

York's Shambles may go one-way to ensure safer social distancing

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A "CONFIDENCE" charter" could see York's medieval Shambles become one-way as businesses consider moves to ensure social distancing can be safely kept within the city's narrow streets.

The voluntary scheme, proposed by the York Retail Forum, could see a one-way system, hand-sanitiser stations and the use of voluntary wardens to co-ordinate footfall in the city centre.

While the majority of businesses remain closed to customers under lockdown, members say they are thinking ahead to ensuring safety is key for when the time comes that rules are relaxed.

"York is a medieval city, with narrow streets and narrow pavements," said forum chair Phil Pinder. "With social distancing, it will be really hard to navigate. The only way to do is to have a plan, with everybody working together."

The forum, at its quarterly meeting, saw members meeting

over Zoom to discuss options for the city's retail economy.

While the Government has not yet indicated how it intends to lift the current lockdown, members believe it will come to staged openings and are planning for the year ahead.

"We all hope a cure or a vaccine could be on the horizon, but it could take many months," said Mr Pinder. "We are trying to minimise the risks as much as we can and keep the city open for business post lockdown."

"One of the biggest battles in the past few years has been to

get pedestrian access," he adds. "Now, we're in the middle of a pandemic and this is the only way the city can cope with the future as it looks."

The York Retail Forum incorporates 80 per cent of the city's businesses, from major retail

ers such as M&S and Primark to smaller stores such as Mr Pinder's own The Potion's Cauldron on the Shambles. His premises are 8ft by 16ft (2.5m by 5m) wide, and the street is 9ft (2.8m), he said. Were a one-way system introduced, it could mean customers could shop at a safe distance.

Other considerations could see the market moved from Newgate to its original home on Parliament Street, which has more outdoor space. "We could call it rules, but we want it to be about a charter," said Mr Pinder. "We've all got to buy into it or it won't

work, and it's got to work or it's going to be a blow to retail."

"It's about retaining that sense of Yorkshire spirit, being friendly and thinking about others."

"But it has got to be fluid – we might not get it right first time in terms of which streets are one-way. We've never done this before. We monitor footfall and traffic, but not which way people walk."

"We need a plan, and to reassure people that we're doing it right. If we're the first city to do this, it's because in York, we've got a city that works together."

"We've got to all buy into it, or it won't work, and it's got to work."

Phil Pinder,
York Retail Forum

Farm trust to expand facilities in 40th year

A FARM trust is set for a major expansion after plans were approved for a new educational building and an extension to its cafe and shop.

The Whirlow Hall Farm Trust in Sheffield has been providing young people with experience of rural life since 1979 and as a 40th anniversary pledge, the team decided to make plans to help more children.

Ben Davies, the chief executive of Whirlow Hall, said the work will see a new educational building that will bring their number of classrooms up from three to six as well as expand the cafe and shop by nearly double its current size.

He said: "On our 40th anniversary year we decided we should make a big commitment to the future of Sheffield. We're having success in providing alternative provision and there's lots of demand for it in Sheffield in particular."

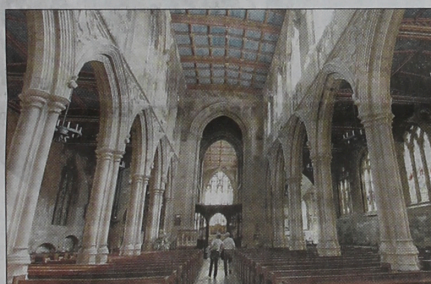
"We've had fantastic help from a raft of organisations and individuals and we now have the funding we need to make these plans a reality."

The trust describes itself as a "classroom in the countryside" which provides outdoor education for children of all ages and young adults as well as specialist provision for children who struggle in mainstream education.

Mr Davies said: "Over the years we have had hundreds of thousands of children come up to Whirlow for one reason or another, and a lot of those will have had life enhancing experiences that they will remember for a very long time."

The cafe helps provide a space for events and fundraisers to support the charitable work but Mr Davies said it was currently too small to be financially viable and the expansion will help provide the extra income needed.

Mr Davies added: "We are a charity that depends on support from the great folk of Sheffield and beyond in order to do what we do."



HERITAGE TREASURE: Interior and exterior of St Mary's Church Beverley, home to some of the finest medieval architecture of any parish church in the country.

PICTURES: PAUL HURST/TERRY CARROTT.

Halfway stage for renovation on poignant day for church

AN EAST Riding church has announced it is halfway through the first phase of an ambitious restoration project – 500 years to the day its tower fell, killing dozens of worshippers.

Stonemasons are repairing crumbling stonework on the north nave clerestory of St Mary's, Beverley – some 50ft up – and their task includes restoring pinnacles and window tracery.

Work started last year thanks

to a £421,400 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and is being carried out by master stonemason Matthias Garn, who has hired new colleagues and apprentices to help with the job.

It was during evensong on April 29, 1520, that the church's central tower collapsed, killing 55 people and leaving the building in ruins.

The rebuild was done in just

11 years and resulted in one of the treasures of St Mary's, which the restoration project aims to save and make better known – its collection of roof bosses.

High up on the ceilings are more than 600 wooden carvings – a vast number for a parish church.

Many of these colourful and curious artworks date from the Tudor restoration of the church in the 1520s.

Stroke patients to 'temporarily' bypass town's hospital

PATIENTS SUFFERING strokes in the Scarborough borough will be taken directly to hospitals in either York, Middlesbrough or Hull from next week, it has been confirmed.

York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust said the temporary decision has been taken due

to "staffing difficulties" and to ensure the safety of patients.

The trust said the "vast majority" of stroke patients who arrive at Scarborough's accident and emergency department have been transferred to the hyper-acute stroke unit at York Hospital since 2015.

From Monday, all stroke patients will be taken to the nearest specialist unit without going to Scarborough.

A trust spokesman said: "Medical staffing difficulties mean patients suffering a stroke will now bypass (Scarborough A&E) and go directly to their nearest emergency

department in a hospital with a hyper-acute stroke unit."

"This is a temporary change to enable us to ensure the safest care for patients and to allow the Humber, Coast and Vale Stroke Network to consider how the service could be delivered in the long term and what a per-

manent solution may be for the future."

He said follow up clinics for patients discharged and those diagnosed with a transient ischaemic attack (TIA) will be covered at Scarborough Hospital. Patients who arrive at Scarborough Hospital will be transferred to York.

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Mother's day of 26 challenges in memory of her daughter

A MOTHER has completed a challenge and raised nearly £7,000 in just one day for a Yorkshire hospice in memory of her one-year-old daughter.

Esme Westmoreland, 40, of Otley, took on 26 challenges in memory of her daughter Cecelia, who had been born with a genetic condition which caused multiple seizures and heart problems.

At six months old, her family were told her condition was life-

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