York City Centre Insights Report October 2026

This monthly insights report brings together a range of data sources to highlight the key trends shaping **York city centre's economic performance**, helping local businesses make informed decisions. For further insights and more detailed analysis, visit the York Economic Data Hub, our free and accessible online resource.

Please refer to the Glossary for definitions of the terms and abbreviations used in this report, along with maps outlining the geographic coverage of each dataset.

Latest Monthly Insights - October 2026

Metric	Monthly Total	Growth vs 2025	UK Benchmark	YTD Jan-Oct 2026	YTD Growth vs 2025	YTD UK Benchmark
Sales	£45.6m	-1.1%	-3.7%	£423m	-1.2%	-2.6%
Customers	529.6k	-3.9%	-4.5%	5m	-3.0%	-3.3%
ARPC	£86.18	+2.9%	+0.8%	£85.03	+1.9%	+0.7%
Transactions	2.3m	-3.2%	-4.6%	22.2m	-2.9%	-3.3%
ATV	£19.48	+2.2%	+0.9%	£19.01	+1.8%	+0.8%
Footfall	3.2m	-1.2%	n/a	27.6m	-6.2%	n/a

Headline Summary

- 📉 York city centre sales are down **-1.2%** year-to-date versus 2025 but are outperforming the UK benchmark by **1.4 percentage points**. Customer numbers are broadly in line with the UK, so the gap is driven by higher average revenue per customer.
- 🎄 Around **22%** of annual sales are generated in November and December, so the festive period will have a significant impact on full-year performance against 2025.
- 📍 York compares favourably with comparator and nearby cities, although out-of-town shopping centres have consistently outperformed the city centre in recent years.
- 🗓️ Saturdays generate **24%** of average weekly sales and have the highest ARPC at nearly **£46**, compared with just **£30** on Tuesdays, the weakest day.
- 🍽️ **Food & Drink** is the largest sector, consistently accounting for **38%** of monthly sales. Year-to-date, York is outperforming the UK Benchmark in Food & Drink and Fashion, and is broadly in line in Grocery, General Retail and Health & Beauty.
- 🏠 York residents generated **38%** of October sales (**39%** on average over the last 12 months), followed by Rest of Great Britain visitors at **31%**. Resident spending is down **-1.0%** year-to-date versus 2025 but **-2.9%** down on 2024.
- 🚶 Footfall was down **-1.2%** in October and is down **6.2%** year-to-date, more than twice the year-to-date decline in transactions (**-2.9%**).
- 🏬 Shop vacancy remains low at **6.9%**, well below the estimated national rate of **13.4%**, despite reaching its highest level since February 2025.

Spending Insights

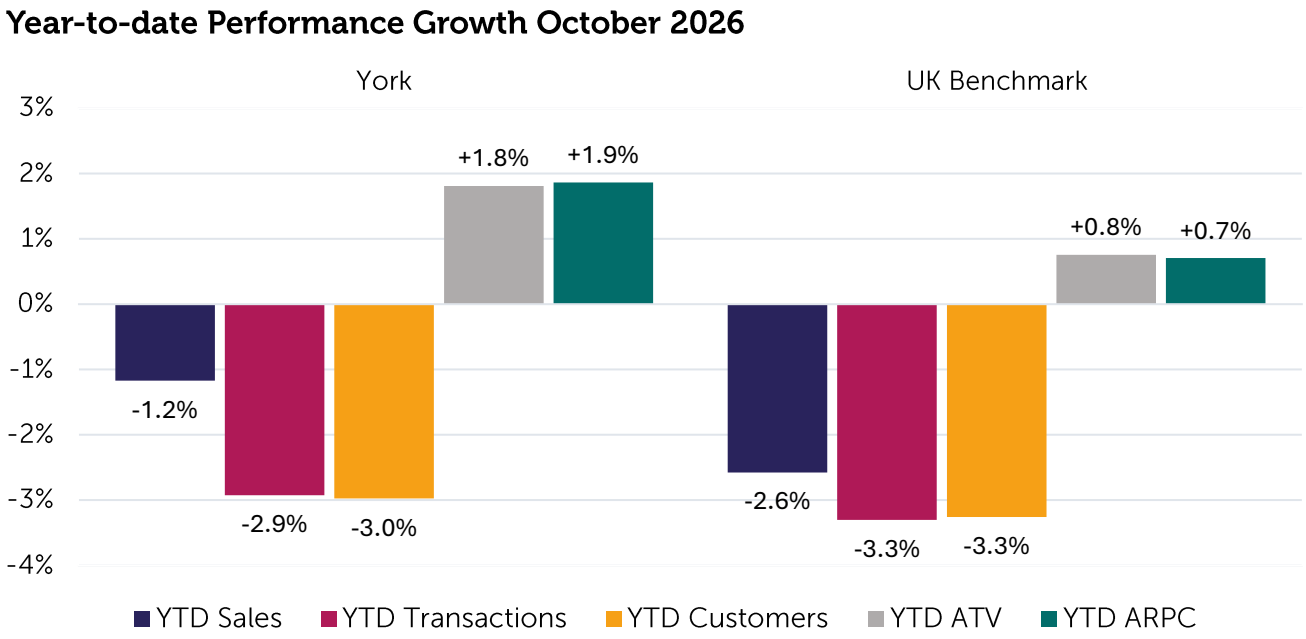

Figure 1. *Comparison of year-to-date (YTD) growth across key spending metrics in York City Centre vs the UK Benchmark, as of October 2026. (Source: Beauclair)*

As of October 2026, Year-to-date (YTD) sales in York City Centre are **-1.2%** below the comparable time period in 2025. Despite the decline, York continues to outperform the UK sales benchmark by **+1.4 percentage points**.

YTD Customer numbers are broadly in line with the UK benchmark. York's stronger relative sales performance has primarily been driven by higher growth in average revenue per customer (ARPC) which is currently sits **+1 percentage point** above the national average.

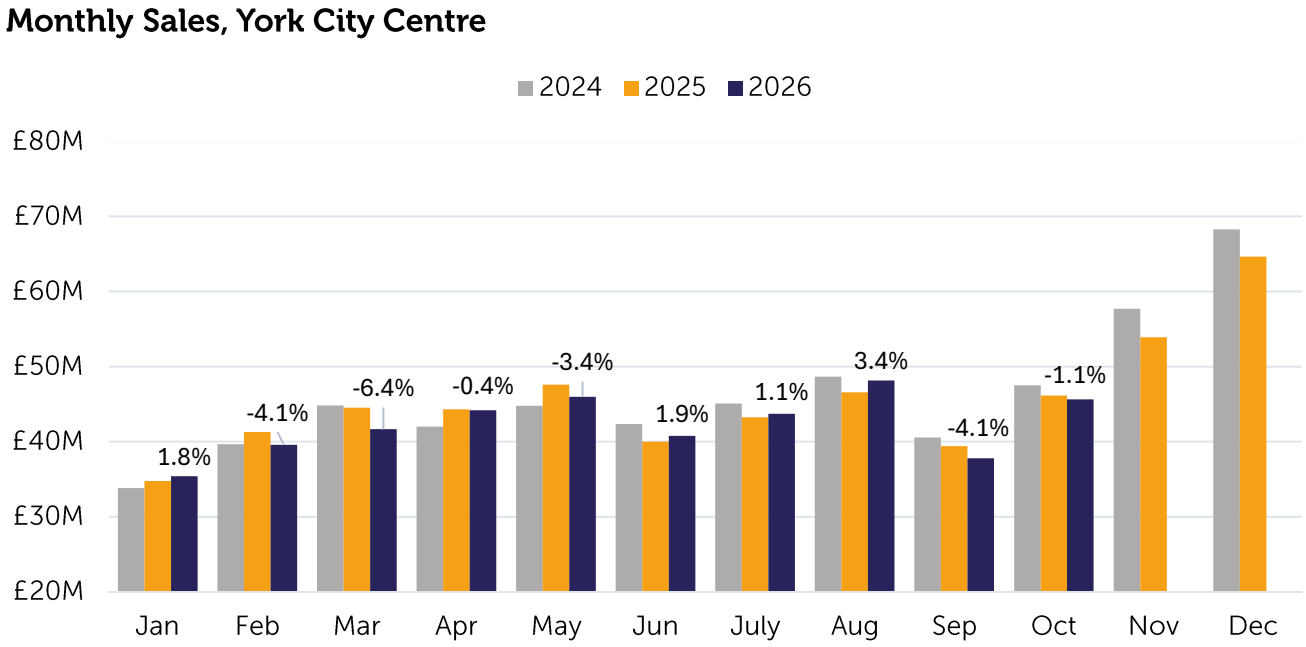

Figure 2. *Total monthly sales recorded in York city centre from 2024 until present. Data labels show year-on-year (YoY) growth, comparing each month in the current year with the corresponding month in the previous year.* ***(Source: Beauclair)***

Monthly sales performance has been mixed during 2026, with notable year-on-year declines in February, March, May and September, partly offset by a spell of positive growth between June and August.

Data from the past two years indicate that around **22%** of York's annual sales are generated in November and December. The success of the festive trading period will therefore have a significant impact on the year's overall performance compared with 2025.

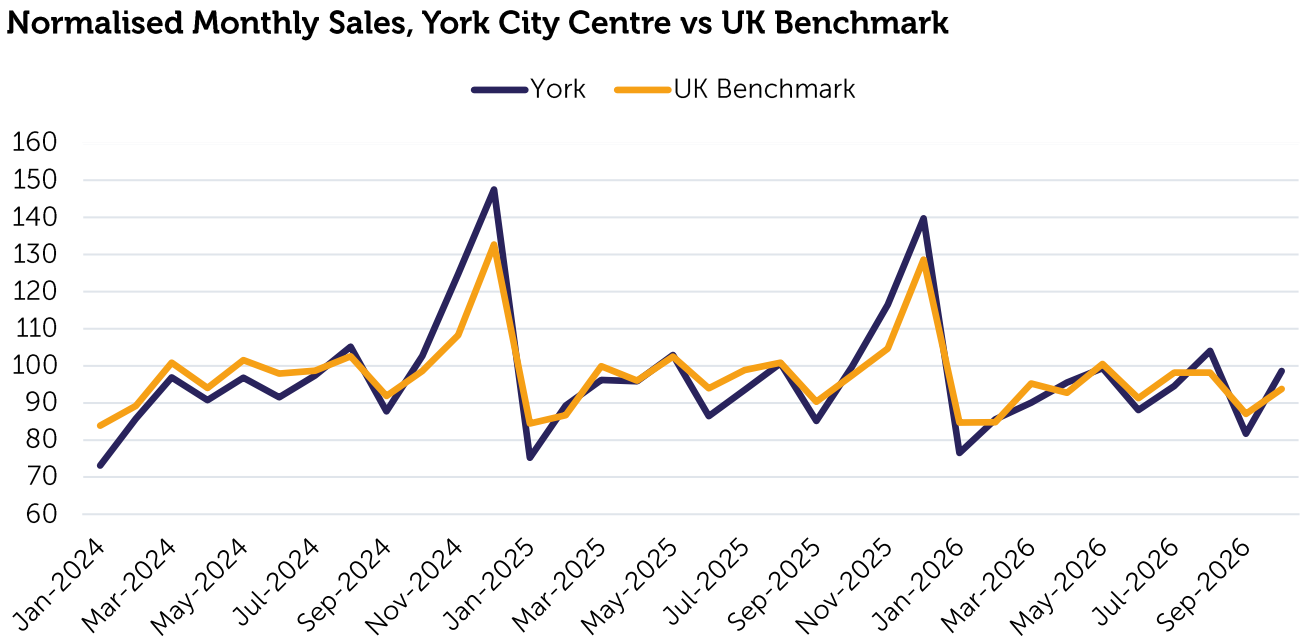

Figure 3. *Comparison of normalised monthly sales - York City Centre vs UK Benchmark, Jan 2025 to present.* ***(Source: Beauclair)***

As shown in figure 3, York's sales broadly track with the UK benchmark, although the city centre experiences more pronounced seasonal peaks and troughs. Historically, York has performed strongest relative to the UK benchmark during August, November and December, and weakest during January, June and September.

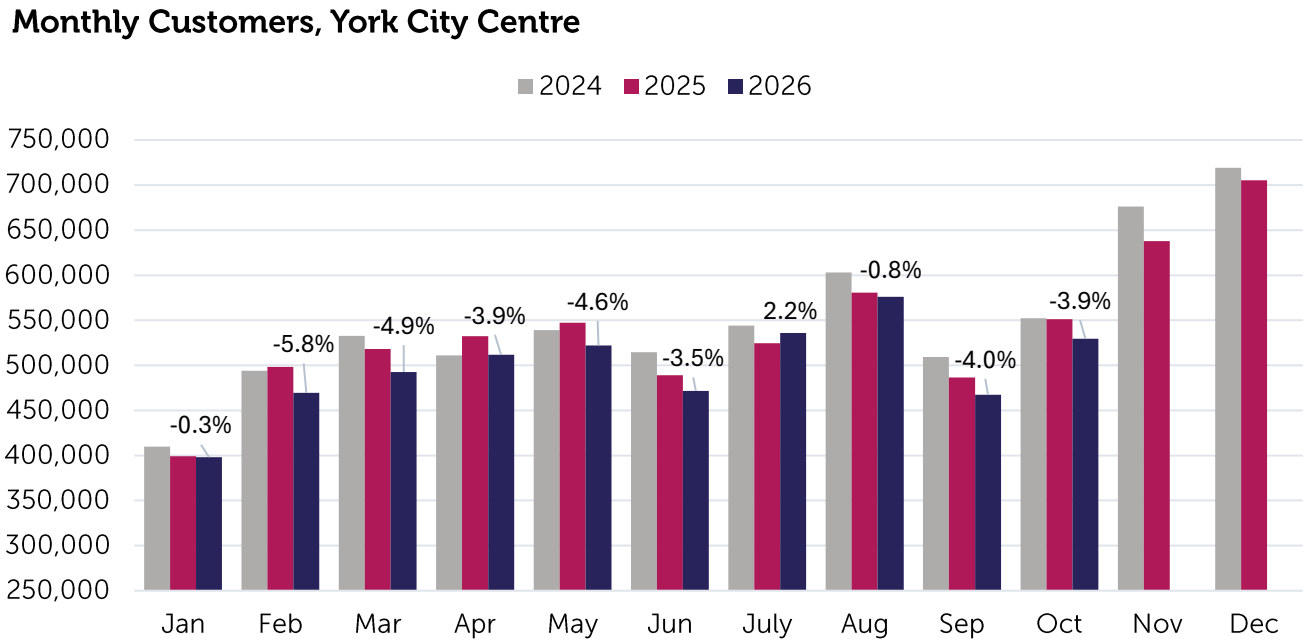

Figure 4. *Total number of account holders linked to monthly debit card transactions, recorded in York city centre from 2024 until present. Data labels show year-on-year (YoY) growth, comparing each month in the current year with the corresponding month in the previous year.* ***(Source: Beauclair)***

Falling customer numbers remain the main driver of lower sales in York city centre, reflecting the wider UK trend. July 2026 was the only month in the year to date to record positive sales growth, at +2.2%.

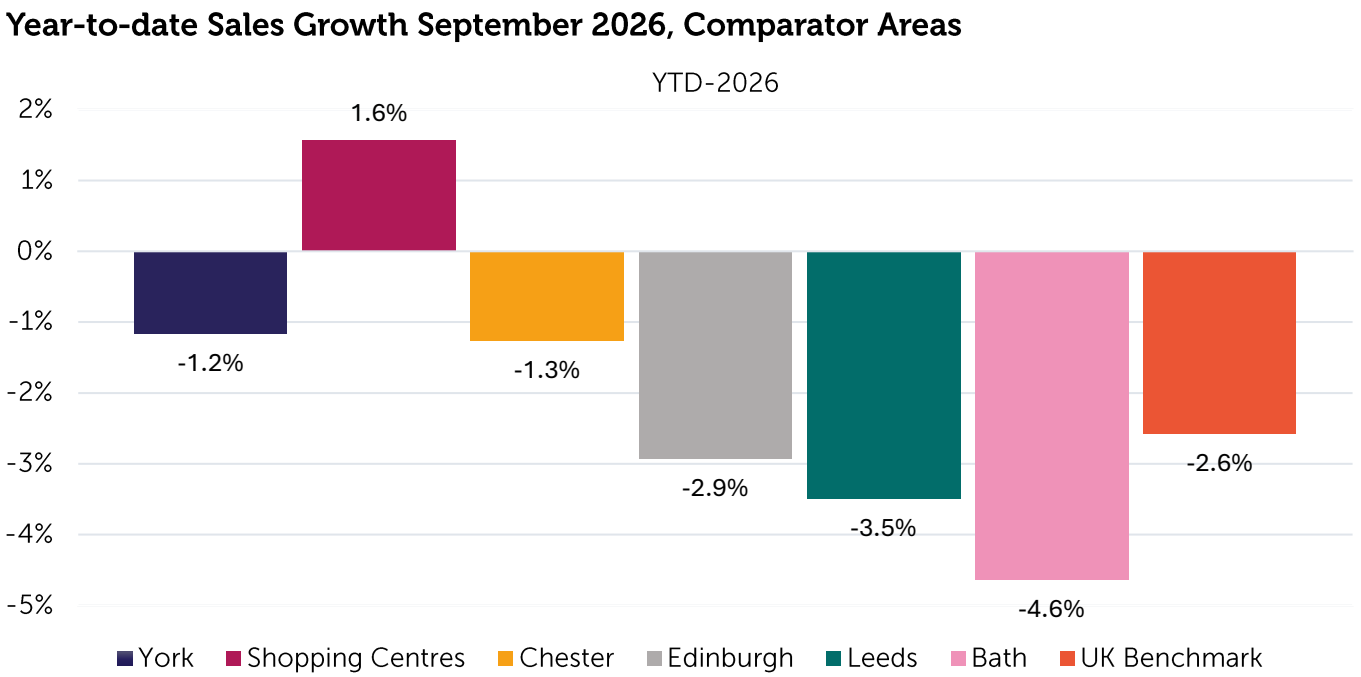

Figure 5. *Comparison of the year-to-date (YTD) sales growth across comparator areas. 'Shopping Centres' refers to collective metrics for Monks Cross, Clifton Moor and York Designer Outlet. Data labels show year-on-year (YoY) growth, compared to corresponding month in the previous year. (Source: Beauclair)*

York's sales growth compares favourably with comparator and nearby cities. However, the city's out-of-town shopping centres, including Monks Cross, Clifton Moor and York Designer Outlet, have consistently outperformed the city centre in recent years.

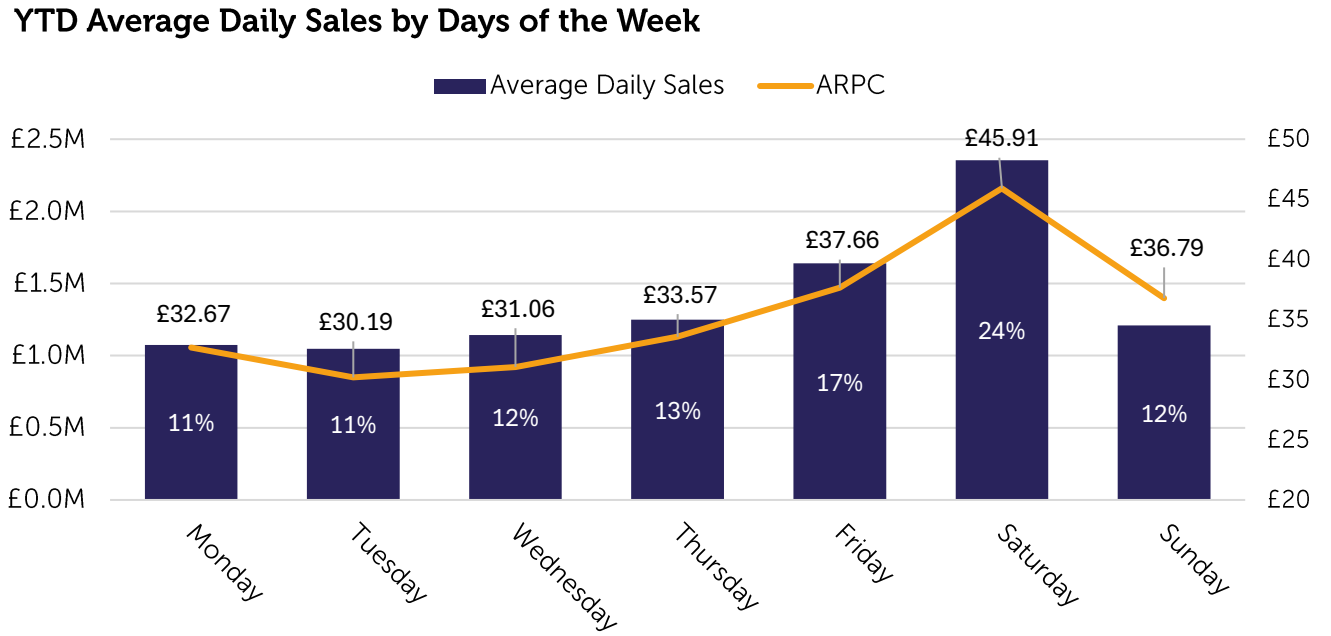

Figure 6. *Average daily sales recorded in York City Centre during 2026 year-to-date, segmented by days of the week. Data labels show the respective share of average weekly sales. (Source: Beauclair)*

During 2026 to date, Saturdays have generated the highest level of sales, accounting for 24% of average weekly sales and more than twice the amount recorded on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This weekly pattern is a long-term trend and is also visible in the 2025 data.

Saturdays also recorded the highest average revenue per customer (ARPC), at nearly **£46**, with **2.28** daily transactions per customer on average. By contrast, Tuesday is the weakest-performing day, with an ARPC of just **£30** and **1.89** daily transactions per customer.

Catchment Insights

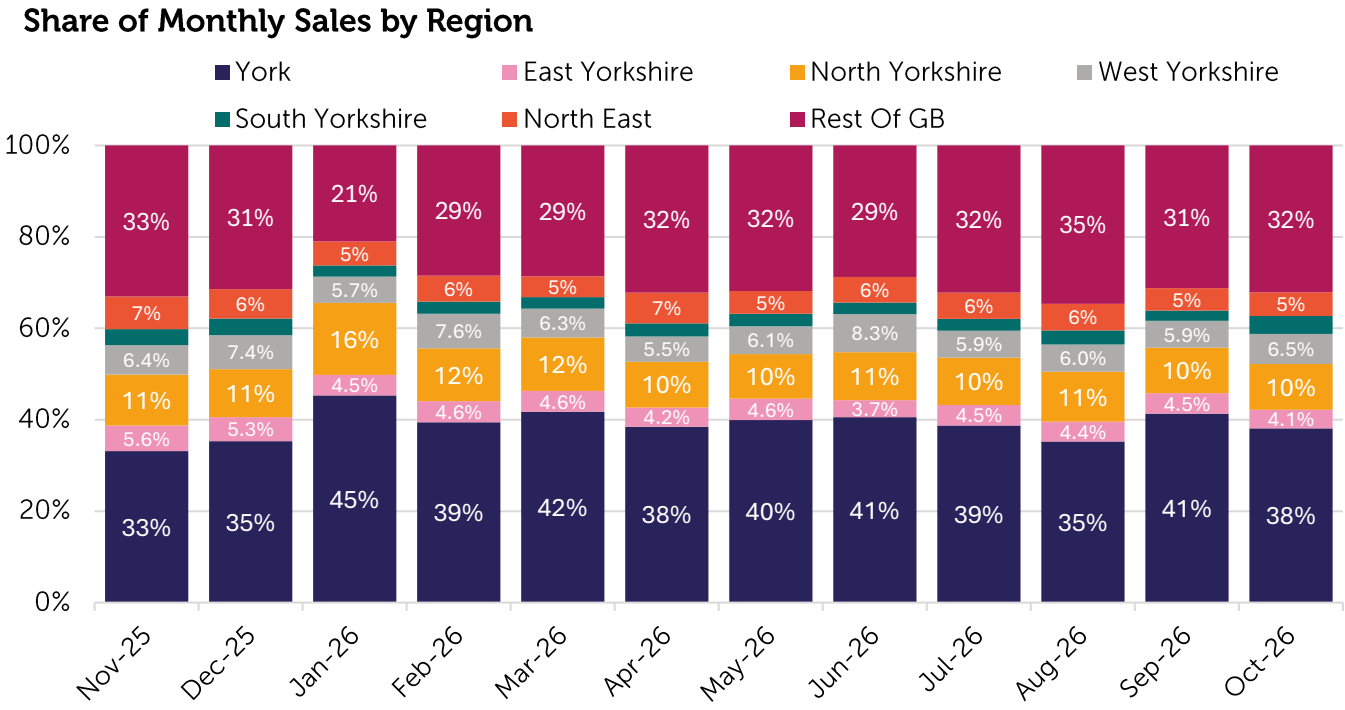

Figure 8. *Distribution of monthly sales by customers' region of residence. Data labels show the percentage share of total sales associated with customers of each region, recorded in York city centre during the last 12 months.* ***(Source: Beauclair)***

York residents remained the largest contributor to city centre sales in October, accounting for **38%** of total spend. In the last 12 months, local residents have generated on average **39%** of monthly sales, making them the largest regional customer group. Visitors from beyond York's hinterland (the Rest of Great Britain) accounted for a further **31%** of total sales.

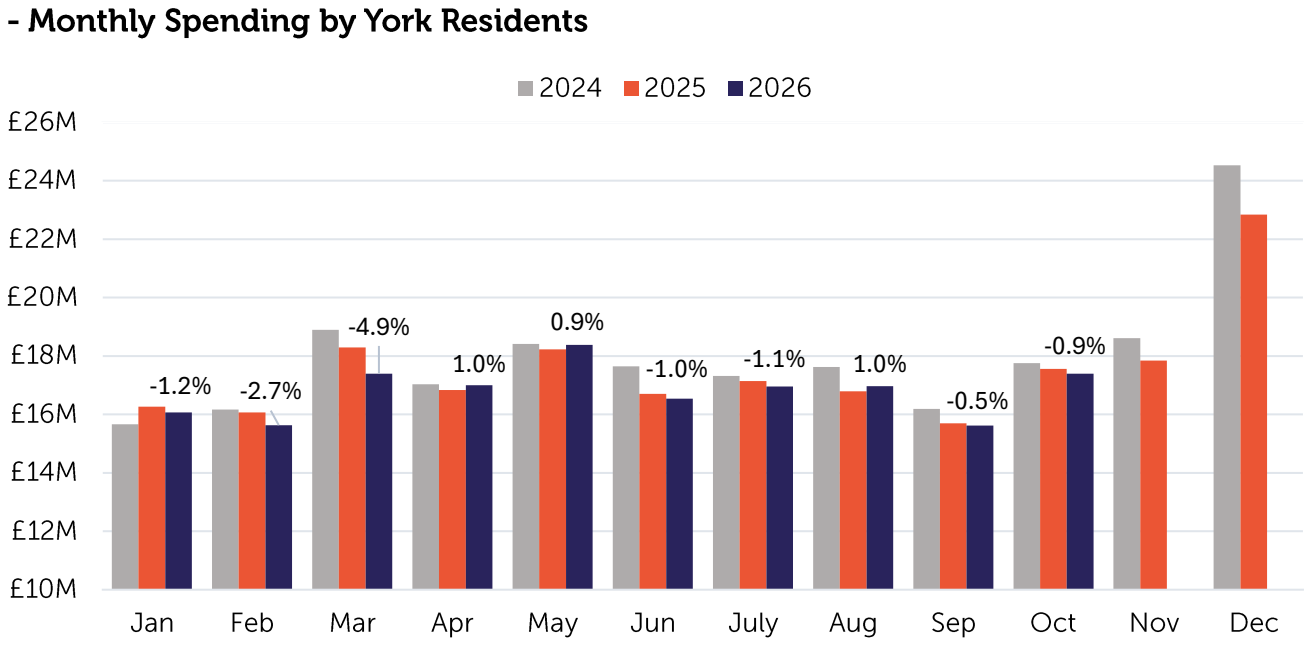

Figure 9. *Total monthly spending by customers residing within the York Local Authority Area, recorded in York city centre between 2024 and 2026. Data labels show year-on-year (YoY) growth, comparing each month in the current year with the corresponding month in the previous year.* ***(Source: Beauclair)***

Monthly spending by York residents shows a moderate correlation with overall city centre sales trends. Its steepest year-on-year declines occurred in February and March, but since April performance has fluctuated within a maximum of **1%** above or below 2025 levels.

Year-to-date spending by York residents is **-1.0%** down on 2025, broadly in line with wider monthly sales trends. Over a longer period, year-to-date resident spending is **-2.9%** down on 2024, significantly behind the wider monthly sales trend of **-1.5%**.

Sector Insights

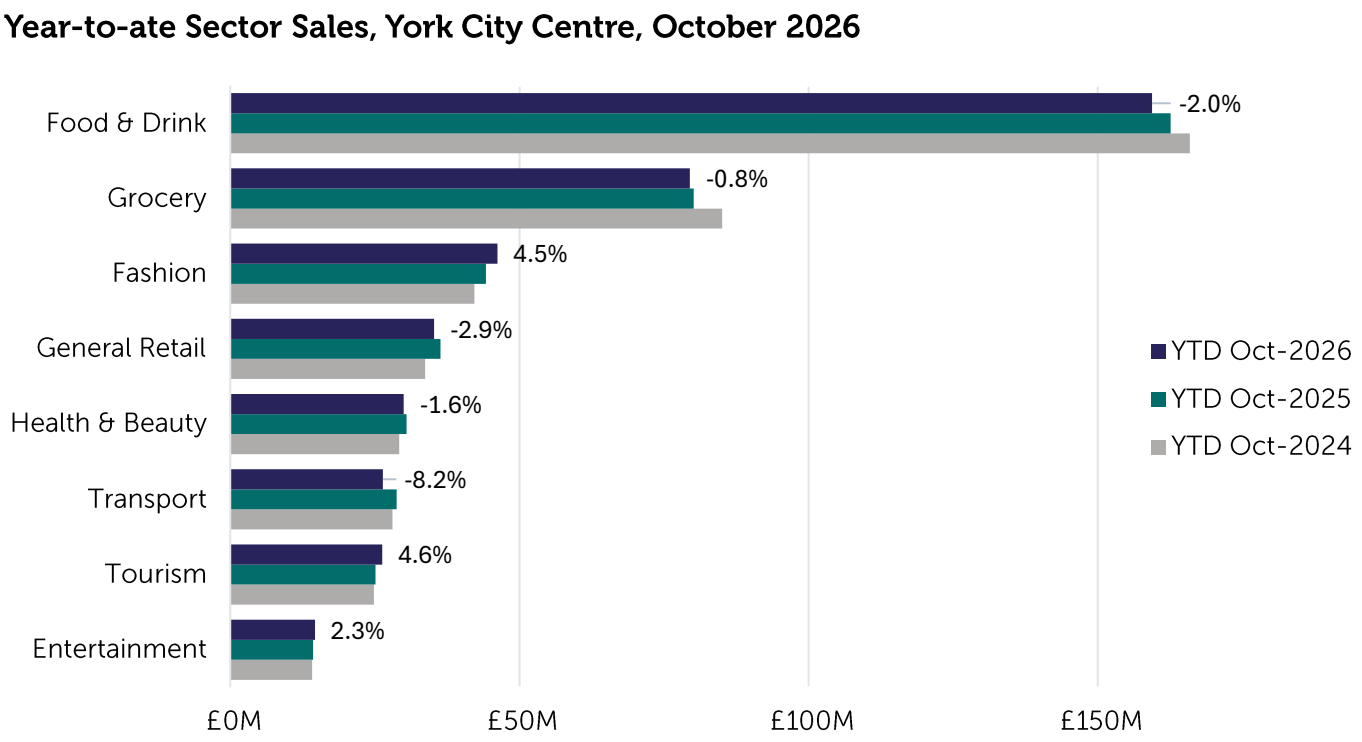

Figure 7. *Year-to-date monthly sales across sectors, recorded in York city centre, as of October 2026. Data labels show year-on-year (YoY) growth, comparing October 2026 with October 2025. For sector definition, please refer to the Glossary of Terms. (Source: Beauclair)*

Food & Drink is the largest contributor to sales in York city centre, consistently accounting for **38%** of monthly sales.

Figure 7 shows how sales in each sector have performed across the year to date compared with 2025. York is outperforming the UK Benchmark in **Food & Drink (-3.0%)** and **Fashion (-5.2%)**, and is broadly in line with national growth in **Grocery (-0.5%)**, **General Retail (-3.2%)** and **Health & Beauty (-2.2%)**.

Please note that the dataset excludes online payments, so the transport, tourism and entertainment sectors are under-represented, as much of their revenue is generated through advance and online bookings.

For a more detailed historical breakdown of sector performance, visit the York Economic Data Hub.

Visitor Insights

- Monthly Footfall, York City Centre

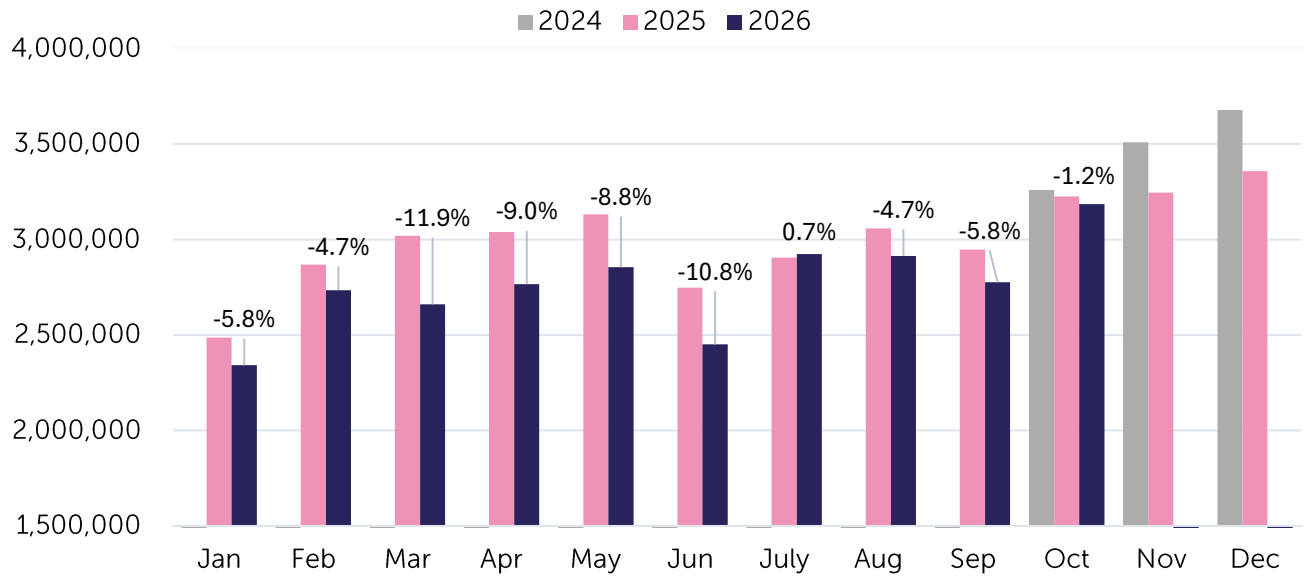

Figure 10. *Monthly totals of cumulative daily visitors to York city centre from October 2024 to present. Data labels show year-on-year (YoY) percentage change, comparing each month with the equivalent period in the previous year.* ***(Source: BT Active Intelligence)***

According to BT Active Intelligence data, York city centre footfall has declined significantly during 2026, falling by as much as **9%** to **12%** year-on-year between March and June. October was a comparatively milder month, with footfall down **1.2%** on October 2025.

Year-to-date footfall currently stands at **-6.2%** compared with 2025, more than twice the year-to-date decline in the number of transactions recorded in the Beauclair data (**-2.9%**).

October marks two years since City of York Council purchased the BT Active Intelligence subscription. From now on, two-year growth comparisons can be made using historical data dating back to October 2024.

Monthly Shop Vacancy

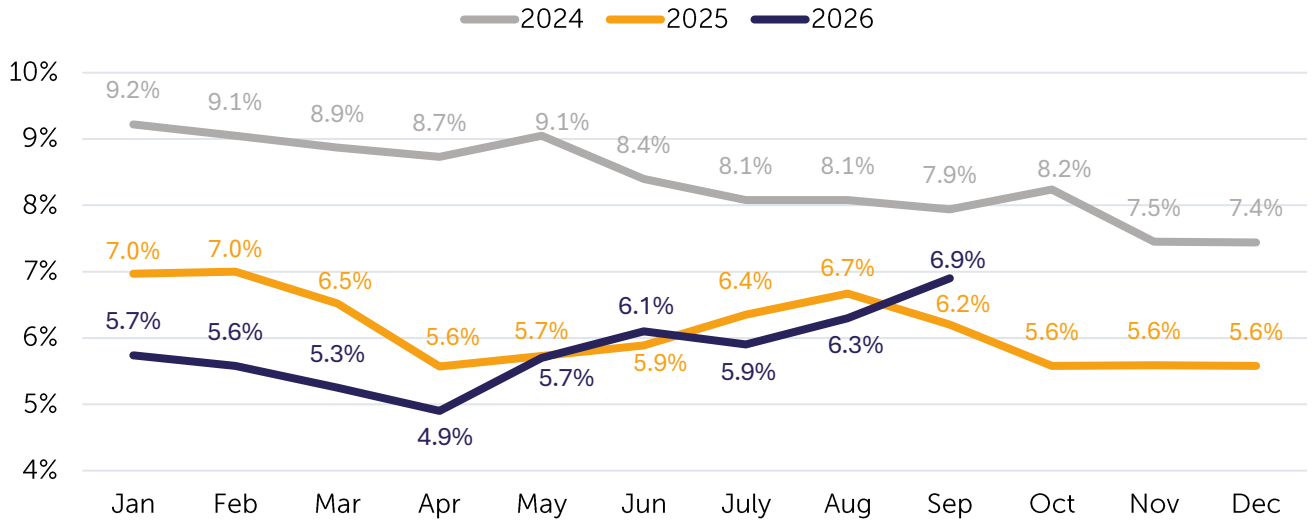

Figure 12. *The average monthly percentage of vacant retail units recorded in York city centre, since the beginning of 2024.* ***(Source: York Open Data)***

Shop vacancy rose modestly to **6.9%** in September, its highest level since February 2025. Despite this increase, York city centre continues to demonstrate strong occupancy resilience, with vacancy remaining well below the estimated national rate of **13.4%**.

About The Hub

York Economic Data Hub is a free, easy-to-use online resource designed to provide York's business community with clear, accessible insights into the economic performance of York city centre over time. Historical insights reports, news articles, and webinar recordings are available via our Insights Archive.

Please refer to the Glossary of Terms for definitions of the terms and abbreviations used in this report, along with maps outlining the geographic coverage of each dataset.

If you have any questions or queries about the data, feel free to contact the York BID at info@theyorkbid.com.

This project is delivered in partnership with York St John University Business School, which provides in-kind support through a dedicated data analyst. It is funded by the York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority and supported by a growing network of contributing partners, including City of York Council.