

# Groups and Activities

## Survey Findings

In partnership with:



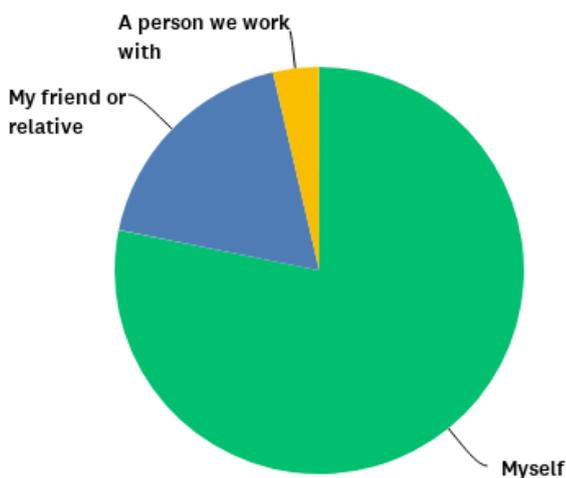
## Groups and Activities

### Survey Findings May 2021

In partnership with City of York Council and Live Well York, Healthwatch York ran a short survey from early February until 31 March 2021. Together, we wanted to hear more about activities and groups in the city. We wanted to know what's available and what's missing. We wanted to understand how many activities have moved online, and how successful this has been. We shared the survey via a number of online and social media channels. We also shared it with organisations working directly with people during lockdown to try and reach those who are digitally excluded.

55 people responded to the survey. Here's what they told us.

#### Q1 I am completing this for

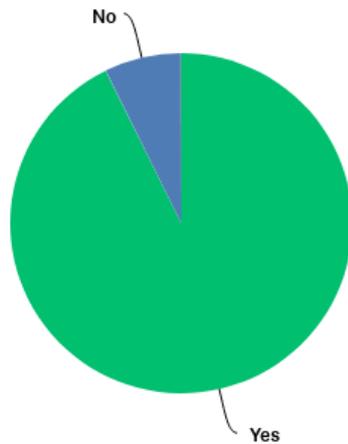


Comments included:

“I am completing it for my wife who was a member of several choirs in York until she became affected with early onset dementia”

“I will try and complete it but I'm dyslexic.”

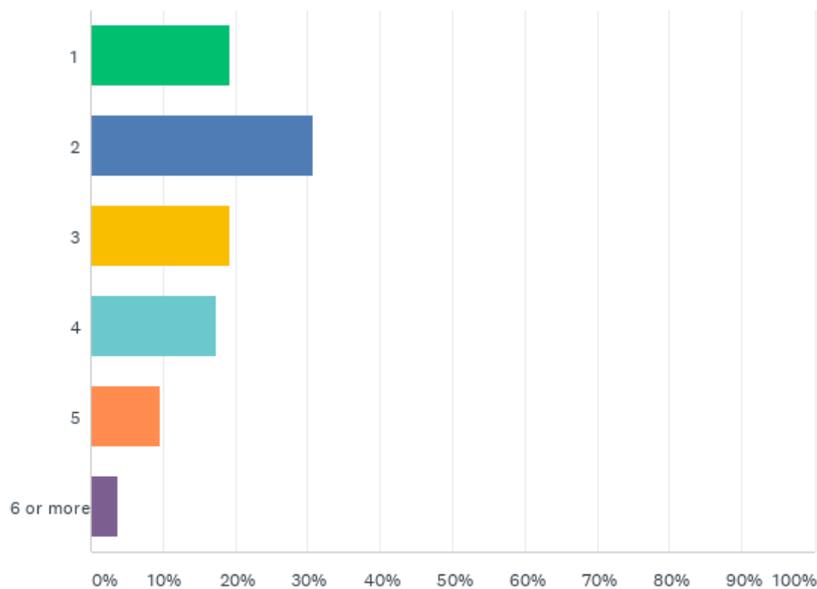
Q2 Did you go out socially to groups / activities before Covid?



4 comments made:

- Yes. Kyra women's group, Ageing without children group
- I used to be a member of lots of groups on the Meetup app and enjoyed going to group exercise classes.
- Met in support groups; not exactly socially
- Yes lots, very active (only recently moved to York)

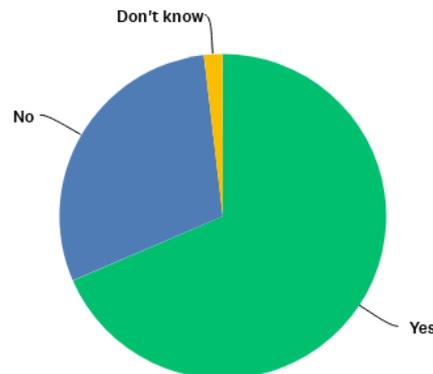
### Q3 How many groups / activities did you go to in an average week?



#### Six comments made:

- Rarely able to go out except for medical appointments.
- I take 3 classes that meet weekly regularly and then about once a week got to the cinema/theatre/museum/meet a friend for lunch, etc.
- I'm an amateur musician and I played with other people several times a week.
- Volunteering weekly at library on Wednesday mornings, Yopa meetings regularly, Assisted support for elderly neighbour, daily.
- Probably 3 exercise classes then at least one social group/activity
- NA meetings

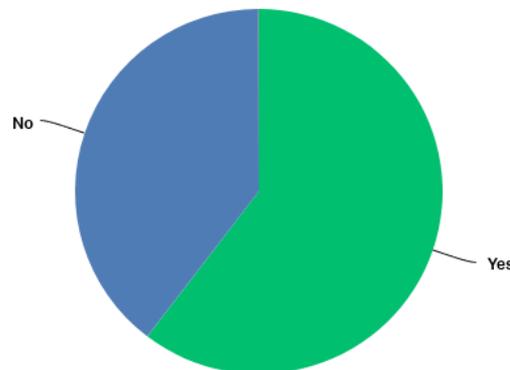
Q4 Are any of the activities you attended still operating online?



Comments:

- Singing for the Brain (Alzheimers Society) (Honeysuckle Singers (Musical Connections) Cuppa and a Chorus (National Centre for Early Music) Singing for All (Jessa Liversidge) AWoC (Ageing Without Children)
- Exercise classes, yoga. Concerts and theatre.
- Yopa regularly and monthly Residents association.
- Except for tennis.
- Most of them except walking groups
- Some are but most not. Socials don't work as well online because you can't have lots of separate conversations happening at once. The gym I was a member of shut down due to financial reasons but online exercise classes don't have the same social aspect or motivation anyway. If other groups which are activity based are going online they're just doing online socials, but without the core activity the group is based around it's not the same and there's very little to talk about.
- A mixture of zoom and F2F.
- all of them
- Some - others like Cinema or walking group closed down

Q5 Are you able to attend?



This question received 15 comments.

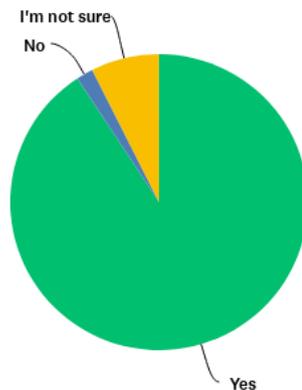
Six mentioned online meeting software like Zoom – with 3 comments indicating this was straightforward and 3 highlighting challenges. The challenges included people’s ability to go online without support, issues with accessibility if codes are not all numeric, not feeling comfortable or confident in large groups on Zoom, and not always feeling able to cope with Zoom.

One person confirmed they were able to attend “if I was invited to do so. The groups I attend have not met on line at all.” Another said they were able to attend “But choose not to.”

“All three classes been much more satisfactory on line than I imagined possible.”

“But honestly there's not enough online and the groups I enjoyed don't translate well enough to online so I don't attend what few I am able to.”

Q6 Do you hope to start doing these things again once they are able to open?



11 people commented.

People talked about the importance of face to face:

- Much prefer face to face contact
- Person to person life is vital...as are hugs and being able to chat socially in pairs or small groups over a cuppa
- Would want to be able to be a part of society
- Can't wait to resume all activities - and start some new ones!
- Planned to restart the indoor group meetings from September

One reflected on adjusting to the 'new normal'

- Although it will be strange and may take some getting used to again.

Others highlighted their concerns:

- Some of the groups I attended have already closed and not sure about another 2 we just have to wait and see
- I am concerned about things opening too quickly though and restrictions extending even longer into the future (like I think we did with the first lock down).
- I'm reluctant to mix with strangers as I don't know how seriously they take adhering to restrictions and guidelines.
- Anything that is too lax with distancing will put me off entirely. There was a lot of this after Lockdown 1 where groups were trying to exploit every loophole to share tables at pubs etc which I didn't want to do. So I probably won't join groups as soon as they get back up and running.

- Some big decisions will need to be made, as to how we proceed with our groups.

## Q7: Is there anything that would make this easier / possible?

38 people answered this.

Many wanted to feel confident that Covid-19 was being well-managed. This included effective public health measures, with low infection rates in the community, effective track and trace, controls on foreign travel especially from areas with higher rates. It also included being confident venues were following all the rules and were as Covid safe as possible. One asked for better coordination between publicly funded facilities and support groups. One asked that the venues they used to use opened fully again.

Some felt that simply lifting the restrictions was enough to get activities up and running again. Others wanted greater clarity on what was permitted when, and more information from venues about dates bookings could restart.

Vaccines and vaccinations came up six times, some mentioning that being vaccinated would make them feel more confident. Three respondents raised the vaccination status of other participants, with two mentioning vaccine certificates and one wanting to make these compulsory for participants.

Four mentioned transport. "Continuation of evening transport like 2A bus service - both in timing and frequency of stops (compared with pre-CV-19)"; "Help with transport"; "Available transport to city centre." One person said they only accessed one venue as others were "too far to travel on the bus."

Several mentioned barriers they experience to participation and the need for more support for disabled people. One said having a personal assistant would make accessing activities easier.



*I have an Aspergers diagnosis and struggle with my mental health. These difficulties mean it is very difficult for me to access online groups. My interests are drama and writing and neither of these translate well to online in the way I enjoy them.*

*Having activities / social groups in York for wheelchair users with learning disabilities and complex needs. Where there is a changing bed and hoist and also space to get out of the wheelchair and use there standing frames etc.*



## **Q8: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about groups and activities at the moment?**

Here, many people expressed that online has helped to fill the gap, and things have continued:

- I think York is quite well served if you can find the information
- As independent local groups Musical Connections and Jessa Liversidge were quick to get on to Zoom etc.
- I do lots of groups with York Inspirational Kids and they are all running
- Much better contact with distant relatives and friends via internet facilities such as FaceTime and Zoom
- I think a lot of groups are doing well to meet.
- Most groups seems to have adapted to online working.
- Lots of stuff has been going on - and adapting to Covid restrictions - including volunteer activities

But they are looking forward to seeing people face to face again:

- It has been very helpful to have zoom meetings although it will be great when we can meet in person again.
- It will be great to experience somewhere different from my own home. And so I can go back to my household with stories and experiences from outside my home.
- I would like to start building my social life back up when groups are running face to face again. I have connected with one of the workers at Tang Hall SMART through an introduction by my LAC so I have these groups to look forward to and they will get in touch with me when they are running again.
- I miss meeting up with friends.
- I had chats on Zoom but I still miss my friends

Transport came up again, in terms of needing to feel confident this was also as safe as possible.

A number of people raised concerns about gaps in what is available and the barriers people experience

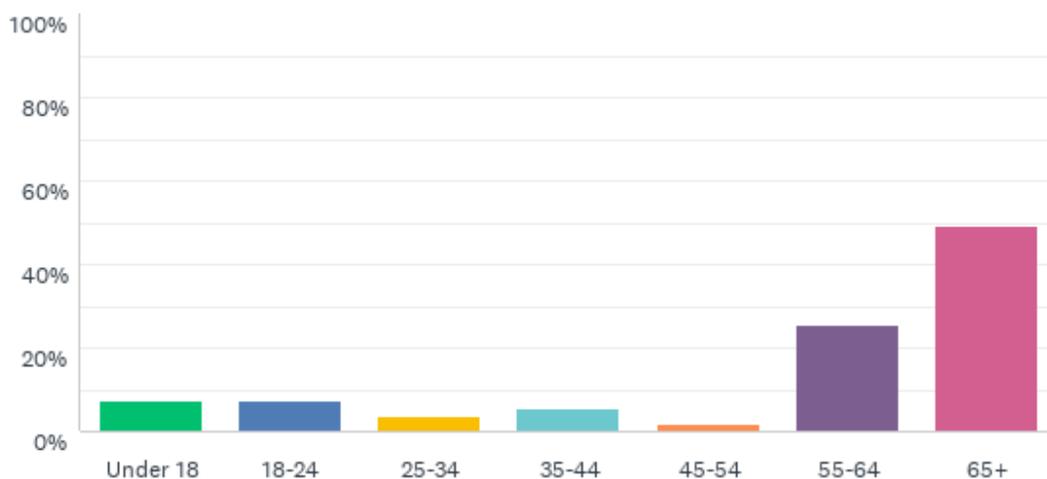
- Difficulty walking so unable to partake. There is a gap in what is available
- Many online activities can still be challenging for those with chronic illnesses or disabilities to access
- I have to go to my sister's to get the Internet to attend Minds and Voices on Zoom. I am looking forward to meeting again in person.

- I am 87 years old and still fear going out to socialise too soon, have not had my second jab yet.
- I think it must be very difficult for anyone isolated who does not have access to computers etc and it would be good if they could get some help with this.
- The obvious drawback is that a lot of people are not up to date with the technology or do not have any access at all.
- There is nothing available for young adults with complex needs who have their own medically trained staff to access in York since the facilities at Burtonstone Lane Centre was shut down. Local area facilities are not accessible for people with complex needs in wheelchairs due to lack of space and changing facilities.

There were also comments about doing things differently in future:

- We may run hybrid events, as being able to join meetings from a distance has been a boon for many....while excluding those not online.

### Q9 What is your age?



Q10 Do you have any of the following? Tick all that apply.

