

Welcome to Yorkshire

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STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL 8AM FRIDAY 19th JUNE 2020

Welcome to Yorkshire Launch Recovery Plan for Yorkshire Tourism Industry

In reaction to the coronavirus pandemic and following industry consultation across the county, Welcome to Yorkshire, has today released details of a collaborative recovery plan to '**Reopen, Recover and Rebuild**' Yorkshire's £9bn tourism economy (**please see attached**):

COVID-19 WELCOME TO YORKSHIRE'S RECOVERY PLAN FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR - FULL REPORT & SUMMARY REPORT - www.yorkshire.com/recoveryplan (avail. online 8am Fri)

As the county's destination marketing organisation, Welcome to Yorkshire accepted the challenge at the start of COVID-19, to stand up for thousands of tourism related businesses and retain a vital part of the region's identity now and for the foreseeable future. Working with the county's local authorities, national parks, LEAs, many businesses and tourism representatives, the aim has been to preserve our much-loved attractions, locations and businesses whilst keeping interest high in Yorkshire as a visitor destination.

Welcome to Yorkshire and partners believe that enabling organisations to feel confident that they can offer a safe visitor and employee experience is of paramount importance. For some organisations the reopening process is well underway, where as for other parts of the sector there is still uncertainty. As such the recovery plan focuses on some key campaigns to support economic growth such as:

1. A revised business membership with an entry level service offering **free** support and resources for anyone to sign up to.
2. The launch of a Yorkshire Gift Card to encourage spend within the county.
3. A focused regional support service for North, South, East and West Yorkshire.
4. A nationwide marketing campaign to Welcome visitors Back to Yorkshire.
5. The launch of a personal membership model to tap in to the millions of Yorkshire connections worldwide.
6. A recovery task group will be formed to ensure delivery of the recovery plan.

The **Yorkshire tourism sector employs almost 225,000 people** with many more in supply chain businesses. Financial losses as a result of COVID-19 are expected to be well into the billions of pounds and Welcome to Yorkshire have written to central government on behalf of many small businesses such as B&B owners and hospitality providers.

Welcome to Yorkshire Chief Executive James Mason said "*The team have worked really hard to keep Yorkshire at the forefront of everyone's minds. We were challenged to make a case for the region's tourism offer and it was one we took on gladly. We are all very passionate about our county that has suffered the effects of flooding in recent years and now this life-changing virus. Our recovery*

*document has been created with short-term, midterm and long-term objectives to reflect the ever-changing times we are experiencing. It must be understood that we will continue to take an organic approach to the situation and have held regular webinars offering up to date practical advice. We are working together with public and private sector strategic partners to ensure that the best possible guidance and support is available to the industry. We are very much looking forward to gradually **'Welcoming visitors BACK to Yorkshire'** when the time is right. This has to start with people on our doorsteps, then nationally and eventually internationally. We must bang the big drum to make sure people stop and think **'We HAVE to visit Yorkshire'**. We must also strive to support communities within the county to make sure their offer is attractive to new audiences with continual product development to encourage repeat visitors."*

Welcome to Yorkshire has had considerable success in promoting the county and raising the profile of Yorkshire over the last decade across the world, with a **global brand reaching over 23m people** and a **social reach of almost 20m**. The recovery plan is a document for the whole sector and one Welcome to Yorkshire hopes will reflect the actions of all partners.

Welcome to Yorkshire Chair Peter Box added: *"I am confident that our recovery plan will be a hugely important step forward in rebuilding a successful visitor experience, attracting tourists back to the county and playing its part in helping Yorkshire's economy recover."*

With Welcome to Yorkshire demonstrating positive leadership to deliver strong and consistent marketing campaigns, website traffic has increased considerably in recent months with 91% of all visitors to www.yorkshire.com in May coming from first-time visitors. In addition, the social media competition the **'World Cup of Yorkshire'** has seen several million online engagements to keep iconic names and places at the top of visitors **'must see'** lists. These results point towards a real optimism for day trips, weekend breaks and staycations across the region for the immediate future.

It is however crucial that all government and business representatives, as well as tourism organisations, visitors and residents, all work together under the banner of #YorkshireTogether towards a successful tourism future.

- ENDS -

Image: Yorkshire Dales (Credit: VisitBritain). Please also see image library link below.

Editors' Notes:

- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is the official destination marketing organisation for Yorkshire, working to grow the county's visitor economy.
- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is a not-for-profit membership organisation, funded in part by grants, sponsorship and Welcome to Yorkshire members. All money raised is reinvested directly back into promoting Yorkshire.
- Key facts include:
 - Tourism in Yorkshire is worth £9 billion annually
 - County's tourism & hospitality industry employs almost 225,000 people
- Tag **Welcome to Yorkshire** in any coverage on Twitter and Facebook using our handles: @welcome2yorks and <https://www.facebook.com/welcometoyorkshire>

More news & a free image bank:

<https://industry.yorkshire.com/archive/resources/free-image-library>

Username: Media **Password:** MZHB9LPa5vA8

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