



'Making a Mark'

Gold Mark Holder Social Impact Declaration

York St John University

York St John University is the oldest higher education establishment in York, dating back to 1841. The University is known for its academic excellence and responsive nature, always putting the student at the heart of everything it does.

York St John was awarded the Social Enterprise Gold Mark in June 2016, becoming only the second university to achieve this accreditation.

The University works to make a contribution to the wider community, and it is our pledge at York St John to continue to work in partnership with our staff, students, partners and stakeholders to increase awareness and develop new initiatives that will have a positive impact and help transform lives.



The Social Enterprise Gold Mark criteria includes a requirement for all applicants and renewing Mark Holders to provide 'social impact statements', which illustrate how they are striving to meet their social/environmental objectives.

Below are examples of how **York St John University** is Making a Mark, striving to make a difference in local communities:

Engaging with the local community

York St John has been engaged in social innovation since its inception and continues to strive to improve the lives of the communities with which it serves, locally, nationally and internationally.

The University reaches out to the community in so many ways. Examples of our engagement include:

- project engaging military veterans in archaeology
- community arts projects
- help for a women's support group
- courses for foster carers
- a theatre project involving the prison service
- access to low cost mental health support
- a specialist service supporting domestic abuse and violence
- extensive work in schools:
 - encouraging engagement in youth theatre and drama
 - storytelling
 - addressing autism, language and learning difficulties, body image, bullying, sexual abuse and exploitation

Our sports provision (**YSJ Active**) is focused on widening participation:

- running a nationally accredited inclusive fitness programme
- a wellbeing programme
- bike rides for cardiac recovery
- targeting female participation in sport and exercise, embracing people from faith communities and groups that might have particular dress or single gender requirements



We continue to invest in the campus as part of our strategic aim of developing a 'sport and wellbeing for all' agenda. The facilities on Haxby Road in York are available to the wider community, including professional sports clubs.

We host conferences, courses and events promoting social economy, accommodating groups such as travellers and refugees, have a partnership with mental health service providers, and have our own theatre company and choir to bring about engagement with the community and develop skills. It is also our aim this year to raise the profile of our pledge and encourage like-minded businesses to follow suit.

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