

The parade of our lives

Lord Mayor Councillor Margaret Wells

“On behalf of city of York it is my honour and privilege as your Lord Mayor to extend the warmest of welcome to the 21st annual York 50+ Festival grand parade. When people look around this square today, they will see they are not just surrounded by ancient stone, but by the vibrant, pulsing life and energy that you have brought through our streets. You’ve raised our spirits, so congratulations, you have completely transformed the heart of York today. You have filled York with colour, music and something even better – an unmistakable sense of fun.

As we mark the International Day of Older People this week, your parade is a powerful, living demonstration of what it means to age well, to stay connected and what is it like to live with boundless creativity and fun.”



Lord Mayor, Town Crier, Dianne Willcocks and Matthew Knight

Carl Wain, Deputy Chief Executive, Age UK York

Festivals like this are important because they provide an opportunity to raise the profile of older people and celebrate positivity, fun and inclusion, while helping to challenge some of the stereotypes associated with ageing. They also create an opportunity for people to socialise, come together and connect around a shared theme. At its heart, it’s about challenging ageism and creating spaces where people can feel included, valued and able to have a good time.

The city centre is often heavily focused on tourism and the bar and nightlife scene. By bringing older people into the city centre in such a positive and visible way, we’re reclaiming the space and creating a different balance - one that celebrates people of all ages and shows that getting older doesn’t mean becoming less active or disconnected.

The 50+ Festival is strongly aligned to Age UK York’s values and being an age friendly community. It’s important to celebrate what is within our city and it’s the largest event we do – a unique celebration which brings older people together for lots of fun.



Carl Wain with the Lord Mayor

Stan the Man, 90 years and 2 month
Events like this keep me alive and kicking.



Anne and Bracken

Anne and Bracken the dog age 13 yrs

I volunteer for Musical Connections as a volunteer driver and make the tea - I enjoy music and wanted to give something back. Singing makes you happy. Things don't stop when you are older.

Anon

I'm here just to be involved and to be here and to find out what's going on in York.



Stan the man

Heulwen, volunteer steward

It's my third year supporting the 50+ Festival. It's a beautiful celebration of the generations and it's important. We wouldn't be here without those who came before us. It's so nice to bring the generations together.



Martin

Martin

I like community. I think it's the age of social isolation, this is good for people to engage and it's a lovely sunny day.

Geri, York U3A

I'm a person of a certain age and it's a great opportunity to make contact with people as I've moved back to York and don't have friends locally. This festival shows we're still capable.



Heulwen, volunteer steward



Town Crier and Dianne Willcocks

Town Crier Ben Fry

I love any chance to celebrate the people of York. The 50+ festival is definitely one of the highlights of the year.



Geri and Jim



Cath and Susan

Cath & Susan

We're involved in the festival because it shows we're not dead yet!

Beryl U3A

It's fun for older people. We can do joyful, happy things. We're just so fortunate to live in York where there is so much going on.

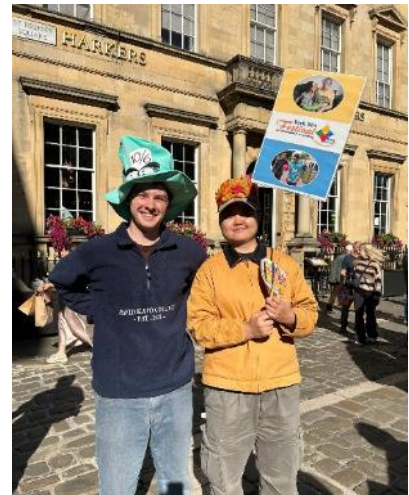
Luis, volunteer steward, UOY

It's my first time in the UK and York and I'm really happy to be a volunteer today. I was a volunteer in China for animal abandonment.

Alex Brown, volunteer steward, UOY

I have been involved with the tea and coffee club at University of York. It's for vulnerable older adults who live alone, so we pick them up in taxis, have a chat, have social events and a bingo night. We have 21 younger people involved and 15 older people every week.

I want to help and give something back to YOPA and Age UK York, supporting older people in York is so important.
@tea_and_coffee_uoy



Alex and Luis, volunteer stewards



John and Dick, York Rotary Ainsty

John Niklaus and Dick Powell, Secretary, York Rotary Ainsty

Rotary is a service club and this is an event that we have mutual interest in and it's great to support the festival.

Simon Proctor, Converge, York St John University

It's great to see people coming together, bringing the streets to life, showing how much goes on especially musically across the city of York. The 50+ festival shines a spotlight on older people's involvement and activity which isn't always obvious, so it's great to have them at the centre of things.



Simon Proctor



Fiona and Alex

Fiona, York Unlocked

I'm 70 and found the 50+ Festival brochure in the library. I work for York Unlocked and today arranged to meet a friend and suddenly was involved in the march, dragged in by Alex's ghetto blaster with fantastic tunes like Mamma Mia and wake me up before you go-go.

Donna, Parade lead

It was the easiest, most amazing, happiest and vibrant parade yet. The Musical Connections choir in the museum gardens was brilliant. The hats worked really well it made a real difference. Every year it just gets bigger and better.



Donna

For me, the Festival is a really valuable opportunity to meet and get to know people I wouldn't normally have the chance to meet. I've always loved living in York, so being involved in the Festival also feels like a way of giving something back to the community. It was particularly good to see the university students getting involved, especially international students who may be new to the UK and unfamiliar with York. The Festival provides a great opportunity for them to meet local people, experience the city and feel more connected and integrated within the wider community.



Dianne Willcocks

Dianne Willcocks, Vice Chair, YOPA

What a glorious sun-filled day. I loved the joy and generosity created by performers and participants alike. And we won so many new friends as the Mad Hatters parade took our 'positive ageing' messages through the city. The photos will show that we won support from all ages and all sections of our community - including, importantly, the wonderful validating words of our Lord Mayor. A good day for York!



