance of this through the consultation route. If areas of concern are fed back, CYC can look at deployment of resources, and whether some of the parts of the policy around obstruction can be strengthened.

BID have been invited to take part in the consultation.

MB will raise with Highways, especially with repeat offenders, as there are other ways to ratchet up enforcement.

Once the consultation closes, MB will provide a report to the Executive Committee, within which there will be a series of procedures for individual Heads of Service in terms of how they need to set out the detail of the issues, including who they deal with them. Lived experience through wider consultation will help inform the detail.

LT: Taxis are a major issue – not knowing their accessibility policy. Issue now enhanced since Dial & Ride ceased. Can a clause be included in the licence conditions around taxi licensees understanding their duty?

DS: Matt is to come back to a future meeting to talk specifically about taxis.

Agreed Actions

1. **DS** to send consultation link to group.
2. **Group members** encouraged to complete the consultation and highlight the importance of access issues.
3. **MB** to raise with Highways re Pavement Café Licence enforcement, particularly for repeat offenders.
4. **DS** to liaise with MB re attending a future YAF to discuss taxis

3	Update – Helen Kane – Coney Street Riverside Project
	<p>HK previously sought input around accessibility from a workshop held in May 2023 (fed back at the YAF meeting in July 2023).</p> <p>HK presented a series of pictures on slides, showing some of the architects' changes implemented in response to the feedback. Plus additional changes to student accommodation.</p> <p>These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverside Walk – simplified, several level changes stripped out. • Waterloo Place – simplified, no clutter. • Changing Places Toilet – now in the public lobby (not student section) • Restaurant Walkway – improved gradient, clearer walkway with clutter removed. <p>Comments/Questions:</p> <p>The group acknowledged the very positive changes made and thanked HK.</p> <p>DS: Can the adaptable rooms in the student section be used for other (non-student) disabled visitors?</p> <p>HK: Yes. To be designed so that two rooms can be joined together.</p> <p>FW: Sought information on how access to the changing places toilet is to be managed.</p> <p>HK: Joint access – intention is to provide both public and student access. The design will enable the management to be suitable for everyone.</p>
4	YAF Updates
	<p>DS: provided updates (see Appendix A)</p> <p>DS: agreed to circulate the new Terms of Reference (TORs) agreed at the recent meeting once they have been agreed at the exec meeting on the 24th January 2024.</p> <p>FW: confirmed the decision session is tomorrow, at which Cllr Lomas will put forward for consideration of the Social Model of Disability Policy document, which includes the TORs. Meeting</p>

	<p>documents available currently on the CYC website under agenda docs.</p> <p>FW: Who is chairing the York Station Gateway meeting on 13th February?</p> <p>DS: still to be confirmed – needs to be someone neutral.</p> <p>FW: requested DS ensure the meeting is accessible (i.e. including not using the online chat function).</p> <p>DS: confirmed it will be organised like the YAF meetings in terms of accessibility. Will be minuted and probably recorded.</p> <p>DR: additional request to ask speakers to give their name and organisation (as applicable) when they speak.</p> <p>Agreed Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DS to circulate the recently agree TORs. 2. DS to ensure the Station Gateway meeting is accessible.
5	<p>Update – Dominic Berry – Make It York (MIY) – Christmas Market</p>
	<p>DB previously sought input around accessibility at the YAF meeting in July 2023. However, given that planning generally takes place in January and February, some changes were too late to take effect for the market in 2023.</p> <p>Several members of the group fed back their experiences of the market, which was much improved in terms of accessibility and safety on the previous year, due to changes made.</p> <p>Key changes made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of layout – Thor’s Tipi moved from the end of Parliament St to Museum Gardens, creating more space. • Walkway outside Marks & Spencer widened to allow for better crowd movement. • Signage – several larger maps added across the site and contact information if needed. • No Christmas music between 10am and 12pm to encourage a quieter period. • First aid info point at bottom of Parliament St. • Poor behaviour – additional signage installed • Website information – worked with AccessAble for all pre-visit planning info (distances from car parks, toilet locations etc.)

- Safe and quiet spaces – since July 2023, MIY met with several venues across the city centre, including Bedern Hall re use of their premises as a quiet space. However, not successfully promoted and each venue had their own opening times. Keen to promote and manage better this year.

Seating/bench provision – July’s meeting was after the physical plans had been finalised in March. No imminent changes. Saturday and Sunday are busiest. Tables and chairs create additional issues and mean that there is no space to allow for seating in a designated area.

Buskers – ongoing concern. Difficult to manage. Most are compliant, but powers limited unless someone has exceeded their 2-hour slot.

FW: Buskers still an issue on corner of Market St.

LT: Suggested MIY work with Matt Boxall to put specific rules in place for the Christmas Market.

Plans to provide info on where the **tactile paving and dropped kerbs** are and what is in each hut.

Comments/Questions:

FW: Taxis using area **outside Museum Gardens** as an informal taxi rank completely obstructed the dropped kerbs.

Issue with **stewards’ van parked on** the corner at the bottom of **Stonebow** (whilst managing the queuing for the car parks) – completely obstructed pavement access for people getting off no.9 bus, as well as blocking the dropped kerb.

Understood that at Scrutiny Committee meeting last night, it was agreed not to disperse the huts more widely across the city.

DB: agreed to feed back:

- taxi issue to the Museums Trust and management of Thor’s Tipi and
- Stonebow issue to Highways team.

Additional venues:

DB: Not aware of any confirmed layout as still very much in the planning process, but will check with Sarah Loftus (MD,

MIY). Issues with lighting, power and potential obstruction in many other areas. MIY has been liaising with Spark York as a possible additional venue.

DR: Could Coppergate be an additional venue?

DB: Stalls stopped following change of Coppergate management in 2021. However, stalls outside Minster may be possible.

AB: suggested a '**Disability Action Line**' for sharing real-time issues. Could be available throughout the year and would make York a more disability friendly city.

DB: agreed with the idea of a Disability Action Line and agreed to discuss with partners re encouraging delivery vans not to be in the city centre.

DR: Website info – comprehensive, but can we better communicate its existence to community groups and voluntary organisations? Would also be helpful to include quieter times during the day in terms of footfall.

DB: Prior to this year, market promoted nationally, but due to popularity, decided not to this year, but acknowledged gap in promoting to residents.

SJ: How can actual stalls be made more accessible? – countertop height accessible, variable height displays etc.

DB: Traders are confirmed in the summer and can factor this into their terms and conditions as 'best practice'.

DS: Could best practice guidance include accessibility and some disability awareness info?

FW: Traders to consider where/how they display their advertising materials, to ensure not cluttering and obstructing walkway.

DR & DS: Signage often too small or too low, including price lists.

Future planning items:

1. **DB** to discuss with **DS** re a respite/refuge place – what structure? Empty shop?
2. Looking to have ambulance on site as capacity is increasing.
3. Temporary toilets –best location would be Kings Square.

DS: ideally need to be at the other end to the ones at Silver Street. Suggested **DB** liaise with Home Instead who

have a 'Take a Seat' and toilet use initiative with businesses in the centre.

Agreed Actions:

1. **DB** to feedback taxi issue to the Museums Trust and management of Thor's Tipi
2. **DB** to feedback Stonebow issue to Highways team.
3. **DB** to liaise with DS re a future respite/refuge location
4. **JT** to send the Home Instead details to DB
5. **FW** to send exemplar photos of access issues to DS to forward on to DB.
6. **DS** to look at signage and wayfinding with the YAF

Appendix A

Updates to YAF – 23 February 2024

SMD and TOR

- 2 recent meetings have produced the paper that is going to Executive this month.
- I will send out the final decision once confirmed

We will work on finding a chair once these have been signed off

- Further details will follow after the Executive Decision

Supplementary Planning Group

- We are continuing to work on the York Access Document and had our latest meeting last week where there was a focus on Accessibility during roadworks and the work required on accessible housing for new developments.

York Station Front

- We have arranged a workshop on the 13th of February 2023 to discuss the details for the York Station Gateway Project. This will be done in partnership with:
 - York Older Persons Forum
 - Age Friendly York
 - YAF and the YDRF
 - Walk York
 - York Cycle Campaign
 - York Bus Forum
 - York Civic Trust

Blue Badge

- Our thanks to everyone who supported and worked hard for the re-introduction of Blue Badges into the City Centre – this is a big win.
- We now await the works to be completed in Blake Street

- The current Blue Badge consultation finishes on the 4 February 2024
- MIMA were the successful Access Consultants who will be facilitating the next round of 8 workshops
- Details of the workshops will follow shortly but will focus on improving accessibility within the city

Live Consultations

Link to consultations: <https://www.york.gov.uk/consultations>

- **Our Big Transport Conversation:** finishes on the 4 February 2024. SO far nearly 25% of the respondents have advised that they have a disability.
 - We have arranged 2 dedicated meetings
- **Enforcement Policy Survey:** Closes on the 4th February 2024
- **Draft Fourth Air Quality Action Plan:** Closes on 4th February 2024
- **Local Nature Recovery Strategy:** Closes on the 12th February 2024

Closed

- **Cashless parking machines:** Closed on 4th December 2023
- **Sensory Services consultation:** Closed on the 8th January 2024
- **Bus Services Review Survey:** Closed on 17th January 2024
- **Copmanthorpe Crossing:** Closed on 10 September 2024