

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

21 February 2024

STATEMENT OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, ARTS & HOUSING
including Culture, Arts, Libraries, Museums, Archives, Key venues, Leisure, and Housing

Leisure Services

Scarborough Open Air Theatre

There are now 16 acts announced for the 2024 Season at Scarborough Open Air Theatre. Sales look to be heading to top last year's record numbers and are predicted to exceed 100,000. The season starts with Status Quo on the 2 June and features a number of big names such as Simple Minds, Deacon Blue, Tom Jones, Gregory Porter, Fat Boy Slim, Paul Weller and many more.

There are a number of improvements taking place within the venue. These include additional CCTV cameras, improvements to some areas of lighting and HVM (Hostile Vehicle Mitigation) for the North Entrance to the venue.

In addition works to infill part of the lake is nearly complete and the new bars are in production ready for the season.

Scarborough Spa

Scarborough Spa has had a busy Christmas and New Year with the Pantomime surpassing last year's sales. New Year's Eve hosted two individual events and just over a 1,000 people seeing in New Year in the Spa.

On New Year's Day the **Scarborough Spa Orchestra Concert attracted** 625 people and in addition we were able to announce the Spa Orchestra's 112th year for 2024. The new season will be running **4 August to 25 September** with tickets on sale now.

There are some exciting new shows being announced for this year with Dexy's Midnight Runners, The Blow Monkeys, Tom Allen, Paul Smith and Sarah Millican amongst some of the shows already announced with more being discussed at the moment.

The team are also proactively developing and marketing the wedding offer at the venue and this has successfully increased bookings for the coming year.

Get On-Line Week

Get Online Week highlighted the help and support offered by Library IT Buddy volunteers. Several volunteers appeared on NYC's social media as part of 'Team North Yorkshire' talking about their experience of helping others get online and stay connected. Eighty-five digital events were held for over the week from 'tea and tech' sessions to coding to introductions to Family History research.

National Libraries Week

This year's National Libraries Week had a focus on Green Libraries and their role in supporting sustainability and tackling climate change. Our libraries took the opportunity to promote their environmental and 'green' themed stock, strengthened links with local partners and hosted green-themed events which included talks on conservation and natural history as well as hands-on sessions on upcycling and reducing waste.

Self-Care Week

Mind and Body was the theme for Self-Care Week in November, an annual national awareness week to help raise awareness about how people can better take care of their own physical health and mental wellbeing, including where and when to go for health advice and to embed support for self-care across communities and families. Libraries across the county explored the theme in several different ways, from Talking Therapy sessions to Dementia Cafes. Staff and volunteers brought 33 Self-Care Week events to over 490 people.

Slipper Socials

Two more successful Slipper Socials at Ingleton Community Library and at the library outlet in Darley were held in November. The events see the library service working with North Yorkshire Sport and other partners to tackle the issue of slips, trips and falls among older people, which can affect their ability to live independently. One of the most common causes of falls by older people is loose, worn or backless slippers. North Yorkshire libraries have now hosted 12 of these events at which older people can pick up a free pair of anti-slip slippers while chatting to other support organisations. So far more than 500 pairs of slippers have been handed out.

Selby 'Now Then!' Place Partnership Project

The Culture Team were successful in their bid for £350k of Place Partnership funding from Arts Council England, for their two-year 'Now Then!' project. The Place Partnership scheme aims to install civic pride and regenerate towns through artworks, events and experiences, and funding from Arts Council England will be matched by a grant already awarded from the UKSPF for £350k, and £300k from the NYC Cultural Development Fund agreed from Selby DC legacy authority.

The £1m 'Now Then!' programme will take place across Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn-in-Elmet between April 2024 and March 2026, and the culture team will be using learning from the project to develop wider place-shaping initiatives across North Yorkshire as the project develops.

Cultural Symposium

The inaugural North Yorkshire Cultural Symposium took place at Skipton Town Hall in November 2023, attracting over 100 participants from the cultural sector across the county. The purpose of the event was to agree a format for working collaboratively to develop a cultural strategy for North Yorkshire, to map what we have, and to discuss priorities. The day was a great success, with some very constructive discussions had, connections made and a strong plan for development. Speakers included Cllrs Myers and Bastiman, as well as senior representatives from Arts Council, NLHF and Historic England.

Funding has been provisionally agreed with Arts Council England to develop the strategy from April, with a view to launching it by the end of 2024.

The group will also be working in tandem with City of York Council and their cultural consortium to ensure a cohesive approach in relation to the Combined Authority.

FEAST (Food.Entertainment.Arts.Sport.Together) Programme

Scarborough Sports Village and Northallerton Leisure Centre delivered FEAST holiday activities sessions to 68 children during the Christmas holidays. The FEAST sessions helped families throughout the school holiday period by providing food and fun things to do, including activities such as swimming, sport and art.

Take That Step – Adult Weight Management Service (Former Hambleton Area)

Work is continuing on expanding the North Yorkshire Adult Weight Management Service to ensure that more North Yorkshire residents are able to access and succeed in weight loss and health and wellbeing objectives. This includes one to one support for people with complex mental health and other challenges, alongside the core programme.

Housing

Home Improvement Agency

The Council's housing service are currently working hard on the roll out of our new countywide minor adaptations service, which is due to be in place for April 2024. This service, which already operates in-house in the former Scarborough and Ryedale areas and is being rolled out countywide, will provide a range of interventions to enable elderly and vulnerable people to live independently, including the provision of minor adaptations on behalf of colleagues in Health and Adult Social Care. The delivery of the new Handyperson Service is the first step on the development of a countywide home improvement agency, dedicated to the delivery of all adaptations in the private sector across the county.

Rough Sleeping

Whilst levels of rough sleeping across the county are monitored on an on-going basis, the new housing service undertook its first formal full rough sleepers count in November 2023. Fourteen individuals were identified as sleeping as compared to the combined figures from the districts of 25 from the previous year.

Tackling rough sleeping is a key priority and can only be achieved through a coordinated multi-agency partnership approach. I am pleased to note that North Yorkshire's multi-agency housing first project was invited to lead a workshop at Homeless Link's national conference in Manchester. The REACH team based in Scarborough, delivered a session around effectively working with partners. The conference focused 'Housing First', a rough sleeping intervention that accommodates homeless individuals first and then provides long term support. The goal is to reduce repeated homelessness and provide support for those with multiple and complex needs who may struggle to access services in the community. Homeless Link wanted to showcase the REACH team as an examples of good practice at a national level.

In December, the REACH team won the Partnership Working award at the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust Awards. The Trust wanted to recognised the unique work being completed in partnership with North Yorkshire Council, which has improved the lives of those sleeping rough in our community. Work is underway to look at the feasibility of rolling out the REACH model countywide to ensure that our most vulnerable residents are offered the accommodation and specialist support they need aligned with the housing first model.

New Energy Efficient Homes in Harrogate

The Council has completed five new homes, which will be let to local people following the completion of a £1million project in Harrogate.

This innovative North Yorkshire Council scheme turned redundant land into social housing. The three houses and two flats, which have been built on a former car park in a residential area of Harrogate, are the most energy-efficient properties developed by the authority. They have the latest green credentials – air source heat pumps, solar panels, triple glazing and insulation – making them extremely energy efficient. The largest house will produce just 0.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year compared to an average home creating six tonnes.

The Dene Park homes, one three and two two-bedroom houses and two one-bedroom flats, have been delivered by the Council's in-house development team and using local contractors wherever possible. They also benefitted from grant funding of £225,000 from Homes England.

This scheme is delivering new social rented affordable homes which make a big difference to the lives and well-being of local families.

Brownfield Housing Fund (MCA)

Funding to build 700 homes across York and North Yorkshire has been approved. Investment is a result of the region's proposed devolution deal and will unlock housing development on brownfield land. It will help deliver affordable, accessible, and low carbon housing, creating sustainable and high-quality places.

Nine schemes – which include 252 affordable homes – will receive a share of the York and North Yorkshire Brownfield Housing Fund. A total of £9,177,000 has been allocated.

Projects will address housing needs in both rural and urban areas. North Yorkshire projects are being delivered by the Council as well as Registered Providers and include:

18 homes, Main Street, Ingleby Arncliffe

17 homes at Raskelf near Easingwold and Carrs Billington, Askrigg

160 homes, former Arc Factory, off Catterick Road, Colburn, Catterick Garrison

9 homes across multiple sites in Harrogate and Boroughbridge

COUNCILLOR SIMON MYERS