



PR 3 19.8.26

Full programme announced for festival of connection, creativity and ageing well

Thursday 1 October to Sunday 18 October 2026

The York 50+ Festival, celebrating connection, creativity and ageing well in later life, is delighted to unveil its full programme of events. A celebration of York's vibrant community, the festival shines a spotlight on the energy, creativity and invaluable contributions of older people.

From exercise classes and ballet to walking rugby, Sporting Memories, Tai Chi and chair yoga, there's something for everyone. The programme also features friendship lunches, historic pub walks, conservation activities, hearing impairment advice, brain health sessions and games - offering plenty of opportunities to get active, try something new, meet others and have fun.

With more than 80 exciting events taking place over 150 sessions, we can't wait to share the celebrations with our community.

Chair of YOPA, Matthew Knight says "We're thrilled to bring together such a diverse and exciting programme of events that celebrates everything our community has to offer. There really is something for everyone and we hope people will come along, get involved, make new connections and discover something new. We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors, volunteers and partners for their generous support in helping us make the festival possible, including Clifton Park Hospital, Somerset House, Switalskis/Pryors solicitor, York Theatre Royal, St Sampson's Centre, Rotary York Ainsty, Fulprint, The Students' of York University, the children and staff of Knavesmire Cool Kids Club, York Food & Drink Festival and Patch."

Carl Wain, Deputy Chief Executive, Age UK York added "Our sincere thanks go to everyone involved in this year's festival. We're particularly excited to introduce some new events this year, including the Beat the Boat run race and a special Goon Show event.



We hope these new additions, alongside our much-loved returning events, will bring people together, inspire new experiences and create plenty of memorable moments.”

Below are just a few of the exciting activities taking place as part of the festival.

Sports and Active Leisure

- Get active, have fun and try something new with a fantastic range of activities, including walking football, walking netball, circle dancing, mind and body classes, swimming, table tennis, indoor bowls, ballet, Tai Chi, accessible yoga, Strictly Fun Dancing, getting active sessions and much more.
- New for this year: Age UK York's **Beat the Boat Run Race on 4 October**. Take on a 2.7km riverside route and race alongside the City Cruise boat. Not running? You can hop aboard the boat, soak up the atmosphere and cheer the runners on!

Advice and Information

- Discover a wealth of advice and guidance covering a range of topics, including supporting people experiencing sight and hearing loss, group hypnotherapy and relaxation, fire and road safety, will advice, Dementia Friends and Older People's Perspectives on AI.
- New for this year: our **Information Fair at York Theatre Royal on 6 October**, bringing together a range of local organisations offering information, professional advice and support on services and opportunities available in the community.

Social Activity and Learning

- Connect, learn and try something new with a wide range of social and learning opportunities, including the Breast Friends York pillow workshop, living with ongoing pain, Sporting Memories, stories in glass, coffee and culture, choirs, brain health sessions, games, conservation task days, York's hidden histories with Uncomfortable York and a historic pub walking tour.



- There's also an opportunity to meet up with **Menfulness Meets** on 5 and 12 October – a chance to connect, chat about issues and enjoy time together.
- New this year are a series of special **Friendship Lunches** taking place at The Chopping Block in Walmgate, on 24 September, 8 and 15 October

Creative and Culture

- New for this year: **75 Years of the Goon Show** – the Goon Show Preservation Society and the Borthwick Institute for Archives present a live performance celebrating 75 years of the much-loved comedy series, featuring two classic episodes on 17 October
- And meet the wonderful singer and violinist Lesley Locke on 14 October for a special event celebrating music, performance and creativity.

See our full programme [here](#)

Next steps

- Save the dates
 - Thursday 1 October 17.30-20.00 – Bob Towner Lecture [book here](#)
 - Saturday 3 October - York 50+ day of celebration with parade from 13.00
 - Tuesday 6 October, 10.00–12.00 - Information Fair
- Get involved by:
 - Run an event - Although the deadline for inclusion in our printed programme has now passed you can feature your event in our online programme.
 - Spreading the word
 - Volunteering
 - Sponsorship – [see pack](#) of options
 - Catch up on last year's festival [here](#)

Have a question - Call us on **07965 246193** or email us yorkfiftyplus@gmail.com
Find out more <https://www.yorkassembly.org.uk/50-festival-26/>

For latest updates, follow us on



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.



Carl Wain, Deputy CEO, Age UK York



Matthew Knight, Chair, YOPA