Evaluation of the StreetLife Project

A REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK / JANUARY 2023

KADA

STREETLIFE YORK

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is an evaluation of the UK Community Renewal Funded StreetLife which aims to create innovative and immersive experiences to revitalise the historic Coney Street in the city of York. StreetLife is led by the University of York in collaboration with strategic partners across the city. The project uses creative and heritage activities delivered by three strands (heritage, music, and print) to engage the public. StreetLife has sparked curiosity, nostalgia and emotions and created a space to ask questions about the future of Coney Street. Kada Research were commissioned by the University of York to evaluate StreetLife.

PROGRAMME CONTEXT

StreetLife is an innovative and interdisciplinary project led by the University of York, in collaboration with City of York Council, York Civic Trust, York Music Venue Network, and creative practitioners. It was awarded £460,554 from the UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF) and aims to create innovative, immersive experiences to revitalise historic Coney Street. StreetLife ran from December 2021 to December 2022 (full project lifecycle). The delivery period of the project ran between the launch of the StreetLife Hub in April 2022 and the end of December 2022. The data used in this report to evaluate the project was captured between project launch in April and 5th December 2022. Delivery continued to the end of December but is not referenced in this report due to reporting deadlines. The University of York committed £165,000 of additional funding to support StreetLife activities.

The focal point of StreetLife is the hub in 29-31 Coney Street (a formerly empty retail unit) which has hosted many events and activities across the three themed strands (heritage, music, and print). The project delivered a range of activities combining digital innovation and physical engagement which aim to better connect communities with civic spaces, transform the streetscape and its sounds, repurpose empty units and create links between retail premises and creative, heritage-led renewal.

StreetLife aligns with several local, sub-regional and national strategic priorities. Particularly, its focus on creative and heritage led regeneration in Coney Street to accelerate its recovery from Covid-19 and create a more inclusive and thriving economy. Key local and regional strategies include:

- The York and North York Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Covid-19 economic recovery plan and the York councils recovery and renewal strategy
- The Local Industrial Strategy
- The York and North Yorkshire Devolution proposal
- The York and North Yorkshire Skills strategy
- The My City Centre Vision for York City Centre
- The Arts Council England's 10-year strategy
- The York's Creative Future: York Culture Strategy, 2020 – 2025
- The University of York Strategic Vision 2020 - 2030 to be a University for Public Good

PERFORMANCE AND IMPACTS

StreetLife has been very successful in meeting the output targets for engaging with people, businesses, and organisations. By the 5th of December 2022, it had achieved 1,052 of its 1,000 people target[1], 137 businesses have engaged (131 more than its target of 6), and 169 organisations have been reached (152 more than its target of 17).

StreetLife has exceeded its targets for engagement with people who are economically inactive or unemployed, and met 85% of its target for employed people. It has also exceeded its targets for engaging with small and medium sized businesses as well as public, private, and voluntary organisations.

StreetLife has been successful in achieving its aims in developing new products/services and knowledge transfer activities. Despite not fully meeting the contracted outcome targets, the project saw some success in its aims to engage individuals in education and training. Due to the long-term nature of the outcomes, there are several more which it is anticipated will be achieved.

To assess the economic impact of the StreetLife project a model has been used which is aligned with HM Treasury's Green Book guidance on estimating the impact of public investment. The approach adopted to assess the benefits that StreetLife has generated for the region is informed by the CRF application form and information on project outputs, outcomes and longer-term impacts that have been/will be delivered. StreetLife's outputs and outcomes, together with benchmark values from econometric and social return on investment studies, have been used to produce bespoke estimates of economic and social benefits. The total net economic and social benefits amount to £1.39m. Notably, 'Preserving heritage' provides the most substantial economic and social value at £1.26m.

Economic and Social Benefits of the StreetLife Project	
Benefit Category	*Net present social value (£m)*
Preserving heritage	£1.26m
Increased GVA from skills uplift	£0.121m
People benefitting from mentoring/training	£0.004m
Total net present social benefits:	**£1.39m**

A Benefit Cost Ratio analysis was undertaken for the StreetLife project. BCRs assess the value for money of public sector investments and compare the net present value of public sector costs to the net present value of economic and social benefits. The StreetLife project indicates a BCR of 1:2.2, i.e., every £1.00 spend generates £2.20, which represents high value for money.

KEY AREAS OF SUCCESS

As an ambitious and bold pilot project, StreetLife has been successful in several areas:

[1] Of the 1,133 beneficiaries providing feedback, 1,052 indicated they were either economically inactive, unemployed, or employed. 81 respondents did not provide an answer to this survey question.

- StreetLife represents high value for money: it generates £2.20 in social and economic benefits for every £1 spent. The heritage activities demonstrated the greatest return on investment by far.
- The fruitfulness of StreetLife's interdisciplinarity, which created dynamic connections and content to engage the public in creative and heritage activities.
- The power of collaborations internally at the University of York and externally, which has strengthened the delivery, and subsequently the impact, of StreetLife.
- The engagement with the public surrounding Coney Street's past and present, which has ignited curiosity, emotions, and a sense of community.
- Beneficiaries were highly satisfied with their experience of StreetLife, which was described as engaging, interactive, and informative.
- All the heritage, print and music activities have been delivered to a high quality.

- StreetLife has demonstrated the strong public appetite heritage activities on the high street which is further supported by its strong economic impact performance.
- The StreetLife Hub has provided an important physical presence for the project and demonstrated how creative and heritage activities can benefit the high street.
- StreetLife has illustrated how the University, along with local partners, can help to shape places for the public good.

LESSONS

Due to its innovative nature StreetLife has provided important lessons (see Section 4.7 for more detail) about:

- The power of collaboration and internal and external partnership working.
- Delivering engaging and innovative creative and heritage activities to the public in a retail unit on the high street is rewarding and challenging.
- The importance of the public voice within regeneration.
- The inclusivity and accessibility of creative and heritage activities.
- The resource required to deliver projects like StreetLife.
- The challenges of monitoring beneficiaries.

PROGRAMME RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of York may wish to consider the following recommendations:

- Recommendation 1: Continue to build on the success of StreetLife.
- Recommendation 2: Continue to develop collaborations across York.
- Recommendation 3: Continue to create opportunities for public engagement through heritage and creative activities.
- Recommendation 4: Explore the opportunities to improve existing university infrastructure and practices to enhance the delivery of projects.
- Recommendation 5: Ensure the delivery of StreetLife is sufficiently resourced within the University of York and its delivery partners.

- Recommendation 6: Use the learning from StreetLife surrounding the practicalities of delivering creative and heritage interventions on the high street.
- Recommendation 7: Improve promotion of StreetLife and its activities.
- Recommendation 8: Consider options to increase the reach and impact of StreetLife across the communities, businesses, and organisations of York.

1. PROGRAMME CONTEXT AND SUMMARY

Kada Research Limited has been commissioned to evaluate the StreetLife Project led by the University of York. This Project has been funded by the UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF). York, as one of the UK's most ancient cities, has an extraordinary heritage and resilience communities, however its civic history is being forgotten and its city centre faces crisis rooted in changing technology, community needs, consumer trends and expensive high street rental costs. StreetLife aims to use York's historic heritage and Coney Street as a catalyst for community renewal.

This chapter introduces the StreetLife Project and outlines its objectives, rationale, and targets. The chapter ends with the strategic context behind the project and the approach used for the project's assessment.

1.1 PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Despite York's rich heritage and long-established sense of civic pride and community, key parts of civic history are in danger of being forgotten with its city centre facing a crisis rooted in changing technology, evolving community needs,consumer trends and expensive high street rental costs, with all factors being accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

StreetLife is an innovative and interdisciplinary project, which was awarded £460,554 from the Community Renewal Fund (CRF). The StreetLife project was originally due to end in June 2022 but was extended to November 2022. No further CRF funding was awarded to the project; however, due to the importance and success of the project, the University of York allocated additional internal funding of £165,000. This means that the overall funding for the full project lifecycle (between December 2021-2022) is approximately £625,554. It is an ambitious partnership, bringing together multiple stakeholders. StreetLife is led by the University of York in collaboration with City of York Council, York Civic Trust, York Music Venue Network, and creative practitioners. It aims to create innovative, immersive experiences to revitalise the historic Coney Street, combining digital innovation and physical engagement. Pop-up activities and virtual experiences connect civic spaces to the community, transform the streetscape and its sounds, repurpose empty units, and forge links between retail premises and creative, heritage-led renewal.

The project's CRF funding was confirmed in November 2021 and appointments and planning activities began the following month. Due to delays from the Government, StreetLife officially launched in April 2022 and officially stopped at the end of November 2022, although some delivery continued until the end of December. This report evaluates progress across the whole StreetLife project lifecycle, between December 2021 and December 2022.

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES, RATIONALE, DELIVERY MODEL AND TARGETS

OBJECTIVES

The StreetLife Project's key objectives are as follows:

- Innovative and immersive experiences to revitalise Coney Street, combining digital innovation and physical engagement.
- Pop-up activities and virtual experiences that will better connect the community to civic spaces.
- Transformation of the streetscape and its sounds.
- The repurposing of empty units.
- Development of links between retail premises and creative, heritage-led renewal.

The Project has aimed to complete the objectives by occupying a formerly empty retail unit (29-31 Coney Street) to host an extensive suite of events and exhibitions between April and November 2022. Activity at this unit, known as the StreetLife Hub, has built relationships with new partners in the city and developed existing ones in new ways, resulting in collaborative work to deliver a range of activities.

RATIONALE

The rationale for this project is to respond to the decline of the high street and to incentivise activity that will engage people, businesses, and organisations creatively with York's heritage. Social and experiential (leisure, recreation, and entertainment) high-street usage is becoming increasingly predominant representing a longer-term decline of retail and functional high-street uses since the 1960s. The impacts of Covid-19 have accelerated the declining retail trend and caused extensive changes to the high street as consumers have shifted online to meet their retail and functional needs. During the first lockdown (March 2020), footfall on some high streets reduced by 75%, and high street businesses were among the most adversely impacted by the pandemic (Local Government Association, 2022).

Resilient high streets are experiential destinations that offer user experiences that go beyond retail or function-orientated activity. StreetLife is a pilot project designed to improve the experiential offer, to encourage footfall, stimulate creativity and create new engagement and understanding of Coney Street's heritage.

DELIVERY MODEL

The StreetLife Project was designed to be delivered via the four work packages outlined below.

Work Package	Activities
WP1: Mapping and Digital Portal	Geomapping, 3D modelling and visualisation of historical spaces of craft, performance and entertainment, creating responsive sites to bring York's streets back to life; Creating web-based portal, experiential tools, and orientation-hub materials for The Guildhall: a gateway to the City's heritage offer.
WP2: Music and Heritage Experiences	Identifying and leasing four vacant properties; Designing and delivering immersive music experiences, renewing York's history of musical performance, community, and innovation; Delivering 'York in Print': a pilot museum, gallery and makerspace, extending to exhibitions, pop-ups, trails and workshops to energise York's history of printing and design.
WP3: Heritage Workshops	Developing and delivering four workshop streams for businesses, museums and third-sector organisations with York Civic Trust, Vacant Spaces Initiative, My CityCentre and The Helmsley Group; Workshop stream on adaptive reuse and conservation solutions with York Conservation Trust.
WP4: Heritage Research	Community-driven research, exploring past businesses, industry and cultural life in Coney Street in partnership with Coney Street Heritage, York Explore, York Minster Library, York Museums Trust and York Music Venue Network. Outcomes will inform work packages 1-3 in a community-led approach to heritage, skills development and innovation; Mapping access, lighting, planning and programming challenges relating to current and historic music venues.

Table 1: StreetLife Work packages, University of York

TARGETS

Street Life has the following CRF Main Indicators (outputs).

Main Indicator	Indicator Subset	Target Group	Number
People	Economically Inactive	No	200 (based on % York economically inactive 2020)
	Unemployed	No	30 (based on % York unemployed 2020)
	Employed	Yes	770
	Total		**1,000**
Businesses	Small	Yes	4
	Medium	Yes	2
	Large	No	0
	Total		**6**
Organisations	Public	Yes	5
	Private	Yes	6 (also captured under businesses, above)
	Voluntary Sector	Yes	6
	Total		**17**

Table 2: Contracted outputs, University of York

StreetLife has the following CRF Core Outcome Indicators:

CRF Core Outcome Indicator	Activities
People in education/training following support (16 plus estimated medium term 42)	Support project staff and participants to explore and sign up to i) further and/or higher learning opportunities in formal education settings (e.g. the University of York's Widening Participation Programme, York College, York St John University); ii) on/off the job training, reskilling and upskilling with project partners, businesses and organisations; iii) lifelong-learning opportunities with project partners including Centre for Lifelong Learning, York Guild of Media Arts, York Explore, York Museums Trust, U3A, York Arts Society, York Festival of Ideas. Medium term estimates (within six months of completion): 2 people will have entered a structured and agreed programme of formal education (e.g. an MA), and c. 40 people will engage extensively with training and Lifelong Learning Opportunities delivered on an informal basis (e.g. York Festival of Ideas, Centre for Lifelong Learning).
Businesses introducing new products (4)	The project will help 2 SMEs and 2 organisations to develop, design and offer new services or products to the market inspired by sharing knowledge and offering training and workshops as part of 'StreetLife'. Co-design and deliver new workshop and training streams with 2 organisations (York Civic Trust and York Conservation Trust) and to create a digital gateway to the City's heritage offering, based in The Guildhall. A number of businesses and organisations have expressed an interest in developing a new service or product inspired by the StreetLife project (e.g., City Screen, St Martin le Grand Church). Translating activities into products, processes or services for market will also form the focus of future initiatives and bids emerging from this pilot project, for example to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
Organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support (6)	4 relationships with the businesses and organisations described above, as part of a longer-term knowledge transfer relationship created through the development of new services and products. 2 further organisations will be engaged in longer-term collaborations through the transfer of good ideas, research, and skills. For example, project team members will be invited to sit on Steering Groups for organisations or projects, enter longer-term commercial and creative partnerships, and/or provide guidance and support in developing pop-up and experiential offerings.

	Within the anticipated broad engagement, and based on prior experience and number of planned workshops, events, and activities, it is estimated: c.300 community members engaging intensively with community-driven research projects and resulting events (e.g. as contributors and volunteers); c.140 attendees at our YCT/Heritage360 workshops; 60 attendees at our Print workshops and 100 attendees at our Music workshops (total c. 300 workshop attendees, c.3% unemployed and c. 20% economically inactive, based on current York employment rates). Attendees at workshops will include representatives from at least 6 voluntary sector organisations; Direct 1-to-1 support to 16 people (mentoring, training, and development to 2 Gallery Assistants, 4 student volunteers, 6 community volunteers, 4 people from SMEs).

Table 3: Contracted outcomes, University of York

1.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

NATIONAL CONTEXT

The £220- million Community Renewal Fund was launched by the UK Government in March 2021 with the aim of supporting in- need communities across the UK. Institutions were encouraged to bid for funding for pilot programmes and projects, designed to grow local economies, support skills development, develop employment opportunities, and build communities. It was designed as a precursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund that was launched in April 2022.

Both funds are directly linked to the aims outlined in the UK Government's Levelling Up White Paper that was published in February 2022. The White Paper outlined the UK Government's focus upon reducing geographical inequalities across the UK through:

- Boosting productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
- Spreading opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
- Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
- Empowering local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency

It places emphasis upon a multi-strand approach to reducing inequalities through support for innovation and entrepreneurship, developing infrastructure, stronger pride in place, and skills development.

The Community Renewal Fund is included as a key investment strand within the White Paper, focused upon the delivery of pilot projects that enable innovation, create levelling-up opportunities, and build community capacity. This being a pilot programme the evaluation findings from CRF projects provide a clear evidence- base upon which future levelling- up funding applications can be built.

ECONOMIC AND POLICY CONTEXT AT THE TIME OF PROJECT DESIGN

StreetLife aligns with several sub-regional and national strategies, through its focus on creative, cultural, and heritage-led regeneration to accelerate Coney Street's recovery from Covid-19 and create a more inclusive economy.

The York and North York Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan and the City of York Council's Recovery and Renewal Strategy both detail how recovery should focus on the creation of an agile and inclusive economy linked to York's creative and dynamic past. This includes utilising York's landscape and heritage, reconnecting people and places, stimulating and synchronising businesses, creative and digital sectors, and providing education and skills opportunities informed by the past but for the needs of tomorrow.

The York and North Yorkshire LEP's Local Industrial Strategy priorities include creating connected and resilient places that utilise digital technologies and work towards net zero targets, supporting people to reach their full potential and lead healthy lives, an economy powered by good business, and world leading land management. Their York and North Yorkshire Skills Strategy details support for young people, employers, communities and local labour market to ensure the skills system is empowering people, and places, to prosper in an inclusive economy.

The York and North Yorkshire Devolution Deal aims to create quality places with improved transport and digital links, and town centres, thriving businesses and people with support for skills and local high-street growth, and green futures supporting the sub-regions' negative carbon vision.

The My City Centre Vision outlines the 10-year vision for York city centre, which will guide investment and policy decisions and is based upon consultations with stakeholders and communities. The vision has the following themes: a family friendly city centre;, events, experiences and investment in public spaces;, an attractive city at all times;, making tourism work for York;, embracing our riverside;, a city centre which is welcoming to all;, thriving businesses and no empty buildings;, celebrating heritage and making modern history.

The Arts Council England's 10-year strategy is guided by three outcomes (creative people, cultural communities, and a creative and cultural country) and four investment principles (ambition and quality, dynamism, environmental responsibility, and inclusivity and relevance).

The University of York strategic vision 2020-2030 to be a University for Public Good is underpinned by four aims: curiosity-driven and action- oriented research, education that empowers, community without limits, and local commitment on a global scale. The drive for public good is shaping agendas across the university and will impact people and places at a local, national and international level. Collaboration and addressing social injustice are a key part of the university for Public Good.

Given that York is the UK's first Creative City of Media Arts, StreetLife speaks to developing York's culture and wellbeing, as highlighted in York's Creative Future: York Culture Strategy, 2020 – 2025. StreetLife works where the strategy aims to ensure culture is relevant and accessible to all people, through interactive programmes and activities designed to engage children and young people throughout the city.

1.4 STUDY APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to provide a clear and robust assessment of the CRF StreetLife Project. This report is the final evaluation report covering the entire Project lifecycle.

The evaluation has the following objectives:

- To assess the outputs and outcomes of the project, the overall impact on the sub-region, lessons learnt and successes.
- To assess the original rationale for the project, whether it is valid and how it fits with the local, sub-regional and national policy strategies.
- To conduct a robust, quantitative impact evaluation of the project that assesses performance, including the achievement of gross outputs and expenditure against its approved targets.
- To conduct a value-for-money assessment of the cost-effectiveness using input:output unit-cost ratios.
- To assess the effectiveness of the process of delivery, including management, administrative, and delivery mechanisms, as well as operational characteristics that have had a significant effect on the scale and nature of the outcomes and impacts realised through the project.
- To identify lessons learned and provide recommendations to improve operational delivery, beneficiary experience and outcomes.

An inception meeting was held to confirm the study approach and agree the principal milestones. The report is based upon:

- A desk review of evidence including programme documentation to explore the strategic context of the StreetLife Project.
- Attendance at the StreetLife Launch event in April 2022, and a follow-up visit in November to observe exhibitions in the StreetLife Hub.
- An assessment of Project performance against contracted outputs and outcomes, as well as a Value for Money assessment.
- An assessment of beneficiary feedback-data provided by the University of York via an 'Indicator and Feedback' form. This includes analysis of data from 1,133 participants who have engaged with the StreetLife Hub between its launch in April and 5th December 2022. Evaluation of this data allows for the understanding of the impact of experiences and drivers of participation in activities and exploration of possible improvements for Coney Street in the future.
- Semi-structured interviews undertaken with 15 stakeholders to explore the impact of StreetLife, its delivery context and future. Interviewees included individuals with strategic oversight, partners, members of the delivery team, as well as those with important insight into York's creative and cultural ecosystem. The interviews were conducted during November 2022.
- Qualitative and quantitative data collected and analysed is used to inform conclusions and recommendations.

2. PERFORMANCE AND IMPACTS

This chapter examines the performance of the StreetLife project against its contracted outputs and outcomes. It also provides an informed economic impact and Value for Money analysis.

The data used has been provided by the University of York.

2.1 FUNDING AND SPEND BREAKDOWN

The StreetLife project was awarded a total of £460,554 Community Renewal Fund budget contracted to be spent as in the table below.

Budget Heading	Contracted Budget[2]
Staff Costs	£225,397
Overheads	£38,810
Contractor and Consultant Costs	£71,731
Materials, Premises and Consumables	£129,616
Total	**£460,554**

Table 4: StreetLife funding breakdown (CRF), University of York

The StreetLife project was due to end in June 2022, however, was granted an extension to December 2022. No further CRF funding was awarded. The University of York allocated additional funding of £165,000 to the project through various grants explained in the table below.

Funding Source	Amount
Community Renewal Funding (City of York Council/UK Government)	£460,554 (as above)
HEIF Internal Funding Bid to deliver Impact and Public Engagement Activities	£47,435
HEIF Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (RIKE) Fund	£117,476
Total	**£625,456**

Table 5: StreetLife Further Funding, University of York

[2] Two Project Change Requests (PCRs) were agreed during the delivery of the project which meant funds were transferred between budget headings.

2.2 OUTPUTS

Key message: The StreetLife project has significantly overachieved on all its total output targets.

The table below outlines the StreetLife project's contracted outputs (also seen in Section 3.3) and outputs achieved at project completion.

Main Indicator	Indicator Subset	Target Group	Number	Numbers achieved at project completion	% of target achieved at project completion
People	Economically Inactive	No	200	227	114%
	Unemployed	No	30	168	560%
	Employed	Yes	770	657	85%
	Total		**1,000**	**1,052**[3]	**102.5%**
Businesses	Small	Yes	4	92	2,300%
	Medium	Yes	2	21	1,050%
	Large	No	0	24	-
	Total		**6**	**137**	**2,283%**
Organisations	Public	Yes	5	67	1,340%
	Private	Yes	6 (also captured under Businesses, above)	51	850%
	Voluntary Sector	Yes	6	51	850%
	Total		**17**	**169**	**994%**

Table 6: Contracted outputs and outputs achieved, University of York[4]

[3] Of the 1,133 survey respondents, 1,052 indicated they were either economically inactive, unemployed or employed. 81 respondents did not provide an answer.

[4] Some beneficiaries may have contributed to the number of outputs achieved across some/all indicators.

2.3 OUTCOMES

Key message: StreetLife has been successful in achieving its aims in developing new products/services and knowledge transfer activities. The project saw some success in it's aims to engage individuals in education and training, however its original target was not met. The heritage stand has produced the most outcomes to date.

As part of the application for the UKCRF, the StreetLife Project outlined that it would seek to deliver against the following Core Outcome Indicators (as outlined in Section 1.2 of this report). The table below outlines the StreetLife project's contracted outcomes and outcomes achieved at project completion.

CRF Core Outcome Indicator	Number	Numbers achieved at project completion	Number of forecasted outcomes	% of target achieved at project completion
People in education/training following support (16 plus estimated medium term 42)	16	5	2	31.25%
Businesses introducing new products (4)	4	4	3	100%
Organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support (6)	6	5	0	83%

Table 7: Contracted outcomes and outcomes achieved, University of York

PEOPLE IN EDUCATION/TRAINING

Between April and 5th December 2022, five beneficiaries have engaged in education/training following support from StreetLife. Two more beneficiaries are projected to be engaging in education/training because of engagement with the StreetLife project. Beneficiary outcome activity are explained below:

- Beneficiary 1, who engaged with the StreetLife project as a Research Trainee on the Heritage strand, engaged in a follow- up Heritage Internship at Hull Minster. This internship involved curatorial work, object handling, workshop creation and running, tour guiding, data handling and database management and PR.

- Beneficiary 2, who engaged with the StreetLife project as a gallery assistant, now plans to complete a Master's Degree in Art, Museum and Gallery Studies at Newcastle University. Beneficiary 2 explained:

"Working at StreetLife has been instrumental in making this decision and has given me experience of history and heritage alongside art and public feedback on the project. This has provided a greater context to my understanding of the Newcastle MA to be the best course for me."

- Beneficiary 3 also worked as gallery staff at the StreetLife Hub, and will be working as a Graduate Trainee Library Assistant at Bodleian Libraries at the University of Oxford. The role will involve on-the-job training and working in frontline services to help readers access the information and resources they require. This will involve working directly with readers and working with materials to ensure accessibility. This beneficiary explained:

"I have been motivated to pursue this role due to my involvement with the StreetLife project."

- Beneficiary 4, another gallery assistant at the StreetLife Hub on Coney Street, will be completing a Master's Degree in Architectural History and Theory at the University of York. They explained:

"Training I have received during my time at the StreetLife project has helped me bridge the gap between my current level of studies and the next possible step for me beyond an undergraduate degree – primarily through the balance of practical, curatorial training and stimulating events and exhibitions that have impressed many new ideas and interests onto me. StreetLife has been useful to me in the sense that it is a multimedia, multifunctional space for me to work in and gather professional experience, with limitless potential for artistic opportunity and expression."

- Beneficiary 5 who engaged in the StreetLife project as a Research Trainee on the Heritage Strand has engaged in on-the-job training in Oral History Research at Sheffield Hallam University. The beneficiary explained:

"Since engaging with the StreetLife project, I have undertaken training on oral history research delivered at Sheffield Hallam University. StreetLife sparked my interest in collecting oral histories and community archives and I have pursued this interest with on-the-job training in my role as a postdoctoral researcher."

There are also 2 potential forecasted outcomes: Beneficiary 6 will become part of an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) bid to work on ballad collection at York Minster Library. This forms the basis of their PhD. Beneficiary 7 intends to complete a PhD in Archaeology following engagement with the StreetLife project, depending on funding.

BUSINESSES INTRODUCING NEW PRODUCTS TO THE FIRM

Three new products and services have been developed by sole proprietors since the launch of the StreetLife Hub. One product has been developed by a registered charity.

- Product 1: The first service launched at the StreetLife Hub are Linocut workshops. The half- day linocut workshops are open to members of the public who can attend to learn the basics of linocut printmaking. Participants are instructed on how to transfer a design onto the block, carve the design, and print the design using a Columbian press from 1845. They are also offered tips and guidance on how to improve their work. Initially, the linocut workshops were developed for the StreetLife project and the individual offering them continues to run them as part of her business.

Figure 1: Event Invitation to a future Linocut Printing Workshop

- Product 2: The second service that has been launched in the StreetLife Hub are the Fossil Walks, branded as Strata/Life Rocks and Fossils of Coney Street. The Fossil Walks have been created within the StreetLife project to help people understand the deep-time origins of York's historic Coney Street, by exploring the street's building stones, and the stories contained within them. This service has been facilitated through the work on York's Hidden History Projects. The walking tours have received high ratings on TripAdvisor.
- Product 3: Another service that has been developed as a result of the StreetLife Hub is the Clown Workshop, which is a workshop activity that introduces attendees to street clowning.

Figure 2: Event Invitation to Clown Workshop

- Product 4: York Oral History Society has released a new book, which received comprehensive reports in the local press. The Society had undertaken oral history research in 2016 into life in the Mansion House York, the official home of the Lord Mayor, which stands at one end of Coney Street. This had been used to prepare text for a book that was not published due to lack of funds. StreetLife provided the resources to publish the book, which makes a significant contribution to the history of Coney Street and celebrates the occupants and employees of an important institution in the life of the city. It was launched at the Mansion House to an audience of 50, including former Lord Mayors and Sheriffs as well as former employees in the Mansion House.

There are also three products/services forecast to be developed.

- Product 5: The Heritage Strand of the project is developing a board game.
- Product 6: A collaboration/new product with York Ghost Merchants will happen in 2023.
- Product 7: There is a plan to develop interpretation materials for the Spurriergate Centre exploring aspects of its heritage, and this will include new products.

ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER ACTIVITY FOLLOWING SUPPORT

With regards to engaging organisations in knowledge transfer, five projects have been identified by StreetLife.

- York Theatre Royal has developed themes and ideas for a Willow community production, based on oral history, focus-group and archival research by StreetLife.
- The National Science and Media Museum has developed the DeLittle x Science Museum Collaboration.
- The Type Archive has developed the DeLittle x Type Archive Project.

- The Helmsley Group has developed the Coney Street Riverside Project 'Urban Room' Community Consultation.
- Vincent Brown Architects have been involved in the Coney Street Riverside Project Design.

2.4 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Key messages: Total net present economic and social benefits amount to £1.39m.

MODEL APPROACH

To assess the economic impact of the StreetLife project, a model has been used which is aligned with HM Treasury's Green Book guidance on estimating the impact of public investment.

- Public expenditure has been profiled over time. It has not been necessary to convert expenditure to constant prices (prices in real value) or discount (converting real value received at a future date to an equivalent present value) as spend has almost all been within the 2022 calendar year.
- The approach adopted to assess the benefits that StreetLife has generated for the region is informed by the CRF application form and information on project outputs, outcomes and longer-term impacts that have been/will be delivered. StreetLife's outputs and outcomes together with benchmark values from econometric and social return on investment studies, have been used to produce bespoke estimates of economic and social benefits, where they can be quantified. The figures presented in the report have been developed in line with best practice guidance on estimating impact and value for money.[5]
- Notably, not all benefits have monetary value. Non-quantifiable benefits are also identified in this report.
- Appropriate proxies have been identified from economic evidence bases.
- Benefit values have been adjusted to 2022 prices using GDP deflators to ensure comparability with costs.
- Benefits have been applied to the relevant number of participants/beneficiaries.
- Benefit values have been adjusted from gross to net using bespoke adjustments for deadweight, displacement and leakage.

BENEFITS

The benefits used in the model are outlined below.

Preserving Heritage

- The economic benefit of preserving heritage and making it accessible to communities has been exhibited by the StreetLife project through the engagement of beneficiaries at the StreetLife Hub with exhibitions and events hosted by all three project strands.
- Willingness-to-pay data for use of an archive from the DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital Evidence Bank[6] has been used as a proxy for the benefit received by those attending the

[5] As set out in HM Treasury's The Green Book: appraisal and evaluation in central government, 2022

[6] Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport, DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital Evidence Bank, Economic Values Database, 2021

StreetLife Hub (users), which in effect creates a (real and digital) archive of York's heritage in relation to history, print and music.[7]

- This proxy has been applied to the total number of beneficiaries attending the StreetLife Hub who have been consulted between April and the start of December 2022 (n=1,133). A multiplier of 2.5 has been applied to this figure in order to account for incomplete forms and beneficiaries who have engaged with the hub but not provided direct feedback.
- The benefit assessment period covers all project activity (from the launch of the StreetLife Hub in April until the 5th of December 2022).
- In addition, data from the DCMS Culture and Heritage Capital Evidence Bank also provides an estimate of the value to non-users of the StreetLife Hub.
- It has been assumed that 10% of York's population will experience this benefit and this is expected to continue over a 5- year period, assuming that materials produced will continue to remain available (a 20% pa decay has been built in, assuming that resources will not be refreshed over this period).
- Deadweight has been assumed at 0% on the basis that without the CRF project this activity would not have gone ahead.
- Low rates of displacement and leakage have been assumed (10%) on the basis that a proportion of beneficiaries who engaged with the project are outside of the area to which the CRF funded is allocated.
- Gross and net benefit values for preserving heritage are £1.56m and £1.26m respectively.

Increased GVA from skills uplift

- Increasing qualifications amongst the workforce generates economic benefits by making people more skilled and productive.
- A number of those who have been involved in the StreetLife project have/will go onto further study as a result of their involvement.
- Two individuals will be undertaking Master's Degrees, and another has engaged in further research in their PhD as a consequence of engagement with the project.
- The economic benefit of completing a Master's Degree or PhD study has been quantified by using government data on the annual wage uplift pa per individual linked to these particular qualifications.
- Wage uplift per annum per person for a Master's Degree and PhD study is £11,999 and £14,332 respectively.[8]
- The benefit has been applied over 10 years with 10% decay per annum.
- Deadweight has been assumed at 0% on the basis that these people would not have engaged with further learning if they had not engaged with the StreetLife project.

[7] The 'Beyond the 'dusty archives': the economic benefits of preserving recorded heritage' study used stated preference techniques to estimate people's preferences for the estimation of recorded heritage of an archive being available. These benefits of preservation were estimated in monetary terms. The asset used in this study to quantify this proxy was the Surrey History Centre.

[8] BIS (Department for Business Innovation & Skills), RP38: Measuring the Economic Impact of Further Education, Wage impact by provision type at 2022 prices.

- Displacement was assumed at 0% as these individuals are not assumed to be taking the places of others by engaging in this learning.
- Leakage was assumed at 50% as the individuals are completing this further study outside of the York area and therefore the benefits will accrue outside of the project area.
- Gross and net benefit value are £0.24m and £0.12m respectively.

People benefitting from mentoring and training

- 5 people have received direct 1-to-1 support during the StreetLife project including gallery assistants, student volunteers, community volunteers and people from SMEs. The wellbeing benefit of engaging in mentoring and training has been measured.[9]
- The benefit -assessment period spans the delivery timeline, from April to the start of December 2022.
- Deadweight is assumed at 0% on the basis that these people would not have engaged in mentoring/training without the StreetLife project.
- Leakage has been assumed at 0% as all beneficiaries are from the York area.
- Displacement was assumed at 10% as a small number of those participating may have engaged in similar activity not related to the StreetLife Hub.
- Gross and net benefit values are £0.005m and £0.004m respectively.

FUTURE BENEFITS

The benefits of the StreetLife investment will extend beyond the delivery period through:

- The continued running of workshops/training/visitor activities developed through the project such as the Linocut Workshops, Clowning Workshops and Fossil Walks.
- The continued use of the building as a space for civic engagement (as described in Section 4.7 – StreetLife's legacy).
- Preservation and access to York's heritage through the archive activity and book release by York's Oral History Society.
- Increasing awareness of the contribution made by creative practitioners and venues to the city's economy and diverse communities.

Due to some level of uncertainty regarding the level of future activity, it has not been possible to quantify these future benefits, however they are likely to be significant in scale and would increase the value for money delivered by the project.

NON-QUANTIFIED BENEFITS

An important non-quantifiable benefit which does not meet Green Book standards regarding the evidence base, is the employment of 18 gallery assistants who have worked at the StreetLife Hub. These gallery assistants were, in the majority, students from the University of York, and all keen to gain experience in the heritage sector before going on to complete further study. 18 beneficiaries have moved into temporary work, and have seen benefits in wages as well as wellbeing, however this has not been

[9] BIS (Department for Business Innovation & Skills) RP85: Valuing Adult Learning: Comparing wellbeing valuation to contingent valuation

counted in the model as the individuals have not engaged in permanent roles. Nevertheless, the StreetLife project has offered them an opportunity to work for the first time in this environment and to learn a very different set of skills.

There are several other non-quantifiable benefits resulting from the StreetLife project outlined in more detail in Chapter 4, including the benefits of a community space in York city centre. The project has also strengthened York's visitor heritage offer, but this has not been quantified due to the lack of data on the extent to which non-local visitors to StreetLife have visited York specifically to engage in StreetLife activity, how much each extra visitor spent, and therefore how much they have brought to the local economy. However, this benefit undoubtedly enhances the overall offer.

2.5 VALUE FOR MONEY ASSESSMENT

Key message: The StreetLife project demonstrates a benefit: cost ratio (BCR) of 1:2.2 which represents high value for money. The 'preserving heritage' benefit brings the highest return at a net value of £1.26m this is significantly higher than the other identified benefits and highlights the value of heritage activities on the high street.

The economic and social benefits of the StreetLife project are outlined in the table below including a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) which assesses the value for money of public sector investments and compares the net present value of public sector costs to the net present value of economic and social benefits. The StreetLife project indicates a BCR of 1:2.2, i.e., every £1.00 of spend generates approximately £2.20. This represents high value for money according to the DCLG Appraisal Guide[10] which states the value for money categories as based on the size of the BCR (BCR ≥ 2 = High value for money).

The 'preserving heritage' benefit provides the most value for money with a net social value of £1.26m and illustrates the value of heritage activities on the high street. The other benefits provided a much smaller net social value.

Impact Summary Table: Economic and Social Benefits	
Benefit Category	*Net present social value (£m)*
Preserving heritage	£1.26m
Increased GVA from skills uplift	£0.121m
People benefitting from mentoring/training	£0.004m
(a) Total net present social benefits:	**£1.39m**
(b) Economic Costs:	**£0.625m**
Value for Money	

[10] Department for Communities and Local Government Appraisal Guide, December 2016, p 2.56

Net present social value (a-b)	£0.763m
Benefit Cost Ratio (a/b)	**1:2.2**

Table 8: Economic Impact Summary Table and Value for Money analysis, Kada

3. CONSULTATION WITH BENEFICIAIRES

This chapter outlines beneficiary feedback on events and activities at the StreetLife Hub on Coney Street attended between project launch in April and the 5th December 2022. During this period, 1,133 beneficiaries were consulted.

Several questions in the beneficiary feedback survey had a significant number of non-responses and for this reason not all questions will total 1,133 responses. We have analysed results against the total number of responses per question.

It is important to consider when reading this chapter that the higher levels of 'no response' answers do have an impact on the statistical robustness and level of certainty of conclusions made from the data.

Also, some of the data in this chapter has been re-coded for consistency - for example, where beneficiaries have inputted a free- text answer that aligns with an existing category, this data has been recounted as said existing category.

3.1 PROFILE OF ACTIVITIES ENGAGED

Key message: Beneficiaries mostly visited the StreetLife Hub on Coney Street on an ad hoc walk-in basis.

This table highlights the top 10 most highly attended activities at the StreetLife Hub between project launch in April and 5th December 2022. Nearly half of all beneficiaries consulted visited the StreetLife Hub on an ad hoc walk-in basis, without the prior intention to attend a specific event, evidencing that the StreetLife Hub was an attractive, enticing, and welcoming shop front which captured the interest of the public.

Activity	Attendance Count	Percentage (%) of total beneficiaries
1. Walk Ins	552	48.7%
2. Open Mic Music Night with Will Dreyfus and Others	42	3.7%
3. York's Forgotten People of Print	30	2.6%
4. Coney Street Live(performance night with Navigators Art)	29	2.6%
5. New Writing North x University of York: Pride of Place	26	2.3%
6. Joanna Lisowiec's Linocut Workshops	23	2.0%
7. York Civic Trust Adaptive Reuse Workshop	23	2.0%
8. York Civic Trust Workshop	22	1.9%
9. 24 Hours in Coney Street Workshop	20	1.8%
10. York Older People's Assembly 50+ Festival Information Fair	19	1.7%

Table 9: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 1,133).

The mixture of events across the themed strands highlights the dynamism of StreetLife which delivered a range of activities to connect with different audiences – for example, the Festival Information Fair targeted at older audiences. StreetLife also held events for children through schools, for example a DJ workshop, and families, such as through the Fossil Tours. A DJ workshop was also held for people who have experienced homelessness.

3.2 ACCESSING THE STREETLIFE HUB

Key message: Three quarters of beneficiaries found out about the StreetLife Hub via the shop window or through word of mouth. Most beneficiaries visit weekly, and predominantly use Coney Street as a cut through to get to a different location.

Three quarters of beneficiaries discovered the StreetLife Hub by seeing the information in the shop window of the Hub (556, 52%) or through word of mouth (250, 23%), which suggests most beneficiaries happened upon the Hub by chance and not via direct marketing activity. The 'Other' category also accounted for a large proportion of responses (228, 21%), many respondents in this category cited advertisements through their university or on an educational field trip. Additional responses in the other category include involvement as a member of staff or performer, Aesthetica Film Festival attendee, Eventbrite or 'What's on' searches, and engagement through local organisations such as YOPA and YCT. Less than a tenth of respondents attended because of seeing social media advertising (106, 10%). The traditional press was the least common channel through which people discovered StreetLife. This suggests there is scope to improve the marketing activities for StreetLife. 1,074 people provided an

answer for this question. They were permitted to choose multiple responses which results in the percentage data labels not totalling 100%.

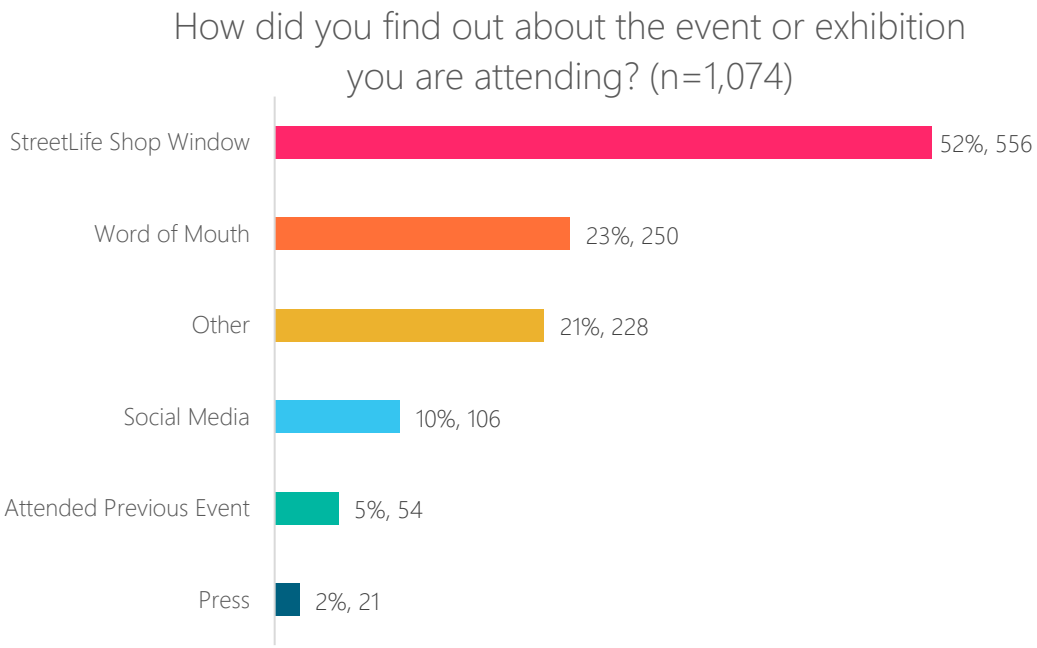

Figure 3: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 1,074)

Of the total number of beneficiaries consulted, 965 provided an answer to the question regarding frequency of visits to Coney Street. The most common visiting pattern for beneficiaries by a significant margin was to visit on a weekly basis, at slightly under half responses (451, 47%). The remainder of visit Coney Street either a few times a year, once a month or rarely/never. Corresponding qualitative responses suggest respondents included a high proportion of tourists to York, who wouldn't visit on a regular basis.

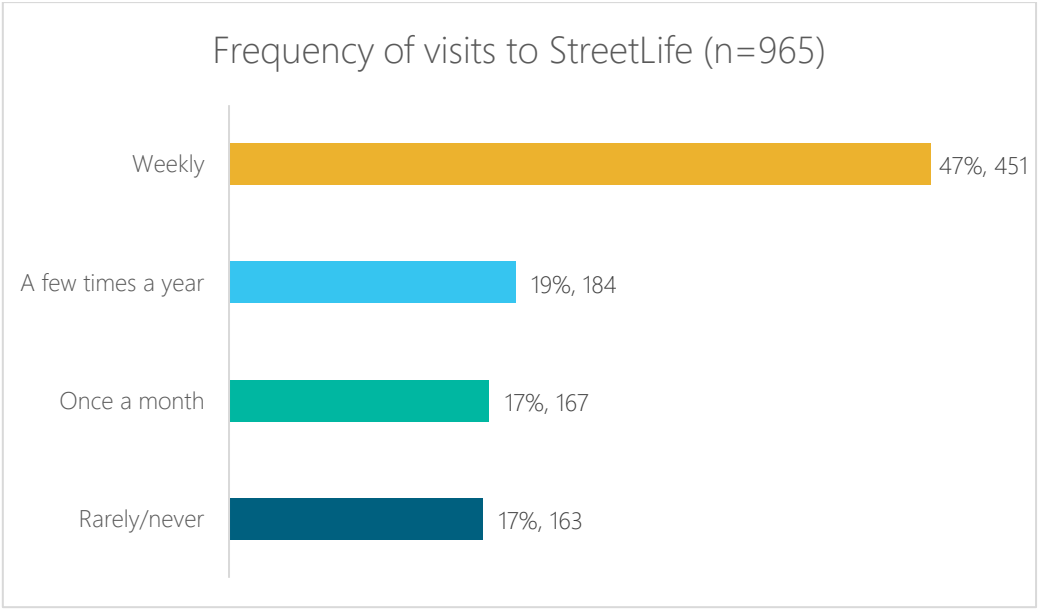

Figure 4: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 965)

The most cited reason for visiting Coney Street was to use it as a cut-through on the way to somewhere else (299, 65%). There are a variety of other reasons for Coney Street footfall including its retail offer leisure activities such as the cinema at the City Screen Picturehouse and other music/cultural events as well as hospitality venues such cafes and bars. Only 459 people provided an answer for this question. They were permitted to choose multiple responses which results in the percentage data labels not totalling 100%.

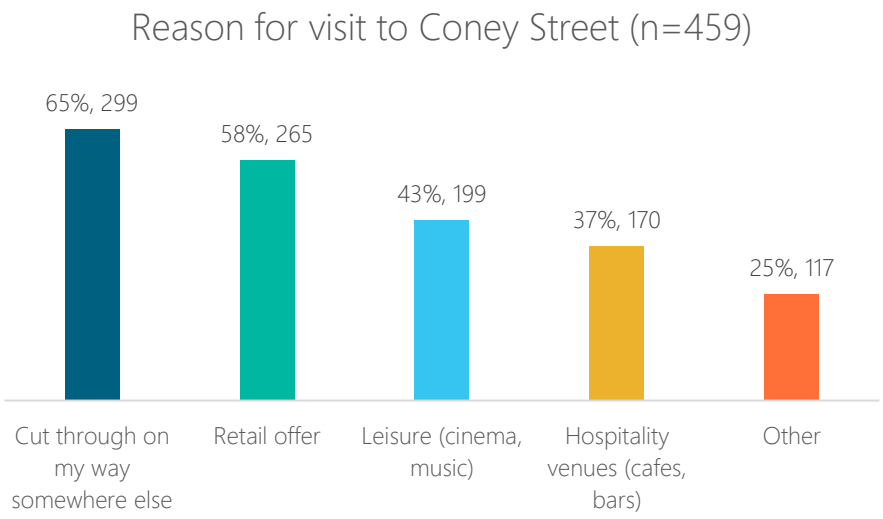

Figure 5: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 459)

3.3 BENEFICIARY DEMOGRAPHICS

Key message: More people who identify as female attended than any other gender. More people were aged between 21 and 35, compared with any other age group.

The StreetLife project attracted attendees across all age brackets, but most attendees were between the ages of 21 and 35 (363, 35% of beneficiaries who provided an answer for this question).

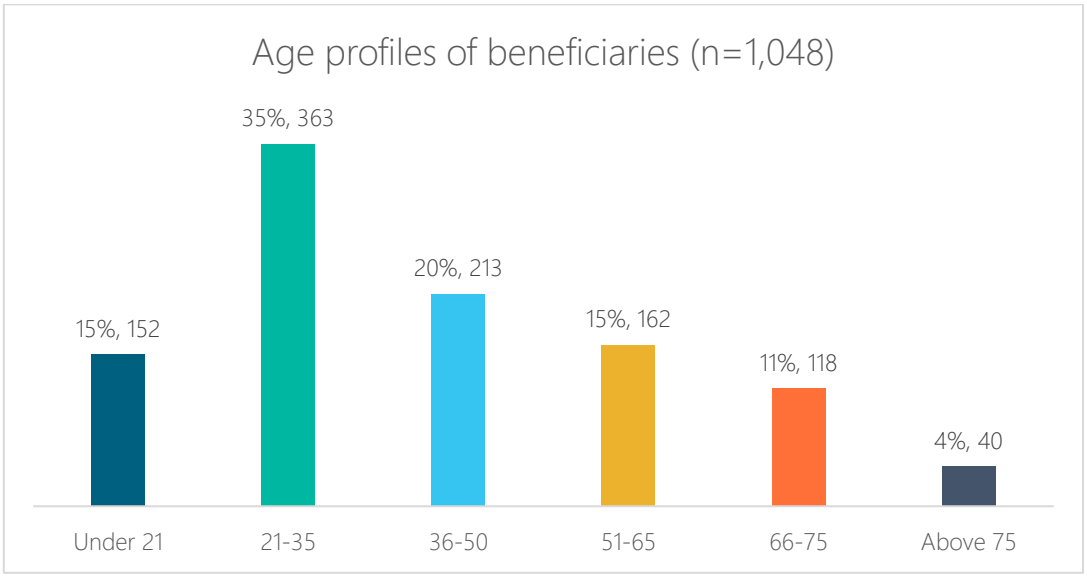

Figure 6: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 1,048)

Three fifths of attendees to the StreetLife Hub (who provided an answer to this question) were female (584, 61%). 34% reported to be male. There were 37 people who identify as a non-binary gender and two individuals preferred not to identify their gender or gave another answer.

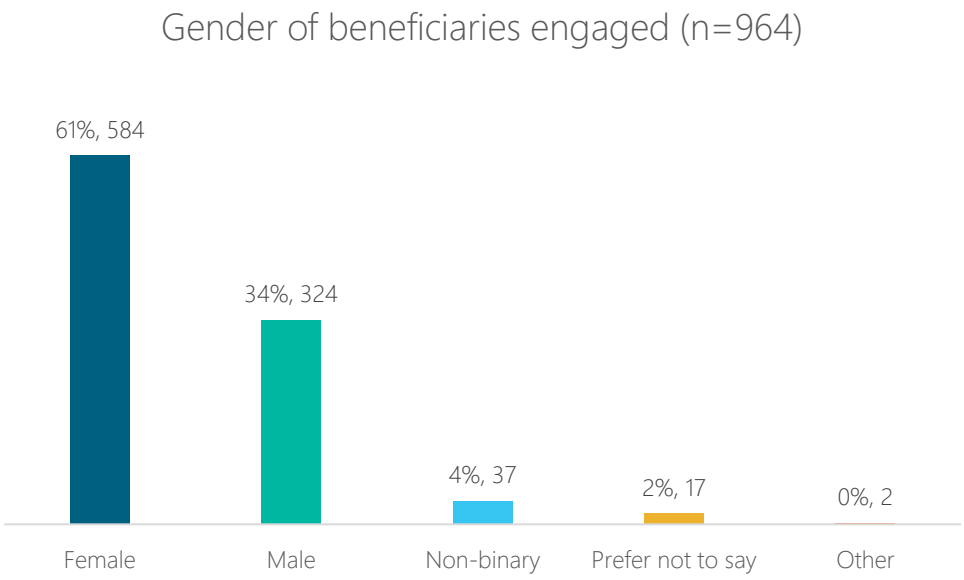

Figure 7: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 964)

Most beneficiaries who responded reside within York or the wider region. Those who answered 'Other' were mostly visiting from overseas (8, 2%). Although over half of the respondents did not answer this question, so caution should be used when drawing conclusions from these results.

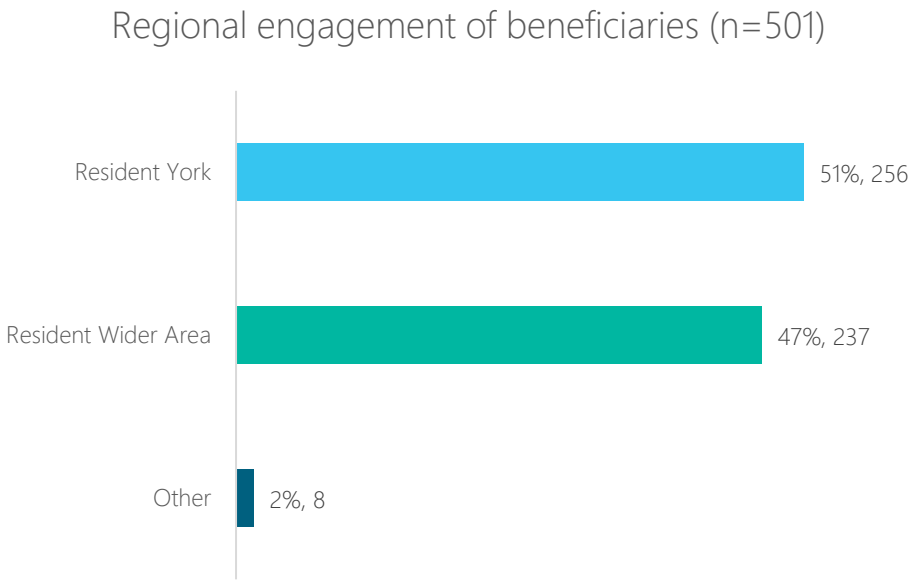

Figure 8: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 501).

3.4 STREETLIFE SATISFACTION

Key message: Beneficiaries were highly satisfied with their experience at the StreetLife Hub. It was found to be engaging, interactive, and informative. The non-commercial nature was a strength. In future, people would like to engage more with the history of York and to attend more workshops. Beneficiary feedback has highlighted a strong appetite for more heritage activity on the high street which ignites people's memories and fascination with the history of York.

Beneficiaries were asked to explain what they enjoyed about their experience in the StreetLife Hub. Their responses are summarised below.

Interactivity: The ability to engage with activities in workshops and events stood out to attendees. The workshop facilitators were praised as "brilliant" and "knowledgeable" and were able to "provide every participant with sufficient challenge". For most, the opportunity to get their creative juices flowing, created a "relaxing atmosphere" which was both "educational and fun". The piano was mentioned regularly as its music drew people into the space while people enjoyed listening and playing. Visitors to the exhibition also enjoyed the ability to use the old printing press, as it was a novel activity for most. While others simply enjoyed the opportunities to connect with others through shared interests in the activities.

"A fantastic workshop, which I would highly recommend"

"The print workshop by Joanna was empowering"

Non-commercial: Visitors to the space enjoyed that something other than retail was on the street, and that they could visit "without the pressure of needing to buy something". Some remarked on the quality of the staff who enabled them to engage with the exhibitions in a manner not found in retail stores. As there are a few empty units on Coney Street, visitors were relieved to discover such a "fascinating space", which is "beyond a shopping location" and "different from the normal". While others simply enjoyed the escape from the bustle of the city streets and liked the "peace and quiet". By creating this space in a commercially dominated area, locals felt it helped to form a space "worth building a community around".

"Lovely way to spend an hour away from the shops"

"Nice to have something to do that's not only drinking and eating"

High- quality exhibits: Beneficiaries liked the accessibility of an arts space in the city centre. Some were surprised that they could visit such a space for free, as few other such spaces exist in York, especially as "the arts can be overlooked and neglected". The art itself was a "very professional" collection which was felt to be "innovative", "serene" and "inspiring". The use of mixed media particularly drew the interest of visitors who may not ordinarily visit an art installation. It was felt by most to be a good balance between interesting art exhibits and history of the city, with both "making [their] presence felt". By displaying work mostly from local artists and art about the area, some felt it brought them closer to the city community.

"I love looking at unique art so to find new artists is very fun"

"Artists provoke thought! Very thoughtful exhibitions"

History: people found the exhibits explaining the history of York "very informative". By revealing the history of the street, through a variety of talks,, workshops and information boards, visitors were better able to understand the significance of the area and how it fits into the historic narrative of the city. The history of print and its links to the city were common topics of discovery, as many were unaware of York's rich history. Visitors also enjoyed the novel approach of using VR to experience the history and music of York and found it "immersive" and "fantastic"; for visitors from outside the city, this inspired them to explore other places within the city. With the inclusion of the consultation space for the new Coney Street Riverside development, locals and visitors alike appreciated "the opportunity to have input in future ideas" as it made them feel "hopeful for change and enhancement".

"Learning more about Coney Street's past and present which helps me to see it in a different light."

"I enjoyed learning about something new, that I didn't have any prior knowledge of"

After visiting StreetLife, people were asked what they would like to do following their experience – see Figure 9. 908 people provided an answer for this question. They were permitted to choose multiple responses which results in the percentage data labels not totalling 100%. The experience at the StreetLife Hub had encouraged most beneficiaries to explore more about the city's history and heritage. Many participants were also keen to sign up for future activities like the one they had engaged with. Future engagement with planning and development proposals was less popular. For some, engagement had spurred interest in future career opportunities. Those who selected 'Other' gave a range of answers including: "will visit again", "will recommend to others", "find other similar workshops".

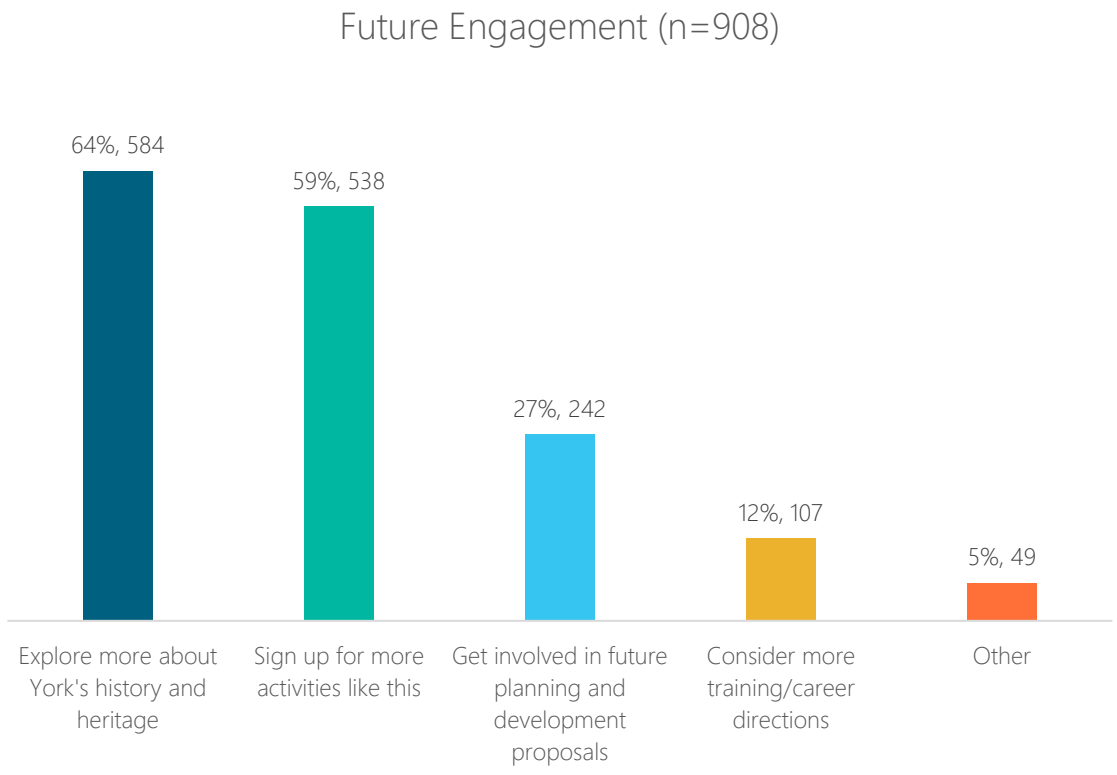

Figure 9: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 908).

3.5 CONEY STREET AND ITS FUTURE

Key message: Beneficiaries identify Coney Street as a central location in York which primarily contains commercial outlets. Many identified flaws with the street in its current state and its potential for regeneration.

Beneficiaries were asked to explain what Coney Street means to them; their responses are summarised below. A word cloud on the next page highlights the most common words attached to meanings of Coney Street.

- **Retail:** Many respondents reported Coney Street as a commercial heart in the centre of York now and in the past. Waterstones was often mentioned as a reason for visiting the street, as was City Screen and Boots. On the other hand, some also pointed to this as a failure of the street - t hey felt the street was lined with "characterless shopfronts" which made it look "like any other centre street".

- **Memories of the past:** Some who visited the exhibits were long-time residents of York or had returned to visit. StreetLife ignited a sense of nostalgia and memories of people's past experiences or family members due to its physical presence on Coney Street. Many past University students had fond memories of Coney Street. Moreover, beneficiaries commented on how their visit to Coney Street will be remembered. Respondents suggested the street used to be a significant attraction to their visit to the city centre - "a main shopping street that we visited regularly". Although, those who returned noted how it had changed over time - "in my youth it was a destination shopping street".

- **Signs of decline:** Respondents were also keen to highlight the streets unfulfilled potential with a sense the high street was dying, especially those who regularly visit the city centre. However, amongst these respondents there was a recognition that Coney Street was not the only one feeling this strain - "a familiar sense of a high street that is struggling". The streetscape was held in low regard by respondents who felt "it seems quite neglected". The high street can also act as a signifier of wider economic conditions as one respondent noted the "sad sight of empty shops, reminding all of the current economic gloom".

- **A thoroughfare:** Respondents reported the access from the street to other areas of the city centre was particularly useful "a connection to other key York sites". However, this was seen as a negative aspect of Coney Street, citing a lack of reason to stay on the street "better for cutting through than dwelling". Some highlighted the removal of York's historic character calling it a "dark uninviting urban canyon", instead feeling it was "just a conduit to better places".

- **Atmosphere:** The high numbers of people using the street were seen as a positive by most who said they felt "a really bustling energy" or Coney Street was "where I go if I want to get lost in a crowd". Beneficiaries frequently commented on the music they had heard on Coney Street at events or from buskers on the street. Although some suggested the atmosphere was too much and put them off visiting even saying it is "to be avoided at weekends".

Figure 10: What does Coney Street mean to you? University of York, 2022

Beneficiaries were also asked what they liked or disliked about Coney Street. Their responses have been summarised and grouped by sentiment.

The variety of retail outlets on offer was highlighted by beneficiaries who enjoyed the mix between common high -street chain stores and independent businesses. Stores such as Paperchase, Lush, Boots and Waterstones were mentioned most often, many highlighting the bookshop as a main reason for visiting the street. Some felt the limited selection of drinking establishments was also a positive as they felt other areas are "dominated by bars". The historic architecture was also an aspect of the street which drew people in and contributed to the character of the street. The historic buildings reminded people of the street's "importance to York". The "big old clock" stood out too, many who said they "love the clock" or called it "beautiful".

"I love the access to major shops like Waterstones"

"Convenience of basic shops… all in one street is valued"

Independent and cultural attractions such as the StreetLife exhibition space, City Screen, the Fabrication Crafts shop were highlighted as unique aspects which attracted people to the area. These drew visitors as they could not find these activities in other areas of the city. When mentioned, these were often highlighted as aspects which beneficiaries would like to be maintained or expanded upon. These particularly stood out, even amongst attractions in other cities, as a free-to-visit exhibition space in a city centre is uncommon.

"[I] wish it was something that more cities pursued".

"City screen an absolute gem"

"A distinct cultural space"

The pedestrianisation of the street is also popular, as it allowed people to "stray freely doing different things". Although people felt less safe when this restriction was removed for delivery vehicles; "lorries" were particularly unwelcome. The street is used by many as a useful thoroughfare to move through to access other areas. People liked that they could access many different areas of the city easily via Coney Street.

The presence of many empty shops unsettled many visitors to the street. "Boarded up shops" and empty premises were cited by many as a drain on the street. Some felt that, due to this, it looks as though the street "has died".

"It strikes me as sad that so many of these sites are empty"

Countering those who enjoy the familiar high street stores, some respondents felt the presence of chain stores and modernised shop fronts diminished the character of the street. It was highlighted that the bright lights of these stores, including the digital displays, were "not in keeping with the historic city".

"It feels too modern in a medieval city"

Some respondents felt there was a lack of stopping space to admire the street; it was felt people did not have space to break from the crowds to "stop and look at things". People often felt crowded in the street, particularly on weekends. Some did not want to divert into a retail space when the crowds were too much, so welcomed the StreetLife space.

"Sometimes the crowds are overwhelming on busy days".

The street was considered unsafe at night and not suitable for children by some, particularly due to visiting stag-and-hen parties, as well as drunkenness in general. Accessibility concerns were also raised about the street. Multiple respondents suggested the street was unsuitable for disabled people, one even went as far to say they felt "banned". Similarly, a few participants highlighted the lack of access to available public toilets, either through a lack of signage, or that they were missing entirely.

Beneficiaries were also prompted to suggest ways in which Coney Street could be improved going forward. 923 beneficiaries provided an answer to this question. They were permitted to choose multiple responses which results in the percentage data labels not totalling 100%.

Approximately 70% suggested the public realm could be improved. Increasing access to the riverside and introducing more diverse experiences to the street were both welcomed. Beneficiaries would like to see more diversity in the retail and hospitality offerings. A high proportion of those who selected 'other' suggested they would like to see more museums and arts/crafts exhibits (like the StreetLife Hub) on Coney Street explaining that StreetLife provides more opportunities for music and creativity as well as somewhere to sit and rest without having to purchase food or a drink. The development of hotels on Coney Street was not a popular suggestion.

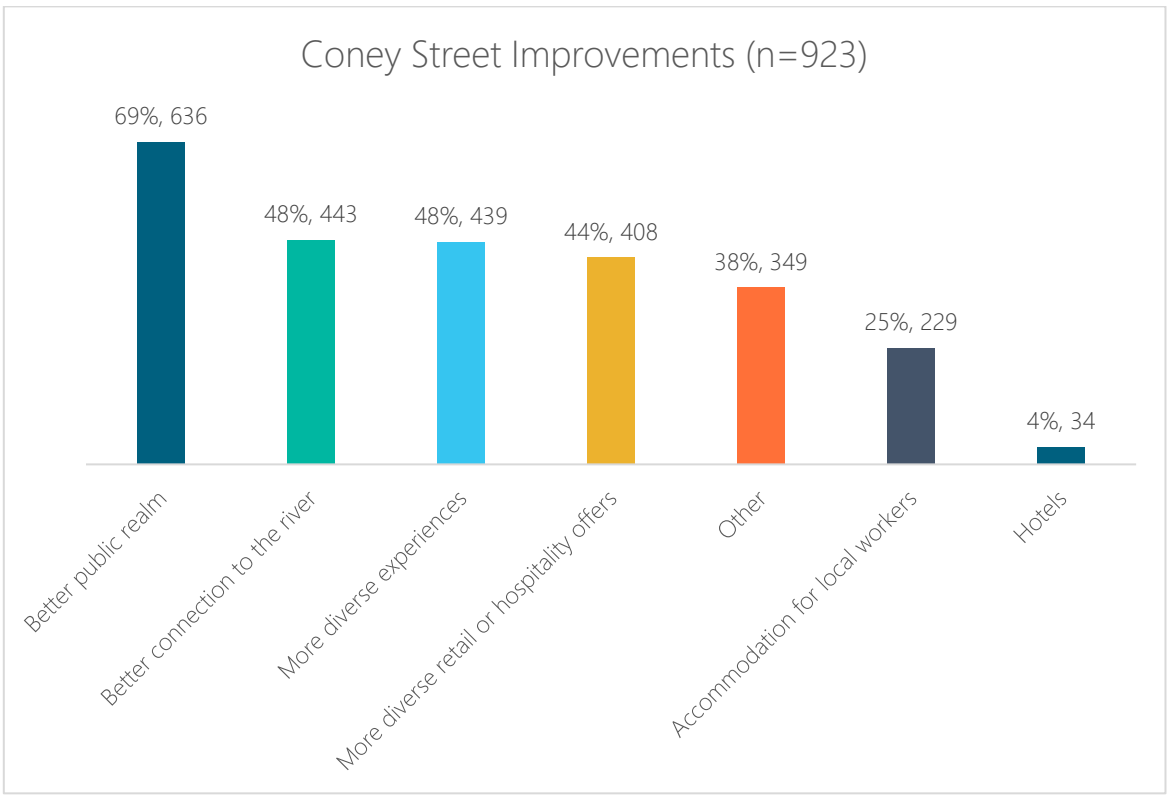

Figure 11: Source: University of York, 2022. (n= 923).

4. STAKEHOLDER AND DELIVERY TEAM CONSULTATION

This chapter explores StreetLife based upon 15 stakeholder interviews. It presents qualitative findings on the aims and rationale of the project, management and governance, project strengths and weaknesses, partnership-working and engagement, as well as lessons for the future. Notably, as a pilot, StreetLife has successfully shown there is appetite for creative and heritage activities on the high street and the challenges which have been overcome provide important lessons for the future.

Conversations with stakeholders took place in November 2022. The stakeholders include the project team from the University of York and representatives from York City Council, the StreetLife Steering Group, the York Civic Trust, the Helmsley Group, York Music Venues Network, WARO (Wobbling and Rocking About) and Aesthetica. This mixture of stakeholders provides a range of views and levels of understanding of StreetLife which allows for a thorough analysis of the delivery model and process.

4.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES, RATIONALE AND APPLICATION

Key Message: StreetLife's objectives were ambitious, and stakeholders agreed the project had been successful in its progress. The project's rationale remains valid and StreetLife has addressed several market failures, and provided important lessons for the future. The application process successfully brought together internal and external partners, although this was challenging given the short timeframe.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of StreetLife were ambitious and most stakeholders agreed they were realistic.

"I think they were ambitious and stretching. But I think that's what you're supposed to do, isn't it?"

Stakeholders felt all but one of the five objectives of StreetLife had been fully achieved, as the project had delivered:

- Innovative and immersive experiences to revitalise Coney Street, combining digital innovation and physical engagement.
- Pop-up activities and virtual experiences will better connect the community to civic spaces.
- The repurposing of empty units.
- Development of links between retail premises and creative, heritage-led renewal.

Stakeholders noted StreetLife had partially transformed the streetscape and its sounds but recognized the difficulties of doing this fully within the time and resources available to the project. Notably, they felt this was still a useful objective for StreetLife to work towards.

RATIONALE AND MARKET FAILURES

There was consensus that the rationale for StreetLife, which aims to repurpose and reinvigorate the high street, has continued to remain valid throughout the project. The project has been a good initiative that has brought people into the area in and around Coney Street.

The active use of the space has facilitated consultation of Coney Street developments. For example, StreetLife has prompted new retail lettings including a small department store that will bring in more retailers.

The evolving and uncertain socio-economic context from the pandemic was recognised as the high street continues to face challenges compared to the traditional picture.

"I think there is still space for the university to explore what that means moving forward. And the project has value in working through one aspect of how the high street can evolve."

The project's use of a retail space on Coney Street was ambitious, especially given the short timeframe. This was made more challenging through Government delays to the start of the project and the pioneering nature of StreetLife.

"I think it's been a really good example of how it can work well and thinking differently for a long time."

The StreetLife project has been a rewarding experience, especially considering beneficiary feedback, which has been a useful tool to inform future activity on Coney Street. Stakeholders were heartened to know the project is felt to be needed and wanted.

The StreetLife project is addressing important market failures on Coney Street by bringing people into the area and getting them to stop on the street rather than using it as a passing route. It successfully highlights how retail space can be transformed into engaging experiential spaces.

Stakeholders explained it would be impossible for a small-scale project, given the scale of pedestrian movements in the city centre, to create a large increase in footfall (to pre-pandemic levels). Yet, it is still a model by which footfall can be reinstated and sustained. A notable success of the StreetLife project is the activation of footfall at different times of the day, whereas traditional high-street retail activity works around standard opening hours, StreetLife has instigated evening events, drawing people in at quieter times.

Although it is difficult to quantify the entire contribution of StreetLife addressing the deflated resilience of the high street, it has successfully piloted, and demonstrated the benefits of, having a dynamic and creative space on the high street. The area has been enhanced by the project's presence and encouraged new independent projects and businesses.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The initial application and bid stage of the project was challenging given the deadlines set by Government. There was some frustration over the rapidity and subsequent lack of time and thought put into the application

"The application process was such a compressed timeframe in the context of the time, and in this specific funding scheme, I'm not sure what more we could have done."

The process brought partners together who created an ambitious plan by merging separate elements and streams of work together. Stakeholders praised how the delivery team and external partners came together within the small timeframe to collaborate and create a successful bid. With more time, stakeholders felt other partners could have been included to strengthen and diversify StreetLife's offer.

"...I don't think we could possibly have anticipated how much work it would be. But on the other hand, how rewarding it would be"

It was recognised the evidence requirements of the outputs and outcomes were not fully understood and that the project leads had not delivered an economic development project before. Therefore, this led to some challenges throughout the project lifecycle, especially regarding claiming outputs and outcomes required by the funding providers.

"I think the learning for me is around the university thinking more strategically more long term. If you're our strategic partner for whatever it is heritage, whatever it is we want to try and do, then we have to have some projects that are shovel ready"

There is an appetite to continue the strategic partnerships developed during StreetLife and a desire to think more strategically and long-term when collaborating on bids and projects in the future.

4.2 MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Key message: Management, governance, and administration of the StreetLife project was praised and benefited from the expertise of the project team, university departments and project partners.

MANAGEMENT, GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Generally, the governance, management, and administration of StreetLife was praised. There was a consensus that there was robust project management and the project team felt supported. Stakeholders reflected that this project management role needed to be sufficiently resourced in the future to ensure the successful delivery of future iterations of StreetLife.

The delay of the signing the contract to confirm the advancement of StreetLife reduced the time the project team had to prepare for delivery. In addition, due to the fast pace of the project, there has not been sufficient time to refine management and governance in real-time. Stakeholders felt that it would have been useful to have more review meetings to reflect on methods and systems of delivery.

The project team was able to draw extensively on the expertise from the professional services teams, at the university to help with finance, compliance, and estates management. The university provided a level of assurance to external partners that StreetLife would be governed appropriately.

The management of the project was mostly driven by the three strand leads who have delivered project activity organically. The delivery team was able to utilise the strand leads' knowledge and expertise, which is vast. Sometimes this puts pressure on people delivering on the ground. People had to work fast to get things delivered. The model has worked but on occasion raised challenges over ownership of issues and

remit of the project manager. It was felt that early clarity on management roles and responsibilities across the delivery team would improve overall management of the project. It was suggested that on reflection, the project manager should have been given the authority to make final decisions regarding delivery, and strand leads would feed in their expertise, vision thoughts and useful contacts. This model would enable the project manager to set a viable and deliverable scope .

MANAGEMENT OF THE CONEY STREET HUB

On the ground, management of the StreetLife Hub was strong. The project team was praised for working hard to make the Hub look appealing to visitors to encourage engagement. The gallery assistants and delivery team were praised for their engagements with the public. However, some commented the gallery assistants could have been more proactive in engaging the public with StreetLife activities.

4.3 STRENGTHS

Key message: StreetLife interdisciplinarity and collaborations are core strengths of the project. StreetLife has connected with people on an emotional level through exploring Coney Street's past, present, and future. It has highlighted the desire for creative and heritage activities on the high street and the success of a physical presence to do this through the StreetLife Hub.

StreetLife's strength is its interdisciplinarity, as it has created a dynamic environment that represents a range of disciplines and areas of research. It embodies a combination of immersive knowledge and expertise with practical discovery and creativity, and it has been able to transform people's understanding of the environment around them. StreetLife has also allowed for interdisciplinarity on a more practical scale, through the collaboration between the academics, researchers, and students as well as those on the economic development team.

"All these collaborations are something that, you know, I hadn't anticipated when we started off setting up the project and the hub."

StreetLife's collaborations and partnership- working has been positive and strong (see 4.5 for more details). Interesting and beneficial relationships have been formed and the project has been able to engage people who might not ordinarily have been part of conversations around the heritage of Coney Street. StreetLife has enabled the university to explore its civic agenda in a practical and collaborative way and these conversations have provided an opportunity for the public to consider and shape the future of the Street.

"What we are trying to do is get the community to have a voice and hear what community is saying about what they want for the future of the High Street"

"I think StreetLife has been able to get people to think about the fact that this is just one moment in time"

"So that was one of the things we were quite keen to uncover, in a way was a pipeline of from the ground upwards of narratives and assets that we might want to celebrate or record"

This reflective nature of StreetLife has deepened people's interactions and connections, and many stakeholders commented on the importance of this.

"...that emotional connection is such an important thing, which could easily be lost in a large commercial development, particularly around a street that's dominated by retail"

The emotionality of StreetLife allows the connections with people and places and has the power to increase the longevity of interventions like StreetLife which require immersion and curiosity. Moreover, it demonstrates the importance of emotion and memory within place-making.

"It's been absolutely brilliant, you know, the demonstration that culture can work so well, on a commercial High Street, it's really helped to enrich your experience, I think shows a great deal"

As a pilot, StreetLife has successfully shown there is appetite for creative and heritage activities on the high street and the challenges which have been overcome provide important lessons for the future (see 4.7). It has strengthened the case to diversify the high street with social and experiential usage. StreetLife has '*captured people's imagination*' and is '*playful*', which is a strength of the project and added to the welcoming nature of activities.

StreetLife has also demonstrated the important role the university can play in the (re)development of the city and the power of strategic partnerships between the university and other key partners in York.

"I also think it's shown really well what the university could do, if it works in the city centre, and brings that level of resource"

The physical space on Coney Street is an important strength of the project and was widely praised. Having a physical space in the heart of the city has allowed for StreetLife to become well-established and stakeholders saw real value in its presence.

"Having that physical space at 29-31 Coney Street has been great and has been able to put new things in motion, because you can direct people to somewhere, not just a website or an idea."

The events, exhibitions and activities were seen as high-quality and the Hub staff were a great asset to the project and were described as 'phenomenal' and 'brilliant'. Additionally, the delivery team at the University of York was praised and their hard work and success recognised in delivering StreetLife.

On a personal level, stakeholders discussed how the welcoming and friendly nature of the Hub increased people's wellbeing and described examples of older people coming in simply for a conversation.

StreetLife has conveyed academic areas of interest to a more general audience in an accessible and interesting way thus, highlighting the importance and power of knowledge exchange for the public good.

"I think as a whole it's been absolutely brilliant. You demonstrate the need for culture or a cultural hub as part of a commercial high street, I think the engagement with that space and the activity, the programme, that activity that's gone on has been phenomenal."

4.4 DELIVERY CHALLENGES

Key message: The constrained timeframe for StreetLife created and intensified challenges experienced during delivery. The use of a retail unit on Coney Street was challenging at times and the delivery team

worked hard to address issues as they arose. As a pilot, the level of resource to deliver StreetLife at the scale and pace required was high.

The timeframe for the StreetLife project, both regarding submitting the bid and the delivery period (compressed due to Government funding delays) was the underlying cause of many of the challenges encountered. The rushed process of writing the initial project bid did lead to several challenges that could have potentially been avoided if more time was available for consideration of measuring and counting outputs.

DELIVERING ON THE HIGH STREET

There were physical constraints regarding the Hub space. The occupation of the space was costly and the spend profile of the project had to be reshaped to address this. There also had to be some compromise when acquiring the space. Initially, the project aimed to secure three separate units on Coney Street, however after careful consideration, it was decided that one larger venue would be gained. At times, the delivery team held events at other locations on and around Coney Street which enabled new collaboration opportunities.

"The project team were pragmatic and managed to secure a single space that was flexible and a space they could adapt to meet the needs across different areas people wanted to engage with. The team adapted well."

Another challenge for the Hub was accessibility in 29-31 Coney Street as a venue. The unit contains two floors, one at street level and the other at basement level, which is only accessible via a set of stairs. There are also no accessible toilet facilities. The StreetLife project team identified this as an issue and quickly responded by completing an accessibility audit with a disability consultant. Following this audit, it became clear that the team was unavoidably restricted with what they could do with the space. The stairs in the space are the biggest obstacle and stakeholders felt it was not possible to put in a stairlift. The audit provided some options of what could be done within the limitations of the current StreetLife Hub, which the delivery team adopted, and suggestions were made for an ideal future. Staff training was also completed following the audit. The project team demonstrated their best intentions and showed they were actively trying to support accessibility. StreetLife also raised awareness of these issues through the creation of a VR experience in partnership with members of York Disability Rights Forum which demonstrated the realities of moving round York for a person with disabilities.

It was noted that the team were very receptive and hardworking, and the accessibility training was seen as an opportunity for personal development, for them to take forward accessibility awareness into other areas of their life.

RESOURCE

There were several challenges surrounding resource. For the delivery team, it was felt there was often a '*reliance on good will*' and the true nature of resource required (in terms of time) had not been realised at the bid stage.

"It's been difficult to keep the momentum going with the project alongside all the other pressure points".

It was difficult at times to deliver StreetLife within the structure of existing university systems, for example, if there was an immediate need to purchase something for the Hub, it was difficult to claim this money back.

The level of administration for the project was also a challenge at times, particularly given the scale of StreetLife and delivering it within a constrained timeframe. Stakeholders commented on the difficulties of getting beneficiaries to complete feedback forms, which are used to monitor the project, with many people not filling them in fully or at all.

External partners also had to manage their resources to meaningfully engage with the project and due to the initial short-term timeframe of StreetLife (six months which was then extended to a year) this was a challenge.

There were questions raised as to how to build in more resource in the future to relieve the pressures on the delivery team and enable projects like StreetLife to thrive.

4.5 PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND ENGAGEMENT

Key message: Partnership-working has been a key strength for StreetLife both internally at the University of York and with external partners. The engagement with beneficiaries has been high, as demonstrated in chapter 3, although some stakeholders would like to see more diverse audiences engaging with StreetLife. The StreetLife brand and presence has continually improved as the project gained momentum.

INTERNAL PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Internal processes have been well coordinated and direction, from the Economic Development Team was highly praised and appreciated by stakeholders. There was consensus that the delivery team has been fortunate with personnel regarding skills and competency levels.

There has been successful partnership-working amongst the internal strand leads that has brought together different areas of expertise, knowledge, and subject discipline areas, all under the aim to revitalise Coney Street and stimulate the post-covid creative economy. The project has demonstrated the power of collaborations and how they can be utilised for public good. The StreetLife project has allowed the University of York to build new relationships, which is sometimes difficult as an edge-of-town campus university. StreetLife has given the University of York a presence in the city centre and created new connections to increase civic engagement further.

"There has been some really lovely coming together or print, music and heritage."

"The process has been useful and helpful, and achieved something which is greater than the sum of its parts."

The project has also been a learning process for delivery partners at the university and there have been some challenges working across departments. There could have been more of a focus on internal collaboration to increase the project efficiency regarding resources.

Partnership-working at times was limited by structural and cultural issues within the university, which did not always allow for easy collaboration due to variation in university financial support systems attached to specific disciplines, fields, and Departments .

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The StreetLife Project has been a great opportunity for the University of York to develop connections with a whole range of external partners. The project has facilitated collaboration and fruitful relationships across York.

The partnership created between the University of York and City of York Council was new and has been mostly positive. Stakeholders suggested there could be a more active delivery role for the Council in the future as this has generally been led by the university.

"I've certainly not worked with them before. That's been really helpful. It's good to get an understanding of their processes and get to know some of the individuals a bit better and it's been really good."

StreetLife's relationship with the York Music Venues Network (YMVN) has been positive and allowed for some good opportunities. YMVN has expanded involvement in other projects because of the collaboration with StreetLife, especially involving archiving and getting venues to discuss heritage development. In addition, the YMVN has been able to introduce people to the StreetLife project through local and regional government representatives. This partnership has raised the profile of both the project and the YMVN and built a strong foundation for future collaboration.

"We can say, we're partnering on this project. We've been able to help with this, and we're helping deliver on this. So basically, helping us increase our status within local cultural groups."

The York Civic Trust wasa good partner to the project and worked well with the delivery team. The Helmsley Group, which has interacted well with the project, has been open to discussions around the potential of its legacy and how this may fit in with their development plans for the future of York city centre.

StreetLife's unofficial partnerships have also been a success, notably with Fabrication Crafts and Aesthetica Magazine and Aesthetica Film Festival. Collaboration with Aesthetica has allowed for increased engagement with the Hub and has been a massive boost to footfall and activity.

"StreetLife and Aesthetica have a brilliant and fruitful partnership."

StreetLife has worked with Navigators Art, a group of artists and creatives based in York, who currently have an exhibition of their work on the basement floor of the StreetLife Hub, as seen in the below.

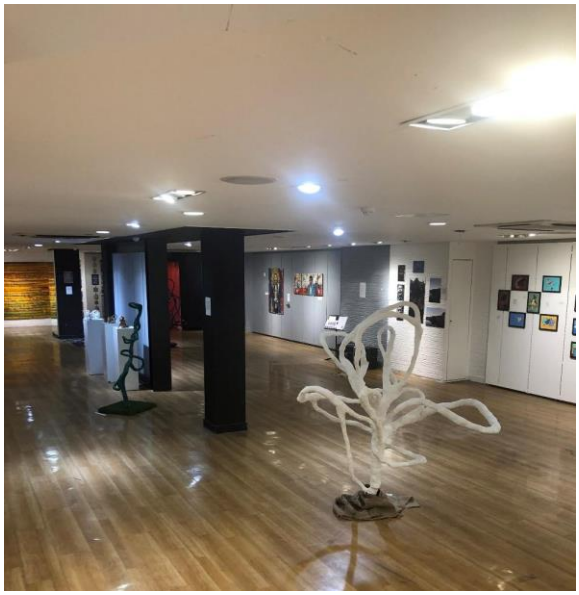

Image 1: Navigators Art Exhibition at the StreetLife Hub

Finally, the StreetLife project has allowed for the development of research contacts with the Type Archive and the Science Museum Group in London where there is the potential to extend project collaboration after project closure. Another partner that formed as a result of the project is the York Oral History Society.

At times, it was a challenge to ensure that StreetLife was not duplicating activity already provided by some external commercial partners. As StreetLife offer is free there was some concern over external providers losing potential customers to StreetLife a concern which has been heightened due to the challenging economic circumstances businesses are currently operating in. It was noted however for the musical venues StreetLife had taken a considered approach which often complimented the existing offer.

In summary, external partnerships were very positive and partners are eager for them to continue and to develop new opportunities for collaboration.

ENGAGING WITH BENEFICIARIES

StreetLife has been successful in engaging beneficiaries with activities at the Coney Street Hub and has successfully hit its target outputs – this is shown in the data analysed in Chapter 3. The beneficiaries who did engage, mostly resident communities, were pleased with the quality of activity. There was also good engagement with visitors to York.

StreetLife held a range of events under the three themed strands to reach wide audiences such as DJ workshops with people experiencing homelessness, workshops on black popular music histories and Ableton for Beginners for those identifying as women and non-binary. There was also a focus on disability and access for example a VR experience demonstrating what it is like to move around York as a person living with disability, and an emphasis on diversity among our workshop leaders. Some activities were also held at other venues to increase the reach of StreetLife.

Yet, there was some consensus amongst stakeholders that more could have been done to attract an even wider demographic.

"We noticed about the workshops that it wasn't as diverse and an inclusive set of audiences as we perhaps would have liked to have seen."

A main aim of the StreetLife Hub is community outreach and bringing people together who would not typically get involved with the heritage, creative and print histories of York. There was mixed feedback from stakeholders regarding the success of this.

"People are getting involved with it, because they're likely to get involved in it, rather than, you know, changing people's perceptions of encountering something and then being sort of impacted upon by getting involved in something unexpectedly that was really exciting, and then changing their aspirations"

"We worked quite hard early on to ensure that there were, for example, people of colour, who were leading workshops, delivering events and things like that. I don't think there's been that stronger commitment to that across all of the team. And I'm, yeah, I'm sad about that. Because that was a prime motivator for me."

StreetLife has worked at engaging targeted groups but have had some challenges, for example with local retailers and increasing the visibility of the project to them. This was addressed by organising events after 5pm at the Hub to engage with people who were finishing work.

"I think there is some thinking there around how we could make StreetLife more effective in engaging those [retail] voices."

Several stakeholders reflected there were challenges around engaging some groups who are 'seldom heard' such as those living in socially and economically disadvantaged areas of York. Some StreetLife activities were held outside the hub with satellite workshops piloted in communities outside of the City Centre in partnership with York Explore.

"It was harder to reach younger adults and school age children from more deprived areas who don't see the city as theirs."

StreetLife could provide more opportunities for socially and economically disadvantaged groups to engage with culture and heritage opportunities. However, the project has successfully delivered events which have engaged other groups, such as people who have experienced homelessness.

BRAND, PRESENCE AND PROFILE

The presence of the StreetLife brand has greatly improved since the Interim Report, which highlighted the promotion of StreetLife as a challenge. The new shopfront is eye-catching and effective at engaging people and drawing them into the Hub. The reframing of the public facing aspect of the project has made it a much more welcoming and visible space.

"The work that has been done to the unit has been really helpful. And it's got a really strong street presence now."

Image 2: StreetLife Shop Window

More time has allowed the project to build more of a name, presence, and cohesiveness around the brand.

The brand has been championed by all members of the university. The Vice Chancellor is a huge advocate of the StreetLife project, and regularly praises the work it does. It has also been used in various presentations as a good example of civic engagement in the city. The external partners have continued to promote the project and one stakeholder commented how StreetLife had helped to promote York to businesses interested in coming to the city.

One area that could be improved to increase the reach and presence of the brand was social media.

4.6 ADDED VALUE

Key message: Stakeholders noted several areas where StreetLife demonstrated added value (or additionality). It has successfully shown the impact and appetite for immersive creative and heritage activities on the high street. The StreetLife Hub is an asset and has provided a space for meaningful interaction between the university and the public.

The StreetLife project demonstrates additionality by showing what the high street can be used for as an alternative to retail. By presenting an alternative use to the high street, the project has allowed for imagining a new future model for Coney Street which makes space for independents, creative arts, and heritage immersion. StreetLife has been pivotal to make a case for a different high street offering, which has the potential to alter some of the Helmsley group development plans. In this way, StreetLife could serve as a model for other city centres across the country.

A key area of added value for the StreetLife project is the location of the Hub which allows for the academic activity from the University of York campus to move to the city centre and engage with new audiences.

"The whole concept was to bring [academic activity] into the heart of the city into a space which didn't typically interact with that type of thing. I think it's worked well."

The physical StreetLife space adds value to the Coney Street offering and has been valuable to beneficiaries. The project was a means of assessing the social value of an interactive cultural hub and allowed for the consideration of what spaces like the StreetLife Hub on Coney Street means to York residents and beyond. It was an opportunity to trial public engagement with York's history and understand where provision of this kind might be missing. The space has been a valuable place for people to simply go and sit, to read exhibitions, to play the piano and to enjoy the space in their city centre. It has been popular amongst families, where children engage with art and drawing, and parents can relax. The Hub has also provided a space for creative practitioners to meet and interact with other people with similar interests. It has provided an area for older residents and visitors who just need a place to sit for free.

"The hub has been a place to just come and be which has been additional to what we perhaps expected."

StreetLife has also demonstrated additionality regarding the collaborations between the university and external partners and highlighted the civic role the university can play in the development of the city centre.

4.7 LEGACY AND LESSONS

Key message: Several strands of legacy activities are being developed from StreetLife which will allow the public to continue to engage with Coney Street's past, present, and future in an immersive and creative way. StreetLife has provided many practical lessons due to its innovative nature surrounding partnership working, delivering on the high street, inclusion, resource, and monitoring of beneficiaries.

STREETLIFE'S LEGACY

The StreetLife project has had a positive impact on activity on Coney Street, engagement with beneficiaries and in terms of the development of projects beyond the scope of StreetLife.

StreetLife Hub will offer incubation space for 'The Common Room' and 'York Centre for Print' and build on the momentum of the StreetLife project by continuing to celebrate York's music venues, supporting community spaces, and bringing innovative research out into the streets.

The Common Room, funded the University of York's newly established Policy Engine Initiative (TYPE), will explore how history and heritage can engage residents and visitors creatively and actively with place-making and planning processes:

"It's a very clear vision based on what we learned about how people come into the space, to pull people through a pathway towards planning."

There are plans for a series of eye-catching window displays (experimenting with nostalgic vs. future-themed content) leading to a representation of York, allowing individuals to identify where they live and feel engaged, and game-driven activities to involve all in planning conversations. It will build on StreetLife's notion of creative engagement and involve existing (York Civic Trust) and new partners.

York Centre for Print (primarily funded through University Research Priming for strategically important capital equipment) will answer public demand and build on the successes of Thin Ice Press (the Department of English and Related Literature's teaching and research letterpress studio) and the 'York in Print' strand of StreetLife. As an innovative studio and creative enterprise in the heart of York, it will aim to: build a vibrant community of members who share a passion for printing, bookbinding, and related craft and trade techniques; engage with York's long and distinguished history of print and type

manufacture; draw in harder-to-reach communities in relation to print and literacy initiatives; and develop commercial activities.

The Willow Community Project, created by the music strand of StreetLife in collaboration with York Theatre Royal, will continue ahead of a theatre piece on the Willow that is planned for 2024/5. The university has also allocated Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) to support community spaces to reconnect and record communities that have built up around music venues over time, including via digital archiving and the co-creation of a gig ephemera exhibition at the Hub with the aid of York Music Venues Network.

HEIF will also fund the 'Virtual Neighbourhoods' project, which will build on StreetLife's research and highly successful collaboration with orthodox and liberal Jewish communities to explore and co-design an intervention in and, crucially, out with the Hub. Research has identified York's difficult Jewish heritage due to the Massacre of the Jews at Clifford's Tower in the Middle Ages. However, before the massacre the Jewish people were a hugely important part of the community, and there were several large Jewish houses on Coney Street as well as a synagogue, making up the Stone City. A street-centred virtual reconstruction (accessed via a shop window screen) and soundscape of the lost medieval Jewish neighbourhood will be accompanied by web based content to develop a meaningful narrative about the presence and contribution of the community to civic life, past and present.

LESSONS FOR THE DELIVERY TEAM AND THOSE DELIVERING SIMILAR PROJECTS

Partnership- working has been successful and a real strength of StreetLife, as it has demonstrated the power of collaboration, particularly those which are interdisciplinary. These partnerships are a legacy of StreetLife and provide lessons. External stakeholders would like these strategic partnerships to continue to support the delivery of new creative and heritage activities. Internally, the delivery team has strengthened their interdisciplinary connections and has learnt from different ways of working. Stakeholders reflected that projects like StreetLife often uncover collaboration challenges, yet once these are addressed the partnership is strengthened.

StreetLife has shown a clear appetite for immersive creative and heritage activities delivered on the high street, which has produced several practical lessons around the leasing and running of a retail unit. The delivery team learnt from these experiences and addressed issues as they arose for example around the accessibility of the space. Being a short-term rented unit it has not been possible to make the StreetLife Hub fully accessible and learning from this should be considered if future spaces are used.

The project has also illustrated the significance of public voices within discussions of regeneration. StreetLife's activities have shown the importance of the emotional connections to places and histories, and this increases meaningful engagement as people connect the experience with their own personal feelings and understandings. The legacy activities from StreetLife will continue to build on this.

StreetLife has been intensive for the delivery team to deliver, due to the scale and pace of the project, as the timeframe was constrained due to Government contract delays. More resources than was first anticipated were needed for delivery, particularly the delivery team's time, and this provides important learning for future iterations.

Whilst StreetLife has been successful in engaging with many beneficiaries, several stakeholders commented on the need for more outreach work to target certain groups who do not typically engage with heritage and creative industries. Stakeholders suggested that with more lead time, the project could have co-designed and co-delivered activities with organisations to increase the reach with people who are 'seldom heard'.

The brand and promotion of StreetLife has improved and gained momentum throughout the delivery of the project. The window dressing and signage at the StreetLife Hub made an impact on footfall when it was improved. It is important to create a clear brand and description of the project early, to begin to build this momentum. Stakeholders reflected social media is an area to learn from and should have been utilised early in the project to create interest.

The monitoring of outputs and outcomes (a requirement of the UKCRF) through the beneficiaries has been a challenge for the delivery team due to the large numbers of beneficiaries not completing the forms fully or at all. Stakeholders noted they believe StreetLife's engagement has been higher than those officially documented through the beneficiary survey. There are lessons for improving the understanding within the delivery team of the outputs and outcomes and for ways to engage with beneficiaries to increase the volume and quality of the monitoring data.

StreetLife has demonstrated how the University of York can take an active role within the high street and utilise its resources and knowledge for the public good of the city and its residents.

LESSONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

The UKCRF timeframe and delays from the Government over contracts created and intensified many of the challenges faced by StreetLife. With more time, the project delivery would have eased, and it would provide more opportunities for the project to evolve and learn iteratively. More time is also required at the bid stage.

Projects and partners also require a secure pipeline of funding to plan and deliver activities without the uncertainty of stop/start funding.

StreetLife has demonstrated the important role institutions such as Universities can play in the place-based agenda and the cumulative power of creative, cultural and heritage industries in high streets. It also provides a good example of how arts and humanities can connect with regional economic development and work with communities.

5. PROGRAMME RECOMMENDATIONS

There are programme recommendations that have emerged from the analysis and synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative data.

The University of York and partners may wish to consider the following recommendations.

5.1 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE SUCCESS OF STREETLIFE

- Use the learning from StreetLife to explore how the University of York can utilise its assets for the public good.
- Continue to utilise the University of York's assets off campus to engage with the public and use knowledge exchange in a meaningful way with residents.
- Maintain an inclusive presence on the high street.

RECOMMENDATION 2: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP COLLABORATIONS ACROSS YORK

- Continue to develop new and existing partnerships between the University of York and strategic stakeholders across the city.
- Maintain the relationship between the University of York and the Helmsley Group and explore options to continue to connect the public with the redevelopment of the city.
- Work with partners to create a pipeline of potential projects to develop a proactive position for future funding.

RECOMMENDATION 3: CONTINUE TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HERITAGE AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Continue to meaningfully engage with the general public.
- Explore opportunities for the University of York to deliver creative and heritage activities in and with communities.

5.2 DELIVERY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 4: EXPLORE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE EXISTING UNIVERSITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRACTICES TO ENHANCE THE DELIVERY OF PROJECTS

- Establish a resource framework between the internal delivery team at the start of the project to provide shared understanding of resources and opportunities for collaboration.
- Integration of the University of York's processes and IT systems in the project needs improvement.
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation is built into the project processes from its inception and this administrative oversight is sufficiently resourced.

RECOMMENDATION 5: ENSURE THE DELIVERY OF STREETLIFE IS SUFFICIENTLY RESOURCED WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK AND ITS DELIVERY PARTNERS

- Clarify roles, responsibilities, and the decision-making framework for the internal delivery team at project inception.

- Increase the time allocated for project leads for StreetLife so that it is reflective of the work undertaken.
- Increase project management, administrative and monitoring capacity.

RECOMMENDATION 6: USE THE LEARNING FROM STREETLIFE SURROUNDING THE PRACTICALITIES OF DELIVERING CREATIVE AND HERITAGE INTERVENTIONS ON THE HIGH STREET

- Establish a forum to share the experiences of delivering StreetLife internally and externally to enable lessons and best practice to be shared widely.
- Create resources to ease the delivery journey of similar programmes in the future, for example a crib sheet, which clearly outlines the delivery stages including practical challenges.
- Celebrate the success of StreetLife.
- Ensure any future projects and spaces consider accessibility at inception.

RECOMMENDATION 7: IMPROVE PROMOTION OF STREETLIFE AND ITS ACTIVITIES

- Employ a dedicated communications role to improve promotion of StreetLife to the public and external partners.
- Improve consistency of social media activity to increase reach of StreetLife.

RECOMMENDATION 8: CONSIDER OPTIONS TO INCREASE THE REACH AND IMPACT OF STREETLIFE ACROSS THE COMMUNITIES, BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS OF YORK

- Implement a methodology co-designed between partners to agree principles of engagement to increase diversity and inclusivity and ensure consistency across delivery.
- Establish a 'residents' group' to increase the community voice within StreetLife and include the group at every stage of StreetLife from project design to evaluation.
- Build on existing partnerships and identify opportunities to widen engagement with businesses and organisations across York to increase the reach and impact of StreetLife.
- Consider options to take StreetLife activities into deprived areas of York to engage with 'seldom heard' groups in their own spaces.

ANNEX ONE: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTEE LIST

Name	Organisation/Role
Andrew Morrison	York Civic Trust – CEO
Ben Murphy	York City Council – Senior Major Development Projects and Initiatives
Cherie Federico	Aesthetica – Director
Chris Sherrington	York Music Venues Network - Co-Founder
Christine Hogan	York City Council – Directorate of Economy and Place
Dom Smith	WARO (Wobbling and Rocking About)
Helen Smith	University of York – Project Lead (Print)
Jennie England	University of York – Research Assistant
Kate Giles	University of York – Project Lead (Heritage)
Lizzy Holling	University of York – Project Manager
Mary Howarth	University of York - Director of Philanthropy and Alumni
Max Reeves	The Helmsley Group - Director
Rachel Cowgill	University of York - Project Lead (Music)
Tom Houlton	University of York – Data Management
Vicky Wren	University of York – Programme Manager

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