International Tourists and York: The Welcoming City

Kersten England, Chief Executive, City of York Council
• There has been an 11 fold increase in overseas travel since the 1960’s

• The UK had 34.8 million visitors from overseas in 2014, spending £21.7 billion*

How do we attract international visitors from these countries to York?
York as a destination

• York currently welcomes 7 million visitors per year

• Tourism contributed £606 million to York’s economy last year, and supported 20,000 jobs in the industry

• 22.4% in length of stay via online bookings last year and an 11% increase in bed bookings (i.e. Longer stays)

• We are regularly voted one of the top five destinations in the UK—most recently awarded joint second place with Liverpool by *Which?* for a City break, behind only Edinburgh
York offers…….

- Heritage - A rich and varied history just waiting to be explored
- Culture and diversity – a fabulous selection of museums, galleries and events for everyone to enjoy
- Brand recognition – York is one of the most recognisable and iconic Cities in the country
- Access to a beautiful and varied hinterland
• Top quality accommodation
• A compact pedestrianised City Centre, accessible both nationally and internationally, via road, rail and air
• A vibrant nightlife and superb restaurants
• A thriving £3 billion economic environment in which to do business
• Two elite Universities and higher education establishments
<table>
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<tr>
<th>TOP 10 OVERSEAS MARKETS FOR LEISURE</th>
<th>TOP 5 OVERSEAS MARKETS FOR BUSINESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The US (18%)</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia (13%)</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany (8%)</td>
<td>Poland</td>
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<td>The Netherlands (8%)</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>France (7%)</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>Canada (6%)</td>
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<td>Spain (4%)</td>
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<td>Italy (3%)</td>
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<td>Norway (3%)</td>
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<td>China (2.5%)</td>
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China is rising fast, and up from 19th place 10 years ago – but it is still a relatively small comparatively market.
Recent investment in the City

The Judge’s Lodging – newly refurbished 4 star, 23 bedroom City Centre hotel

£8 million investment in York Art Gallery, re-opening Spring 2015

£1 million investment in Cosmo – 248 seat restaurant

A £4 million investment and refurbishment programme at York Theatre Royal

John Lewis and the brand new Vangarde Shopping Park
‘All the World’s a stage....’

In July 2014, the world famous Tour de France came to York. 200,000 people in York lined the route, with 28,000 at the Knavesmire for the Depart.

Estimated economic benefit to the City was £8.3 million; legacy from one event will be £2 million over two years.

94% of residents supported the event as positive for York; 76% of those visiting at the time of Le Tour would recommend York to others as a place to stay.
York was designated a UNESCO City of Media Arts in 2014, one of only eight Cities worldwide – this permanent title allows us to breathe new life into our heritage

Contemporary culture will now be more visibly celebrated and accessible in the city

An iconic Media Arts Centre will be built in York’s historic Guildhall, creating a new City Centre focal point for creativity and participation

York is well on its way to becoming a Gigabit City with superfast network connections
How well do we know our markets?

China: A Case Study

• Long distance travel for the top 5% of Chinese travellers is an investment, not a holiday: education, business, property, high end jewellery
• Gambling and horseracing is a draw
• Shorter ‘niche’ experiences are much more appealing: two hours long and not a whole day!
• Wi-fi is extremely important
• Museums and attached merchandise are extremely important
• Chinese expats and current students are an important market
People from China have only begun to travel extensively in the last seven or eight years, so how do we get them to come to York?

Remember:

The worm has to be tasty to the fish, not the fishermen!

Professor Wolfgang Arlt, Director of COTRI (Chinese Outbound Tourism Research Institute)
Visit York is working with partners on an International Leisure Marketing and Activity Plan Targeting markets in the USA, Canada, Germany, The Netherlands and China Working with overseas tour operators, travel agents and online travel agents Designed to maximise our return on investment, and grow the numbers of visitors and spend per market
What has York done to adapt already?

• Participating in China Welcome training programme, and some venues are working hard towards a Quality Label for being China ready
• Minster is adapting its product for a US tour operator
• The JORVIK Viking Centre time car is in 6 languages!
• Produced literature in relevant language
• Foreign language speaking guide
Partnership working on the ‘package’ concept

• English Heritage has created bespoke itineraries. This covers a group of eight Cities working in the North American market and now extends to over 11 member cities.

• Custom GB is currently promoting a Richard III package to cover York, Leicester and Stratford.

• Submissions made to the Government’s Northern Futures funding. If approved, there will be much more joint working across the North. Watch this space!
Air and sea links

- Looking to working with Aer Lingus on the new route from the U.S.A via Dublin.
- Familiarisation trip with VisitBritain and Air Canada in June.
- Campaigns taking place with P&O in Northern European markets.
World class education

• The University of York, York St. John, York College and Bryan Colleges educate 24,000 students in the City

• The highest number of overseas learners are from China, Hong Kong and America

• Higher York developed a York Welcomes International Students video and brochure for recruitment purposes, along with a leaflet about living and studying in York
We will continue to work on:

• Knowledge of our market
• Cultural awareness
• Training and competitive salaries in the hospitality sectors
• Concentrating upon the elements of our business which make us unique
• Cohesive support and advice where it can be of most benefit to services in the sector
• Mutually supportive business community
Thank you
Any questions?