

# Experiencing the Historic City: A Geography of York's City Centre Festival Space.

by

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Dissertation presented for the Honours degree of BA  
Geography with Business

School of Geography

University of Nottingham

2023

Word Count: 9, 990

This dissertation presents results of original research undertaken by the author. The work has been conducted in accordance with the University of Nottingham's Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics and in accordance with the School of Geography's risk assessment procedures

## **Abstract**

In a climate where *experiences*, now dominate consumption of urban spaces, the small historic city of York has become festivalised. However, too frequently has the visitor economy been narrated and contested, that the ways in which York has developed a festivalised identity has been left undocumented in the academic literature. This study aims to address this gap, by critically theorising how the conservation and commodification of the historic built environment in York's city centre supports the production of festivals and the subsequent experience economy. To achieve this aim, this study critically embeds, Lefebvre's (1991) 'spatial triad' of the 'production of space' into the narrative, to theorise York's social 'production of *festival* space'. Specifically, the study uncovers the past festivalisation of York's built environment, by geographically decoding the 'Festival Flats' on Paragon Street, constructed for the 1951 Festival of Britain. The study then looks to the present, to theorise the urban governance of a festivalised, experiential historic city centre, and the lived experience of this, through ethnographic participation in the 2022 York Walls Festival. A methodological mix of semi-structured interviews, ethnography, semiology and the archive, are used, to comprehensively encompass the tourism and heritage geographies that interweave the festivalisation of York's historic built environment. This study concludes that although visitors are consuming the heritage they demand of York, via festivalisation, York ceases to respond to this demand effectively, when spreading festivals around the city centre of York, is in reality, difficult, with the lack of appropriate festival infrastructure across streetscapes. Thus, this study hopes to act as a theoretical justification and guide for York's festivalised, experience economy, in order to encourage stakeholders to act more proactively, when introducing infrastructure into the city centre that serves the simultaneous needs of festivalisation, and the contemporary conservation of the historic built environment.

**Word count – 299 words.**

## Preface

Firstly, I would like to convey my most sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Andrew Cook, for his continuous support throughout this journey, believing in and supporting my many ideas for this dissertation. I would also like to thank all my interviewees, who graciously responded with care and enthusiasm to my many enquires. My thanks extend to the York Walls Festival and Friends of York Walls for welcoming me as a volunteer to conduct my research. Also, I would like to thank the staff at York Explores Archive, who made my experiences in the reading room so useful, when I was unfamiliar with the scanning technology. Finally, I am eternally grateful for all my family and friends who have endlessly supported and listened to me, through the tough and exciting times of this dissertation.

On another note, I would also like to thank the School of Geography as a whole, and the enthusiastic and informative teaching I have received. With this teaching, my passion and appreciation for geography has become even greater. A passion, I am certain, has fuelled this dissertation.

## Declaration

*All people contacted as a part of this research have been through my own skills and perseverance and have not derived from family or work relations.*

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## **List of Abbreviations**

**Royal Commission on the (Ancient) and Historical Monuments and Constructions of England:** RCHME

**Production of space:** POS

**Festival of Britain:** FOB

**York Walls Festival:** YWF

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

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*Figure 1 - The city walls of York before entering the historic core (Source: Researcher's own photo)*

## 1.1 – Introduction: The Research Gap

*‘York is special, not for one reason, but for a multitude. The inner city is world famous; outside the city walls, York is distinctive. The city as a whole is a mirror of British history and architecture. It is a special community whose evolution is well-recorded. **It is a city whose future wealth is likely to be built successfully on these assets.**’ (Cooke, 2016:1)*

As a past Lord Mayor of York, and founder of the York Conservation Trust, John Morell (1955: 5), set the tone for research of the city, by claiming that ‘York does not stand still.’ However, research pertaining York has since stood static. Academic research has narrated and contested the touristification of York (see Meethan, 1996, 1997; Voase, 1999; Snaith and Haley, 1999; Mordue, 2005, 2010). However, this research is outdated and has ceased to recognise that York has become festivalised, becoming a ‘city of festivals’ (Visit York, 2022). This study aims to address this gap, by exploring the significance of York’s festivalised identity for stakeholders, namely: tourists, residents and local governmental organisations, in order to theorise the social production of *festival* space. To do so, this study will place an emphasis upon how and why the historic built environment of York is conserved and commodified, as the grounding foundation of York’s festival space.

Although this study aims to fully conceptualise York’s festivalised place identity, it explores certain features in detail, to permit a credible argument. The study conceptualises the past remarks of festivalisation, before turning to the present festivalisation of York, focusing upon the management of city centre space and the narration of my lived experience of a York festival, the York Walls Festival. Thus, the exploratory nature of this study allows different areas of geography to be encompassed. The study will input cultural, historical and social geographies, into the wider paradigms of tourism and heritage geography.

Holistically, this study of the ‘small and mighty’ city of York (Visit Britain, 2022) is contributing and adding value to the under-researched realm of ‘small cities’ in urban geography (Jayne et al., 2010). Urban geography has placed too much emphasis upon constructing theories from the sites of global metropolises, ceasing to recognise the lack of generalisability that these theories have upon smaller cities that exist in our heterogenous urban world (Bell and Jayne, 2009). This study, will develop a critical conservation with urban geography, valorising the small city of York.

## 1.2 – Study Area

This study is performed within the historic core of York, the city's most valuable physical asset (Cooke, 2016). The historic core is separated from industrial activity by historic city walls (Meethan, 1996), that in 1972 were documented by the RCHME (see abbreviations) as a grade I, ancient scheduled monument (RCHME, 1972). York's city walls, are the most complete and preserved in England, extending a walk for 2.5 miles (Wilson and Mee, 2005; Magnusson, 2021), that permits a view of the conserved historic core (Hall, 1996). Entering the historic core, is the conservation of a complex, medieval street pattern, embedded with Georgian and Victorian conservation improvement (Cooke, 2016). The compact structure of the historic streets makes the historic core a place to be discovered by foot (ibid, 2016; Hall, 1996), welcoming 8.4 million visitors per annum (Visit York, 2018). Thus, 67% of visitors arrive at York to stroll around and enjoy the complex ambience of the historic core, with 100 per cent of visitors following suit (Visit York, 2022).



Figure 2 - A map of the historic core of York, produced by Meethan (1996), labelled with researcher's own photos



### 1.3 – Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore how and why the **historic built environment** of York's historic core is **conserved** and, in some cases, **commodified**, to support York's festivalised identity. To do this, across all three objectives, this study will critically utilise Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad of space, to contextually theorise the social production of '**festival**' space in York.

The following objectives will be addressed to achieve this aim:

1. To evaluate how York historically promoted a connection between its built environment and festivalisation. – *Chapter 4*
2. To analyse and theorise how present urban governance strategies utilise and commodify York's built environment in the 'historic core', to produce festival space. – *Chapter 5*
3. To investigate and evaluate the success to which festivalisation in York is place bound to its historic built environment. – *Chapter 6*

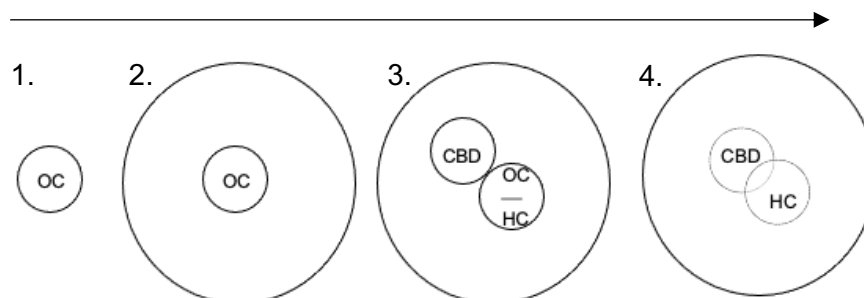
## Chapter 2 – Literature Review

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### 2.1 – Sourcing the Historic City

#### 2.1.1 – An Urban Structure

Ashworth and Tunbridge have led research into the historic city. In 1990, Ashworth and Tunbridge developed a model of the historic city (figure 3), that tracks the growth of the 'original city' and the relocation of commercial urban functions into a CBD area, leaving a conservationist attitude upon built heritage left behind. The scholars imply that this action, enforces a district capable of morphing into a 'historic city' and subsequently, a 'tourist-historic city' (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990, figure 3). Specific features modify the model, like a historic 'city wall', that physically separates the historic district and the CBD (ibid, 1990). Later, Ashworth and Bruce (2009) develop the model, with typologies of the tourist-historic city, most notably, the 'gem' city, in which the city is conserved like a museum exhibit, conservation favoured over contemporary development. Indeed, Ashworth and Tunbridge's (1990) model, inflicts an understanding of the theoretical evolution of this study's context, the historic, walled city of York.



*Figure 3 - A diagram to show how Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) described the evolution of the historic city.*

#### 2.1.2 – A Contested Heritage

With the conservation of the historic city, has come a heritage debate. Harvey (2001) notes that there is no clear definition of heritage, although there is a consensus, that heritage is forged from tangible and intangible links with the past. It has been largely recognised that heritage exists from the action of selection, i.e what should be valorised as 'heritage' (Ashworth, 1997; Harvey, 2001; Timothy and Boyd, 2003), an action that

provokes dissonance between stakeholders. Focalising multifaceted heritage into the geographical discipline, an act that initially and ironically dampened the success of their publication (Silverman, 2013), Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) recognise this dissonance, arguing that although many conservationists favour the moral-aesthetics heritage value of the built environment, ultimately, the heritage of the built environment is approached through the lens of economic value. The later work of Ashworth (2013) reinforces this, describing the evolution of heritage, from the simple act of preservation in the 1850s, and wider conservation practices in the 1960s, to the production of heritage as a commodified 'product' in contemporary society. Clearly, 'what constitutes heritage is not fixed' (Bandarin and van Oers, 2012: 178). This is important, when this study aims to uncover the new phase of York's heritage, festivalisation, and combat the dissonance that may be a result of this.

## 2.2 – The Touristification of the Historic City

### 2.2.1 – Modification of the Historic City

Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) develop their model of the historic city, to a 'tourist-historic' city; a city situated within an area of overlap between the space of the historic and the tourist cities (figure 3). It is thought that the expansion of the 'historic city' will grow outwards into newly built areas free from commercial activity, whilst expansion of the 'tourist city' cannot physically expand and relocate from the central tourist area (ibid, 1990). This 'tourist-historic' city maps onto this study's context, York's historic core.

The development of York from a historic city to a tourist-historic city has been documented. Unlike Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990), Meethan (1996; 1997) provides a three-stage narrative (table 1). This narrative is reflective of Harvey's (1989) study that recognises that in the 1970s and 1980s, urban governance rose from managerialism to entrepreneurial, to embrace urban culture not as a substance, but a spectacle. Maitland (2006), recounts a similar timely narration of development within the tourist-historic city of Cambridge, however, unlike York, the restructuring of Cambridge's economy in the 1980's, was more reliant on the economy of high-tech, research-based enterprises, than tourists. Thus, this study will narrate the next stage of York's development, festivalisation, considering, Meethan's (1996, 1997) legacy.



|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <b>Post-war – 1960s</b>   | Unmanaged and small-scale tourism.<br><br>Reliant on an economy of confectionary manufacturing and railway engineering.                           |
| 2. <b>1960s – 1980s</b>  | Implementation of conservation policy.<br><br>Rise of cars in the 1970s.  |
| 3. <b>1980s – present (At the time of writing for Meethan (1996, 1997)).</b> | Relocation of railways and confectionary manufacturing out of the city.<br><br>Monopolisation of the economy into a heritage-enterprise industry. |

*Table 1 - The three-stage development of York into a tourist-historic city (Meethan, 1996, 1997)*

### 2.2.2 – A Tourist Enclave

Meethan (1996, 1997) ceases to contextualise how York is consumed by tourists and locals, and the subsequent dissonance this provokes. Thus, Mordue (2005, 2010) argues that tourists, tourist brokers and locals, contestably consume York's historic core as a sanitised enclave. According to Edensor (2000: 330) enclavic space is maintained by 'continual material, aesthetic, and regulated upkeep'. With this, Mordue (2005, 2010) suggests that the appearance of the streetscapes that specialise the enclave of York's historic core (Cooke, 2016) are regulated for tourist consumption. It is feasible to suggest, that the regulated streetscape appearances in York, are reflective of MacCannell's (1999), following Goffman ([1959], 1969), conceptualisation, that it is the sanitised 'front region' that is consumed by tourists, stimulating contestation when tourists search for authentic experiences. Although, it can also be extrapolated from MacCannell (1999), that the aesthetic control of shop fronts, can act as semiotic 'markers', that direct the tourist gaze (Urry and Larsen, 2011), away from the shop front to the distinctiveness of the shop's historic architecture (Warnaby, 2009). Ultimately, it is fundamental that I recognise these 'markers' and 'front regions' in the enclave, that spatially and symbolically, manage the streetscapes and performance of tourism (Edensor, 2001) in York, when I come to theorise, in this study, how York's space is consumed for festivalisation.

Subsequently, it is Voase (1999), who argues that York, since the 1980s, has commodified its historic core as a tourist attraction, to the extent that tourists are isolated

by their 'staged' consumption. Meanwhile, Snaith and Haley (1999) found 50% of York residents thought tourism businesses in York were too influential. As Mordue (2005, 2010) suggests, this study will theorise a democratic gaze upon the tourism policies that shape the governance of York, to actively embrace the interests of tourists and residents.

### 2.2.3 – A Fantasised Space

Sorkin (1992) fantasises a city as comparable to the simulation of a theme park, in which the buildings act as 'rides' to the past. Hannigan (1998), I critique, fantasises the city further. This postmodern city is unique, by physical, economic and cultural terms, instructing all activity within the city to conform to a scripted theme. Lovell (2019) could have utilised these theorisations more directly when narrating the fairytal-esque ambience of York. Lovell (2019) argues simply that the medieval built environment of York and other historic cities, provides a visual simulacrum of a fairytale, by presenting the opportunity for the tourist to mentally reconstruct the environment. Recently, this proposition has been developed when Lovell and Thurgill (2021) utilise Cohen and Cohen's (2012) 'hot' authentication (subjective beliefs), to find that the 'Shambles' Street, York, has become the real-life magical focal point of Diagon Valley from Rowling's 'Harry Potter' narrative. Lovell and Thurgill (2021) argue that this fantasied simulacrum causes dissonance, and an inauthentic geography. This study aims to festivalise the fairytal-esque built environment of York in a collaborative and place bound manner, utilising the agent of festivals.

## 2.3 – Festivals in Urban Space

### 2.3.1 – The Historical Legacy

Finkel and Platt (2020) highlight that festivals are an escape from the everyday. This idea derives from the work of Bakhtin. Bakhtin (1984) conceptualises the 'carnavalesque', to describe an ebullient experience that takes over the street and temporally suspends the socioeconomic and political organisation of everyday life. Street performers aid the 'carnavalesque', in which Simpson (2011) explains that these performances must be encouraged instead of discouraged by modern licensing controls. Thus, Crouch's (1998) acknowledgement that streets are the sites of cultural practices, has encouraged urban planner's recognition of Bakhtin's 'carnavalesque' when planning contemporary festival spaces. Therefore, it is important that this study acknowledges that an urban festival 'produces, and is produced by, [the] city space' (Johansson, 2020: 60).

### 2.3.2 – Urban Placemaking Agents

Finkel and Platt (2020) also argue that contemporary festivals are no longer simple, separated spaces from everyday life, but are spaces fabricated with socio-economic tensions. These tensions exist as cities come to utilise festivals as agents of place branding, in which the festivalised identity gives strong impetus to the city's economy (van Aalst and van Melik, 2011; Cudny, 2014; Smith et al., 2022). Waitt (2008), argues that destination management organisations see urban festival spaces as 'spatial fixes' to capitalism. Significantly, Quinn (2010) argues that (arts) festivals are now detached from their early cultural importance, when serving the purpose of economic and urban tourism policies. Richards (2017) comes to explain that for festivals to achieve a full socio-economic place making impact, the festivals need to embed meaning into the city. However, festivals that embed meaning, by often physically rearranging the cityscape with the influence of economic incentives, disrupt the social order in the city, connoting a contested festivalised cityscape (Johansson, 2020). Thus, Cudny's (2014) suggestion of a typological approach to festival space is paramount, to categorise the overarching purpose of the festival, socio-cultural/ socio-economic. I hope that this study adds theoretical rigour, rather than description (see Laing, 2018), to uncover the reasoning of festivals in York that reside within an equilibrium of socio-economic and socio-cultural purposes.

### 2.3.3 – The Experience Economy

Pine and Gilmore (2011) pioneered that experiences offer a new and improved economic offering, an 'experience economy'. Inevitably, the experiences in this experience economy are bound to the consumption and the commodification of place, most significantly the city (Lorentzen, 2009; O'Dell and Biling, 2005). O'Dell and Biling (2005) theorise an 'experiencescape', spaces that are strategically planned for experience consumption. In no better way is the 'experiencescape' represented than with the festivalisation of urban space (see Johansson and Kociatkiewicz, 2011; Johansson, 2020; Smith et al., 2022). The coupling of the urban festival to the experience economy is so significant, that urban space is now subjected more to the 'experience economy' than a traditional economy (Hracs and Jakob, 2015). It is fundamental that the mobilisation of festivals into urban space, does not become as great that it sanitizes the urban ground, remarking the space placeless (van Aalst and van Melik, 2011). This study takes Pine and Gilmore's (2011)

'experience economy' and critiques how festival experiences utilise the space of York as a centre stage (see Richards, 2001), rather than a placeless, background stage.

## 2.4 – The 'Production of Space'

### 2.4.1 – A Theory: Lefebvre

From the mid 1970s, Lefebvre (1991), has dominated anglophone conceptualisations of space, with the 'production of space' (POS) (Merrifield, 2006). Lefebvre (1991) showcased from a humanistic, capitalistic standpoint, how different kinds of space combine to produce a theorisation of space that controls our lived experience of the world. The complex qualities of these spaces, Lefebvre (1991) meshed together into a spatial triad (figure 4). Lefebvre (1991: 38) conceptualises that conceived space (representations of space), is tied to the order that 'planners, urbanists ...' impose upon space through objectified plans, whilst perceived space (spatial practices), references daily reality, the routes and networks that interlink work and leisure, places and people (ibid, 1991). Lived space (representational space), Lefebvre (1991: 33) theorises, is the space of the everyday experience, in which 'inhabitants and users' make symbolic use of objects in the physical space. This space is so elusive, that imagination and human thought desire to dominate it. Lefebvre (1991)'s spatial triad is the hegemonic tool to suggest that every society produces its own social space.

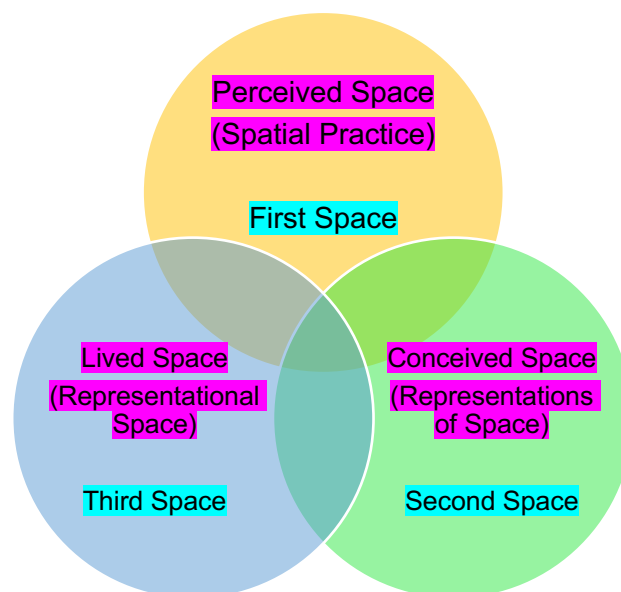


Figure 4 - Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad overlaid with Soja's (1996, 2000) adaptation.

### 2.4.2 – Adapting the Theory

Ed Soja's (1996, 2000) 'thirdspace', I argue, most directly aims to modernise Lefebvre's 'spatial triad' of the POS, by opening up the geographical, complex imagination of space. Soja (1996, 2000), through his trialectics of 'cityspace' imposes 'firstspace', 'secondspace' and 'thirdspace' upon Lefebvre's spatial triad (figure 4, table 2). Harvey (1990: 258), complexes Lefebvre's spatial triad, by inputting the triad into a grid, arguing that Lefebvre interlinks the components of the triad too vaguely and not 'causally'. Harvey (1990) implies that the grid speaks to the accumulation of capital within contemporary spatial practices.

| <b><u>Lefebvre's (1991)<br/>Production of Space</u></b> | <b><u>Soja's (1996, 2000)<br/>Trialectics of 'cityspace'</u></b> | <b><u>Soja's (1996, 2000)<br/>Conceptualisation</u></b>   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Perceived Space</b>                                  | Firstspace   | To conceptualise the material and measurable 'spatial practices' that produce the concrete patternings of urban life.   |
| <b>Conceived Space</b>                                  | Secondspace  | To reveal the 'urban imaginary' (Soja, 1996, 2000) of 'cityspace', and its subjective symbolic representations of urban space, (eg a mental map of a city).   |
| <b>Lived Space</b>                                      | Thirdspace   | Draws upon the above material and mental concepts of space to create a new spatial imagination that lies at the intersection of the real and imagined visualisation of space.<br><br>A biographical narrative of the lived collective experience of urbanism. |

*Table 2 - The conceptualisation of how Soja's (1996, 2000) trialectics of 'cityspace' map onto Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad*

### 2.4.3 – Critiquing Lefebvre

Although Soja (1996, 2000) and Harvey (1990) have adapted Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad, geographers have too, critiqued the complexity implied by the original triad. After all, Lefebvre (1991: 46) emphasised that the 'relations between the three moments of the perceived, the conceived and the lived are never either simple or stable'. Merrifield (1993) argues that if the 'spatial practices' are so fundamental to the 'perceived' social space Lefebvre (1991) promotes, then perhaps they can be granted a role that mediates between space and place. Merrifield (1993) argues further that the different 'spatial practices' that are embedded in people's perceptions of landscape, may centre upon the symbolic representation of the landscape, eg. monuments, suggesting that 'spatial practices' have an ambiguous role when place too, has the capability to impact the POS. Unwin (2000) emphasises that Lefebvre focussed too greatly on theoretical narration, undermining the actual lived experience of humankind, and the role that human agency has upon future projections of the POS.

Despite these critiques, I chose to utilise Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad as a theoretical lens for the production of '*festival*' space in York. Lefebvre's articulations, as Merrifield (2000) and I argue, remain the reference for contemporary examinations of the city. Unlike Lefebvre, I will seek to address a coherent conceptualisation of space, being clear how each element of the triad, produces '*festival*' space and is transformative for York's cityscape and its visitors (see Unwin, 2000).

### **Chapter 3 – Methodology**

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The research occurred from May – September 2022, using a triangulation of: semi-structured interviews, ethnographic methods and archives. The duality of interviews and ethnography was decided within the early planning stages. This was to ensure that there was time to gain access to key stakeholders of York and their informed consent. The archive arose as a methodology from being in the ethnographic field. Such a flexible production of research is according to Latham (2003), what is needed for geographical fieldwork to produce imaginative outcomes.

#### **3.1 – Semi-Structured Interviews**

Interviewees were headhunted by email/ phone, however due to the tight network of community groups in York, two interviewees were derived via snowballing (BH, SM), totalling eight interviews (table 3). Whilst awaiting interview acceptances, information regarding the interviewee's role as a stakeholder in York was collated. This information formed the basis of interview questions, permitting the interviews to follow the ordered, adaptable format of a 'semi-structured interview' (Dunn, 2021). This engaged interviewee's positionality as key stakeholders in York, allowing them with assistance, to prise open theoretical concepts (see Dowling et al., 2016)

Successful access to interviewees, stems from the flexibility of the interview method, allowing research to occur at an accessible location (Hitchings and Latham, 2020a). The online medium of Microsoft Teams was the most accessible for the five interviewees interviewed prior to my ethnography of the York Walls Festival. Interviewees associated with the festival were conducted in the 'field' of the festival, one via telephone at home. The festival provided space to reinforce the interviewee's positionality, creating a successful microgeography (Elwood and Martin, 2000). In person interviews are stabilised by 'atmospheric atmospheres' (Adams-Hutcheson and Longhurst, 2017: 153), that allow an interviewee to feel comfortable, an ability that is more challenging for online interviews. This challenge was overcome when the online medium offered a financially valuable way to access the interview, limiting time spent away from hours of work (Lo Iacono et al., 2016). Also financially valuable, the telephone interview, permitted a colloquial

conversation at ease and length (Cook, 2009). A mixed interview approach was the most beneficial way to gain access to each interviewee's positionality.

All interviews were recorded and manually transcribed with consent, allowing subtle signs like hesitation to become visible. Transcription resulted in a large amount of data, ready for organisation (Jackson, 2001; Payne and Payne, 2004) and open coding. Open coding was performed on physical paper, to allow the data to 'speak' unrestrictedly, permitting an abundance of descriptive codes, and upon re-reading, analytic codes that allowed the transcript to become bounded to the literature (Cope and Kurtz, 2016). At this stage, codes became complex enough to be embedded into themes that grounded the transcript findings (ibid, 2016). When coding, I was careful as not to be too systematic of the data, and 'cherry pick' quotations (Jackson, 2001) that would disrupt the transcript narrative and detract from the findings. However, according to St.Pierre and Jackson (2014), this post-coding analysis is always in a state of becoming as theories intertwine.



| <b>Name(s)</b>                  | <b>Initials</b> | <b>Position</b>   | <b>Type</b>      | <b>Location</b>             | <b>Date</b>                           | <b>Time</b> | <b>Length</b>    |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Penny Nicholson and Will Clarke | PN<br>and<br>WC | City of York Council:<br><br><i>Economic Growth Department</i>  | Teams Video Call | Teams (Online)              | Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2022    | 2pm         | 41 minutes       |
| Ben Murphy                      | BM              | City of York Council:<br><br><i>Regeneration Department</i>   | Teams Video Call | Teams (Online)              | Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> May 2022      | 10:45 am    | 47 minutes       |
| Chris Bush                      | CB              | York BID:<br><br><i>Business Manager</i>  | Teams Video Call | Teams (Online)              | Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2022    | 2:30pm      | 44 minutes       |
| Dominic Berry                   | DB              | Make It York:<br><br><i>Senior Events Manager</i>   | Teams Video Call | Teams (Online)              | Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2022   | 9:15 am     | 56 minutes       |
| Baz Jones                       | BJ              | York Walls Festival:<br><br><i>Director</i>   | Face to Face     | Outside the festival stands | Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2022 | 2pm         | 36 minutes       |
| Bill Hill                       | BH              | Friends of York Walls:<br><br><i>Chairman</i>   | Face to face     | The Phoenix Inn             | Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> August      | 4:30pm      | 1 hour 2 minutes |
| Chris Tuckley                   | CH              | JORVIK:<br><br><i>Head of Interpretation and Learning</i>   | Teams Video Call | Teams (Online)              | Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> August       | 10:30am     | 54 minutes       |
| Simon Mattam                    | SM              | <i>Author of 'A Walking Guide to York's City Walls'</i><br><br>and<br><br><i>committee member of Friends of York Walls.</i> | Telephone Call   | Home                        | Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2022 | 2pm         | 44 minutes       |

Table 3 - The interview record

### 3.2 – Ethnography Methods

To critique the socio-spatial reality of the information discussed in the interviews, a (short) ethnography was needed (Hitchings and Latham, 2020b). For it is ethnography that places the researcher into a scene of social interaction, exposing the mechanisms and meanings of sociospatial life (Herbert, 2000). Thus, ethnography was a reflexive tool, that permitted my critical reflection of festivalisation in academic literature and interviewee's narratives. Considering this, and to understand how the historic builtscape of York is being festivalised, key-term online searches of York's builtscape, led to the discovery of the York Walls Festival, and details to headhunt the director.

Participation within the York Walls Festival occurred over a weekend in August, and as a volunteer and an 'insider' meant the interaction with attendees/ activities, and the observation of their social actions (Herbert, 2000). This is perhaps the most social of methods (Watson, 2021), which made it more suited for the context of a festival experience. A field diary was utilised to record interactions/ observations of festival attendees. Interaction was also aided by the distribution of a short, systematic questionnaire, to 10 groups of attendees (see Payne and Payne, 2004). Like Fu et al's (2018) study that evaluated festival attendee's perception of a historical re-enactment festival, I drew up a 'means-end' model before the festival, to aid the collection and record of interactions and observations into the field diary (figure 5).

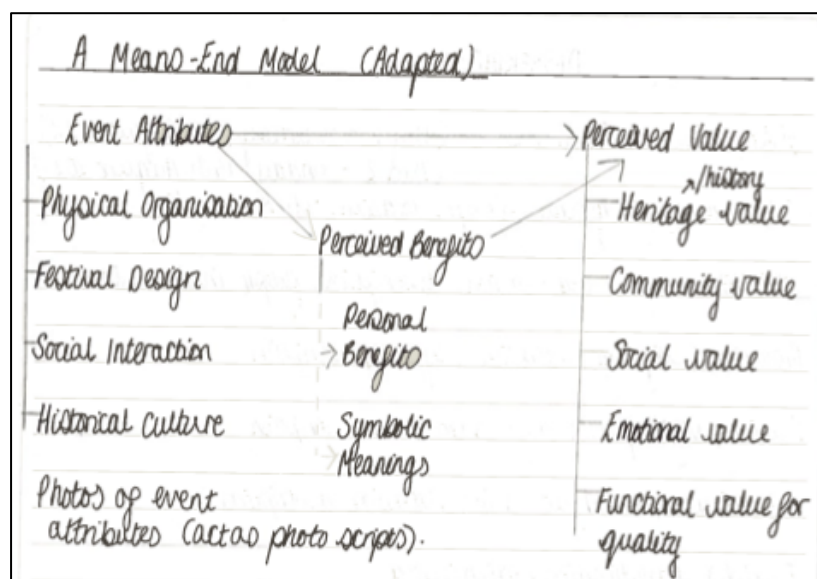


Figure 5 – Researcher's field diary notes - A means-end model.

As a weekend festival, this permitted periods where my role as an ethnographer switched to an 'outsider role' (Herbert, 2000). In the space of the home, this role reflexively enabled the data to be uplifted from the field diary and connected to theory (ibid, 2000). As a reflexive practice, upon analysis, care was taken to prevent the prioritisation of citing theory, rather than 'sighting' (Lees, 2003) the data recorded in the field diary. Thus, the diary adopted a simplistic, open analysis.

### 3.3 – Semiotics and the Archive

During the York Walls Festival, I noticed the sign 'Festival Flats' attached to a building of flats overlooking the city walls. At home, I attempted to understand this place name. Semiotics, which defines that a sign represents something, guided me to find a meaning within the image that I took of the 'festival flats' sign (Rose, 2016; Chandler, 2022). This led me to the York Explore Archives. Thus, I was uncovering the 'ghostly' presence of the festival flats and connecting this presence to the present identity of York as a 'city of festivals' (Mills, 2013; Visit York, 2022). Before physically entering the archive, key-word searches upon the archives online catalogue (Solberg, 2012), meant specific sources were to be viewed in the reading room. This action made me aware of the active power relations embedded into the archive, showcasing which records were privileged and which absented, ultimately, which stories made to be remembered (Schwartz and Cook, 2002).

To comprehensively understand the meaning behind the 'festival flats' in the form of images, newspapers and letters in the archives, meant not taking the sources at face value, but with critical analysis (Baker, 1997). Textual analysis permitted written sources to be forensically analysed, by sourcing the clues in the text (titles, metaphors), that spoke of the context of the festival flats (McKee, 2003). This textual analysis leaped to 'Discourse analysis', which involved the remainder of the visual sources, in a 'connection building' exercise, showcasing the 'truths' of the festival flats, and the displacement of these truths into wider context themes (Dittmer, 2010).

### 3.4 – Risk, Ethics and Positionality

Risk was most prevalent during the microgeographies of the interviews and ethnographic fieldwork. As prescribed in the risk assessment, I conducted interviews in safe mediums (physical public space, online 'Microsoft Teams'), to reduce any unlikely possibilities, that the interviewee could use their power to input the interview into a situation of abuse (Elwood and Martin, 2000). Having visited York's city walls upon feasibility research, I was

better placed to imagine and evaluate before the festival, where risks would most likely occur, like places along the wall with no railings (Hitchings and Latham, 2020b). During the festival, I highlighted these risks, visually and verbally.

Each method is bounded by a thorough acknowledgment of ethical considerations. As the GDPR states, my collection of data was 'for specified, explicit purposes' (Gov.UK, 2018). Thus, I had to be reflexive about my positionality as a researcher, at every stage (Etherington, 2007). I connected my (P)ositionality as an academic and non-academic together, in order that I could best portray the (p)ositionality that understands the social actions (Hitchings and Latham, 2020b), from the ethnography participants, interviewees and archivists, that showed acceptance of my research (Valentine, 2005). Especially during the festival, this rendered emotional labour. Widdowfield (2000) conveys that such acknowledgement of emotions permits a comprehensive understanding of research. Finally, it is important to note that, the photography in this study, was ethical, as this photography occurred in the public realm, abiding by UK law (Wiles et al., 2008).

## **Chapter 4 – Stumbling Upon Past Festivalisation of the Built Environment: York and the 1951 Festival of Britain**

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This chapter looks back to York's interaction with the 1951 Festival of Britain (FOB), to contextualise how this festival initiated and inscribed a festivalised identity upon York's built environment. This chapter stems from my encounter during ethnographic fieldwork, of the 'festival flats' on Paragon Street. I critique in this chapter, that the legacy of the 1951 FOB in York has been dormant and is ready to be uncovered, in the wake that York is a 'city of festivals' (Visit York, 2022). Afterall, viewing heritage in the present, can be 'backward to a past or forward to a future' (Graham et al., 2000: 2).

### **4.1 – The 1951 Festival: An Agent to Showcase York's Built Heritage**

In order that I 'experienced' the 1951 FOB, as Tuan (2001: 9) asserts, to experience, I had to 'venture forth into the unfamiliar', the archive. A pamphlet that narrated the celebratory purpose of the festival (Festival of Britain Office, 1952), as a 'tonic to the nation' after WW2, allowed this. The celebrations of the national festival stretched from the centre of the South Bank Exhibition, London, to travelling land/ sea exhibitions, and festivals of the arts (ibid, 1952; figure 6), to promote British science, architecture, industry and the arts. A new festival of the arts, 'York was able to build its Festival round its unrivalled series of buildings' (ibid, 1952: 22), an act that FOB organiser Sir Gerald Barry conveyed, marked the success of York's festival compared to others (see Turner, 2011). Indeed, the built environment framed the space of York in a literal and discursive sense, for an agenda of festivities (see Dovey, 2008).

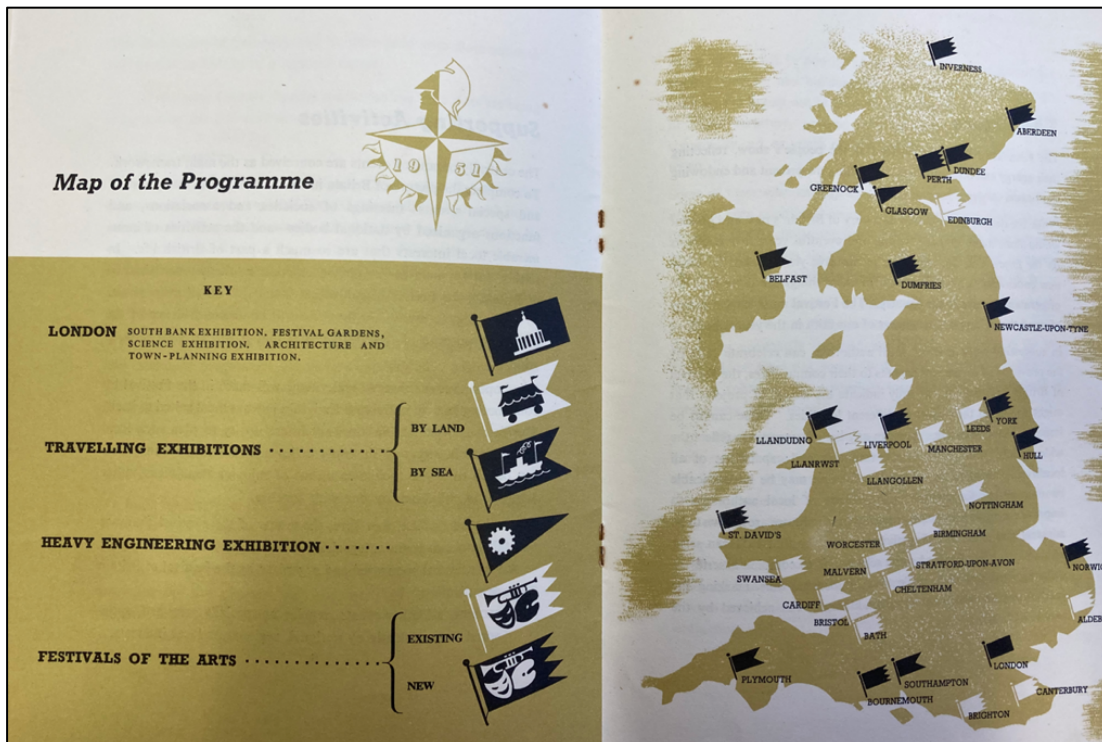


Figure 6 - Map of the 1951 Festival of Britain programme (Festival of Britain Office, 1952).

Although the festival was designed for the people of Britain, it was a strategic event to stimulate the economy with national and international tourism (Festival of Britain Office, 1952). An extraordinary celebration (Conekin, 2003), the labour government were attempting to promote the 'idea of Britain as a place worth celebrating and knowing better' (Grant, 2006: 583). This manifesto set the tone for York's acceptance of visitors and tourism, during the festival, and in the future. Thus, the Yorkshire Post, highlighted the importance of York's heritage, making a claim that would frame the cityscape of York (figure 7).

*"Endowed with a unique heritage, York, by no means a rich city, has a great obligation to the country and the world in the preservation of its ancient relics. Sacrifices have been made and will have to be made in the future to permit the devotion of resources to the preservation ... Unless part of the burden is borne by the wider shoulders of the nation, the attraction of tourists in great numbers is the only way in which the city can offset this form of expenditure."*

Figure 7 - An extract from *The Yorkshire Post* evaluating the York Festival for the 1951 Festival of Britain (Fieldhouse, 1951)

#### 4.2 – Building Festivalised York: The Festival Flats

The Festival of Britain Office (1952: 4) remarked that the FOB involved ‘permanent improvements and amenities’ in that ‘new or restored buildings, were as much a part of the Festival idea as exhibitions, concerts and pageants’. This is reflective of the natural agency of humans to embody their thoughts and emotions into tangible material (see Tuan, 2001). The opening of the modern Festival Flats was performed by the Royal Duchess of Gloucestershire and was a fundamental aspect of York’s Festival programme (The York Press, 2001; Chrystal, 2015; figure 8). So much, that the grand opening caused an influx of visitors and the ‘police had difficulty in restraining them as they surged around the Royal car’ (Anon, 1951a; figure 9).



*Figure 8 – A newspaper image showing the Duchess of Gloucester meeting Mr A.E. Sorrel, the Director of the Festival Flats contractors on Paragon Street, before conducting the royal opening of the flats. Source: (Anon, 1951a), York Explore Archives ©.*



*Figure 9 – A newspaper image showing a large crowd waiting on the city walls to see the Duchess of Gloucester open the Festival Flats, Paragon Street. Source: (Anon, 1951a), York Explore Archives ©.*

Utilising the words of Lefebvre (1991), ‘representations of space’, I critique that the choice of space for the flats was purposeful. Lefebvre’s (1991) ‘representations of space’ are abstract spaces, but spaces that mediate and change spatial textures, implying that the planners envisaged that constructing flats in a space in such proximity to the city walls, would help stimulate an improved ‘spatial texture’ of the walls. Such a ‘modification’ of the city walls ensured their ongoing ‘texture’ of conservation and significance to York, by way of visual promotion during the period of festivities. This analysis is realistic when the FOB embodied a planner-preservationist vision (Matless, 2016). This abstract analysis brings truth when visitors can be seen to be consuming the space of the festival flats, implicitly, the space of the city walls.

#### 4.3 – Stuck in the Past: The Authenticity of the Festival Flats in Contemporary York

Upon viewing the Festival Flats on Paragon Street, their festivalised role seems to have diminished (figure 10). The present way to uncover and understand the role of the festival flats to the contribution of the FOB, was turning to archival sources. However, it may not be that the festival flats have lost their festivalised identity in the present day, rather, the fact that I am an ‘outsider’ to York’s celebration of the 1951 FOB, unable to view the flats with the ability to imagine their festivalised significance within the programme, without assistance from the archive (see Relph, 2008). Indeed, the York Press sources memories



of the festivalised flats and their role in the 1951 festival, evidence that the festivalised identity of the flats has not holistically been forgotten (Berl, 2021).



*Figure 10 - The present view of the Festival Flats, Paragon Street (Source: Researcher's own photo)*

Subsequently, uncovering the role in the present, found the lived space of the festival flats on Paragon Street, to be principally utilised for student flats. According to Lefebvre (1991: 39), 'lived space' is 'lived through its associated image and symbols'. Thus, the flats offer a lens to critique Lefebvre here. Inhabitants of the Festival Flats may not spend significant time to render the historical symbolism of the flats (see Kraftl, 2010), rather, simply the name and signage, 'festival flats', may be the only symbol of the flat's identity (figure 11). Thus, although the flats do not confer complete placelessness, the present identity is not to the same extent as it was in 1951, rendering the builtscape of the flats metaphorically 'fractured' (see Matless, 2016). As Relph (2008) argues, a full place identity must comprise the interrelated concepts of: appearance, activities/ functions and symbolic meaning. This theorisation reinforced the necessity that I looked to the past representations of the festival flats, to comprehensively uncover the authentic, festivalised identity of the 'Festival Flats', and the way York utilised the built environment as a festivalisation tool.



Figure 11 - The signage of the Festival Flats, Paragon Street, a present view (Source: Researcher's own photo).

#### 4.4 – Conclusion

*“memories of the Festival will linger on” (Fieldhouse, 1951)*

This shorter chapter has narrated my ‘reading’ of the cultural built landscape of York’s Festival flats as a text, geographically decoding the layers that formulate their festivalised identity (see Cosgrove, 2008: 81). The overall purpose of this has been to suggest that the built environment has the capacity to stimulate cultural and social relationships with York’s festivalised identity (see Goss, 1988). Here, focalisation has been upon how the construction of the Festival Flats for the 1951 FOB, implicitly and simultaneously stimulated the social celebration and festivalisation of the city walls of York. Clearly, the built environment has the capacity to be festivalised, however, if the built environment does not comprehensively communicate this, by going further than unexplanatory signage (figure 11), I predict that the significance of the festivalised identity of the built environment, in this chapter, the Festival Flats, will diminish.

## **Chapter 5 – A New Beginning: Producing Festival Space in the City Centre of York** **... The Contested Cityscape**

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This chapter looks to the present and attempts to critically theorise how York's city centre space is used to host festivals/ events. This chapter sources how York's festivals are planned and managed for urban (heritage) tourism. Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad of space is intensely borrowed to 'produce' York's *festival* space. After all, as Smith et al (2021) critique, there has not been sufficient research to how a *place* can *provide* for the festival.

### 5.1 – Accepting the Experiential City Centre

Urban growth is now orientated around the production of experiences (Lorentzen, 2009; Lorentzen and Hansen, 2009). The interviewees agree with Pine and Gilmore's (2011) suggestion that a shift to experiences is fundamental. Ben Murphy (interview) explains that "to have a high street presence, it's all around the experience." Penny Nicholson (interview) adds, "people are looking more for experiences, that they're not looking just to go in to shop". Such views also agree with the theme of 'changing consumer expectations' that Morgan et al (2009) derive from their interviewees, when questioning whether the experience economy has arrived in urban places.

Inevitably, the acceptance of the experience economy in York's city centre is contested. Planning for the experiential city should be inclusive of social spaces for residents *and* visitors (Lorentzen, 2009). Yet, there remains a concern that York's experiential identity is favoured by tourists. The City of York Council (2022) advertise that 'York has a huge variety of festivals' (figure 12) and 'there's always something for everyone'. Make It York (DB, interview) agree, intending that their delivery of events is for residents and tourists. Others, impose a critical narrative. According to Ben Murphy "the current calendar of events ... didn't necessarily meet the needs of residents", and thus, the My City Centre Vision "reset that relationship with tourism", "an engagement approach ... developed with ... [the my] handle attached to it." (BM, interview). It is as Paddison and Biggins (2017) contend, by facilitating engagement with the community, and permitting control of the destination brand, residents are more likely to accept a touristic place identity and become a part of the subsequent heritage, tourism alludes to.

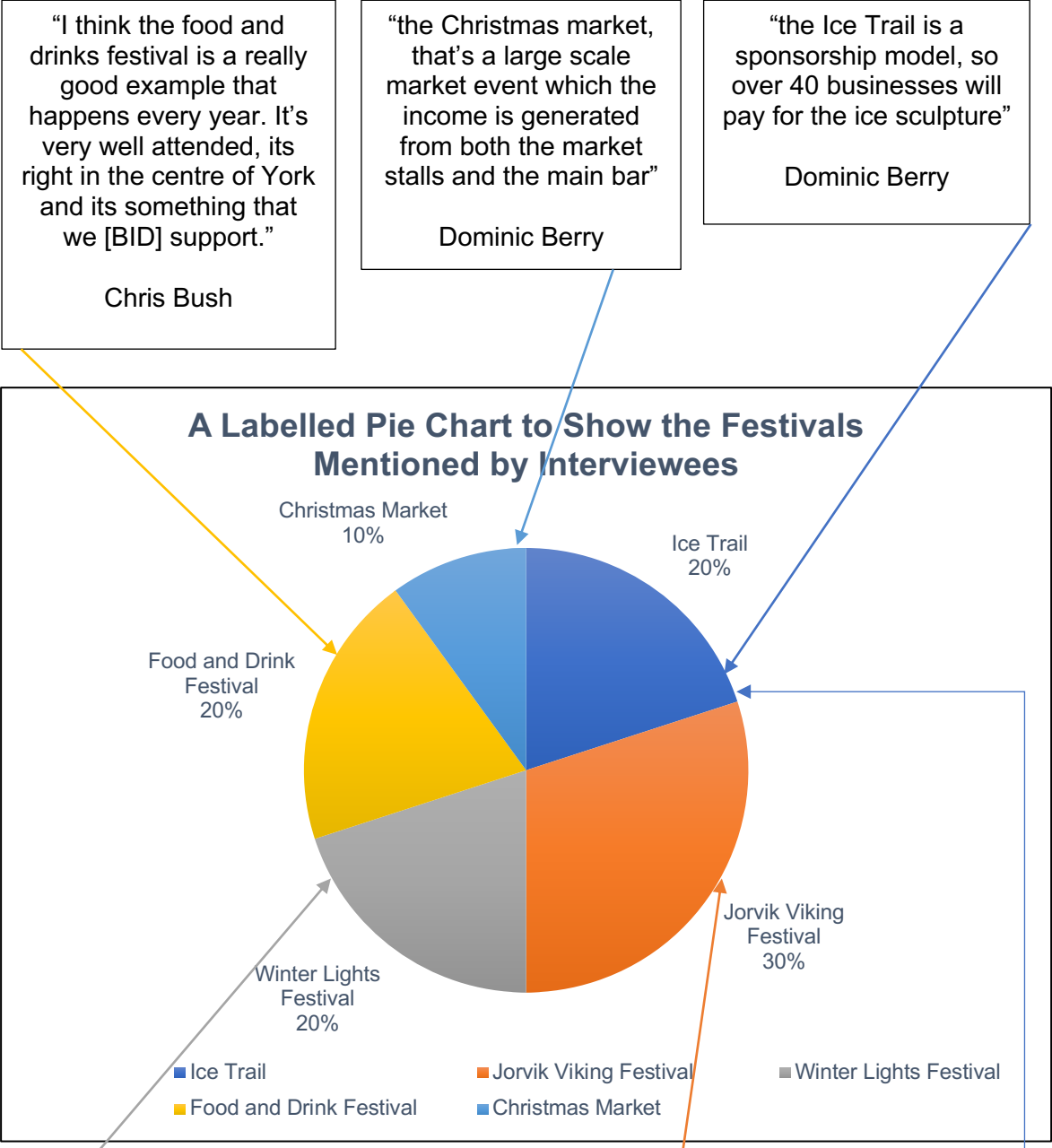


Figure 12 - A labelled pie chart to present the festivals mentioned by interviewees.

“we’re absolutely renowned up and down the country for our winter lights festival. We’ve got 15 kilometres worth of lights”  
Penny Nicholson

“The Jorvik Viking Festival has been in February every year since 1985”  
Chris Tuckley

“The one I have probably done the most and enjoyed the most is the Ice Sculpture Trail.”  
Baz Jones

## 5.2 – The Spatial Triad of York’s City Centre Festival Space

### 5.2.1 – A *Participatory* Representation of Space

Since COVID-19, tourism has come of more significance to the UK government, as people are “enjoying and appreciate of going out and having the experiences they couldn’t have before the [COVID-19] lockdowns” (CT, interview). An objective is the safe management of an increase of visitors to heritage areas, bringing benefits to visitors, communities, and businesses, whilst preserving the natural and built assets (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2021). This is realistic, when my interviewees spoke of the eight themes within the My City Centre Vision policy-document. The themes, recognise the importance of preserving the built heritage of the city centre, whilst encouraging visitors and businesses to flourish (figure 13). Collating the interviewee responses, it is clear, the My City Centre Vision instructs the production of York’s visitor economy. In this way, the small scale of York, allowed the opportunity for the most appropriate stakeholders to collate (Paddison and Hall, 2022). Thus, as a strategic production of space, I connote the My City Centre Vision, to planned space, Lefebvre’s (1991) ‘representations of space’.



Figure 13 - A diagram to show the themes presented by the My City Centre Vision (City of York Council, 2021).

I argue that the My City Centre Vision is correct to holistically theorise the experiential, visitor space of the city centre, as it is aware of, and attempts to combat the contested relationship between residents and tourists of York (see Voase, 1999; Mordue, 2005, 2010). This is important, as Lefebvre (1991: 42) suggested ‘representations of space’, must be ‘informed by effective knowledge and ideology’ in order to ‘modify spatial

textures' of the city. Ben Murphy (interview) describes the process of how the vision engaged with the contested relationship between tourists and residents of York, in which: *“a lot of the early stages of engagement that we did, we called them sort of myth busting stages ... we did some number crunching on tourism”*

and

*“we had a big tent on Parliament Street where we were trying to grab people who were walking past to talk about the project.”*

The development of a positive relationship with the 'spatial textures' of York's city centre, was a participatory, rather than top-down approach (Mordue, 2007). After all, for strategic urban tourism planning to be accepted, it needs to be reactive to community needs (Page and Hall, 2003). Accordingly, the My City Centre Vision attempts to go beyond a neoliberal policymaking approach that spatially excludes community groups (see Paddison and Hall, 2022).

### 5.2.2 – Suitable Spatial Practices

Although the interviewees praised the production of experiential space suggested by the My City Centre Vision, the interviewees critiqued a theme of the policy-document, that aims to spread events across the city centre. In line with Lefebvre's (1991: 38) 'spatial practices', I propose the interviewees, saw the 'urban reality', noticing spaces likely to be associated with 'work', that may affect the ability that the city centre can provide for leisurely festivals/ events.

The city centre is compact to facilitate movement, and networks of 'spatial practices' (Lefebvre, 1991). As, “the one fantastic thing about the layout of York is because you can get around on foot very easily” (PN, interview). For locals, the historic streets are a quick way to move around, however, for tourists, symbolic markers (MacCannell, 1999), guide a fascination, embodying the streetscapes as the final destination (Orbaşlı, 2000) (figure 14). The streetscapes 'are the city's special selling point, not just for visitors, but also for residents, ... employees on the move' (Cooke, 2016: 38). Thus, it is theoretically sensible that the policy-document is inclusive of more streetscapes being made available for experiential consumption. This is reinforced when principally using Parliament Street for festivals is problematic (figure 15), meaning that:

*“Parliament Street is a nightmare to work with.” (DB, interview) and it “gets very congested” (BM, interview).*

Evidentially then, the best consumption of the streetscapes is through the performance of a streetscape 'trail' (figures 16, 17), that signposts sites of interest for both tourists and non-tourists (see Crang, 1994).



Figure 14 – Distinctive shop architecture, with symbolic markers - lining the streetscapes of the historic core. (Source: Researcher's own photos).



Figure 15 - The busyness of Parliament Street where many festival events take place in York's historic core. (Source: Researcher's own photo).



Figure 16 - The 'Shambles', a popular fantasised street in York's historic core. (Source: Researcher's own photo).



Figure 17 - A popular street (Stonegate), leading up to the Minster. (Source: Researcher's own photo).



Indeed, Dominic Berry and Ben Murphy recognised the impracticality of hosting festivalised events across the entire city centre space. It is “often quite hard because there isn’t infrastructure in a lot of the other areas of the city” (DB, interview). Although more festival space in the city centre can mean “more trails around the city ... you have to put in things like electricity for stalls” (BM, interview). Dominic Berry reinforces this negative, when festivals for “the first three to five years, ... make [a] loss because you’re ... paying for a lot more infrastructure”. It is ‘urban reality’ (Lefebvre, 1991) for Dominic Berry and Ben Murphy, that the production of festival spaces across the city centre are firstly experienced as places of labour, before becoming focal places of leisure, in their perceived ‘spatial practices’. Thus, work needs to be performed to repurpose York’s historic core for more festivalised events (see Smith et al., 2021). It is paramount that this is the case, when experiences are propelling the visitor economy of York (York BID, 2021). Therefore, I propose that streetscapes like St Mary’s Square (figure 18) and Kings Square, (figure, 19) receive the funding and labour needed to develop into infrastructurally efficient festival/ event spaces. It is notable, that Kings Square has begun this process with: regular buskers, the council’s licensed permission for the operation of three stalls (Major and Commercial Team, 2012) and investment under the Reinvigorate York Initiative (Liptrot, 2013). However, according to interviewees, in the pipeline already is, “the Castle and Eye, that’s going to be a really huge space ... at the minute that’s a car park.” (BM, interview). Consequently, “its all dependent on funding” (DB, interview). Significantly, for the rise of experiential spaces to successfully occur within York’s historic core, firstly, there is a need for “leadership that is forward thinking enough to allow for [the] development and facilitate change, but whilst keeping York’s heritage intact” (CB, interview).



Figure 18 - St Mary's Square (Source: Researcher's own photo).



Figure 19 - King's Square (Source: Researcher's own photo).

### 5.2.3 – A Theatrical Representational Space

It is estimated that York's city centre has got "the second lowest number of shop vacancies in the country" (WC, interview); the "vacancy rates for shops in York are normally about 7 per cent or so, which is really, really low" (BM, interview). This estimation supports the My City Centre Vision (City of York Council, 2021: 5), in which 'city centre businesses are able to thrive ... creating a city centre people want to visit.' Occupied shops contributes to the ability that experiences can be consumed in an experiential, theatrical space (Edensor, 2001). Thus, the simple presence of occupied shops are 'representational spaces', (Lefebvre, 1991), symbols, that are passively perceived by consumers, but ultimately shape their lived experience.

The York BID (2021: 17) support this theatrical ambiance and these 'representational spaces' (Lefebvre, 1991), by 'work[ing] with landlords and agents to dress and utilise occupied and vacant commercial properties'. The appearances of the shops are valued to the extent that the shops are commodified with 'dresses' (figure, 20), deriving consumers positive experiences of the surrounding space, and stimulating economic spending (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). Clearly then, the vacant and occupied shops have a landed use value that is commodified and produced capitalistically (Young and Markham, 2020), by

the labour of the York BID. This landed use value inscribes the surface which the visitor encounters, and although this space between the visitor and surface is rather abstract, it is the space in which the tourist unconsciously acknowledges how the (commodified) image of the shops, compliments their experience of the city centre (see Crouch, 2002). This notion confirms the role of shops in the city centre of York as ‘representational spaces’ (Lefebvre, 1991). However, there are problems with ‘dressing’ the shops, “being able to engage with the landlord” (CB, interview), which is made difficult when the landlord is not the York Conservation Trust (see The Newsroom, 2019). Also, “the nature of working in commercial property makes it very difficult to do much more than have a cover on the windows” (CB, interview).



Figure 20 –A ‘dressed up’ store, the former Debenhams. (Source: Researcher’s own photo).

### 5.3 – Conclusion

This chapter has utilised Lefebvre’s (1991) ‘spatial triad’ to discuss how the present space of York is managed for experiential consumption. This has involved the critique of the ‘My City Centre Vision’ and the ‘urban reality’ of hosting festivals. Firstly, this chapter recognised the acceptance that York is becoming a theatre of experiences and an extended festival space (see Richards, 2001). Secondly, the chapter explained that the My City Centre Vision (a ‘representation of space’), aims to reduce conflict between

tourists and residents, preventing a 'twin-track city' (Mordue, 2007), vital when tourists are becoming 'citizens of the spatial everyday' of York (Mordue, 2017: 400). Thirdly, the chapter critiqued the success of the My City Centre Vision, when the vision ceases to recognise the 'urban difficulty' (spatial practices) of developing an experiential, festivalised visitor economy. Ultimately, the chapter implicitly conveys, that there is "in some ways a little bit of competition" (CB, interview) between York BID and Make It York, with the prioritisation of different facets of the My City Centre Vision. As York's historic core begins to produce *festival* space, it is vital that stakeholders of York's governance collaborate, to eliminate a fragmentary approach that ceases to comprehensively respond to the challenges of imposing a modern festivalised, experience economy upon a historic city.

## Chapter 6 – The Value of Festivalising York’s Historic Built Landscape: A Lived Experience of the York Walls Festival

Here, I discuss the festivalisation of the historic built environment of York, the city walls, through my lived experience. Evaluation critically embeds Pine and Gilmore’s (2011) experiential realms, to encompass the multi-faceted experiences within the ‘York Walls Festival’ (YWF). Thus, this chapter evaluates how these festival experiences are encouraged to understand the socio-cultural heritage (Williams, 2009) of the city walls and the wider historic built environment of York.

### 6.1 – Initiation of the Festival: The Contemporary Conservation and Heritage of York’s City Walls

The walls of York have been utilised as a leisure resource, before the ‘Festival’ was initiated in 2018 by the Friends of York Walls. “[T]he Victorians did a lot on the walls. They added the walkway” (BH, interview), “to turn [the walls] into a pleasure thing” (BJ, interview; figure, 21). A walkway provides an experience with minimum cost, and the freedom to end the experience at any spot in space and time (Ashworth and Bruce, 2009). Thus, the walls are “very well-known and very familiar” (SM, interview). However, for the meaning of the walls to be demonstrated via the sole consumption of the wall walk is unjustifiable, when the meaning is active and ‘can be written and rewritten in a myriad of ways’ (Bruce and Creighton, 2006: 246). There was a need for the walls to ‘be presented better and made to ‘work harder’” (Falk and King, 2003: 24).



Figure 21 – Source: City of York Council, n.d. *Photograph of people walking the city walls of York.* [Photograph]. Asset ID: 1001474. Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Ltd [Explore York Images], York. ©Explore York Images.

Conserving the heritage significance of the city walls, in today's context of York as a 'city of festivals' (Visit York, 2022), has imposed a festivalised value (figure, 22). According to Historic England (2008), conservation should be reflective of the ways that each generation benefits from and shapes the historic built environment. Festivalising the walls, ensures that they are experienced as a 'living heritage', remaining an intrinsic part to the city's identity (York Walls Festival, n.d), and visitors' intentions when consuming York (see Poria et al., 2001). However, this was not without the guidance of expertise (Historic England, 2008: 23). John Oxley, York's past archaeologist, advised that the walls could 'easily withstand the strain of a few extra pairs of feet' as 'the best-preserved defences in the land' (The Newsroom, 2018).



Figure 22 – The festivalisation of the city walls, Fishergate Bar. (Source: Researcher's own photo).

The Friends of York Walls are a registered charity, numbering over 600 members and seeking to promote the walls as a worldwide attraction (York Walls Festival, n.d). The "Friends set up the festival in 2018" (BJ, interview) as a community festival, valorising public input. In this way, despite the wider political and economic incentives of the festivalised, experience economy in York, the festival, has the capacity to have a notable role in citizens everyday lives, especially, when the wall's perimeter intersects communities (see Stevens and Shin, 2014). For example, Baz Jones (interview) recalled that he "was chatting to some of the volunteers" at the Fishergate Tower opening day, and "reached out and said is there anything I can do". Similarly, Bill Hill (interview) recalled

how he became involved with the festival, by putting in “a bid for them, for the heritage lottery fund”. Indeed, the grassroot festival, has the capability to strengthen the social placemaking of the conservation of the city walls (see Platt and Ali-Knight, 2018). As Page and Hall (2003) suggest, single-interest groups like the ‘Friends’ are often the most influential when inputting the conservation of monuments into communities, and tourism policies.

Indeed, the festivalisation of the city walls brings to the foreground their socio-cultural heritage (Williams, 2009). To unveil this, the YWF allows ‘the public chance to find out more about parts of the three-mile circuit they might not often visit’ (The Press, 2018), whilst enacting “a bigger way to engage families and young people” (BJ, interview). Thus, the festival is evidentially “community engaging” (BJ, interview). Festivalising the walls echoes the heritage values enforced by Historic England (2008) (table 4). The aesthetic and communal heritage values of the walls are given prominence, ensuring that the YWF is a festival place bound to the socio-cultural heritage of the walls, rather than just a festival within the place of the walls (see Smith et al., 2022).

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Evidential       | The ability that a place can provide evidence of past human activity eg physical remains.                                   |
| Historical       | How past people, events and life are connected through the medium of the place to the present. Illustrative or associative. |
| <b>Aesthetic</b> | <b>How people deduce intellectual and sensory stimulation from a place.</b>   |
| <b>Communal</b>  | <b>How a place gives meaning for people who relate to the place and the place is situated in their memory/ experience.</b>  |

Table 4 – A table to show the heritage values implied by Historic England (2008).

Although it is a ‘great thing that this festival has emerged from the community and is under community management’ (York Walls Festival, n.d), the promotion and growth of the festival depends on awareness. As Daz Jones argues “if we want to make this festival feel like it belongs to the community, the people of York, we need to let them know its

happening”. This action attempts to decrease any dissonance between volunteers and the community, ensuring that residents do not feel alienated by the presence of the festival, seeing the festivalisation as an inauthentic ‘stage set’ (see Bruce and Creighton, 2006; Creighton, 2007). Thus, from the moment of the wall’s festivalisation in 2018, the media promoted the festival’s contemporary significance.

## 6.2 – A Lived Experience: Negotiating the ‘Spaces’ of the City Wall

The festivalisation of the walls can only comprehensively be understood through lived experience, which I now turn to, from the basis of my ethnography. As Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad confers, it is important to convey that such a lived experience, coincides with other ‘spaces’ of the walls. For example, the walls are ‘used as a shortcut and a meeting place for exercise’ (Donald Insall Associates, 2021: 146; figure 23) (‘spatial practices’). Additionally, the ‘Friends’ imposed a plan for the festivalised space of the walls, (‘representations of space’). These two facets of space, according to Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad, clarify that the ‘representational space’ of the walls is expressed through lived experience.



*Figure 23 - A potential meeting place on the city walls. (Source: Researcher's own photo).*



### 6.3 – Navigating the Festival Experiences: Consuming Socio-Cultural Heritage

I now critically input the festival events into the experience realms (entertainment, educational, esthetic, escapist) (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). This approach is reliable when Alexiou (2020) finds that a similar cultural heritage festival in Rhodes covers all the realms characterised by Pine and Gilmore (2011). From this, Alexiou (2020) developed the CIF model, describing the steps to the optimal cultural heritage festival experience (figure 24). Although my lived narration of the festival acknowledges Alexiou's (2020) CIF model, it goes further. This narration understands how the festival can have a placemaking effect, bounding social meanings upon the walls (Richards, 2017).

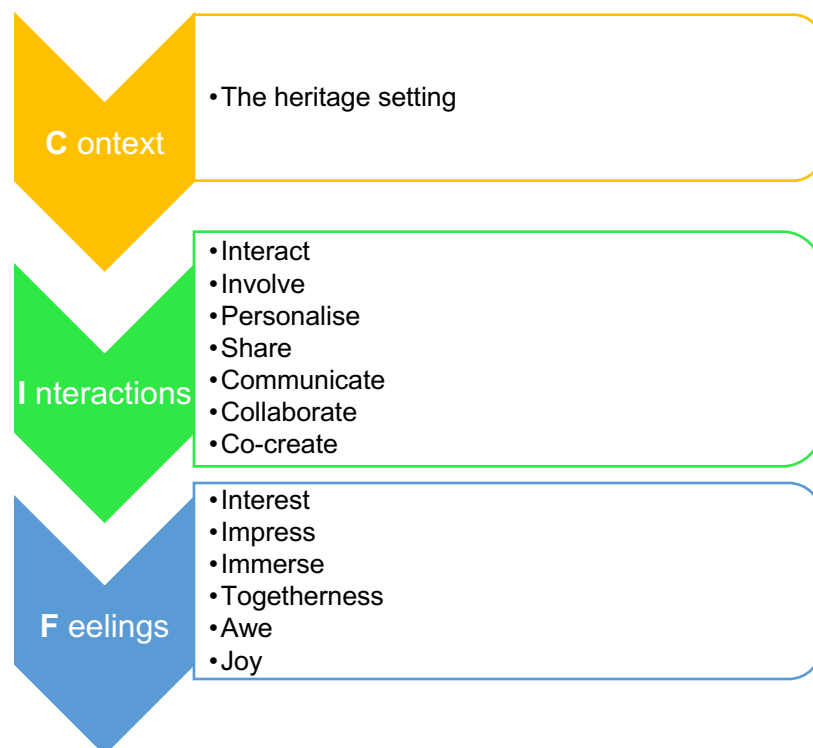


Figure 24 - A diagram to show the CIF model developed by Alexiou (2020).

The YWF attempted to festivalise most of the wall's circuit, by encouraging visitors to walk the circuit to different activities, along an 'explorers trail'. Thus, 70% of questionnaire respondents answered that they came across the festival when walking the city walls (figure 25). To assert to Pine and Gilmore's (2011) terms, the 'esthetic' activity of becoming immersed in the walking environment of the walls, was transformed. Placing activities along the length of the wall, formulated a heritage trail that was 'a means of organizing the visitor experience by providing a purposeful, interpreted route' (Hayes and MacLeod, 2007: 48). Walkers were fully immersed as active participants in an 'escapist' experience (Pine and Gilmore, 2011), by voluntarily and inevitably consuming the

'explorers trail' to activities (figures 26, 27). From Hayes and MacLeod's (2007) study, trails that incorporate themes of education and entertainment have the most potential to situate the consumer at the centre of Pine and Gilmore's (2011) experiential realms, the highest experiential value. Thus, the festival 'explorers trail' booklet was correct to dictate a trail along the walls that was entertaining and educational.

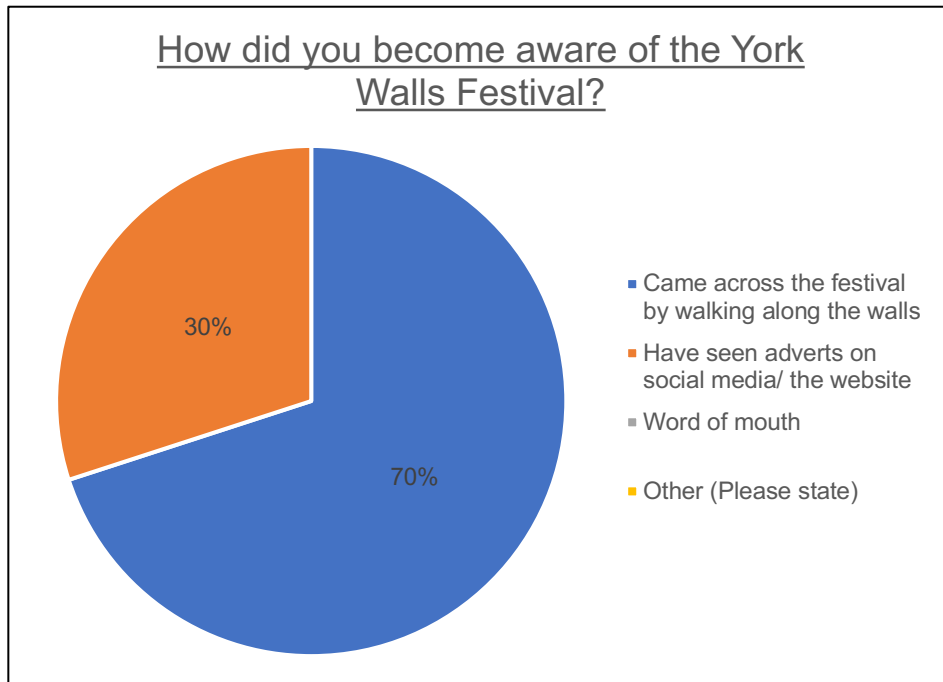


Figure 25 - A pie chart to show questionnaire results. (Question 1).



Figure 26 - Front image of the York Walls Festival Explorer's Trail. (Source: Researcher's own photo).

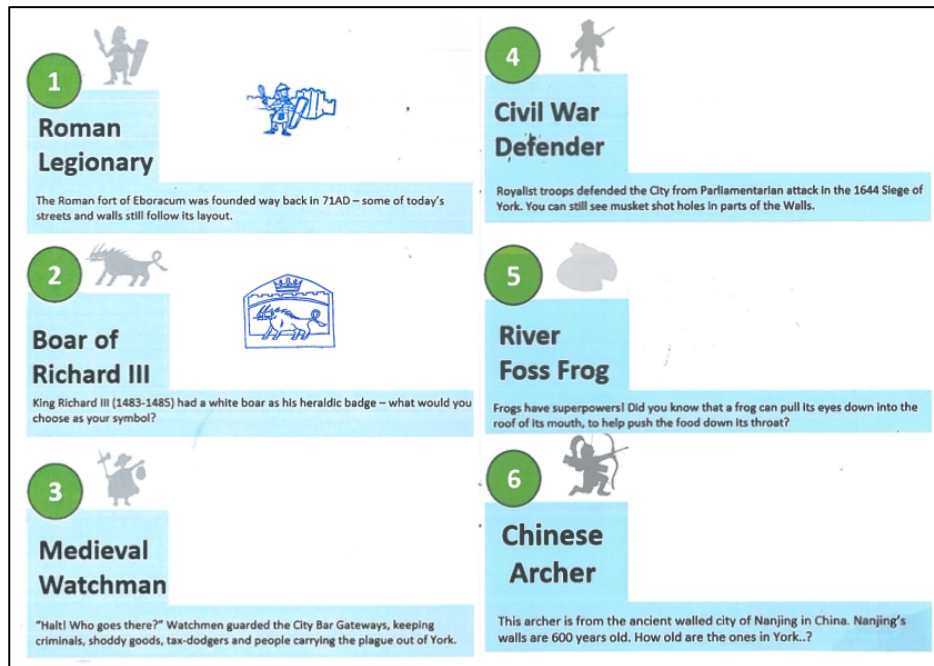


Figure 27 - Inside image of the Explorer's Trail booklet. (Photocopy of researcher's own booklet from ethnography).

A part of festival days was musical performances, perhaps the most memorable, was the Ebor Morris Dancers, who performed Cotswold dances and the York Escrick Longsword dance (Ebor Morris, n.d; figure 28). Baz Jones (interview) remarks that it is ‘the tradition of Morris dances, the songs. They want to promote that.’ My field diary confirms this, when I spoke to a dancer, Kevin Holland, at the street fair, in which Holland conveyed that performances regularly use the walls as a setting (figures 29, 30). In fact, Holland recounts to The York Press (2016), that since the group’s formation in 1974, ‘they soon got a reputation for being a lively and fun morris team, ... with regular performances in York city centre and for village fetes and carnivals’. However, the importance of Morris dancing, can be derived from before the formation of the group in 1974. For instance, the York 1951 Festival of Britain, included a display of Morris Dances from groups across local areas, in Museum Gardens (Anon, 1951b, figure 31). As a traditional performance that has persisted through the space and time of York, it is no surprise that the Ebor Morris performance was highly cited as an enjoyably activity.



Figure 28 - A collated photograph to show the Ebor Morris dance performance at the York Walls Festival. (Source: Researcher's own photo, taken during ethnography).

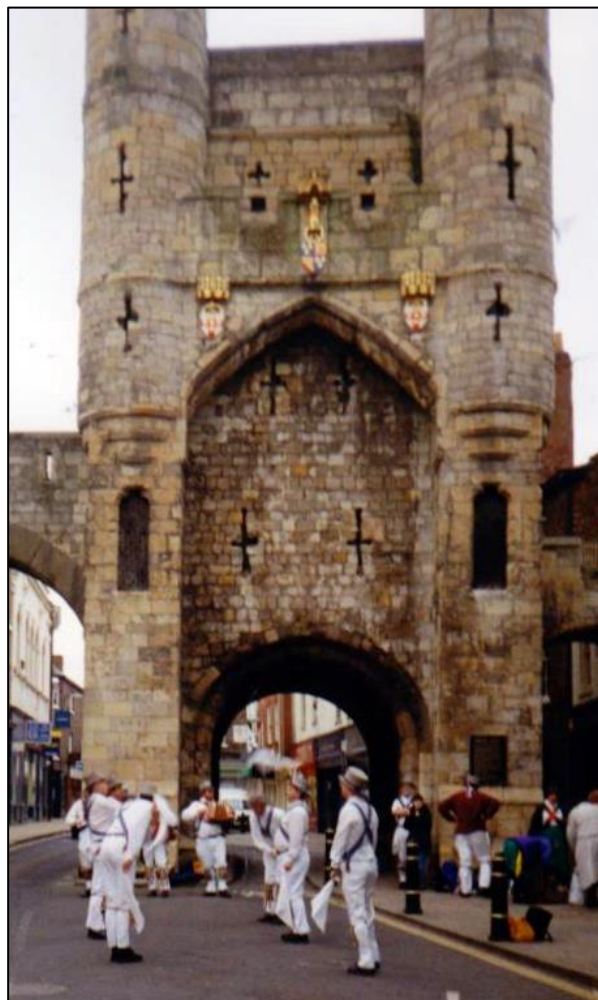


Figure 29 - Ebor Morris dancer's performing outside Monk Bar, 2000. Reproduced with permission from Kevin Holland.



Figure 30 - Ebor Morris dance performance upon Birchdaughter Tower, 2016. Photograph reproduced with permission from Kevin Holland.



Figure 31 – English Folk dancing in the Museum Gardens, for York's Festival within the 1951 Festival of Britain. Source: (Anon, 1951b), York Explore Archives ©.

Viewing the performance, embodied an 'entertainment' experience (Pine and Gilmore, 2011), which my senses absorbed comprehensively. As suggested by Thrift (1997), a non-representational geographer, this is the aim of a dance performance, in which thoughts are stipulated that extend beyond a resonance with words. It is evident, that my senses were following Alexiou's (2020) CIF model. Furthermore, by simply viewing the performance against the city walls, this framed the wall's significance to York's identity. In this way, the Morris dance performance interacted with the tourist gaze (Urry and Larsen, 2011), causing both tourists and non-tourists in the crowd to feel 'encaptivated' (field diary). Thus, the bodies of the 'Morris' dancers, performed by moving in imaginative, collective, aesthetic, social, and cultural ways (McCormack, 2008), to produce this lived space (Lefebvre, 1991) that observers and I consumed (figure 32).



*Figure 32 - York's Ebor Morris team and I (researcher). (Taken on researcher's camera by fellow festival volunteer).*

The YWF is also situated within an 'educational' realm (Pine and Gilmore, 2011). Housed within Fishergate Postern Tower was an exhibition showcasing images of Nanjing's city wall in China, in which the city walls of York were exhibited simultaneously in Nanjing (Lewis, 2022; figure 33). It was 'an informal chat with Dave Taylor, the former major of York who was a spectator of the [morris] dancing' (field diary), who reinforced the

significance of this exhibition. Also, within the tower, was a visual narration of York's city walls through time (figure, 34). Bill Hill remarks that "the displays have accrued ... The timeline was a historical inheritance". Clearly then, the success of unveiling the socio-cultural heritage of the Walls, bounds the YWF to their historical and educational context, remarking that tourism encouraged by the festival, 'can also be educational at the same time' (BH, interview).



Figure 33 - Nanjing city walls exhibition in Fishergate Postern Tower. (Source: Researcher's own photo).

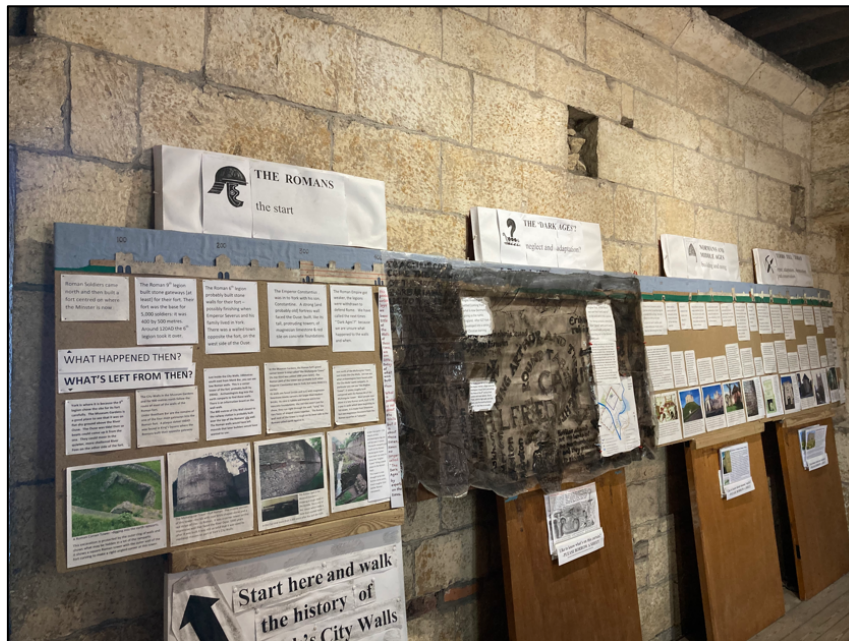


Figure 34 - Educational timeline boards of the city walls in Fishergate Postern Tower. (Source: Researcher's own photo).

#### 6.4 – The Experiential ‘sweet spot’ of the Festival

It was clear to festival attendees why the walls remain an integral force of York’s identity (Bruce and Creighton, 2006), with the recital of heritage values (figure 35). In line with Alexiou’s (2020) ‘CIF model’, those that valued the setting of the walls and interacted with the volunteers, were likely to have the greatest feelings of enjoyment. However, this enjoyment was limited when 67% of attendees (questionnaire respondents) did not experience all activities. As Pine and Gilmore (2011) theorise, the richest of experiences must encompass all experiential realms. For future festivals, marking the activities with their experiential realms, would increase the likelihood that attendees can consume a range of experiential activities and the experiential ‘sweet spot’. “[B]uilding other relationships with other groups” (BZ, interview), would encourage this.

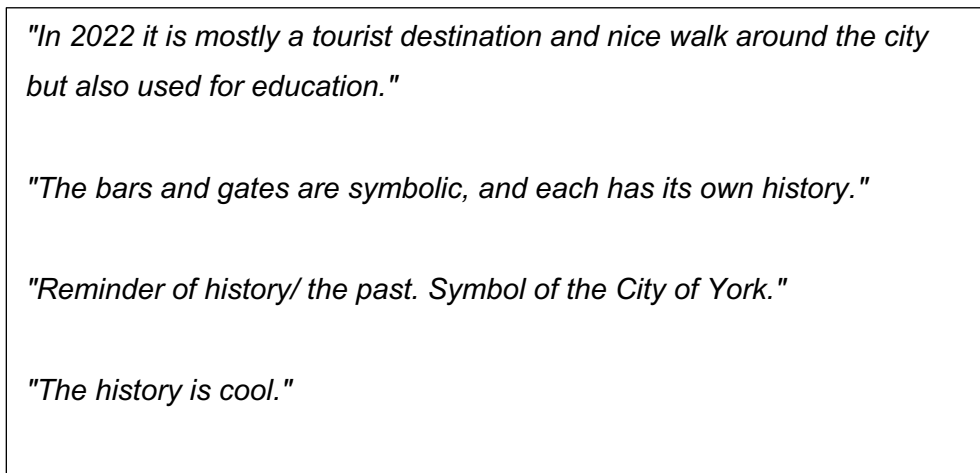


Figure 35 - Questionnaire results detailing the heritage of the city walls. (Derivative from questionnaire question 7).

#### 6.5 – Conclusion

*"they [the walls] have shifted their meaning of their uses." (BJ, interview)*

The decision to festivalise the traditional walkway of the city walls has been found to be accepted by visitors and the wider community of York (see Historic England, 2008). Indeed, the festivalisation of the walls was co-created by attendees and volunteers, bounding new meanings to the materiality of the walls, reinforcing the walls involvement with the social production of space (see Pappalepore and Smith, 2016). Experiencing the YWF, has evidenced the assumption that the festivalisation of York’s historic built environment is place bound to socio-cultural heritage, and is ‘influenced and shaped by a mix of elements’ (Timothy and Boyd, 2003: 7).



## Chapter 7 – Conclusion

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### 7.1 – Conclusion

This study has critically theorised how the city centre of York, is utilised and managed by tourists, residents, and local government organisations, in order to socially produce *festival* space, as a ‘city of festivals’ (Visit York, 2022). Lefebvre’s (1991) spatial triad was critically used to group facets of festivalisation. Ultimately, this study has attempted to critically and humanistically, modernise Lefebvre’s social ‘production of space’ in today’s experience economy.

Most significantly, this study finds that no longer do visitors of York wish to only gaze upon the historic builtscape of York (Meethan, 1996, 1997). Rather, these actors wish to actively consume the historic builtscape with festivals/ events. The theatrical set up of York’s city centre, aided by fantasised streets and ‘dressed up’ shops, guides the gaze to an experiential offering. By way of the ‘My City Centre Vision’, the City of York Council, supports this rise of experiential York, as this positively supports the city centre economy. This major finding is supported by others, as I subsequently emphasise.

Initially, this study found that the capability of York’s built environment to be festivalised, is an older concept, represented with the ‘Festival Flats’ from the 1951 Festival of Britain. This finding reinforces that in contemporary York, the architecture of the historic core needs to be utilised, to frame the festival cityscape (see Dovey, 2008). The problem that this study finds is that many of the historic spaces of York’s city centre, do not have the landed resources, to produce *festival* space, making the permanent spread of festival events, away from Parliament Street, difficult. This study has marked the realisation that the historic urban morphology of York’s city centre needs to be altered, along conservationist principles, to provide for festival/ event space. This is feasible when Historic England (2008: 22), remark that ‘change in the historic environment is inevitable’ and that conservation permits a process to manage this change in a way ‘that will best sustain its heritage values’.

This study also finds that York’s festival calendar is accepted by the local community of York, when inclusive of community led festivals. This was found through the lived experience of the ‘York Walls Festival’. Lived experience, additionally revealed, that in

contemporary York, the city walls, and the wider historic cityscape, have a meaning that is co-created by those experiencing the cityscape, rather than prefabricated within the materiality of the cityscape (see Pappalepore and Smith, 2016). Hence, the atmospheric and experiential values of the festival, were found to inflict a meaning of the tourist-historic city of York that is postmodern, contemporary and in line with York's identity as a 'city of festivals' (Visit York, 2022).

On the contrary, this study has revealed that consumers are creating the heritage they demand of York, for the contemporary purpose (Graham et al., 2000), that York is a 'city of festivals' (Visit York, 2022). Experiential value is found as being placed upon the heritage of the historic built environment, with educational/ entertainment effects. As such, this study has evolved past the typical critique of dissonant users of the tourist-historic city (see Meethan, 1996, 1997; Voase, 1999; Mordue, 2005; 2010), and has offered a new perspective of the tourism and heritage geographies of York. This perspective has grounded these geographies into the realm of experiences, and the wider experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 2011), in the hope to have theoretically explained the justification for York's turn to festivals. Subsequently, this study aims to have acted as a guide to the City of York Council and the wider community, encouraging a proactive response to the development of York's historical cityscape, for further event/ festival space. Thus, the intention of this study has been, to be at the start of a transition to a fully functioning experiential tourist-historic city of York; a city that enhances and adapts the built environment of its historic core. It is as Penny Nicholson (interview) remarks, "[in York] we do have to work hard to enhance what we've already got".

### 7.2 – Limitations of the Study

This study has brought to the foreground York's reliance on a festivalised, experience economy, however, the shortage of time and festivals assessed, limited the development of this study. Additional time would have permitted the study of further York festivals like the Jorvik Festival, which "is now a staple of the York festival scene" (CT, interview). This would have enabled a greater evidential understanding of how festivals in York are consumed and managed. Headhunting additional festival directors, would have added to the repertoire of stakeholders of York interviewed, providing further ways in which stakeholders view the governance of York's city centre space.

### 7.3 – Future Study

A future study would research, perhaps by a longitudinal approach, the development of event space in York's city centre. This would involve cooperation with key stakeholders. A research opportunity would be the event space in the making at the 'Castle Eye' of York.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview Transcript Coding

#### Initial Themes from Interview Transcripts

- Background of York's cityscape.
- Background of York's festivalscape
- Development of York's built environment
- Conflict
- Types of experiences/ activities.
- Logistics of festivals/ events.
- Types of heritage/ festival consumer
- Preservation: reasoning, meaning behind the monument conservation, utilisation of the walls.
- Engagement with the public: bottom-up approach.
- Culture as a big concept in York.
- Connections with other community groups, stakeholders.
- Accessibility of York's heritage
- Promotion of the festival.
- Sense of belonging of the festival.
- Economy of heritage and tourism.
- Challenges of the expansion of the experience economy in York.
- Resident marginalisation- community involvement
- Vibrancy of the city centre.

#### Detailed Interview Transcript Codes, Key Themes: Codification Manual

##### York as an Historic City

HC 1: Historic Core Streets:

HC 2: Reputation of York as an Historic City:

HC 3: Conservation of the Historic Built Environment:

HC 4: Commodification of the Historic Built Environment:

##### Touristification of York

T 1: Strengths/ Benefits

T2: Drawbacks/ Consequences

## **A Management Strategy**

MS 1: Background Information/ Development

MS 2: Strengths/ Opportunities

MS 3: Weaknesses/ Threats

## **Festival Case Studies**

CS 1: Context

CS 2: Strengths/ Opportunities

CS 3: Weaknesses/ Drawbacks

## **Experience Economy**

EE 1: Context

## **Future of York's Cityscape**

Appendix B: Coded Semi-Structured Interview (Dominic Berry)

Interview – Microsoft Teams – Dominic Berry – Make It York – Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August – 9:15-10am

Researcher: I've timed you know, half an hour to 45 minutes, if that's ok with you.

Dominic Berry: Yeah that's fine.

Researcher: So I will start on my first question. So, the first question is quite a holistic question. So, please could you outline your role at Make It York and you know the overall importance of the company to York's success as a heritage centre?

Dominic Berry: Ok.

Researcher: Yes, quite an overall question to start with.

Culture has an intangible value  
Responsible stakeholder / experienced  
Development of new festival  
MS1  
CS1  
MS1  
Management  
lots of planning for events to actually occur.  
MS1

Culture plays a big part in York  
Event industry in York

Dominic Berry: Yeah. So, my job is, I'm a senior events and culture manager for Make It York. I manage a team of event managers who create events across the year. That can be what Make It York delivers in the year. It's things like stakeholders groups, Visit York tourism awards. But also, more of the kind of more public facing events, such as the Christmas market, the ice trail this year. In April, we did the first York Life event, which involved as working with the independent venue network. Umm, what else do we deliver? Another part of what we do is I work with a lot of third parties, things like the food and Drink festival, the Viking Festival and Roman Festival wagon plays, mystery plays just going back to what you're saying about events. Sorry, festivals in terms of York's heritage, I think the wagon player is there, probably like the prime example of that. [Yes, the mystery plays.] But yeah, it's I also oversee events which happen on the maze mire, which is York balloon Fiesta, uh York 10K, the marathon, Race for Life and basically, any event, any major public event in the city, I'll be dealing with them more from the point of view of making sure they've got all the plans in place and all the right licenses and stuff like that.

Researcher: Ok and for my dissertation, I'll actually be volunteering for a community festival, its called York Walls festival. I don't know if you've heard of that?

Dominic Berry: I don't know that I'd say.

Researcher: It's a small festival, it's happening not this weekend, next weekend with someone called Daz Jones. [Ohh yes, yeah, yeah, yeah.] So, I've been in contact with him about that.

Independent community organisations  
HC3  
Heritage of the built environment left to the community.  
MS1

Dominic Berry: I have, sorry, yes I have. Because it's the walls, it's not necessarily under our jurisdiction so, we kind of just leave them to it. Really. Because you know, there's lots of different kind of community and 3rd party events which we don't necessarily have to get involved with. So, on the more larger scale, whereas things like public safety, licensing, road closures and things like that, that's where we come in.

An agent to ↑ visitor numbers → Placemaking impact of festivals

Longevity + success of festivals

A variety of events occurring

Researcher: And how do you think because York, it's known as like the city of festivals. How do you think that affects tourism by holding so many festivals every month?

Festival calendar

CS2 → MSI

Dominic Berry: I think they are great. Umm, I've worked in events in York for about 15 to 20 years and I think. [Yeah.] It's it's kind of you almost need to look at each one individually. Say the reason why we do ice trail the first weekend in February is that's always a quiet retail and hospitality uh week because it's no one wants to go out in January. But that attracts about 20,000 people over the weekend. And that's a mixture of residents and tourists, and because it's free, it's kind of we like to try and promote it towards residents as it's just a nice family friendly thing to do during the over a weekend. Then, two weeks after that, we have the Viking festival, which is the February half term. Whilst that runs on a small budget, I've always been a big advocate for that festival because um, it's just great that again, whilst it's quite a quiet period in like kind of high streets and stuff like that, that period of time, you actually see families walking around. You know, kids have got helmets and swords and stuff like that, and you can just see that this kind of either residents or tourists come just to have a fun day out in February. We do evaluation on lots of different, all all the events that we deliver, we do evaluation and there's always this ongoing conversation about whether events are focused on residents or tourists. From our point of view, we're just delivering the events for both really. Umm, we do. There has been criticism in the past about the Christmas market because that brings in thousands and thousands and thousands. People from outside of town. But all the retailers and hospitality loves up that fact. Similarly with. So I'm going all over the shop here, but there's things like Balloon Fiesta, which isn't necessarily my cup of tea is an event, but they had 65,000 people attending last year. [Wow] All hotels and caravan sites around York were booked up. And it's a cheap event for if you've got a family of four or something you wanted to get there, it's kind of, it's it's not 20 where the ticket it's, you know, last year it's £3.00. It's gone up this year cause the content but the idea that a family can be there for like a whole afternoon is I think that's an attractive thing and and things that we want to kind of pursue more have more events like that.

CS1

CS2

Re-enact ment festivals

Attraction for

MSI range of stakeholders

Benefit for promoting areas to

CS2 York

MSI

CS3

Congestion in the dense city

Researcher: Yeah. So, which would you say are the most, you know, popular festivals or events, being, you know, in the past or in the present, that are still running?

Scale + intensity of York events (this one outside city centre)

CS2

Dominic Berry: Umm. Thinking. Well, I mean, say the Balloon Fiesta getting 65,000 people over four days. That's kind of that's probably the largest scale event outside of the race course events. The Christmas market brings hundreds of thousands of people every year. Obviously that's over the course of five weeks or so, but it's that has kind of that's kind of a signature event that we deliver. Also in the past, I would probably say I don't know if come across it with the Great Yorkshire fringe, that was something I was involved with. It ran for about four years, and that was working in partnership with Leicester Square Theatre, who kind of they work with a lot of household names in the comedy World and Cabinet and stuff, and they basically took over the whole Parliament street and Sampsons with these unique, I've forgotten the name of them. Umm kind of old German Spiegel tents and they just look really nice, they've got stained glass. They're like circular venues. I worked with them for a good few years to get that up and running because I saw that as York didn't have anything like that. You know, Edinburgh has got

Replica of well researched Edinburgh scene

Recognising gaps in the market

MSI

Length of festival taking dominat of the space of the city centre.

Questioning a cultural production of space → denying placelessness  
the the the festival and this was kind of seen as well, how do we kind of get culture and things like that into the city centre?

Researcher: How do you manage you know know the events when there's so many people around the city centre? How busy do events usually get in the city centre?

This is a potential problem

Dominic Berry: It depends. Say, for the Christmas market, especially on a Saturday and Sunday. Uh, which are peak times. I can put rough figure on it. The footfall cameras in the city centre don't work properly. But just on the terms of crowd density and stuff, I can kind of factor in that there's about at any given time, there's about 5000 people. Umm. In the area and and you can kind of just measure it up by kind of how deep it is from the stalls. And obviously there's lots of when you're in the city centre, it's quite hard because you know people just wanting to get to a sandwich from them unless and stuff like that or coffee from Costa who aren't engaging with the event itself. With things like uh, you know, we managed the coach bookings and things like that. So we get a good idea of which is a peak times. Etcetera. In terms of managing that, it's I'm a safety officer. I'm already working on the documentation for Christmas this year. We've been working on it since January, but in terms of actually safety documentation in terms of what do you do if there is a fire, what do you do if the terrorist attack all that type of thing? That's just the idea with and. So kind of when the events are live, we have a team of stewards that kind of can react and or otherwise just give out information to the public, but they're there for a reason. In case of any kind of emergency situation. And I work. I work very closely with that. The police and ambulance and stuff like that to kind of. In short, especially that we have counterterrorism barriers around the city at Christmas.

impact of some festivals  
MS3

CS1/  
CS2

For festivals, lots of planning occurs. ↓ Reality that theory does not consider!

Researcher: So how much you know revenue, do you think that the experience economy actually holds for York, you know approximately how big of a part do you think festivals and events actually play in the experience economy? Do you think it's more than the shops themselves or?

Dominic Berry: I mean, I'm not very good with stats and stuff like that for after evaluating events because there is a kind of a specific, um national kind of uh. Almost calculator which works out kind of what's the average spend of a a day visit? What's the average spend for an overnight visit? An overnight kind of, that's the key thing that, uh, most businesses in the city would kind of push for. If you can get someone to stay overnight in York, then it kind of quadruples their spend. Because hotel from evening meals and things like that. So it's kind of I also work with the Council and looking at kind of things like the evening economy. To try and make it kind of a safe and nice place to be in the city centre. I've only been in the city centre about four times this year on a Saturday afternoon. By about 2-3 o'clock, it's a very different culture. And again, that that's kind of one of the reasons why we do things like the ice trail. Other types of events to change, kind of like the demographic in the city centre, you know, make it more inviting, get more things for families to do. Just I mean, it's it's a large issue which has been going on for about 15-20 years about. If you're the manager of Travelodge and you get a booking for half your rooms, you're not gonna turn them down. Its a larger scale issue of kind of working with hoteliers working with bars, working with the police and working with

EE

Solution

Does the experience economy take over negatively  
HC2  
CS2  
MS1

Encourage a wide audience

train companies and things like that about how you're gonna. It's more people than restaurants. There's more people in bars and hotels, so as a whole, the hospitality sector kind isn't gonna refuse it really. [After COVID especially]. Yeah, and I mean obviously I think some of the stuff I've witnessed would probably be, yeah, it's people coming out for the first time and stuff like that, but it's it's not ongoing issue, but that's why we're trying kind of narrate it so that, uh, there are family friendly things every well, not it's not every weekend, but as as much as we can. I'm guessing Ben Murphy shared with you the My City Centre vision.

MS1

Researcher: Yes. How does Make It York support the, you know, My City Centre vision?

Unpractical

Dominic Berry: Uh, I sit on these it's not a shareholders, a stakeholders kind of committee for My City Centre. There's quite a few elements within that vision document, which is improving some of the public realm because Parliament Street is a nightmare to work with. Uh, physically. Umm, it's very only even which brings its own problems but again, with my city centre, its kind of it's helping to shape the content of certain events, like there's a few kind of recommendations within that and, it's useful to have something like that vision document, and we also have within visit York, well Make It York, we have the culture strategy. [Yes, I was going to ask you about that].

MS

HC1

MS2

Researcher: So, what are the latest developments on that?

Dominic Berry: I'll just say about the My City Centre. A lot of those things kind of can help steer you content, something in the My City Centre is about moving events across the city. That's often quite hard because there isn't infrastructure in a lot of the other areas of the city. But that's always like the main incentive. Can we do something elsewhere to help spread things around and get people more interested and we work very closely with the bid. So when we do something like the ice sculpt ice trail, we'll make sure that there are sculptures up on Micklegate down Walmgate. Some of the lesser known streets. And that's all purposely to get people to go down those streets and kind of reinterpret what those streets are to them. You know, kind of go. Oh, I didn't realise there was that shop on that street. There's a lot of that type of stuff that goes on in our planning. Going back to the culture strategy, and there are six priorities within that and. I had a 3-hour meeting yesterday about it, so I should know. So there's a place making, national and international profile, children and young people, town development and retention, um, health and well-being and engagement. So, we've never had either a culture strategy or any other main strategy to work with, but it's a really it's a really useful tool so that, where we kind of approach either our partners or other kind of we speak with other Council or members of the public. Before, it was just kind of we're doing this because it's nice. Yeah, but this we can actually kind of measure it and kind of say we're doing this because it's supports these groups and gets them engaged with this blah blah blah. In terms of where we're at with the cultural strategy. That's like a five year strategy. And what we do, we have a RAG support. Are you familiar with RAG reports? It's basically one huge spreadsheet. And its ranked red amber green. So you just kind of within each of the six priorities, they're broken down into about 14 different kind of action points, if you will.

HC1/HC4

CS1

HC1

MS2

MS1

The city is not set up for their festival scene

Trail like

Is culture now taken more seriously?



And a lot of those get delivered by third parties. So things like talent development, that's stuff mainly that your university would be working on with their students and kind of what's the progression from being a student to are there enough careers in the city? Its kind of a creative and cultural remit. What's you know, what's the cost to live in, which is obviously a big issue at the moment. There's lots of little things like that help us to kind of mark out or map out right we are doing this because it's benefits these groups and this will get these groups talking to these groups or kind of getting people to use libraries more or anything like that, which is kind of. [That's really useful.] I don't know if you've seen it, but the the culture strategy is on the Make It York website.

MS1

Researcher: Yes, I think, yes, I've seen it. It's it's really good actually. I think it's quite clear how its set out as well. You know with with the 12 different points to it.

Dominic Berry: Yeah. So when I said I had a 3 hour meeting yesterday, I also had a 3 hour meeting last Thursday. And that was basically I was reviewing this RAG report to kind of say, alright within the 12 points under each priority, where are we with this? What's happened here? Because with a five year plan, not everything happens straight away and obviously it was it was. It came out in the December 2020. Right in the middle of COVID. [So, how did that impact it?] And how does that matter? What we had to do was kind of prioritise like some key deliverables which because a lot of things we weren't able to deliver, but we kind of just named like three or four within each priority to kind of say, yes, we can get to work on that. There's, there's a lot of work to get on with, but it's kind of slowly chipping away at it.

Along process

MS1

Researcher: And which would you say are the most important parts to it? Which are the parts are you trying to do first, would you say?

Dominic Berry: Well, for for myself, with the kind of my events hat on, it's more things like placemaking and national and international profile. So placemaking is about, again that goes into a lot of the my city centre work. It's getting people to reinterpret it, interpret the city centre and the kind of you know, change people's views. That kind of, oh, actually this is nice you know I feel safe here. And kind of, you know, York as a deep history of heritage. Also, it's kind of, yeah, I used to work on an event called Illuminating York, which was umm that ran for about 8-10 years and that was kind of what you know when you do that kind of projection mapping, that was really popular. That was always free up until the last two years and yeah, we did a lot of work there with kind of looking at spaces in a new light, you know, so doing installation in the church which a lot of residents wouldn't have even knew exist. Making use of little kind of areas like that where it's kind of alright actually and it's also drawing across the city so people just. Families felt safe coming in at, you know, 7:00 o'clock at night, and will get excited to have a map and then be kind of looking around and that achieved, and what I'd also I'd kind of say that ticked off the box of place making and also ticking the box of international profile. [That's really interesting]. So it's it's things like that. Also, I've been working with Ben and the My City Centre team on with the landscape architecture working on the eye, sorry the castle gateway.

Importance of social meanings

Meaning of the city centre is not static

HC2

CS1

CS2

MS1

widening the city + visitors to new possibilities

Future possibilities

Researcher: Yes, I was going to ask you about that. So, what is happening at the minute you know with the regeneration projects, the Castle Gateway and the castle eye?

*Rising football since COVID*

Dominic Berry: Yeah. So, so we manage, we already kind of manage Tower Gardens and the Eye of York. That space is not very its not used very often, that will probably pick up, but it's because of COVID, Clifford's Tower, well Cliffords Tower is getting a new visitor center and Castle Museum has been pretty much closed for two years. So footfall was pretty down over there, but we'll work over that over the next year or something. But I have been working as I say, I've been working with the Council on kind of hen the Castle car Park is redeveloped into a public space. How do you how do you prepare that for large scale events in terms of infrastructure of hard standing, electrics, water, blah blah blah. See, that's a really exciting development, but obviously it's all dependent on funding, so probably it's probably not gonna exist for another five years I'd have thought. [Well, I mean, it's sounds exciting, so.]

*MSI*

*designing more open spaces*

*Future of York: city scape*

*Future of York's city scape*

*modification will be a long process  
longitudinal research projects*

Researcher: So how as a company, do you fund all the events and festivals that happen in the city?

Dominic Berry: They've all got various kind of models. So the Christmas market, that's a large scale market event which kind of the income generated from both like kind of the market stalls and the main bar and stuff like that. That covers it, this cost that way. The Ice Trail is a sponsorship model, so over over 40, businesses will pay for the ice sculpture on where they actually get 2, because one for the Saturday and one for the Sunday. [Yeah, before I started researching about was it. I've never heard to be ice trail.] It's a really nice, you know, it's just, you know, all the demonstrations of ice sculptures and things like that, but it's kind of is just you walk around and seeing all these different high sculptures really. So that's the sponsorship model. Uh. What else? Some other ones that kind of from, say, we did York life and in April this year, the background behind that is we got um all government issued all local authorities with Arg money, which is basically to bring people back into city centre after COVID. So York life was paid for by that and that. And that was obviously the independent venues around the city have been struggling for two years. So we worked in partnership with them to like program a stage. And I hope to kind of sign post people into if you enjoy this, go to Crescent go to fulfill arms etcetera. What other events? Third party events, things like food and drink festival and the Viking festival, predominantly are through fund themselves through tickets and again, stalls, stalls, that kind of. I say stores like food stalls and stuff like that is. More and more often now we find events, bankroll themselves, essentially, by having a bar. Uh, and that kind of conflict with a lot of what we're trying to do in terms of making the city, for family friendly space. So we always have to kind of compromise in some way. It's like you, you're not allowed to have like, an Ibiza kind of bar in the city. The centre needs to be kind of you know a family friendly space and it's not not encouraging, kind of you big hendus and stuff like that. It's about kind of again having a nice safe environment for people. So we often work with people on kind of the planning process, but say when we did the great Yorkshire fringe, so that had about four venues on Parliament Street and each had about 100 capacity, if you think about each of those. We're busy every night and people paying £10- £20.00 a ticket. But still they relied on the street food and bars as their main kind of source of profit. And they didn't make a profit because of the

*CS1*

*CS2  
CS3*

*actually making money from events is difficult  
Reality of the experience economy / festination*

*CS3*

infrastructure took a lot. But if you're doing a large scale event or festival, you've generally got to expect the first three to five years, you're gonna make the loss because you're you're building the brand, you're kind of, you're paying for a lot more infrastructure when it's first starting and you just hope that it starts to evolve and become a better profit model for so.

long process to

become an established festival/event

CS3

Researcher: And I was just thinking about the shambles market. How does Make It York support that because you know I've always known about the Shambles Market. How is it supported?

Dominic Berry: Well, Make It York manage the Shambles Market. Uh, I used to be involved in that team. So yeah, there's a team of about five or six people which says seven days a week because it's one of the only seven days a week markets in the country. And so I was.

commodifying the reserved historic area of the Shambles

I'm old enough to have been around when the market was redeveloped in that's around 2013 or something. When it was developed, I'm not sure if we were of the food court at the bottom of the Shambles Market. I'm not sure if you are aware of the food market at the bottom of the Shambles Market? [Yes.] So when it was first built, that wasn't intended to be a food court and but when it was kind of thought, actually this could work so. We went to town basically with the idea of right, how do we address this space? How do we make it more inviting? How do we brand it up? So, you know, putting festival lights everywhere, making it look pretty. And putting big parasols up there and stuff like that and that's actually quite, that feels like quite an achievement because if you go there any weekend, any holiday, it's rammed at lunchtime. And this was before Spark existed, so it was kind of, it was quite a risk. But we kind of persevered with it and it took, yeah, three years of the food stalls not actually having many customers. And it just it just takes away from people's behavior to change, you know, where to get a coffee from, where to get the sandwiches from and stuff like that. But it's, it's now kind of, you know, it'll be mentioned in kind of national, influences or kind of in the Guardian or something that someone has a day out in York, they'll always go to the food court.

MS1

MS2

HC2/HC4

Reputation

Researcher: And do you think the Shambles Market supports the independent businesses that exist along the Shambles themselves, you know, along the small streets?

→ Reliance of the Shambles on tourism?

Theatrical ambience of York

Fantasy focal point

Dominic Berry: I mean, it's a bit of a weird one that because, we've certainly seen the food court, kind of almost like triple the amount of visitors to shambles market over the past ten years. And so that's benefited all the kind of you know the fruit and veg traders you know the second hand books or whatever they're selling. So it's definitely increased the footfall in that area. I mean, at the same time, there is a when the food court started getting busy after a couple of years of that. And that's when the Harry Potter shops or the first Harry Potter shop first started. The shop, that can't be named or whatever it's called. [When do you think that came around? What year was that do you think?] I'm gonna guess about 2016, 2015 or 2016. Yeah. And it's kind of the first shop, which is still in existence, the other ones are not. That's, you know, that's done it really well and it's kind of really captured the market and done it. Yeah, delivered on it very well. The other ones were just kind of lets just buy a bunch of stuff and sell it. Because you know, the Shambles its one of the most famous streets in the world, like as a place to visit. So it's the businesses down there will always have a footfall, you know. Its I suppose what the food court has done to the shambles market and therefore the whole area is

T1

HC4

HC2

HC2

HC4

Reputation

→ significance of heritage tourism

HC4

→ HC4

brought a different demographic over because you know, say 10 years ago, you certainly wouldn't have gone down that end of the market with either a friend or a family because it was, dark dingy, scary. And just a bit of a wasteland, really. And so the the actual fact of you know, I know that some of my friends will go and get their lunch in the food court. We've created a whole new area in the city center which didn't exist 5-10 years ago, so, Very impressive.

↳ opportunities that exist to develop the historic environment for contemporary purposes

Researcher: So, do you think you know all the events and the festivals, do you think they're promoting York's medieval, like heritage, or do you think they're making a new sort of identity to York?

Dominic Berry: And that again is kind of like a constant conflict not conflict, but just kind of a balancing act because we have, we have the Jorvik festival, we have the Eboracum Roman festival as we mentioned before, we've got the wagon plays and mystery plays all hugely steeped in heritage. Um, but then we don't want to just rest on our laurels, you know? It's kind of that's why we had, uh, Illuminating York, because we're working with cutting edge, you know, modern media similar with medially that's only run 1 1/2 times. But that's the same principle that kind of attracting kind of cutting edge international artists to York toto kind of flip that idea of kind of, yeah, York is known as a heritage site, but we also do very cutting edge and interesting things.

CS2

Researcher: Because York is an UNESCO Media City of Arts, isn't it, which is interesting seeing as you know how York has so much heritage as well.

Dominic Berry: Yeah, and sorry that probably ties in with the mention of Illuminating York and medially are kind of like key components of York's media arts status. There is a Guild of Media Arts in York. But we would always seek to, you know, things like you're the Aesthetica short Film Festival that brings in so many students from across the country. And it's just kind of, yes, you know, as soon as you step out into the street and you're you're stepping over something that's like 1000 years old or something like that and whereas, so we could just kind of sit back and just kind of say ohh yeah, that would be great, we've got the Minster, the walls. But it's kind of it's how do you make it more interesting to change the demographic of visitors? So it's not just kind of all of the Minster, its kind of people come to visit our venues, visit our theaters and yeah just kind of change the offer as opposed, or vary the offer.

CS1

HC3 / HC4

Building upon the framework of York, experientially

Researcher: So, in your opinion, what would you say the future is with York's experience economy and you know with the heritage that the festivals try to promote? What would you say is the next step for York really?

Dominic Berry: Um I mean this could be like a 24-hour conversation really, but it's I think, again on that basis, of kind of heritage and kind of what's new and stuff like that. One thing that York doesn't have is it when you compare it to other cities. Whilst the great Yorkshire Fringe is no longer running, we don't really have anything which kind of caters for whether it's bands or whether it's comedy or whether it's going well, the theatre Royal do great jobs, but it's kind of

Future of York's cityscape

↳ Is York competitive to other cities?

you know, if you go to any city, you'll see a poster for, like, a central festival. And it's kind of ohh, I'd heard of them, I've seen them on the telly, it's what your household names kind of thing. York doesn't have kind of large like popcorn concerts. Which I always think is kind of we're missing a trick really. You know, people just go to Leeds or Newcastle or wherever, whereas York would have something really quite strong. Yeah, say, I suppose the good example would be the balloon Fiesta. Um, if you've not come across that, it'd be worth just Googling that. [Yes, I will do that, definitely.] Because in the past, it's essentially the blue vest is celebrating balloon taking off and when balloons they can only take off in very precise weather conditions. So when they can't, that can be a bit of a let down, if you pardon the pun, but it's so what they're doing this year is they've increased their kind of stage content, so they've they've been invested quite a lot to kind of create like a program for three days of it's nothing groundbreaking in terms of the music. It's things like Scouting For Girls. I mean, you could say it's music people, they don't like music. If you're being critical. But it's kind of like they are kind of household names that people will go, oh yeah, I'll pay £5 to see what. So, and that's because the balloon Fiesta sees that there isn't that kind of there's a gap in the market and they want to kind of utilise that and also fill in space and their programming. You know, because Leeds got Millennium Square. Manchester's got, different types of music festivals and things like that. But York doesn't have that key focus. I mean that's that's just music, but it would be similar with the kind of the either comedy or kind of, I suppose, live arts. First of all, I mean, we do have the National Centre of early music, their early music festival, which isn't my cup of tea, but that brings in lots of different visitors from all over the country to that. Yeah, it's really quite prestigious event and you know it's covered by Radio 3, I think similar with their Christmas festival. It's probably my own personal taste because I like music, but I kind of think York's just missing the key ingredient of something like that.

Future of  
York's  
cityscape

Too many  
festivals  
in  
the  
center

Researcher: No, and I think it is. Because I think it would probably attract a lot more of an audience, you know, if it had lots of music or more music festivals. So, I think we will end there really.

Dominic Berry: Ok.

Researcher: I don't know if you have any more information you'd like to add. Anything that you think would be useful. You know, based on, you know, heritage, culture, anything that I've missed out perhaps.

Dominic Berry: I'd recommend having a look at uh, even if it's just Google images on ice trail. Just so that you have an idea of that type of thing, go on to the balloon Fiesta website because that's quite a a. The first two years of the balloon Fiesta was a bit of a shambles, but they're really kind of invest in it to make it kind of a an event which is really good for residents, but also brings a lot of visitors to the city.

Researcher: Yeah, that's another thing I saw you have a residence festival. Is that because you know, residents feel left out of, you know, all the festivals out for tourism, or is that, you know?

→ This should be developed more.

Normalizing  
significant  
heritage?

Dominic Berry: Yeah that's something we're looking to develop, that's been going for years and years essentially. It's not really a festival essentially what is is all the attractions, all the restaurants, etcetera, all kind of if you prove that you live in York, you can get in for free or if you go to restaurant and you get like a course free or a bottle of wine or something, so it's it's not really a festival per say. And but it's just a way to kind of get residents to you know, so it's a new visitor centre, Cliffords tower that could go in there like. I mean, I meet with the Minister every so often, so I go in there quite often, but I know a lot of people who live in York haven't been to the Minister for, like, you know, 20 years. And so it's, it's that type of thing. So kind of reengage people with what your York has to offer. But something I've been discussing with colleagues is it shouldn't just be like one weekend in a cold January. It should be more opportunity for residents to kind of engage with essentially their own assets, you know, if you live in York, then you can be proud that you got your Minster and you, you should be able to, you know if you've got some friends visiting, you should be able to say. Oh yeah. Umm, when London had the Olympics or when there was something like Commonwealth Games. They do things like they train up taxi drivers with kind of just general bits of information, so they kind of act as kind of advocates and also kind of almost like mini tour guides to kind of say ohh, have a look at that building quality here can. So I think, I like the residence festival in principle. I think there should be more should offers for residents to kind of be proud of the city, I suppose.

CS1

HC3

CS2

HC3

CS2

link to  
the  
tourist  
gaze?

Researcher: Do you think because you know residents you know live in York. Do you think all of the events, the Shambles and things are for tourists specifically and the residents because they have seen them before just almost ignore the Shambles and heritage parts of York city centre?  
Dominic Berry: Absolutely. Yeah, yes, I used to work like 10 meters away from the shambles for five years, and I probably walk down the street itself by twice and not to time. There was a point I lived on one side of town where every morning I walked past the Minster on my way to work and that was kind of that was amazing. You know, it's kind of you've got one of the best buildings in Europe on your doorstep. You know why wouldn't you marvel at it and kind of be proud of it? Similar with the city walls, like when was the last time you went on the York City walls? But also kind of if you if you're from. I don't know if your family it's coming from. I don't mean this in kind of dispiriting way, but kind of, I suppose. I'll go for a town which has been going to rebuild like Milton Keynes or Coventry or something like that, where the heritage is never existed or was bombed out in the 40s. Where every every building in the city is kind of, you know, 50s or 60s kind of structure when you come to York, you know you can walk around the walls and it's kind of it's free. It's something nice to do and it's quite unique to only a few cities in the country. [Yeah, I don't know many other cities that have city wars.] Yes, Chester does, there's probably loads in Europe as well.

HC3

HC3/1

HC2

Free  
experiences

Not all  
experiences  
for the  
experience  
economy?

Researcher: And just another quick question. You know when the when the festivals are happening and all the events? How are the areas protected with lots of listed buildings? You know, litter and things like that, are they sustainable?

Dominic Berry: I mean things in the city centre there is not that many kind of listed buildings when we have. I've done events around the Minster, in museum gardens outside Castle

CS1

Museum, Cliffords tower. Each of those kind of properties have their own kind of restrictions already. Uh, obviously being the kind of tourist attractions. Then things like litter are a primes thing, whose it's kind of you work in that throughout, you employ additional staff just to manage that because no one wants a picture on Twitter the next morning so look at the state of left it in. And sometimes it's on the avoidable because the bin wagons broken down or something like that, but you always work with the restrictions of the building or the land. You plan around that from an early stage kind of thing. Say the gardens around the back of the Minster you're not allowed to, there's a huge water but underneath the grass so you're you can't actually put a marquee down, it can't go further than a foot because there's a huge water container under there just in case there's ever a fire at the Minster. So there's little things like that where you just, you get to know what you can and can't do, where where it is saved to have a heavy vehicle where it's not, etcetera.

Responsibilities

→ HC4 → TI → Conservation restrictions  
 → MS3/ C33  
 → HC3

Researcher: How long does it take to plan an event, which is that you know a yearly event? You know, like the Christmas market or one that happens all the time?

Ongoing process of festivalisation

Dominic Berry: Christmas is a year. So as soon as it's finished in January, we're just getting all the evaluations and stuff like that in and reports. And then we have to we we have to start booking in kind of traders around March time and but because it you know, because we close of the city. Uh, I have to work with the police about the kind of counter terrorism measures. Just because it's all-encompassing and I think I mentioned before, I have to kind of you have to work with emergency services and things like that. It's a huge beast, so anything of that scale is probably, you know, if you were doing like a festival it's a year. So, if you just doing kind of like let's say the food and drink festival, which lasts for a week in September that's probably only about five or six months planning.

CSI/ MSI

Researcher: So, yes just finally if you have any you know any like statistics or facts or figures that you think would be useful just email me.

Dominic Berry: There should be a Christmas evaluation kind of stat sheet, I've not seen it since January, but I'll try and dig that out and send it over because that has a thing about kind of, they interview, you know, people on the, on the ground there. They measure kind of peoples experience and why they visited the city. It does show that kind of how that split between gender, age groups, postcodes. It kind of gives a rough idea of the economic impact.

MSI

Researcher: Yeah, if you could find that would be really useful.

Dominic Berry: Yes.

Researcher: But yes, I just wanted to thank you really for your time, it's been very useful and I'm sure it will input into my dissertation.

Dominic Berry: Good. Uh, but if there's any questions where if you kind of think back on that and kind of go what do you mean by that? Why did he go off on a tangent about that? Just just drop us an e-mail or something?

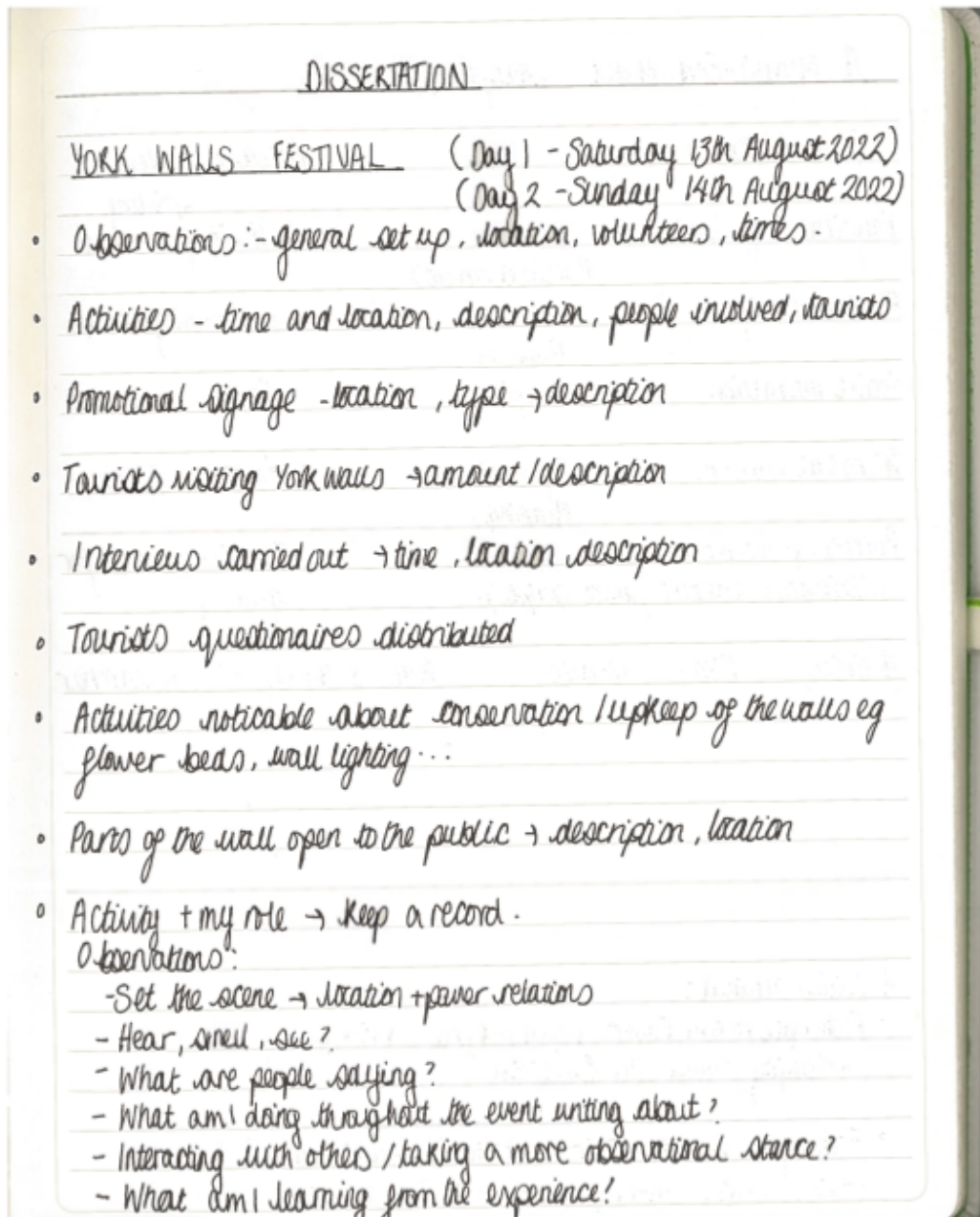
Researcher: And yes, and if if you can do any other useful contacts that would be useful have for me to enter touch with that would be useful as well. But yes, thank you so much for coming on an interview with me.

Dominic Berry: No, no worries. All right. Well, nice to meet you and good luck with the dissertation.

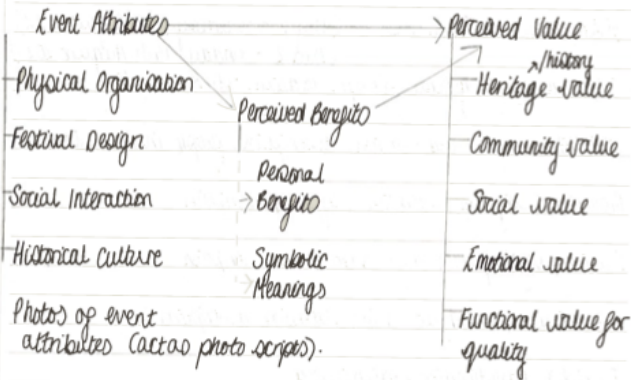
Researcher: Thank you. Bye.

Dominic Berry: Cheers, bye.





## A Means-End Model (Adapted)



| Activity | Time | Location | Role of myself as a researcher |
|----------|------|----------|--------------------------------|
|          |      |          |                                |
|          |      |          |                                |
|          |      |          |                                |
|          |      |          |                                |
|          |      |          |                                |

### Activities outlined:

- Fishergate Postern Tower → open for free → 10-4pm  
- Making Walled City Exhibition
- Fishergate Bar Street Fair → outside the Phoenix Inn  
- live music, Sunday → Ebor Morris Dances → 12:30pm

### • Red Tower

- Saturday → 10-4pm
- Sunday → 10-2pm

### • River Foss Society Stand

- Foss Islands Road



Sketch map of the York Walls Festival  
street fair → 11:15am

11:15 - 12:15 pm

I walked to Fishergate Tower, and I spoke to the volunteers of the tower about the walls and my dissertation! I carried out many questionnaires with visitors.

## AFTERNOON

12:30 pm

The Ebor Morris dances are about to perform!  
Wow! Tradition, music and community all together.  
The music was new to me and energized the crowd! The Ex Mayor of York was part of the Ebor Morris Dance group!

3 dance groups, Had a chat with one of the dancers in York about the heritage and tradition of the dances. The dances have been passed down in history.

Approx 2pm  
- Had an informal chat with Dave Taylor, the former mayor of York who was a spectator of the dancing. We spoke of the walls and their relation to China's city walls in (China) - I think! These walls are older than York walls! The fact that lots of city walls around makes it difficult to gather support for a World Heritage Fund and UNESCO status for York's historic city. China have its own exhibition showcasing York's walls too.

- Worked with Robert Sjaham → city's past archaeologist.
- A project started 5 years ago.
- China's walls → 57 km! York's walls → 5.7 km!
- Festivals in China + York → 3 days apart!

## DAY 1 - SATURDAY 13th AUGUST 2022

Morning:

10:06am - Setting up!

- It is a bright and sunny morning, and a headache in the UK - 30 degrees it will be today!
- I arrived at 9am, and the volunteers and I started to set up the festival at Fishergate Bar. This is one of the points in the festival, with other visitor points being Fishergate Postern Tower and Red Tower. We have set up: games, tombola, and kuzing... The day is off to a wonderful start!

10:30am - First customers to wait!

- Enjoyed learning about the trail pack, and also details!

11-11:30am - A visit to Fishergate Tower

- Walked along the walls with Baz Jones, the director of York Walls Festival. On entry, met Bill Hill, and he introduced me to the tower and its exhibits. I will be back to the tower later to have an interview with Bill about the tower, the walls, the Friends of York Walls etc.

### Observations

- Families
- Lots of people walking the walls.
- Hot weather!
- People walking through Fishergate Bar.
- Community feel about the festival.
- York Explorer Trail booklet for children.

'I fully support it, and this is what York needs.'

12:00 - Visit to Red Tower

I walked along the walls, and in particular noticed the houses on the sides of the walls. Once at Red Tower, I was greeted by the volunteers. Ian, a volunteer, I spoke to about the significance of the Red Tower about the heritage.

Afternoon:

12:30 - 2:00pm - live guitar + music

Live music outside the festival stall! This drew tourists in to see what the festival was about!

2 - 3pm

During this period of time, I interviewed Baz Jones, the director of the festival. We did this in a

a shaded spot, in front of the festival. Kar on the piano was playing live music in the background, which did provide some festival ambience! [check I can hear the recording!] We discussed the festival itself amongst York and its heritage.

3 - Volunteer - 'We had about 170 people into Red Tower!' Bill Hill - 262 people visit the Fishergate Tower. The City Sightseeing bus often goes past further in the distance, close to the walls.

There are bubbles and lots of socialising happening at the site of the festival.

'So he heard the piano playing, and so wanted to come and see.' ★

4 - 5pm - Interview with Bill Hill, Chairman of Friends of York Walls.

I walked over to Fishergate Tower to meet Bill Hill, the Chairman of the Friends of York Walls to have an interview. I helped rack away the festival things, and we walked over to the Phoenix Inn where we conducted our interview. The medieval feel of the pub definitely added to the ambience of the interview.

## DAY 2 - SUNDAY 14th AUGUST 2022

MORNING

11am

- Arrived at the festival site slightly later this morning due to the rain strikes!

- Once arrived, tried to attract the first visitors of the day!

2-3pm - Walked back along the walls to Fishergate Tower.

I walked back to check the status of visitors at the tower and possibly conduct some interviews/questionnaires. I met ~~Bob~~ Hill, the Chairman of the Friends of York Walls, whom I enquired to see if any photos/maps of the present and the future state of the walls. ~~Bob~~ Bill is going to send me an email with the photos/maps of the walls!

3pm-4pm - Closing of the day!

As the weather becomes hotter, the festival is drawing in. The day has been busy, full of activities and informative details. My highlight was the Floor Movers Dances! The crowd was in awe and so was I! Dances that no one has seen before, which made the performances even more captivating!

## Appendix D: Questionnaire

**York Walls Festival – Questionnaire**

I would like to thank you for your participation in the questionnaire. Responses collected will contribute to my dissertation based on the historic city of York.

Please make sure you have completed the consent form and have read/ acquired information regarding the dissertation.

Questions

1) Please tick how you became aware of York Walls Festival.

Came across the festival by walking on the walls.

Have seen adverts on social media/ the website.

Word of mouth.

Other (please state):

---

2) How long do you plan on spending time visiting the walls?

30 minutes

1 hour

2 hours

2 hours +

3) Which activity have you enjoyed experiencing the most from the York Walls Festival? Please state/ describe.

Walking up the fishergate tower

Seeing the Mom's Dancers at fishergate bar

4) Are you aware of all of the other activities run by the York Walls Festival across the walls?

Yes

No

5) Have you spoken to many volunteers of the festival about the value of the walls? If yes, please state what you have learnt.

Yes

No

6) Do you think the festival is well organised and designed? Please state why.

Yes

No

Social media posts have enabled us to plan what we wanted to see during our visit

7) To you, what are the symbols and uses of the city walls? Please state.

The bars & gates are symbolic, and each has its own history.

8) Are you aware of any other festivals that happen in York? If yes, please state.

Yes

No

9) Do you think the walls separate the historic and contemporary parts of York? Please explain.

Yes, certain parts of the walls eg by the old

Abbey ruins and Yorkshire museum. Nice to see  
quieter areas away from busy city centre.

10) How do you think York is different from other cities?

Very friendly city, lots to see & do. We visit

5-6 times a year from Widnes, Cheshire.

Always things going on & the walls are interesting  
to walk round.

Appendix E: Consent Form

| <b>School of Geography, University of Nottingham</b>  |                         |  |
|---|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Consent Form</b>   |                         |  |
| <b><i>Investigating The 'Experience Economy': Breaking Down The 'Walls' of York's City Centre.</i></b>  |                         |  |
| In signing this consent form I confirm that:  |                         |  |
| I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.  | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have had the opportunity to ask questions.  | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it (an interview).   | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw from the research project at any stage, without having to give any reason and withdrawing will not penalise or disadvantage me in any way.  | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I agree that extracts from the interview may be quoted in the dissertation arising from this research.  | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that the interview will be recorded using audiotape/electronic voice recorder/video recorder.  | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that data will be securely stored.   | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that I may contact the researcher, if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Officer of the School of Geography, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research. | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I agree to take part in the above research project.   | Yes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Participant's name (BLOCK CAPITAL)  | Participant's signature | Date   |
| EMILY HUTCHINSON  | E.H.Hutchinson          | 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2022                            |
| Researcher's name (BLOCK CAPITAL)   | Researcher's signature  | Date   |



## Appendix F: Information Sheet for Participants

### **Participant Information Sheet**

**School of Geography**  
**University of Nottingham**

**RESEARCH TITLE: Investigating The 'Experience Economy': Breaking Down The 'Walls' of York's City Centre.**

I, Emily Hutchinson, am carrying out a study to investigate York's experience economy. I will investigate York's: visions, economy, architecture, festivals ... aspects that all formulate experiences in York. This study will form my undergraduate dissertation.

The participant will take part in a semi-structured interview. This will involve questions that are open to the participants knowledge of certain aspects of York's experience economy, such as: strategies that York is implementing to create a vision for the city's experiences. The interview will be expected to last 30 -45 minutes.

Being involved with a semi-structured interview, will bring many benefits for the participant. The participant will gain a new insight into York, becoming aware of the geography behind York's 'experience economy', as a festival city. Additionally, the participant will be able to provide information, that will supplement research that aims to develop a holistic understanding of York and its 'experience economy'.

There are no foreseeable risks to the individual, with participation in an interview.

There are no costs to taking part in this research.

The participation in the interview is voluntary, and the individual can withdraw at any time without giving any reasons, if they do no longer wish to participate.

Information collected will be recorded and transcribed onto a word processing document. The information will be stored upon a password protected computer for the duration of the dissertation only. Reference to participants will reference the organisation, however, full anonymity can be made available if participants so please.

#### **Contact details**

Researcher:

Emily Hutchinson  
[lgveh11@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:lgveh11@nottingham.ac.uk)

Dissertation Supervisor:

Dr. Andrew Cook  
[andrew.cook@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.cook@nottingham.ac.uk)

## Appendix G: York's Festival Programme for the 1951 Festival of Britain

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ART, HISTORY<br/>and ARCHITECTURE</b></p> <p><b>ART GALLERY</b><br/>Exhibition of Masterpieces from the great Yorkshire houses</p> <p><b>PUBLIC LIBRARY</b><br/>Exhibition of Mediaeval Books and Manuscripts</p> <p><b>CASTLE MUSEUM</b><br/>The world-famous Kirk Collection of Bygones in its unique setting of the old "street"</p> <p><b>GRANDMOTHER'S TREASURES EXHIBITION</b><br/>and Display of Period Dresses</p> <p><b>YORKSHIRE MUSEUM and GARDENS</b><br/>Mediaeval Sculpture, Roman and Anglian Remains, Yorkshire Pottery and Natural History</p> <p><b>RAILWAY MUSEUM and OLD STATION</b><br/>Special Exhibition of Railway History</p> <p><b>EXHIBITION FLATS</b><br/>Two modern blocks of flats, specially designed and built for the Festival</p> <p><b>PERIOD ARCHITECTURE</b><br/>The <i>Rosam</i> Multangular Tower, the <i>Medieval City Walls, Gates, Parish Churches and Guildhalls, The Shambles</i> (the oldest street in Europe), the <i>Tudor King's Manor, the Georgian Assembly Rooms, Mansion House, Streets and Houses</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OTHER EVENTS<br/>and INTERESTS</b></p> <p>Regatta and Night River Carnival<br/>Festival Club in the <i>ASSEMBLY ROOMS</i><br/>Masked Georgian Ball<br/>Brass Band Contest and Massed Band Concert<br/>Special production in the <i>JOSEPH ROWNTREE THEATRE</i> of "Highwayman Love", a Yorkshire Opera, by the York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society<br/>Displays of English Folk Dancing<br/>Many famous houses and the historic Abbeys of Yorkshire are within easy reach of York, and special transport facilities will be available.<br/>Hospitality Scheme for overseas visitors in the surrounding countryside.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— 6 —</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOOKING<br/>ARRANGEMENTS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOOKING OPENS ON 1st MARCH, 1951</b></p> <p>Requests for accommodation and ticket reservations should be made direct to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>York Festival Offices,</i><br/>1 Museum Street, YORK, ENGLAND</p> <p>Festival information can also be obtained from:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Festival of Britain Information Centre,</i><br/>Leicester Square, LONDON</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>British Travel and Holidays Association Information Centres at:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">47 Leicester Square, LONDON<br/>336 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK, N.Y., U.S.A.<br/>372 Bay Street, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA<br/>331 Dominion Square Building, MONTREAL,<br/>P.Q., CANADA<br/>6 Place Vendôme, PARIS</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Thomas Cook and Son Ltd.,</i><br/>Berkeley Street, LONDON, W.1, and Branches</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dean &amp; Dawson Ltd.,</i><br/>14 Bolton Street, LONDON, W.1, and Branches</p> <p style="text-align: center;">●</p> <p>A second brochure giving full details of programmes, prices and dates of all Festival performances, with Ticket Order Form included, will be issued later. Send your name and address to the York Festival Offices, 1 Museum Street, York, as soon as possible, if you want a copy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— 7 —</p> |
|--|--|

Source: York Mystery Plays Archive.

Reference:

1948. *Programmes/ Posters: 1951 York Festival – Committee minutes from 1948.*

[Online]. York: York Mystery Plays Archive. Catalogue Code: YMP/ J/ 19. Accessed [30 August 2022]. Available from:

[http://www.yorkmysteryplays.org/default.asp?idno=193&a=d&item\\_id=11&k=festival](http://www.yorkmysteryplays.org/default.asp?idno=193&a=d&item_id=11&k=festival)

## Appendix H: Typical 'York Walls Festival' Activities

(Source: (York Walls Festival, n.d))

### Typical Festival Activities:

| <u>Activity</u>  | <u>Time</u>                           | <u>Location</u>                                   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Walking the Wall Circuit   | Approximately 8:00 – Dusk             | Wall Circuit                                      |
| York Guard Promenade   | Approximately 10:00 – 10:30, Saturday | Micklegate Bar to Barker Tower                    |
| Festival Information Point   | 10:30- 16:00                          | Museum Gardens                                    |
| Battlefields Trust Stand   | 10:30- 16:00                          | Museum Gardens                                    |
| Woollen Walls Project<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of a wall-hanging tapestry taking inspiration from York's history and heritage.</li> <li>- View the final tapestry.</li> </ul>  | 12:00 – 16:00                         | Fishergate Bar                                    |
| Craft Fair<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local York creatives, Moody Mare Patisserie, The Holgate Windmill Preservation Society.</li> </ul>  | 10:00 – 16:00                         | Red Tower   |
| Ecological Trail<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Find the 9 information signs, left within the grass mowed path alongside the walls ramparts.</li> <li>- Discover the trees, grasses and other plants that have been left to thrive on the ramparts, over the summer.</li> <li>- Support of the City of York Council.</li> </ul> | 10:00 – 16:00                         | Wall ramparts near Red Tower, Foss Islands Road.  |
| Grass Labyrinth<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Walls Ramparts in this section have been allowed to grow.</li> <li>- Support of the City of York Council.</li> </ul>   | 10:00 – 16:00                         | Walls Ramparts, near Red Tower, Foss Islands Road |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Special Festival Guided Walks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- York Walls Festival 'Beneath Our Feet' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Archaeological consultant Toby Kendall.</li> <li>→ A walk to connect the streets and buildings to the archaeology below.</li> <li>→ Arranged with association with the River Foss Society.</li> </ul> </li> <br/> <li>- 'The Changing Views of York and its Walls' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Volunteer Guide Neil Moran</li> <li>→ 8 stop walk to show how York and its Walls have changed over the centuries.</li> <li>→ Arranged with association with The River Foss Society.</li> </ul> </li> <br/> <li>- York Air Walk 'York Walls Festival' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Dr Simon Rogerson</li> <li>→ From Micklegate Bar to York Minster.</li> <li>→ York's not as known tales.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 18:30 – 20:00, Sunday</li> <br/> <li>- 10:30 – midday, Sunday</li> <br/> <li>- 15:00, Sunday</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eventbrite booking page.</li> <br/> <li>- Eventbrite Booking Page</li> <br/> <li>- <a href="http://www.hiddenhorizons.co.uk">www.hiddenhorizons.co.uk</a></li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

Specific 2022 Festival Activities:

| <u>Activity</u>   | <u>Time</u>  | <u>Location</u>          |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Walking the Wall Circuit  | Approximately 8:00 – Dusk  | Wall Circuit             |
| Fishergate Postern Tower<br>(Climb the spiral staircase)  | 10:30 – 16:00  | Fishergate Postern Tower |
| 'Nanjing Walled City'<br>Exhibition<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Showcasing 6 iconic images of the walls in Nanjing, whilst the City Walls Museum in Nanjing showcase the York City Walls.</li> <li>- A partnership with The City Walls Museum, Nanjing, China, York Mansion House, OE Media and former mayor of York, Dave Taylor.</li> </ul> | 10:30-16:00  | Fishergate Postern Tower |
| Red Tower – The only tower made with brick. A fascinating history, once a gunpowder store, now a food bank.<br>(Collect the special stamp on the explorer's trail)  | 10:00 – 16:00, Saturday<br>10:00 – 14:00, Sunday   | Red Tower                |
| Fishergate Bar Street Fair:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Live music from Esther Clare and Andrew Clegg.</li> <li>- Ebor Morris Dancers</li> <li>- Live music from pianist Karl Mullen</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From mid-day, Saturday</li> <li>- From 12:30, Sunday</li> <li>- 14:00 – 16:30, Saturday and Sunday</li> </ul> | Fishergate Bar           |
| River Foss Society Stand<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlighting the history of the river in relation to the walls. Also, the environmental and social activities of the society.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10:00-16:00, Saturday and Sunday</li> </ul>   | River Foss               |

Abstract I: Heritage values of the York Walls Festival

| <p><u>Element</u><br/><i>(Garrod and Fyall, 2000)</i></p> | <p><u>Context</u><br/><i>(Garrod and Fyall, 2000)</i></p>   | <p><u>Context in York Walls Heritage and Community Festival</u><br/><i>(York Walls Festival, n.d)</i></p>                                    |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Conservation</p>                                       | <p>The role of the heritage manager needs to ensure the longevity of the heritage asset. The use of the heritage asset in the present must not deter from the use of the asset in the future.</p> | <p>'promote the City Walls as 'living heritage' that remain integral to the city's vitality and identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century'</p> |
| <p>Accessibility</p>                                      | <p>To be significant, heritage needs to be accessed. This needs to be controlled.</p>   | <p>'engage with families, Festival visitors and those who may not usually be interested in heritage, history and community'</p>              |
| <p>Education</p>  | <p>Understanding of the heritage asset is needed to appreciate the heritage asset.</p>  | <p>'combine the power of archaeology, archival materials, social history, arts and theatre to inspire and celebrate'</p>                     |
| <p>Relevance</p>  | <p>All visitors should understand why the heritage asset is relevant to them. The heritage asset should be identifiable and relevant to the local community.</p>                                  | <p>'inspire interest and appreciation in heritage and community including York's diverse history and the City Walls'</p>                     |
| <p>Recreation</p>   | <p>Return visits to the heritage asset are encouraged when a recreational opportunity is provided.</p>  | <p>'a series of community and family-friendly activities'</p>  |
| <p>Financial</p>  | <p>Heritage assets should be financially supported.</p>   | <p>'capture feedback and build evidence for investment in conservation, presentation and interpretation'</p>                                 |
| <p>Local Community</p>                                    | <p>The heritage asset should work with the local community.</p>   | <p>'forge links with local community groups, organisations and businesses'</p>   |
| <p>Quality</p>  | <p>High quality service must be provided to ensure competitiveness.</p>   | <p>'deliver high quality and memorable experiences'</p>  |

Appendix J: Extract from The York Press newspaper article featuring the York Walls Festival (Lewis, 2022)



Appendix K: Researcher's photographs taken with permission (Credits: YorkArcheological Trust) inside the Jorvik experience, the founding company of the Jorvik Viking Festival.

