

York Environment Week 2022.

Report on YEW22.

24th September to 2nd October 2022.

Introduction.

This year's York Environment Week was the third organised by York Environment Forum, and the third for the city.

How YEW22 was organised.

A Core Group, mainly drawn from York Environment Forum members, was assembled to take decisions about the programme and to do all the administration and management. Necessary infrastructure was already in place, including social media, website, email and 'mailchimp' newsletter. The basic framework remained the same, in that events were organised by groups or other agencies who operated independently to run their event. By being part of YEW22 the organisers benefited from shared publicity, and from the promotion generally of environmental issues.

There was a slightly different approach this year. There would be fewer online events and more in person. We wanted to foster greater collaboration and team spirit, and did this through holding two meetings for potential event organisers. We increased the frequency of the newsletter, and we encouraged anyone interested in YEW22 to sign up.

The dates coincided with the Great Big Green Week, a national initiative to have many environmental events happening simultaneously. This provided resources on all aspects of organising events, including a calendar-listing section on the website. YEW22 had a small amount of funding from a GBGW grant the previous year, and spent this on the events mentioned above.

Facts and figures.

25 events in the main programme, one of which was itself a festival of numerous walking activities. 5 late entries with brief information.

From attendance figures supplied by the organisers (about half) there were over 1,000 participants.

The programme can be seen here. <https://yorkenvironmentweek.org.uk/events-2022/>

Impact.

Positive outcomes included: new members for activity groups, participants finding out about other activities, networking in geographical locations, learning relevant information such as about food, recipes, urban trees and home energy, raising the profile of an activity / initiative, and learning new skills.

The Core Group sent out a general invitation to councillors to attend YEW22 events, and some organisers invited councillors directly. Several councillors participated including at least one Executive member.

YEW22 and individual events received media coverage through radio interviews and press items.

Challenges.

- The Core Group hoped to include a wider format of event, but none were found. Ideally YEW22 would have had, for instance, exhibitions, installations and interactive outdoor events.
- There were several groups who were hoping there would be a joint event to take part in comprising many stalls and contributors, such as a fair. The Core Group lacked resources to take this on. It was not possible either to find an alternative overall organiser of such an event.
- Ideally the Core Group would have at least six members. That number would cover the workload and would have the spread of skills to develop the programme and carry out publicity and so on. This year there were four active people in the Core Group. All organisers were asked if their group could find someone to join the Core Group in the future, and one offered to take on small tasks.

Other observations.

There is evidence that over three years there is increased awareness of York Environment Week. This year agencies took the opportunity to publicise environmental news and achievements during YEW22, such as solar panels installed in a school.

There has been increased contact from outside York from agencies which consider York to be part of their catchment area, and would like to be involved in some way.

Thanks to everyone who took part and contributed to YEW22.

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YEW22 meeting for organisers