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## York 50+ Festival fever just days away

**Get ready for creativity, connections and memories in the making - start planning your festival favourites**

The York 50+ Festival is York's only [festival](#) dedicated to the over 50s and runs from **Saturday 20 September to Wednesday 1 October 2025**. The unique event features an exciting mix of talks, performances and social activities, organised by York Older People's Assembly (YOPA) and Age UK York.

We asked **Professor Dianne Willcocks**, Vice Chair, YOPA what makes it so special. *"In these challenging times, the Festival will to bring colour, creativity and joy to our city. Our glorious booklet of 100+ activities offers something for everyone. On Saturday 27 September, the Grand Parade through Museum Gardens - with banners, dancing for all ages with student stewards and family fun - will create memories to treasure. In our 20th year, we warmly welcome all to share in this rich menu of delights."*

This year's Festival is all about **Celebrating and Connecting** – and there's no shortage of ways to join in the fun! Whether you're curious to uncover York's hidden histories, fancy picking up a new language, or want to make a difference by volunteering, there's something to spark everyone's interest.

For those keen to get moving, the festival is serving up a whole menu of activities to try. Give walking netball or indoor bowls a go, stretch your toes with over-50s ballet, or join the pickleball craze. If improving health and wellbeing is more your vibe, you'll find friendly advice on everything from home and driving safety to daily living aids, fire safety tips and even hearing or glasses repairs.

But it's not all serious business - there's plenty of joy and connection woven in. Share stories and a slice at Cake and Connection, take part in a lively game of *Deal or No Deal* or board games with new friends, or drop into a lip reading taster session. Creative spirits can try their hand at whittling, origami, or simply soak up the fun of Strictly fun dancing.



There's also a welcoming LGBT Coffee Social, a foraging walk for the adventurers, and of course, the unmissable Fish and Chip Friday.

**Simon Holmes, CEO, Age UK York** added *"We want York to be a brilliant place to grow older - full of fun, connection, and opportunities to try something new. This festival is all about breaking the stereotypes, celebrating the many ways people enjoy life at every age, and bringing different generations together to share laughter, learning, and good times."*

As we celebrate 20 years of the York 50+ Festival, **visionary founder Sue Lister** said *"I turned 80 this year. I can do what I want. It's an empowering thing, you can be as curious as you like, have an open mind and never get stuck in a rut. Life happens, now deal with it. It's about knowing you are of value, you are the only person who is you in this world. Don't waste the opportunity."* You can hear more about why Sue set the festival up in this brilliant video [here](#).

This year's **International Day of Older People Celebration** will take place on Saturday 27 September and here's what we have in store:

09.30-10.30	Silver Swans Ballet Demonstration	York Theatre Royal Studio Theatre
11.00-12.00	York Playback Theatre performance	York Theatre Royal Studio Theatre
10.30-16.00	Music Performances including Musical Connections, Nicola Betts and Vanessa Simmons	St Helen's Square
13.00-15.00	Celebration Parade	Convene York Theatre Royal
14.30-15.00	Parade is received by the Sherriff. A creative happening takes place with music and dancing	St Helen's Square
15.00-17.00	Celebration continues with refreshments	St Sampson's Centre, Church Street
15.15-16.15	Tai Chi demonstration and participation	Museum Gardens



As Festival fever sweeps in, we can't wait to see you there. Open to anyone looking to learn something new, meet like-minded people, or simply have fun, this festival is all about enjoying life to the fullest - whether you're 55, 75 or 95!

### Next steps

- The full programme of events is [here](#) and the booklets are available around the city at libraries, West Offices, St Sampsons Centre, Spark.
- 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



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### 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.

