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## Excitement builds and plans come together for York's only festival dedicated to the over 50s!

***York 50+ Festival Saturday 20 September to Wednesday 1 October 2025***

As plans come together for the York 50+ Festival - a unique, 10-day event featuring an exciting mix of talks, performances and social activities - organisers York Older People's Assembly (YOPA) and Age UK York share some news of what is in store.

**Professor Dianne Willcocks**, Vice Chair, YOPA says *"We anticipate the biggest, brightest Festival yet. As the 50+ Festival comes together, we are deeply grateful to our generous sponsors, including SPARK, Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Harrowells Solicitors. Also special thanks go to the Festival Committee, whose efforts have brought in so many new supporters this year, enriching the programme for all participants."*

To coincide with the festival theme - ***Celebrating and Connecting*** – we list below just a few of the exciting activities taking place.

- Cultural, social, learning
  - **u3a Open Day** - for anyone retired or semi-retired who wants to enjoy educational, social, recreational, travel and creative activities.
  - **York's Hidden Histories** - a thought-provoking walking tour exploring the overlooked stories of women, people of colour, and LGBTQIA+ individuals.
  - **Clements Hall History Group** - a presentation about the fortunes of the remarkable Varvill family of Micklegate and their impact on Victorian York.
- Community health and wellbeing support
  - **York Carers Centre** art installation - offering **free** support to unpaid carers, they will display their **'We See You'** art installation.
  - Dementia Forward, Alzheimer's York, Minds and Voices – will all be involved offering help and support.
- Volunteering
  - **Older Citizens Advocacy York** - open day offering advocacy and practical support. Learn more about fulfilling volunteering opportunities.
  - **Age UK York** – find out more about services and volunteering - Whether helping someone home after hospital, tackling loneliness or free advice.
- Help and advice in later life

- **MySight sighted guiding taster** - Discover practical tips to confidently guide a friend or loved one with sight loss.
  - **Specsavers Acomb glasses repairs**, MOT and advice - just drop in or call for a free appointment.
  - **Medequip Independent Living** - an informative and practical drop-in session, showcasing low-cost daily living aids.
- Keeping yourself safe in later years
  - **North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue** – Road Safety for older drivers and safety in the home advice.
  - **Slipper social and information fair** - Pick up free slippers, have a cuppa and access a range of useful information.
- Sporting /getting active
  - Look out for loads of fun activities or try new sporting activities such as walking football, pickleball, getting active sessions and more.

Celebrating its 20th year, the festival embraces the UN designated International Day of Older People (IDOP) and runs from **Saturday 20 September to Wednesday 1 October**, with a Central Parade on Saturday 27 September. The festival is an invitation to actively participate in York's vibrant community and offers a space to challenge ageism and celebrate the energy, creativity, and contributions of older people.

**Dianne** added: *“Our partnerships with York St John Student’s Union and Knavesmire Primary School are bridging generations, ensuring that older people take their rightful place within the heart of our community. We’re forever grateful to the staff and children of Knavesmire Cool Kids Club who are creating an inspiring installation that will feature leaves on large branches to be displayed at York Theatre Royal throughout the festival.”*

We can't wait to see you there.

#### Next steps

- The full programme of events will be on our webpage and the booklets available around the city in early September
- Join us on Saturday 27 September from 13.00 York Theatre Royal for the Grand Parade
- Get involved either as a volunteer, sponsor or putting on activities
- Find out more [www.yorkassembly.org.uk/50-festival-2025/](http://www.yorkassembly.org.uk/50-festival-2025/)
- Email us [yorkfiftyplus@gmail.com](mailto:yorkfiftyplus@gmail.com)
- See social posts for updates





## Ends

### About YOPA

York Older People's Assembly (YOPA) is an independent local charity which has advocated for, celebrated and supported older people across York and North Yorkshire since 2001. We are an organisation of older people, for older people and we work to achieve full citizenship for diverse older people across and within the wider community.

We aim to:

- Represent the views of older people in York to decision makers locally and nationally.
- Inform older people about services that are available.
- Identify where needs are not being met.
- Work with the local authority and others to make York an age-friendly city

As part of the 50+ Festival, this is the third year in which YOPA has successfully led a city-wide collaborative for International Day of Older People.

### About Age UK York

Age UK York is an independent local charity which has been working in the local community to help older people for over 50 years. We have 100 dedicated staff and over 400 volunteers helping us to deliver services and activities for older people in York. Age UK York provides free, confidential and impartial information and advice on a range of issues relating to older people and those who care for and support them.

We offer a wide range of services to older people in York to enable them to live better lives. This includes information and advice, benefits and money advice, befriending services, carer respite service, Day Clubs and Home From Hospital support. All our work is aimed at improving the lives of older people in York. Age UK York encourages older people to speak out about local and national issues. We are here to make more of life in York.

### About the International Day of Older People

Each year on October 1, people across the world mark United Nations International Day of Older People to raise awareness of opportunities and challenges faced by ageing populations, and to mobilise the wider community to address challenges faced by older people. The theme for 2025, is the role older people play in creating resilient, sustainable societies.

### About SPARK

SPARK is a unique space championing the creative and independent community, providing a home for the next generation of entrepreneurs in York. You'll find the best food, drinks, retail, events and entertainment Yorkshire has to offer. All access facilities provide a comfortable space for individuals and groups to meet.

### About Harrowells Solicitors

With offices in the centre of York and at Clifton Moor, Haxby, Easingwold, Thirsk, Malton and Pocklington, we have experts on hand to help you. Our staff take pride in always being professional, supportive, approachable and friendly when looking after our clients.

### About Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust

The best care in beautiful settings, JRHT provides comfortable, affordable and secure homes to people in York and parts of the North East. Homes include apartments, houses, and bungalows. Some homes have been adapted to support people living with disabilities, and extra care and support is also provided.



The wonderful staff and children of **Knavesmire Cool Kids Club** cocreating a beautiful leaf installation for this year's festival.

