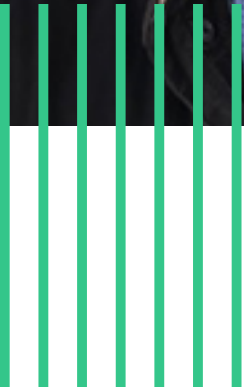




The Mayor's Vision

Healthy and Thriving
Communities

Introduction



It's been one year since I was elected as Mayor of York and North Yorkshire, it remains an incredible honour and a privilege to represent and champion the place I was born, where I started my business, and where I am raising my family.

Over that year, I've been able to support our communities and businesses across our region.

- Delivering £27.5m in funds to support our highstreets, environment, skills and businesses.
- Supporting village halls and community buildings, funding vital renovations to keep these community hubs going strong.
- Funding additional bus services and rolling out under-19 £1 bus fare across York and North Yorkshire.

York and North Yorkshire has been at the forefront of a new era of devolution. We are three-quarters rural, which presents great opportunity but also enormous challenges. We are home to historic cities, thriving market towns, coastal communities, and rural villages. There is so much to be proud of about our region. It's a vibrant, and largely prosperous, place to live, work, and visit.

However, that vibrancy and prosperity is not felt by everyone across our region. Many communities have been left behind for too long. Some neighbourhoods in our region face some of the highest levels of deprivation in the whole country. In rural and coastal communities, older residents are facing an epidemic of isolation and loneliness.

As Mayor, I can and will do something about this. My Vision sets out my priorities to help to build those strong, healthy and thriving communities across York and North Yorkshire.

This vision will inform the direction of my work and provide focus on what I am delivering as Mayor. It will see that in all the work we do we are always working in the interest of people and communities across the region.

I said I would constantly listen and take on board what people across York and North Yorkshire say to me. That's why I've made some slight changes to my priorities, including adding new ones about making our streets safer. Nothing has been taken away, because I believe that people should keep their promises, or own up when they can't.

Healthy and Resilient

York and North Yorkshire has a lot to be proud about, we have a world leading research industry, we are home to the highest concentration of food manufacturing businesses, our farmers are world class, we have incredible small businesses, and we're home to breathtaking heritage, culture, and natural scenery.

Our region should be a place of aspiration and ambition for all, however for many people this is not the case. Opportunities and life expectancy vary drastically from one area to another.

In North Yorkshire our coastal and rural communities are ranked lower for resilience than the rest of the country, meaning they are less able to withstand and recover from crises, like covid and the cost of living. These communities are also more likely to experience both social and digital isolation.

I want to see a York and North Yorkshire in which no matter where someone is born or where they live, they can achieve whatever they set their minds to and where all our communities share in the benefits of growth and investment.

That's why building healthy and resilient communities is at the heart of everything I am doing as Mayor.



I have always said that where good work is already going on, I want to support and amplify that, so we are not duplicating work. That's why I'll bring together our partners to make sure we are all working towards the same objectives, to identify gaps in provision, and to create a long-term plan for our region.

I'll support people to find long-term employment, making sure our communities are digital connected, and have access to local employability support, careers advice, and skills provision. Working with our partners we will identify the areas which need this support the most and get people working.

I will support investment in our region and champion our food and farming sector, building on the work already being done to get more locally produced food into public sector organisations, such as schools.

Healthy and resilient communities need strong local economies. Co-operatives and community owned businesses have a wide-ranging impact which is often hard to measure. I will support co-operatives and community ownership schemes to give local people a stake in their amenities and local services.

Collaboration and Convening

I will convene roundtables with major funders, the VCSE sector, and wider partners to map and coordinate support for community projects and organisations.

In the Summer, I will convene a VCSE Sector Summit and meet with funding agencies to discuss how funding priorities can be aligned for maximum impact.

Local Growth Plan

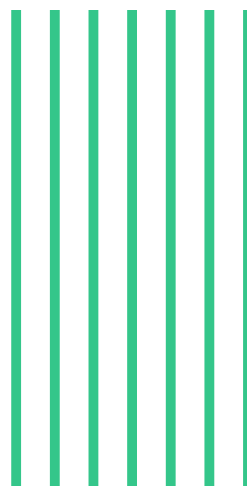
I will work with Combined Authority Members and wider stakeholders to produce a Local Growth Plan that delivers on our region's potential and invests in communities across York and North Yorkshire.

We have made great progress on the Local Growth Plan, following extensive engagement with industry stakeholders we are consulting with the public on our final plan to be launched in July. It's important we get this right so as many people are backing our vision for growth in the region.

Improving Access to Skills and Employment Opportunities

I will champion skills provision and work to connect employers with skills providers. Ensuring that people across our region can realise their aspirations.

Over 2025/26 we are providing £30m of investment in skills provision across York and North Yorkshire, supporting a wide range of people through the Adults Skills Fund, Careers Advice, and Trailblazer Funding.



Support our Region's Farmers and Improve our Food System

I will work to improve productivity and innovation in our food and farming sector and get more locally grown food into our schools, improving the nutrition offered to our children and young people.

Through the Grow Yorkshire Partnership, I commissioned a study of the farming sector in the region. I have also worked with Fix Our Food to begin to address the issues in procurement, so we can get locally grown food into public sector organisations.

Champion Investment

I will champion our region and highlight investment opportunities. Developing proposals for investment across York and North Yorkshire.

From Schneider in Scarborough to Microsoft in Eggborough. Over the last year we have secured millions of pounds of investment in our region, and we won't stop there, pushing for more investment for jobs in our region.

Drive Growth in Co-Operatives

I will ensure support and advice to double the size of the co-operative sector.

I have commissioned a report to assess the scale of the co-operative sector in the region, and identify the benefits it offers to local communities. This will inform my approach in the future to grow and support the sector.



Support for Local Business

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, I will support our high streets to thrive.

The £10m High Street Fund launched in January 2025, over the rest of my term it will support projects small and large to drive footfall in our high streets and support long lasting change.

Digital Transformation Strategy

I'll develop a strategy to improve digital connectivity across our region, ensuring that all our communities have access to reliable internet connections, supporting further opportunities for work and leisure.

Our Local Growth Plan sets out improving digital infrastructure as a priority for our region, we will develop a strategy to support this ambition.

Culture, Heritage and Tourism

I'll work to champion our cultural and heritage sectors, seeking investment to enhance our regions brilliant cultural, heritage and tourism sector.

The Creative Industry has been highlighted as a growth sector in our Local Growth Plan, we will work with the sector to support growth and investment. Working across the North, we are committed to One Creative North, which will drive forward a pan-regional creative and cultural renaissance.



Connected to Opportunity

Improving our transport system is key to ensuring people are connected to opportunities like work, leisure, family, and important appointments. The current system is not working for people. In our urban areas buses are trapped in congested streets and in rural areas residents are stranded by irregular services.

I'll create a transport system that works for York and North Yorkshire, one that puts passengers first. While the car will always be a key form of transport in our region, I want a system that gives people more reliable choices on how they get around, and outside, the region.

Franchising remains my preferred option to achieve our transport aims, however our region is unique and complex, so I am continuing to explore all options and ensure that whatever path we take it is financially viable and delivers for passengers, residents, and visitors across York and North Yorkshire.

As we get to that point, I have set out my stall, prioritising our rural communities and young people. We've enhanced services for the Moors Bus and Dales Bus and expanded the £1 under-19 fare to cover the whole of York and North Yorkshire. I have convened the bus operators in our region and we will continue to work together to drive forward improvements to the passenger experience.



Active travel will form a core part of an integrated transport network and I will appoint an Active Travel Commissioner to unify the region behind a shared plan for improving active travel in our region, making sure there are safe streets for people to walk, wheel, or cycle.

Improving our railways in our region and across the North is a must. We will work with partners, such as the rail industry, Department for Transport, and Transport for the North, to identify barriers to rail connectivity, supporting and putting forward the case to unlock the potential of our rail network. The White Rose Agreement I have signed with the Mayors of South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire, commits us to work together to achieve these aims across Yorkshire.



Integrated Transport System

Taking a region-wide view of transport, ensuring all modes of transport in our region work together.

The Strategic Transport Plan sets out our ambition for transport in the region and our plan to get there – starting with the regions first Local Transport Plan to be approved by the Combined Authority Board in early 2026.

Unlocking Barriers to Rail Connectivity

I'll identify barriers to regional and national rail connectivity, and work to unblock these with our partners.

The Blunkett Review of rail in the White Rose region put forward a case to government calling for investment to unlock the bottleneck on the East Coast Main Line and at stations in the region, such as York, Leeds and Sheffield, which all face significant delays.

Rail Improvements

I'll champion a 30-minute service between York and Scarborough, and work towards improvements along this route and at Thirsk, Sherburn-in-Elmet.

Putting devolution into action, I have been working with Transport for the North, the Department for Transport, and TransPennine Express, to push forward on two-trains per hour. We are taking positive steps towards this and I will keep progressing improvements in this vital service.

Mayor’s Pothole Fund

I'll deliver a pothole fund, supporting councils to fix the worst streets in our region.

At the Autumn Statement in October 2024, the Government awarded York and North Yorkshire an additional £16m of funding for highways, this will help repair our broken roads while further work is undertaken to develop a Mayor’s Pothole Fund.

Boost Active Travel

I'll ramp up participation in Active Travel across our region, supporting safer walking, wheeling, and cycling across York and North Yorkshire.

An Active Travel Fund will launch later this year and prioritise improved supporting infrastructure for cycling, and ensuring our region starts on the journey to become a safer place to walk, wheel, and cycle.

Connecting Communities Across Yorkshire

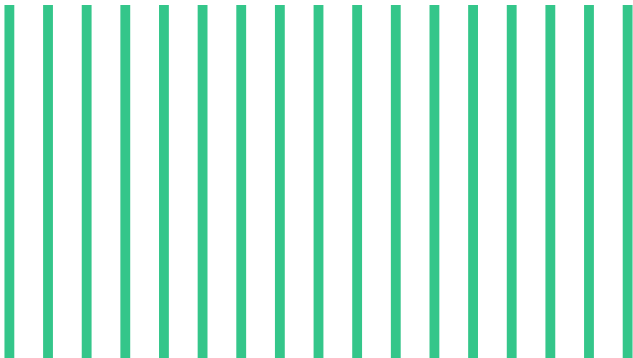
I'll champion changes to the Government's investment model, the Green Book, to ensure investment in key infrastructure, like the A64, A66, and railways. I'll work with Mayors and Leaders across Yorkshire and the North to ensure residents can get where they need to go, regardless of regional boundaries.

In March, I signed the White Rose Agreement with the Mayors of South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire, committing us to work together on regional rail investment and cross-border buses. I also welcome the Government's intention to reform the Green Book, and will be actively engaging to ensure improved infrastructure investment in the North.

Decarbonise our Bus Network

To meet our carbon negative targets, I will support efforts to decarbonise our buses.

I have called for further zero-emission funding for buses, as we progress with the bus delivery model ensuring more buses are decarbonised will be a priority.



Warm and Affordable Homes

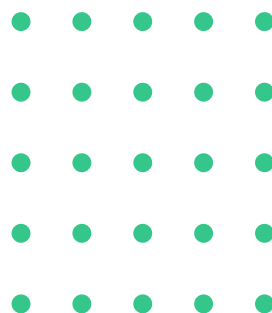
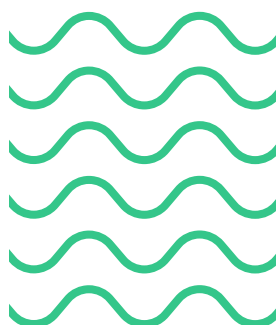
Everyone should be entitled to a safe, warm, and affordable home. Doing this creates a sense of belonging and community. Access to social and affordable housing is a huge challenge for so many people across our region. Many people who want to stay in their local area have no choice but to move elsewhere.

We need to fix this, that is why I will work closely with our local authority members, government, and partners to deliver the housing that we urgently need in York and North Yorkshire. I will prioritise development of affordable and social housing to ensure local people can afford to live in their local communities.

Our Brownfield Housing Fund has unlocked over 1,100 new homes on brownfield land across the region, half of these will be affordable.

Ensuring that new homes in our region are built to the best possible standard is crucial, and we're making good progress setting out a shared plan to retrofit across our region.

Partnership will be crucial, and I am glad that the English Devolution White Paper sets an expectation for bodies such as Homes England to work closely with Mayors to deliver a shared vision for housing across the region. We've already taken the first step, establishing a Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England, both local councils and the York and North Yorkshire Housing Partnership.



A Catalyst for Housing Development

Working with government, local authorities, Homes England, and stakeholders, to identify sites for housing development in the region and the barriers facing these sites. I will use all powers available to me to remove these barriers and ensure people get access to the homes we need across York and North Yorkshire.

We will deliver a Housing Investment Plan that prioritises affordable and social housing, ensuring local people can stay in our region. We also saw support from the Government, investing to speed up delivery at Deverell Barracks, outside Ripon.

Better Housing Standards

I will work with partners to ensure that homes in our region are warm and safe and built to the highest standard.

Working with York and North Yorkshire Housing Partnership and others, we are setting out on a housing standards agreement, which will ensure new social housing is of a good standard.

Holiday Lets and Second Homes

I will work to ensure that holiday lets and second homes do not hollow out our communities, particularly our coastal communities.

Where possible, I will ensure that funding for housing builds homes for residents and not for holiday homes.

One Public Estate Strategy

Convening partners to leverage the public estate and seek innovation solutions to build affordable and key worker housing – particularly in our rural communities.

Following the adoption of a Housing Investment Plan, we will focus on how we can utilise underused public estate land for housing and business use.

Close Working with Government

We will work closely with government to identify barriers to housing development and advocate for the powers and changes we need to deliver the homes we need in York and North Yorkshire.

The English Devolution White Paper sets out the ambition of the Government to provide more powers to Mayors to support their communities.

Spatial Plan

We will develop a Spatial Plan that gives a bold and ambitious vision for the future of housing, business, and our natural landscape.

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill, put forward by the Government, will establish a role for all Mayoral Combined Authorities to introduce a Strategic Spatial Plan, which will work closely with Local Plans to set out a vision for land use in our region.





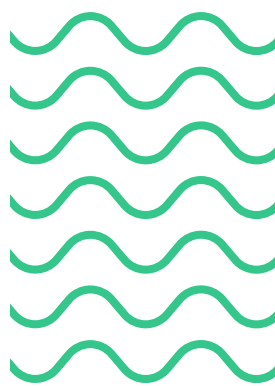
Connected to the Outdoors

Our region is home to beautiful outdoor space, whether that is our urban parks, countryside landscape, or the two national parks. We should aim to have open spaces that are safe, affordable, and accessible.

An active lifestyle and spending regular time in outdoor green space improves physical and mental health outcomes. Recognising this and the impact that sports and physical activity can have on the communities they are situated within, I will develop a fund to support improving access to sport and physical activity.

These beautiful landscapes are also a huge reason why we can become the first region to be Carbon Negative by 2040. We are refreshing our routemap and setting out how we can achieve this aim and lead the way in protecting our natural environment for generations to come.

Flooding has a huge impact in our region, I will work with partners, like the Environment Agency, to push for investment in flood alleviation and coastal defence schemes. I will also look across regions and work with other Mayors and local leaders to ensure a joined-up approach to flooding.



Mayoral Movement, Activity and Sport Fund

I will develop a sports fund to encourage participation in sport and activity, with a particular focus on early intervention.

We are exploring where funding will make a difference to, increasing participation for women and girls, tackling rural isolation and access to sport, diversionary work away from crime, and disability sport and inclusion.

Mayor's Sport Council

Working with North Yorkshire Sport, partners and stakeholders, I will champion our region's great sporting capability and convene a Working Group to assess the challenges to improving participation in sport and activity and produce a plan to tackle these challenges.

I convened the first Mayor's Working Group in April. I am pleased that North Yorkshire Sport and other partners have joined us in driving this work forward.

Championing National Parks

The Mayor will work closely with the National Park Authorities, developing projects to encourage residents to visit.

I’m working with our national parks to improve access to their beautiful natural spaces, such as developing a natural social prescribing model with North York Moors National Park Authority.

Flood Defence

I will work with partners to push for investment in flood defence and alleviation scheme.

I welcomed the £9.5m investment into flood defence and coastal erosion protection schemes in York and North Yorkshire. I will continue this work across our region and support towns like Tadcaster to secure their Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Enhance Nature Recovery

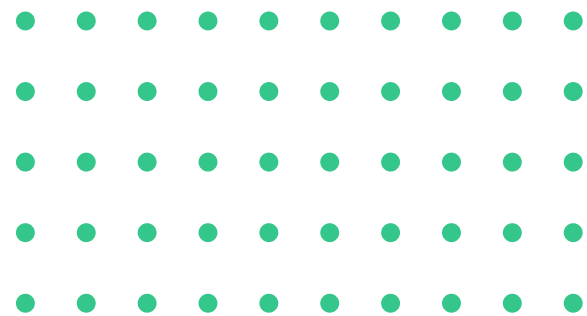
I will work to enhance our natural landscape and nature recovery.

Building on the Local Investment in Natural Capital funding we received from central government, we’ll make sure that York and North Yorkshire keeps the countryside as beautiful as possible for generations to come.

Ambitious to be net-zero by 2034 and the first Carbon Negative region in England by 2040

We will ramp up our efforts across the region to ensure we deliver on our targets to be a net-zero region by 2034, and become the first Carbon Negative region by 2040, such as by accelerating retrofitting.

We are refreshing our routemap to Carbon Negative, which will set out how we can achieve this ambitious target and what support we will need to get there.





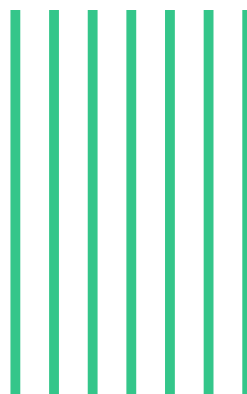
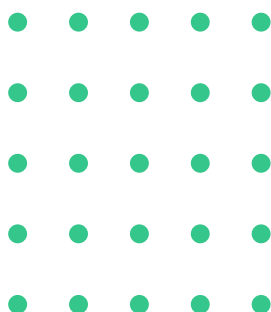
Safe Places for All

Everyone deserves to feel safe in our region, whether they are at home, work, or in public.

We will prioritise early intervention, tackling violence against women and girls and domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, retail crime, and rural crime. Our Police and Crime Plan focusses on these priorities and ensuring that we build confidence in policing. Visible policing is key to building public confidence across York and North Yorkshire. In 2025/26 £2m additional funding from central government will mean over 50 additional PCs and PCSOs.

Our Fire and Rescue Service have faced increasing pressure on their finances over the past decade. It was not an easy decision, but increasing the Mayoral Precept for Fire will allow the service to deliver against the new Fire and Rescue Plan, which sets out what the fire service must prioritise over the next four years, including protecting the built environment, effective emergency response, and putting public and firefighter safety at its heart.

Working closely with Jo Coles, Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire and Crime, I will ensure North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service are working effectively to protect the public and that they are responsive to the concerns and priorities of the public.



Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls

Alongside the Deputy Mayor, I will ensure tackling violence against women and girls is a priority for policing and the whole of the Combined Authority.

Our Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy will launch in Summer 2025, setting out how the police and partners can work together to cut rates of violence against women and girls by half, in line with the national ambition.

Early Intervention and Prevention Funding

I will, at least, double funding for early intervention and prevention services.

The Police Budget for 2025/26 saw us double funding for early intervention and prevention. Ensuring we can support people to stay away from crime and reducing the rates of reoffending.

Safer Streets Across our Region

One road death in York and North Yorkshire is one too many. I will work tirelessly to deliver Vision Zero and make our streets safer for everyone who uses them.

Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

Alongside the Deputy Mayor, I will prioritise keeping streets safe by tackling anti-social behaviour and retain crime through neighbourhood policing and policing priorities.

Enhance the Rural Crime Taskforce

Alongside the Deputy Mayor, I will enhance the Rural Crime Taskforce, to ensure stronger action is taken for our rural communities.

The Police and Crime Plan identifies 'Building Stronger Communities' as a core priority. This will be achieved by developing targeted strategies to tackle anti-social behaviour and retain crime.

Police and Crime Plan

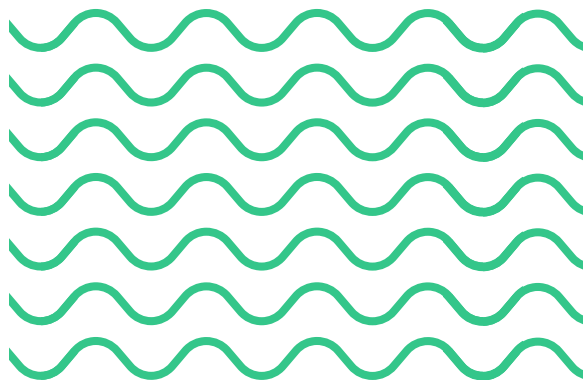
With the Deputy Mayor, I will create a Police and Crime Plan that considers the priorities of residents, organisations, and businesses.

Following a public consultation, I set the priorities for North Yorkshire Police in our Police and Crime Plan. By focussing on prevention and early intervention, protecting the public, working with partners, and building stronger communities, we will ensure Safer Places for All across York and North Yorkshire.

Fire and Rescue Plan

Working alongside the Deputy Mayor, I will create a Fire and Rescue Plan that prioritises public and firefighter safety.

The Fire and Rescue Plan sets the priorities for North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service over 2025–2029, establishing how they will build Safer Places for All by focussing on: targeted prevention; protecting the built environment; effective emergency response; stronger communities; supported, safe and skilled staff; and ensuring the service is financially stable.





About us

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority has been created by the City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council and is a legally recognised, single body. Our role is to use some of the money and powers, that up to now have been held by central government, and work with local leaders and communities to invest in ways that will help to make York and North Yorkshire a better place for you to live, work and do business.

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