

**MUSEUM GARDENS, YORK: AUDIENCE RESEARCH  
PILOT PROJECT**

**GEORGIOS ALEXOPOULOS**

**INSTITUTE FOR THE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
PAST, UNIVERSITY OF YORK**

**NOVEMBER 2009**

# Contents

Acknowledgements .....	4
Introduction .....	4
Objectives .....	4
Methodology .....	5
Potential for fulfilling long term objectives.....	6
1. Audience survey demographics .....	6
1.1 Gender.....	6
1.2 Age distribution .....	6
1.3 Origin of respondents .....	7
1.4 Educational background .....	8
1.5 Occupations .....	8
1.6 Ethnicity.....	9
2. Museum Gardens: values attached by people.....	10
2.1 Main reason for visiting the Museum Gardens.....	10
2.2 The value of the Museum Gardens as a public space.....	12
2.3 Cultural heritage as a motivation for visiting the Museum Gardens .....	14
3. Popularity and visitation trends to the monuments/sites and attractions within the Museum Gardens .....	17
3.1 Looking at awareness and visitation to specific monuments/attractions .....	17
3.2 The public toilets by the river side .....	17
3.3 The York Art Gallery.....	18
3.4 The Observatory .....	19
3.5 The architectural fragments .....	20
3.6 The Yorkshire Museum .....	20
3.7 The Hospitium .....	21
3.8 The ruins of St Mary's Abbey .....	22
3.9 King's Manor.....	23
3.10 St Olave's Church.....	24
3.11 The Roman Multangular Tower .....	24
3.12 St Leonard's Hospital .....	25
3.13 The Abbey walls .....	26
4. Values attributed to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens .....	27
4.1 Assessing public perceptions about the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens .....	27
4.2 Personal values .....	28
4.2.1 Interest towards cultural heritage.....	28
4.2.2 Multiple values attributed to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens .....	30
4.2.3 Dominant personal values according to the origin of the respondents .....	33
4.2.4 Dominant personal values according to age .....	35
4.2.5 Dominant personal values according to education qualification.....	35
4.2.6 Dominant personal values according to occupation .....	36
4.3 Local/regional values.....	37
4.4 National importance of cultural heritage at Museum Gardens .....	40
4.5 International importance of cultural heritage at Museum Gardens .....	42
5. Presentation of cultural heritage at the Museum Gardens: public views and	

aspirations .....	43
5.1 What presentation would help you understand and appreciate what you are looking at? .....	43
5.2 What more would you like to learn about the Museum Gardens? .....	46
REFERENCES .....	48
APPENDICES .....	48
Appendix 1: Questionnaire employed for the audience research .....	48

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank the following members of the Institute for the Public Understanding of the Past (IPUP) for their contribution to the preparation of this report:

Professor Helen Weinstein and Dr Adam Gutteridge contributed with useful comments at the various stages of this audience research project and also assisted in the editing process of the report.

Martin Scott has assisted in various practical and technical matters.

I am very grateful to Dr Kalliopi Fouseki, who assisted in the collection of the audience data by conducting interviews at the Museum Gardens on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2009 and also for providing very useful insights and feedback in the coding process and the analysis of the data.

Nuala Morse has offered valuable help in the transcription of the interviews.

Finally, many thanks are also due to Martin Watts, Director of Learning and Audience Development at the Yorkshire Museum, for his very useful comments and suggestions for the preparation of the audience research questionnaire.

## **Introduction**

### **Objectives**

The Institute for the Public Understanding of the Past (henceforth IPUP) offered to undertake audience research at the Museum Gardens, York, on behalf of various cultural institutions – such as the York Museums Trust, the York Archaeological Trust – in September 2009 as part of a wider project to assess public perceptions about the cultural heritage of York. One of the main objectives of this audience research was to investigate the values attached by people (both local people and visitors from outside York/Yorkshire) to the Museum Gardens as a public space and the reasons behind their visit with regard the historical monuments/cultural heritage within and around the area. The level of visitation to 11 of the main

monuments/sites/attractions in the wider area was also assessed followed by an examination of the values and meanings attached to the afore-mentioned cultural heritage places by the respondents. Furthermore, an emphasis was placed on issues of presentation and interpretation in an attempt to gain insights on public perceptions about the present state and potential future development of the Museum Gardens.

## **Methodology**

For the purposes of this audience research 100 open-ended face-to-face interviews were conducted outdoors in various locations within the Museum Gardens, York. These interviews took place on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2009. People who were sitting on the benches, the ruins or the green areas of the park were targeted as respondents in an effort to maximise the quality of the data (allowing respondents some time to reflect on the questions and to answer with the least possible haste). Although this research pursued to engage people from as wide a background as possible a focus was intentionally placed on people representing the wider local community (York residents, Yorkshire visitors).

The open-ended questionnaires, retaining the anonymity of the respective respondents, were digitally recorded to allow for careful transcription. The main part of the interviews consisted of specific questions addressing the values, meanings and other public perceptions related to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens and the use of the space in the area (see Appendix 1). In addition, general background information on the interviewees was also collected in order to assist in the identification of any patterns with the regard the responses. Both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the interviews has been coded in line with the specific objectives of the audience research project and has been analysed with the use of Microsoft Excel.

All of the transcribed interviews are included in a separate document (see **MuseumGardens\_transcriptions.doc**) which also includes the background information for all individual respondents. Every interview corresponds to the responses provided by one individual followed by a code that indicates the relevant audio file and the person conducting the interview (e.g. GA 1 or GA 17a and 17b respectively).

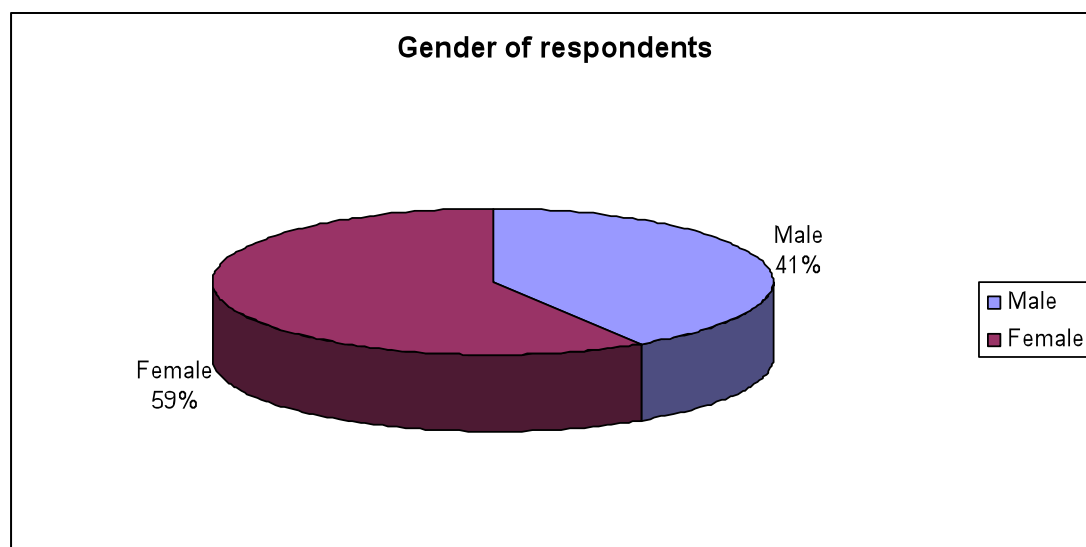
## Potential for fulfilling long term objectives

The audience research conducted at the Museum Gardens can serve in the future as the basis for a more extensive project utilising qualitative methodologies to inform the future development of the place and provide opportunities for public engagement. In addition, it forms the basis of a larger research agenda to better understand public perceptions of the cultural heritage in the city of York. The employment of qualitative research methodologies can potentially contribute to the identification of visitor needs and expectations as well as to engage with both users and non-users of York's historical monuments, attractions and museums.

### 1. Audience survey demographics

#### 1.1 Gender

On September 2009, a sample of 100 face-to-face interviews was collected at various locations within the Museum Gardens, York. More than half of the respondents were female (%59) while male respondents accounted for %41 (Fig. 1).



*Fig. 1: Percentage of female and male interviewees from the total sample of 100 interviews.*

#### 1.2 Age distribution

Young people represented the majority of the interviewees with %36 of the respondents belonging to the “16-24” age group and only one respondent being

“Under 16”. The interviewees belonging to the age groups ranging from 25 to over 65 years old were rather evenly distributed (see Fig. 2).

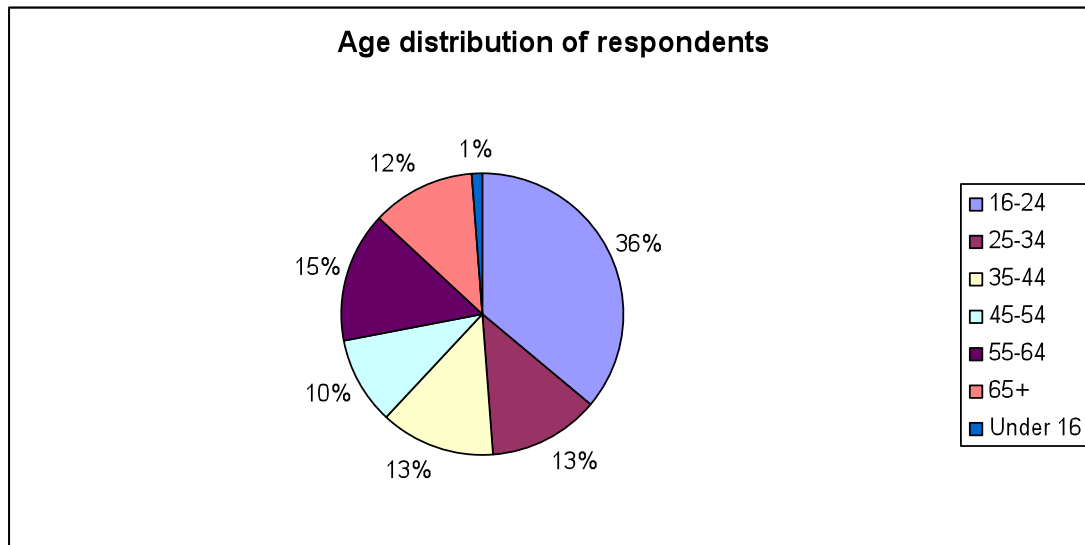


Fig. 2: The distribution of the respondents according to their age (total sample of 100 interviews).

### 1.3 Origin of respondents

The majority of people represented in the sample of this audience research stated that they were living within Yorkshire (%59) of which %38 accounted for residents of the city of York and %21 for residents of other areas in the county. Visitors from elsewhere within the United Kingdom were the second largest group numbering %35 (Fig. 3).

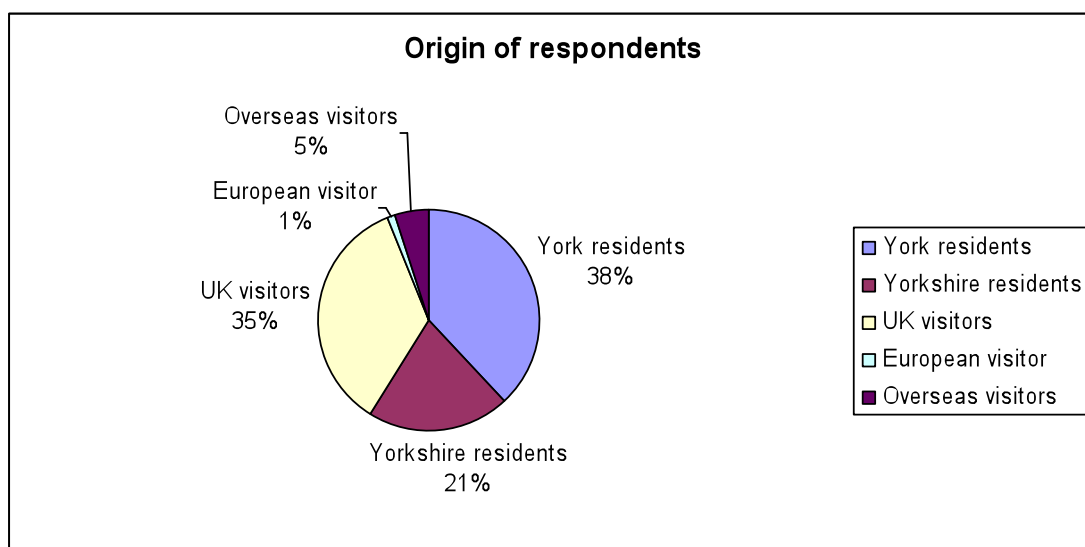


Fig. 3: The distribution of the respondents according to their origin (total sample of 100 interviews).

## 1.4 Educational background

In terms of highest educational qualification %22 of the people interviewed for this audience research project indicated the “A Level/High school” option, followed by %20 for “Postgraduate”, %18 for “GCSE/Secondary” and %15 for “Undergraduate”. Overall, with a background in the tertiary education accounted for %37 of the total sample (Fig. 4).

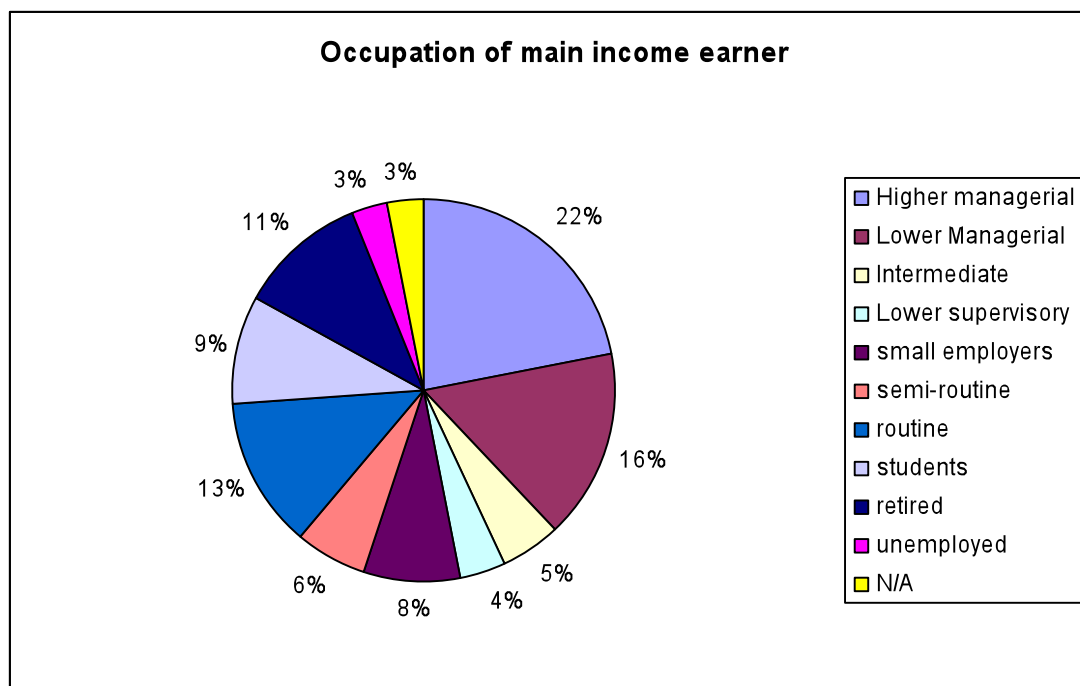
Highest educational qualification	Frequency
No formal qualification	3
A Level/High school	22
A Level/High school + Trade qualification	2
GCSE/Secondary	18
GCSE/Secondary + HNC/Technical qualification	1
GCSE/Secondary + Trade qualification	3
Undergraduate	15
Undergraduate + HNC/Technical qualification	1
Postgraduate	20
Postgraduate + HNC/Technical qualification	1
Trade qualification	5
HNC/Technical qualification	5
HNC/Technical qualification + Trade qualification	3
No response	1

*Fig. 4: The distribution of the respondents according to the occupation of the main income earner in their household (total sample of 100 interviews).*

## 1.5 Occupations

The majority of the respondents (%38) stated that the main income earner of their household held a higher (%22) or lower (%16) managerial or professional position (Fig. 5).





*Fig. 5: The distribution of the respondents according to the occupation of the main income earner in their household (total sample of 100 interviews).*

## 1.6 Ethnicity

The sample of 100 interviews represents almost exclusively people from the British Isles (%80) the majority of which identified themselves as British (%66) or English (%7). Almost half of the respondents (%47) avoided or chose not to specify their ethnic group racially. However, %51 indicated that they were “white” or “Caucasian” (Fig. 6).

<b>Ethnic background</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
White British	40
Caucasian British	1
Caucasian British/English	1
British	26
British Irish	1
White English	1
English	5
English/York	1
Scottish	4
Irish	1
European Caucasian	1
Lithuanian	1
Latvian	1
Portuguese	1
Canadian	1
Asian	1

Caucasian	6
White & Black	1
White	1
No response	5

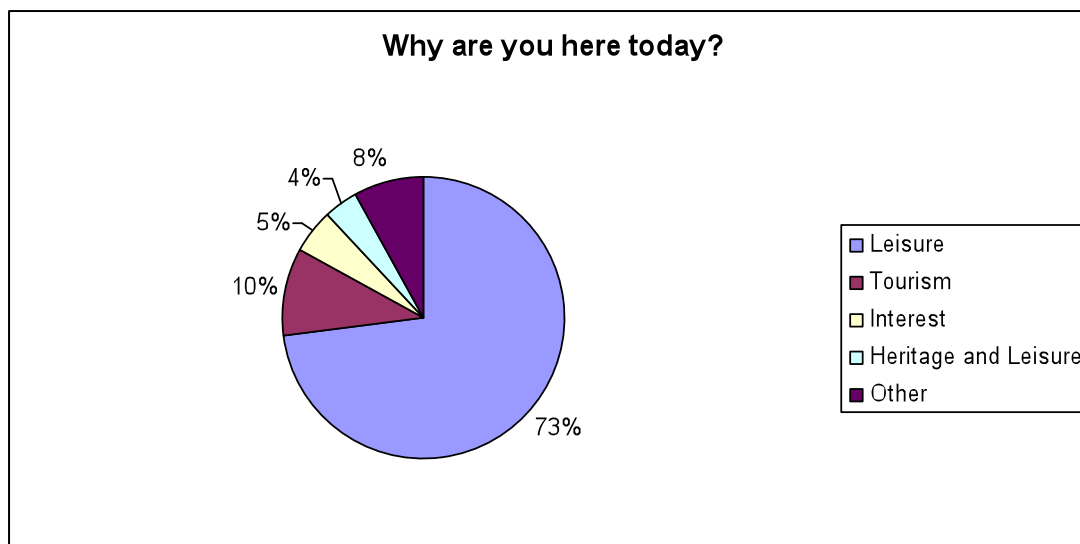
*Fig. 6: The distribution of the respondents according to ethnicity (total sample of 100 interviews).*

## **2. Museum Gardens: values attached by people**

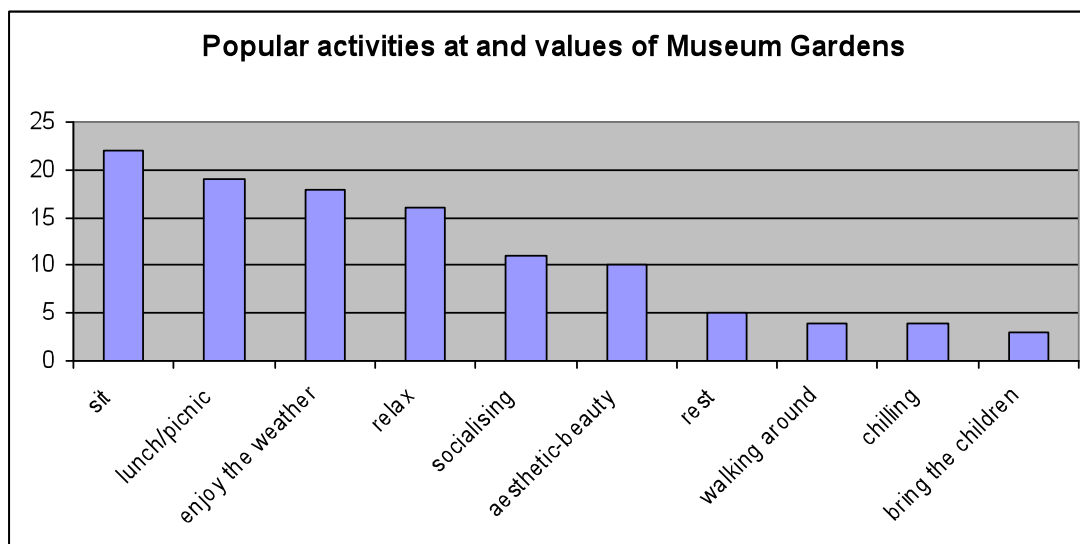
### **2.1 Main reason for visiting the Museum Gardens**

The respondents for this audience research were initially asked about their reason for visiting the Museum Gardens on that day. The vast majority (%73) stated that they had come in order to use the park for various leisure activities (Fig. 7). The most popular of these activities were to sit, to have lunch or a picnic, to enjoy the sunshine or nice weather, to relax, and to socialise or meet someone (Fig. 8). One out of ten people from the total sample mentioned the aesthetic qualities and the beauty of the Museum Gardens also as a reason for their visit. It perhaps comes as no surprise that the 10 respondents (%10) that stated “tourism” as their reason for visiting the gardens were all visitors and not local residents (of York or Yorkshire). It was actually revealed at a later stage (Question 3 – see Appendix 1) that two of these visitors (Interviews 91-92) were planning to visit the Yorkshire Museum. All five (%5) of the people who responded that their visit to the Museum Gardens was triggered by a general interest to discover what the place was like were visitors from the UK.

Quite interestingly, only %4 of the respondents mentioned the heritage (in this case a visit to the Yorkshire Museum) or the history of the place as the reason of their visit. This minority consisted of 2 visitors from the UK and two Yorkshire residents. However, the latter two respondents (Interviews 88-89) later acknowledged that the setting with the historic buildings was only part of their reason for visiting.



*Fig. 7: A more analytical breakdown of the categories of the visitors and non-visitors to the York Minster.*



*Fig. 8: A more analytical breakdown of the categories of the visitors and non-visitors to the York Minster.*

Activity/main reason for being at Museum Gardens	Frequency
To sit	22
To have lunch/picnic	19
To enjoy the nice weather	18
To relax	16
To socialise/meet someone	11
The aesthetics/beauty	10
To rest	5
To walk/stroll around	4
To chill	4
To bring the children	3

To pass through	2
Peacefulness	2
To have a break/time out	2
To escape from the crowds/shops	2
To walk the dog	2
Quietness	1
Cosiness	1
Picturesque	1
Scenery	1
To spend time	1
To read	1
To enjoy the gardens	1
To sketch the monuments	1
To take photographs	1
To escape from school	1

*Fig. 9: A summary of the most frequent answers to the question “Why are you here at the Museum Gardens today?” by respondents whose major reason for visiting was leisure (73 people= %73 of total sample).*

## **2.2 The value of the Museum Gardens as a public space**

The great diversity and variety of values attached to the Museum Gardens by all of its users, both local residents and visitors, was clearly reflected in the answers provided by the 100 respondents. This could be considered rather obvious for a place that combines such a variety of features and caters for such a range of activities.

The vast majority (%72) of the people interviewed for this research highlighted the importance of the Museum Gardens as a public space for more than one reasons. Only one Scottish visitor focused on the history as the main value of the Museum Gardens but surprisingly the same person considered this only as part of the reason for visiting the place (as opposed to just finding a place to relax). Overall, the importance of the Museum Gardens for its historical, architectural or heritage values was mentioned (along with other values) only by %18 of the respondents.

A look at the most popular answers provided by the 100 interviewees in terms of the importance of the Museum Gardens as a public space demonstrates clearly that cultural heritage plays a cursory role in the overall use of the space (Fig. 10). A quarter of the respondents highlighted the importance of the gardens as a place to relax while an almost similar amount of responses stressed the aesthetic-beauty of the area and its serenity/quietness/peacefulness/tranquillity. One out of five respondents value the Museum Gardens as a good place to sit. Furthermore, %14 of the sample

seems to enjoy the openness and public accessibility as well as the escape that the gardens offer from the crowds and/or busy shops of the city. The greenery was appreciated by %12 of the respondents while one out of ten people considered the place as a focal point for socialising.

The history and historical heritage of the monuments and other visitor attractions of the area were mentioned as important only by %5 and %8 of the interviewees respectively. Very few people emphasised the architectural value of the old buildings (%3) and the general heritage value (%2) followed by two comments on the resonance of the Museum Gardens with the past and the importance of being able to look at the ruins (both %1).

<b>Importance of Museum Gardens as a public space</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
A place to relax	25
Aesthetic-beauty	23
Serenity/tranquillity/quietness/peacefulness	23
A place to sit	20
Openness/publicly accessible	14
Escape from crowds/shops	14
Greenery	12
Socialising	10
Scenery/setting/picturesque	8
Everyday use value	8
Historical heritage	8
History	5
Picnic/lunch	5
A place for chilling	4
Personal memories	4
Architectural value	3
Atmosphere	3
Nature	3
Wildlife	3
Heritage	2
Well looked after	2
Tourist value	2
Restful	2
Resonance with the past	1
Look at ruins	1
Good for the soul	1
A place to feed the squirrels	1
Ambiance	1
Safety	1
A place to play with the kids	1
Nice for pets	1
A place to enjoy good weather	1
No response	10

*Fig. 10: An outline of the most popular answers to the question “What meaning/importance does this public space have for you?”.*

The following quotes provide a small overview of the wide range of reasons for which the Museum Gardens are important to people:

Young (25-34) female Yorkshire resident: *“Hm...well, I enjoy the historical heritage because I am a medievalist. But also...it’s just that I find it very relaxing, kind of green space, it’s nice to be able to come here and (emphasises) spend time”* (Interview 3, MG KF 2a).

Young (25-34) male York resident: *“Ehm, it’s the biggest green space, I suppose, in the middle of York so I come here sometimes in my work, lunchtimes. I walk through here on my way to work and on the way back from work. And weekend will come I sometimes meet my girlfriend here for lunch and we have a picnic”* (Interview 12, MG GA 4).

Young (25-34) male York resident: *“Very good! I used to spend a lot of time here when I was younger, with family and friends. And yeah, it’s a lovely place just to sit out and...and the gardens and enjoy the weather”* (Interview 38, MG GA 21).

A male undergraduate student living in York: *“Yeah, it’s nice to come somewhere where it’s not too busy. And be somewhere where its nice to relax, site down and have something to eat”* (Interview 100, MG GA 55b).

## **2.3 Cultural heritage as a motivation for visiting the Museum Gardens**

The perceptions and values of the 100 respondents towards the cultural heritage within and around the Museum Gardens will be more thoroughly examined in the following sections (3 and 4). Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that very few of the people interviewed mentioned the cultural heritage of the place as their main reason for visiting the gardens. More specifically from the responses to the question *“Is the setting, with the historic buildings, your main reason or part of your reason for being here?”* (Question 3 – Appendix 1) only %7 answered “the main reason” while %29 replied negatively. Although the vast majority of the respondents (%59) admitted that the setting with the historic buildings was at least part of the reason they visited the Museum Gardens a closer look at the answers provided in questions 1-3 reveals that

the cultural heritage or historical values do not feature strongly in the feedback provided by the majority of these people.

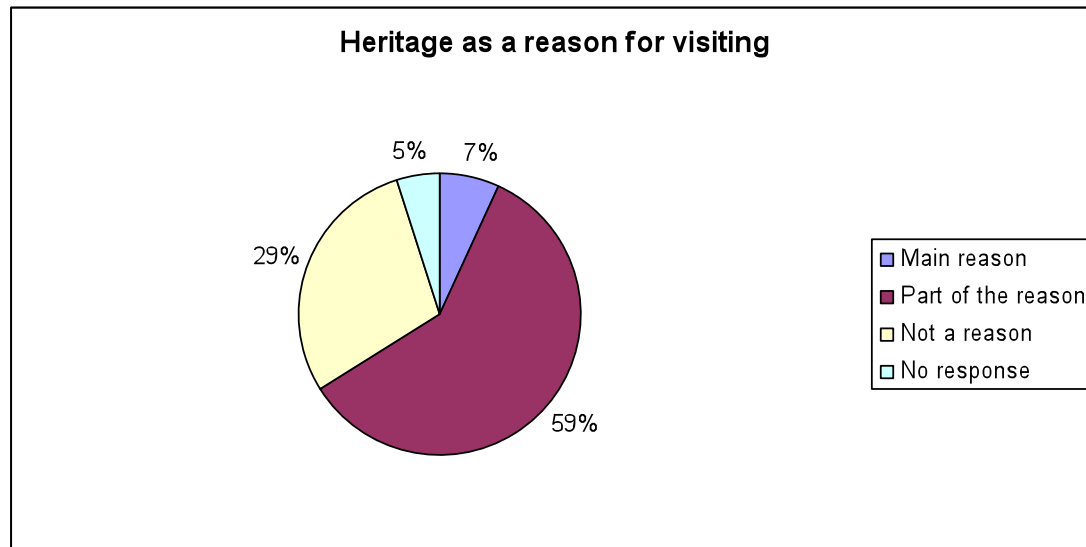


Fig. 11: A summary of the answers to the question “Is the setting, with the historic buildings, your main reason or part of your reason for being here?”.

The diversity of views held about whether the historical setting of the Museum Gardens was the main motivation for visiting the place is illustrated through the following quotes:

Female Yorkshire resident (age group 35-44): “Yeah, probably! Cause I think if they had the park but it didn’t have all of that it wouldn’t be as interesting. So, yeah, it does make it better having all that there. Definitely!” (Interview 5, MG KF 3).

Male postgraduate student living in York: “It’s probably just part of it, it’s more the fact that it’s a green park area and it’s really nice. I mean, the abbey itself helps cause it looks nice but it’s more about this open green space” (Interview 14, MG GA 5b).

Young (16-24) female York resident: “It’s a nice place to sit, be with your friends and socialise. So it’s more of a social thing isn’t it?... Well, considering I’ve lived here all my life and I’ve seen everything already so it’s basically just to hang out and to be with friends and being in an area that we enjoy being in” (Interview 20, MG GA 8b).

Young (16-24) male York resident: “It’s not even a reason. The reason we’ve always come here is because it was always a good nice place to be, it was out of the way, you weren’t bothering people, we could do what you liked, you could have a laugh, fair enough – try to keep noise down don’t want to disturb people but we don’t come here

*because we like the architecture (laughs)! To put it simply (laughs)!"* (Interview 19, MG GA 8a).

Male UK visitor (age group 35-44): *"It's part of the reason, I think. It's the whole ambiance of the area is the thing that we like and that's what brought us back the second time"* (Interview 26, MG GA 12a).

Retired female visitor from Hertfordshire: *"It's a lovely place to be. Historic buildings add a kind of depth to the experience. Even if you didn't understand the precise history they would give you a very pleasant sense of continuity"* (Interview 27, MG GA 13a).

Retired female visitor from Newark, Nottinghamshire: *"Well, with regards the park it's such a tranquil, serene spot, isn't it? It's good for the soul"* (Interview 32, MG GA 17a).

A male university lecturer born in York but living in Nottinghamshire: *"Ehm...It's important, it's part of it, it adds to the general atmosphere of the place I suppose. It is intrinsically part of the gardens so, yeah, it's all part of the same thing, so yeah"* (Interview 40, MG GA 23).

Young (16-24) male York resident: *"Of course, yeah! Well, if there was grass land in the city anyway it's good because it's somewhere to come and sit but...but, I mean, aesthetically to have this view (pointing to the ruins of St Mary's Abbey), it's brilliant, it's priceless! And it's something that a lot of cities don't have so it's good that York has it"* (Interview 56, MG GA 32a).

Young (16-24) female York resident: *"I forget that there is a museum here to be honest! (All laugh). I come here just because of the grass really"* (Interview 77, MG GA 43a).

Young (16-24) female York resident: *"I don't think I've ever been in there [The Yorkshire Museum] to be honest. I've been in York for fourteen years and actually never been in there (All laugh)"* (Interview 78, MG GA 43b).



### **3. Popularity and visitation trends to the monuments/sites and attractions within the Museum Gardens**

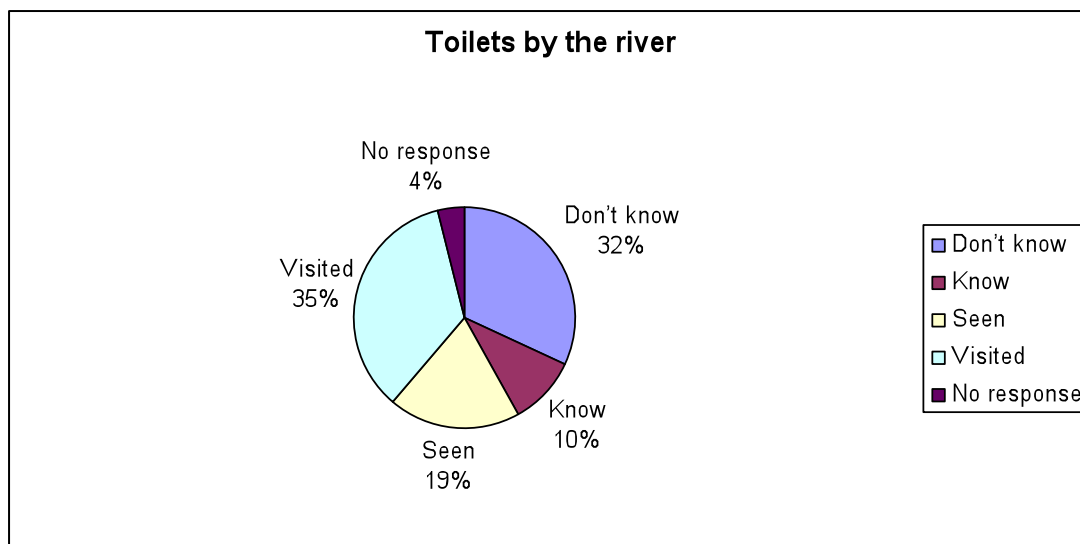
#### **3.1 Looking at awareness and visitation to specific monuments/attractions**

Question 4 of the audience research questionnaire introduced to the respondents a table with 11 major heritage places/monuments/attractions within and around the Museum Gardens. The interviewees were consequently asked to reply whether they knew (were aware of), had seen or had visited these places. The questionnaire table also included one public facility (the public toilets by the river bank) the use and popularity of which were deemed relevant due to potential future developments.

The 11 “heritage places” consisted of: the York Art Gallery, the Observatory, the architectural fragments (scattered around the park), the Yorkshire Museum, the Hospitium, the ruins of St Mary’s Abbey, the King’s Manor, the St Olave’s Church, the Roman Multangular Tower, St Leonard’s Hospital, and the Abbey walls.

#### **3.2 The public toilets by the river side**

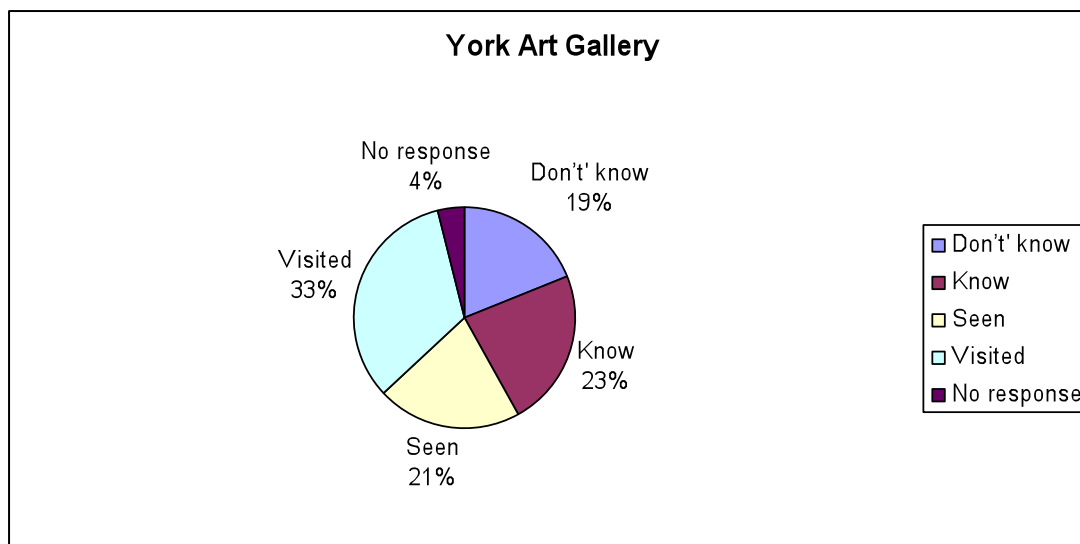
More than one third (%35) of the respondents stated that they had visited the public toilets while a significant segment (%32) was not aware of the place. The only thing worth mentioning here is that from the people who were not aware of the existence of the toilets more than half (%20 of the total sample) were visitors from outside York and Yorkshire.



*Fig. 12: Awareness and visitation numbers for the public toilets by the river side.*

### 3.3 The York Art Gallery

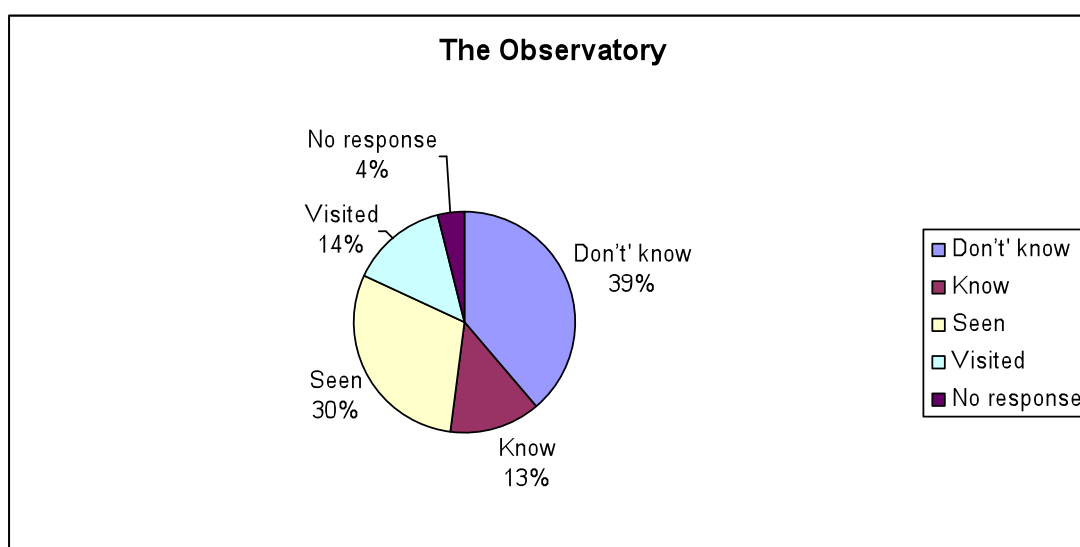
The York Art Gallery was well-known to the vast majority of the respondents with only %19 stating that they didn't know the place – these were mostly visitors from outside York and Yorkshire (%15). The number of people who stated that they had actually visited the place accounted to more than one third (%35) of the total sample – with most visitors coming from York and Yorkshire and only %4 from elsewhere in the UK. The educational background of the respondents seems to have influenced predominantly the number of people not being aware of the existence of the gallery – people without tertiary education represented more than half of this group as opposed to those having “Undergraduate” and “Postgraduate” qualifications. Although the sample of interviews is not extensive enough to allow for very clear observations with regard visitation and awareness of the gallery according to the occupation of the respondents it seems that people with higher, lower and intermediate managerial or professional positions as well as students are the more frequent visitors.



*Fig. 13: Awareness and visitation numbers for the York Art Gallery.*

### 3.4 The Observatory

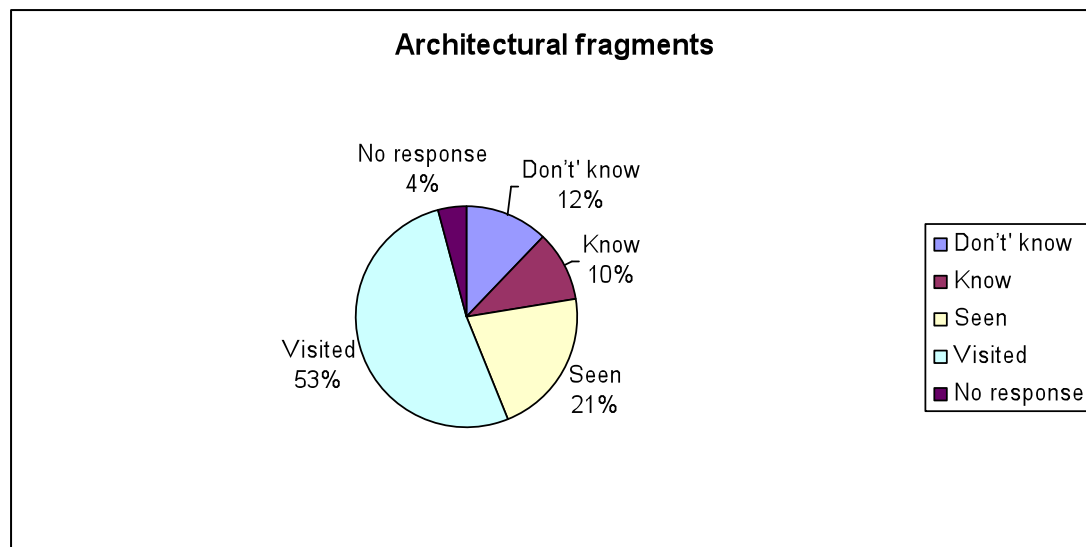
Most of the respondents (%43) demonstrated an awareness of the Observatory in the Museum Gardens – %30 had seen it and %13 knew about it. Nevertheless a significant segment (%39) of the interviewees also revealed that they were not aware of the place as opposed to only %14 who had actually visited it. The educational background and the occupation of both the visitors and non-visitors to the Observatory did not seem to have a significant influence on the responses. Overall, York residents accounted for more than half of the people who stated they had visited the place (8 out of 14 visitors).



*Fig. 14: Awareness and visitation numbers for the Observatory.*

### 3.5 The architectural fragments

The architectural fragments which are scattered around the Museum Gardens are apparently well known to the majority of the respondents (%53) who had visited them (in this case perhaps rather observed and used them) – the vast majority of these (%37) were York and Yorkshire residents (%24 and %13 respectively). A further %21 stated that they had seen the architectural fragments with only %12 not being aware of them. As in the case of the Observatory educational and occupational factors did not seem to have an impact on the answers.

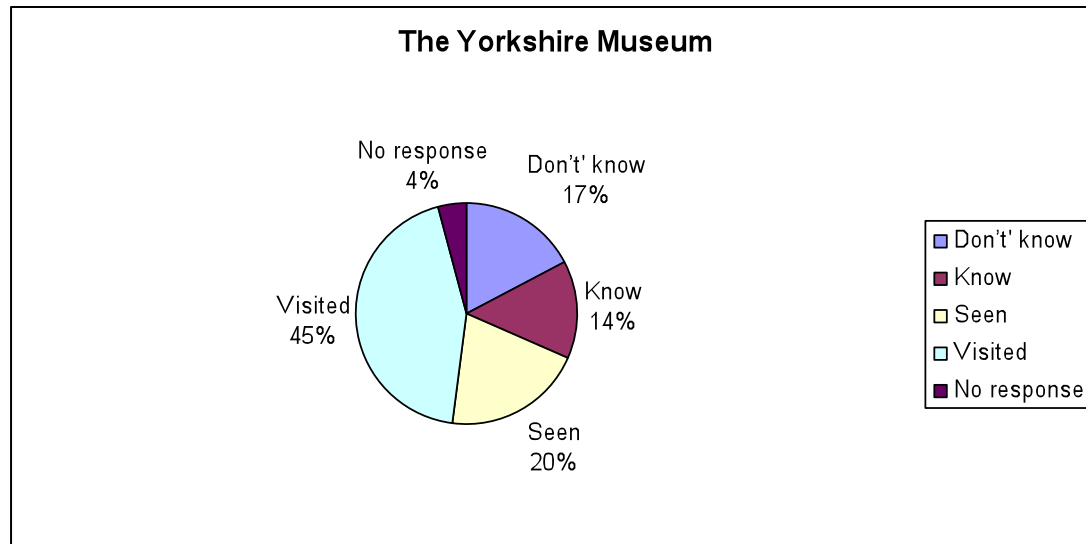


*Fig. 15: Awareness and visitation numbers for the architectural fragments scattered around the Museum Gardens.*

### 3.6 The Yorkshire Museum

In the case of the Yorkshire Museum, non-visitors correspond to just over half of the total sample (%51) as opposed to the %45 of respondents claiming to have visited the place. However, the museum seems to be much better known among the public (compared to most of the other historic buildings and sites of the area) judging by the fact that %20 of the respondents has seen the building and %14 knew about it. The majority of York residents (24 out of 38) claimed that they had visited the museum and accounted for almost half (24 out of 53) of the total number of visitors. Out of the 21 Yorkshire residents, on the other hand, only 8 claimed to have visited the Yorkshire Museum. In terms of the educational background of the respondents only people with “Postgraduate” and “GCSE/Secondary” qualifications had significant numbers of visitors (as opposed to non-visitors) – 11 out of 21 for “Postgraduates”

and 12 out of 22 for “GCSE/Secondary”. The occupation of the respondents does not appear to have a significant impact on whether individuals visit the Yorkshire Museum despite the very slightly lower numbers of non-visitors coming from the higher, lower and intermediate managerial or professional occupations.

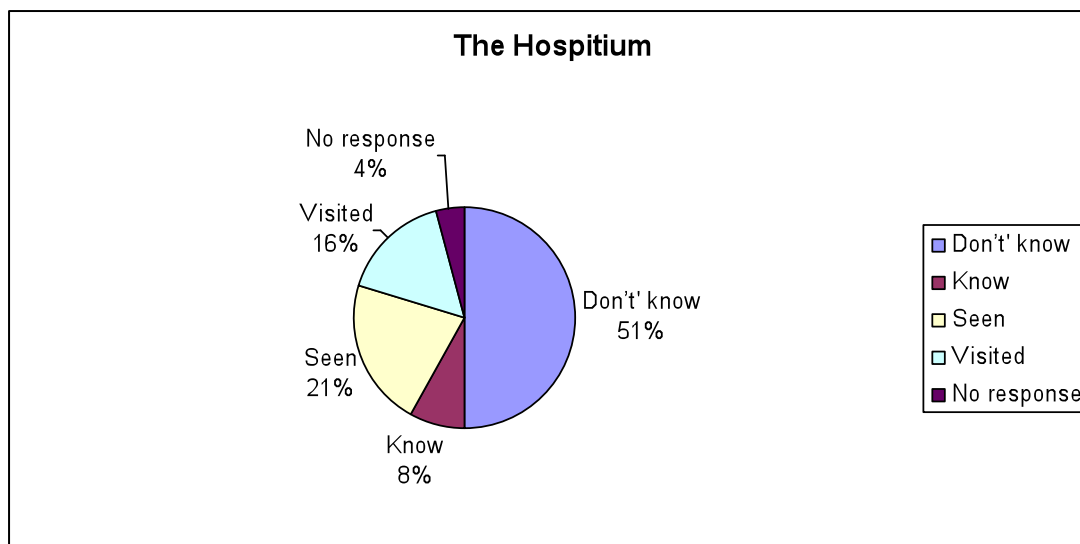


*Fig. 16: Awareness and visitation numbers for the Yorkshire Museum.*

### 3.7 The Hospitium

The Hospitium represents a striking example of a historic building that is not known to just over half of the respondents (51%) and has only been visited by 16% of the total sample. Only one UK visitor (out of 35) and 6 (out of 21) Yorkshire residents had visited the Hospitium. Even the residents of York provided low visitor figures (10 out of 38). The educational qualifications of the respondents did not seem to play a major factor in the awareness about or the decision to visit this particular historic building. Nevertheless, people from households with income earners belonging to higher managerial or professional occupations indicated a higher frequency of visitation (9 out of 22).

It is worth noting that throughout the conduction of the interviews it became apparent that many people, particularly local residents, could not associate the name “Hospitium” with the building itself which they actually knew as a venue for hosting weddings etc.

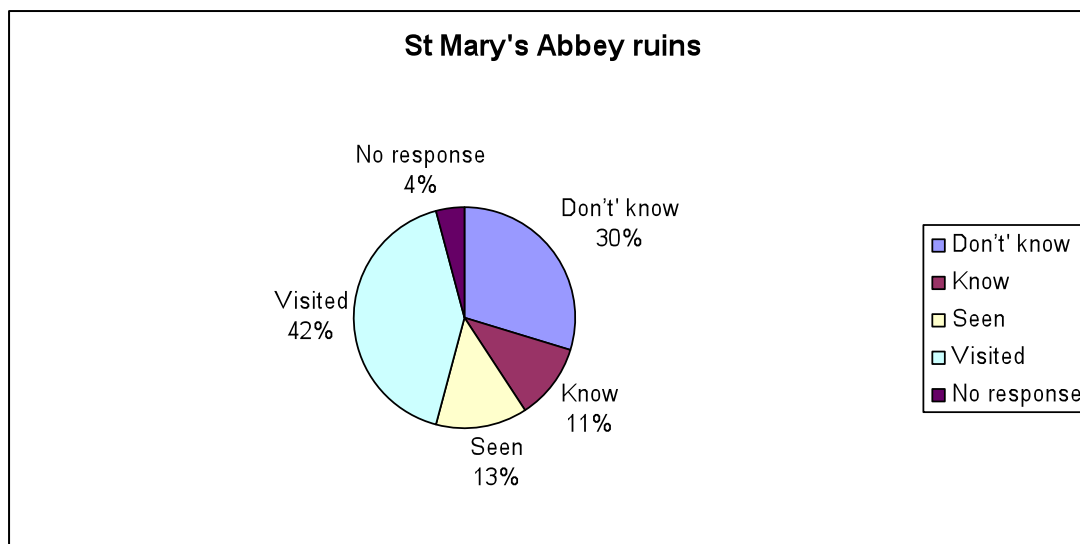


*Fig. 17: Awareness and visitation numbers for the Hospitium.*

### **3.8 The ruins of St Mary's Abbey**

The ruins of St Mary's Abbey proved to be more popular than most of the other historic buildings within the Museum Gardens despite the fact that %30 of the respondents were not aware of what this place was – owing also to the fact, as in the case of the Hospitium, that some people could not associate the ruins with this particular name. The majority of the people were aware of the historic structure (altogether %66) while the specific percentage of respondents claiming to have visited the ruins was quite high (%42).

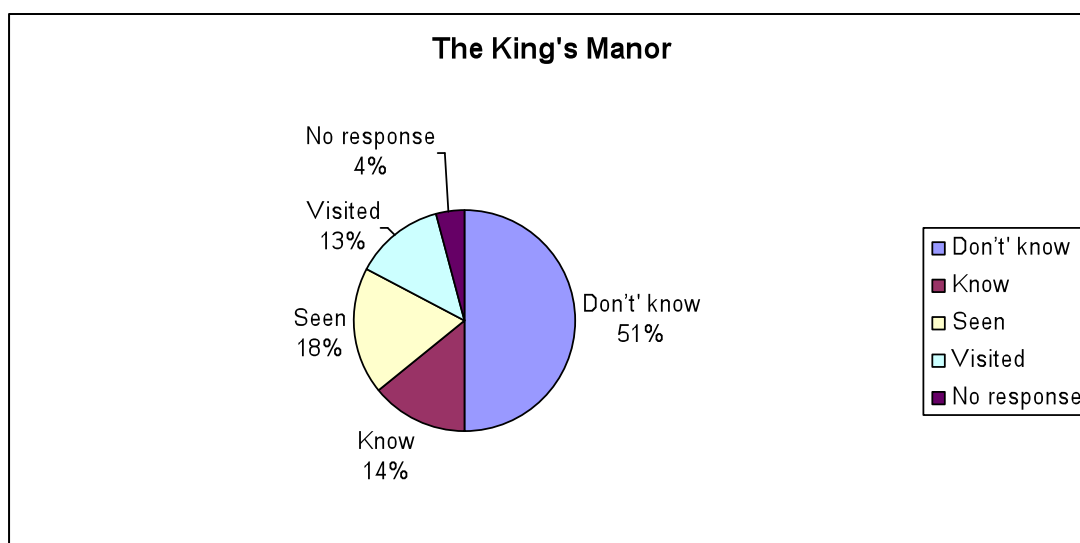
Quite surprisingly the origin of the interviewees did not seem to affect the number of visitors (as opposed to non-visitors) with less than half of York and Yorkshire residents (15 out of 38 and 10 out of 21) and UK visitors (13 out of 35) indicating that they have visited the St Mary's Abbey ruins. However, this does not apply to the educational background of the respondents which clearly provided a motivation for people with "Postgraduate" (15 out of 21) and Undergraduate" (7 out of 15) qualifications to visit more frequently. The occupation of the respondents was also a decisive factor judging by the very high visitation number derived from, at least, the higher managerial or professional jobs (16 out of 22).



*Fig. 18: Awareness and visitation numbers for the ruins of St Mary's Abbey.*

### 3.9 King's Manor

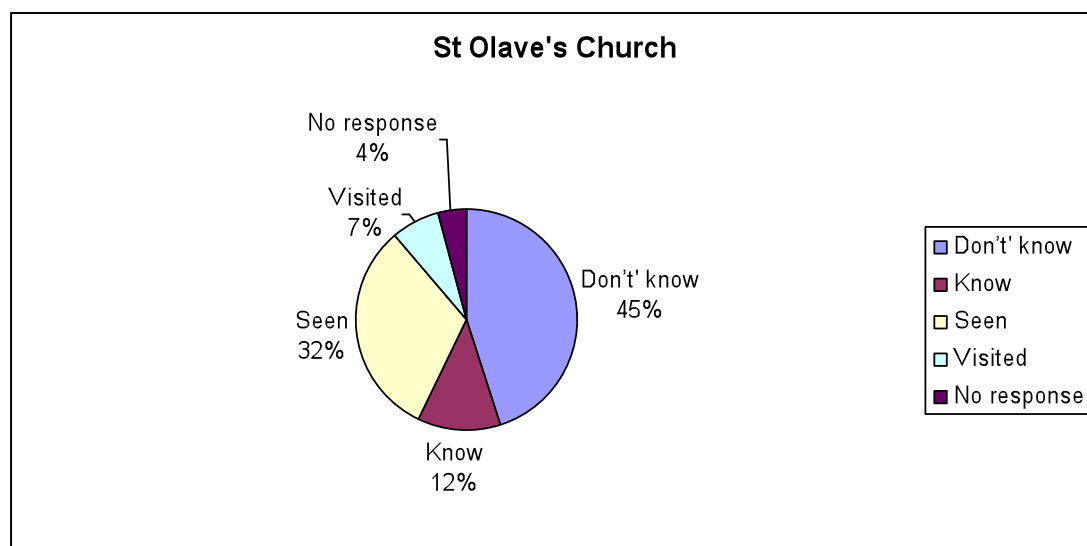
The historic building of the King's Manor is among the least known and visited historic places of the area within and surrounding the Museum Gardens. Just over half of the respondents (%51) admitted that they did not know about it and only %13 had actually visited it. Only two respondents (out of 41) that came from elsewhere in the UK or outside the country stated that they had visited the King's Manor. However the numbers of visitors from the city of York itself and the wider Yorkshire area are also very low (8 out of 38 and 3 out of 21 respectively). Although these visitor numbers are generally very low for all types of respondents, people with "Postgraduate" qualifications and higher managerial or professional jobs seem to have a higher tendency to visit King's Manor.



*Fig. 19: Awareness and visitation numbers for the King's Manor.*

### 3.10 St Olave's Church

St Olave's Church proved to be one of the least visited (%7) heritage places examined by this audience research with %45 of the total sample of respondents also stating they were not aware of the place. At the same time, %32 of the interviewees mentioned that they had seen the church. None of the visitors from elsewhere in the UK or abroad had visited St Olave's Church which is something that only one (out of 21) Yorkshire resident had done. It came perhaps as no surprise that York residents had the highest number of visits which still reached a very low rate (6 out of 38). The only statistically interesting aspect to note is that 5 out of 7 visitors to St Olave's Church (from the whole sample of 100 interviews) belonged to a higher managerial or professional occupation.



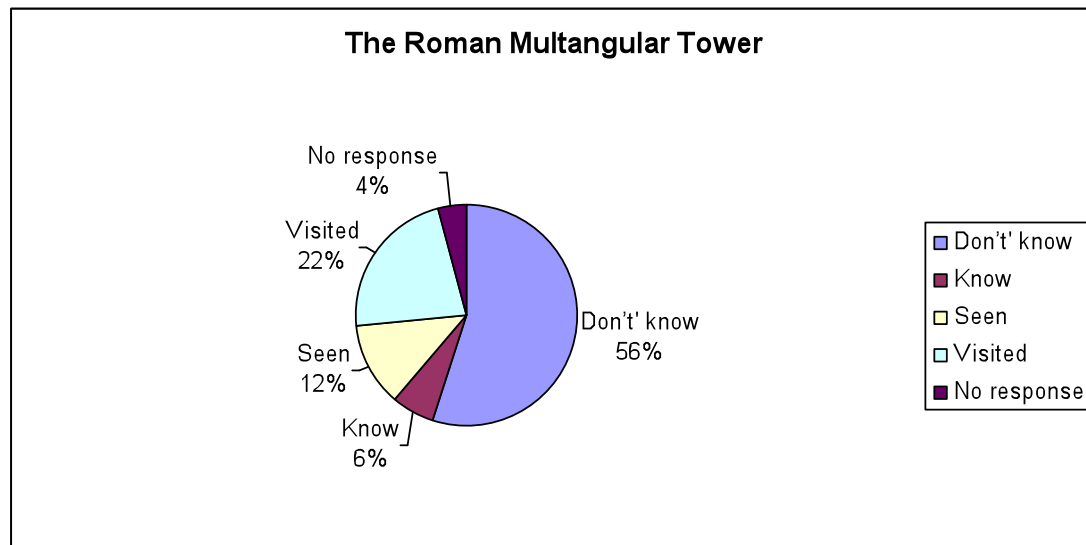
*Fig. 20: Awareness and visitation numbers for St Olave's Church.*

### 3.11 The Roman Multangular Tower

More than half of the respondents (%56) did not know what the Roman Multangular Tower was while only %22 had actually visited it. Only the overseas visitors had a high rate of visitation to this specific monument but the sample from this category is not really representative (2 out of 5). Although slightly more numerous than visitors from elsewhere in the UK (only 3 out of 35) local people who had actually visited the tower were also very low in numbers (York residents: 12 out of 38; Yorkshire residents 5 out of 21). Education played no particularly significant role in visitation



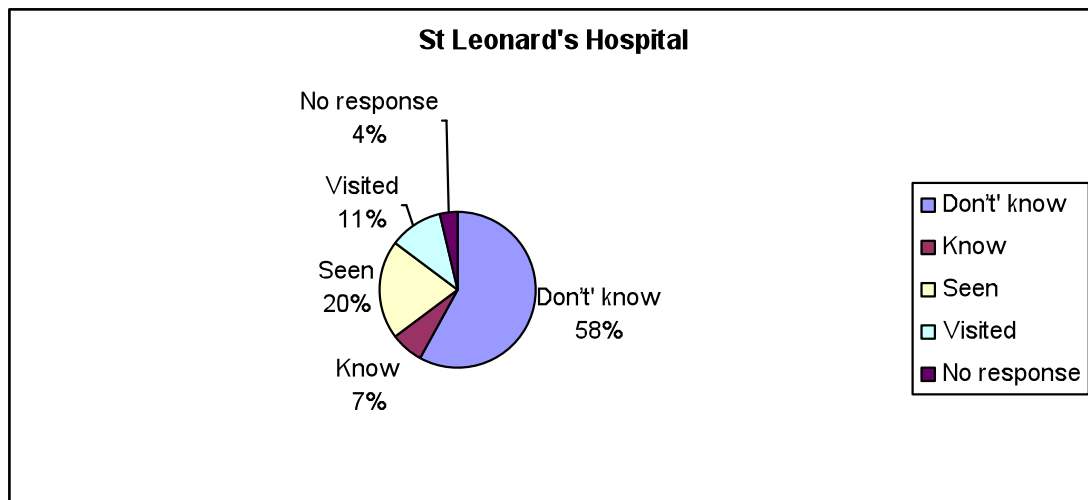
numbers while occupation, once more, seemed to be, to a smaller extent, a factor only for the higher managerial or professional jobs. It is worth noting that the name “Roman Multangular Tower” seemed to be unfamiliar with many local residents.



*Fig. 21: Awareness and visitation numbers for the Roman Multangular Tower.*

### 3.12 St Leonard's Hospital

The semi-ruined building of the St Leonard's Hospital is by far the less known (%58) heritage site within the Museum Gardens with only %11 of the respondents stating they have visited it. This could be explained partly by the fact that it is slightly isolated or less visually imposing to people entering the gardens and because people, particularly local residents, do not seem to associate the place with this specific name. Except for 10 York city residents (out of 38), only one respondent admitted to having visited St Leonard's Hospital. Surprisingly this was a UK visitor and not a resident from elsewhere in Yorkshire. The only respondents that seemed to have a clear tendency (despite the very low numbers of visitation) to visit this specific historic monument were the ones with a higher managerial or professional occupation, accounting for 6 out of 11 visitors.



*Fig. 22: Awareness and visitation numbers for the St Leonard's Hospital.*

### 3.13 The Abbey walls

The Abbey walls surrounding the Museum Gardens had been visited by almost half of the respondents (%44) of this audience research with a further %24 claiming they had seen this historical structure. At the same time only one out of five interviewees mentioned that they were not aware of the walls (%19). More than half of the visitors to the Abbey walls were residents of York (20 out of 38) with Yorkshire residents and UK visitors having slightly lower figures (8 out of 21 and 11 out of 35 respectively). Surprisingly the educational background of the respondents has not demonstrated significant differences in the visitation trends. In fact, people with “A Level/High School” and “Undergraduate” qualifications had equally high numbers of visitors (as opposed to non-visitors) to the Abbey walls (12 out of 24 and 8 out of 16 respectively). The occupational qualifications did not demonstrate to have a significant role in people's visitation tendency.

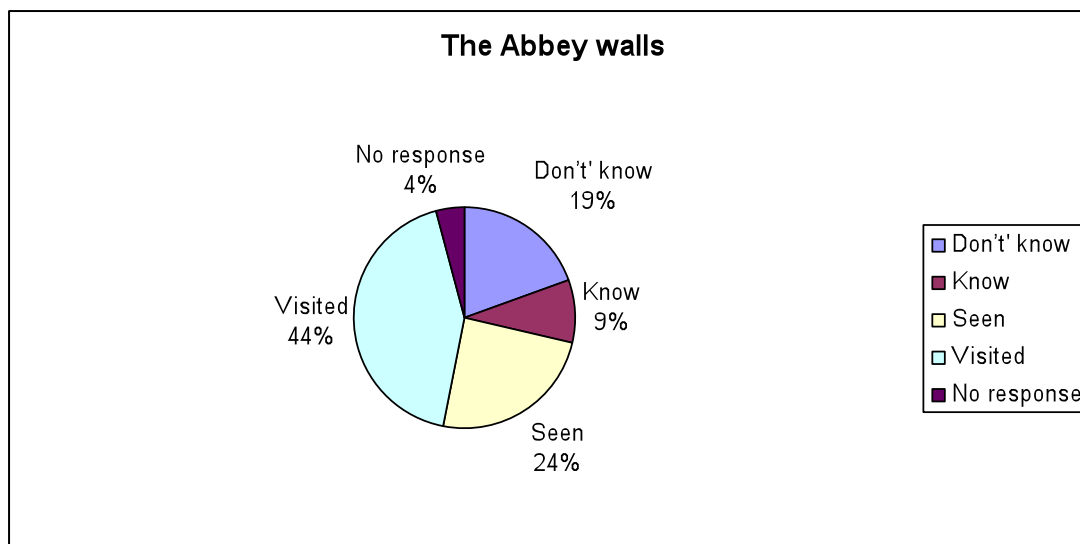


Fig. 23: Awareness and visitation numbers for the Abbey walls.

## 4. Values attributed to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens

### 4.1 Assessing public perceptions about the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens

Having provided feedback about whether they knew, had seen or visited the aforementioned 11 historic sites/places within and around the Museum Gardens the 100 respondents were asked whether these places mattered to them (Question 5 – see Appendix 1). In order to maximise the possibility of in-depth answers that reflect personal as well as local, regional, national or international values this question was followed by another one which asked what meaning do these heritage places have for them and for the city of York (in the case of local residents) or for the country or internationally (for UK and international visitors respectively) (Appendix 1).

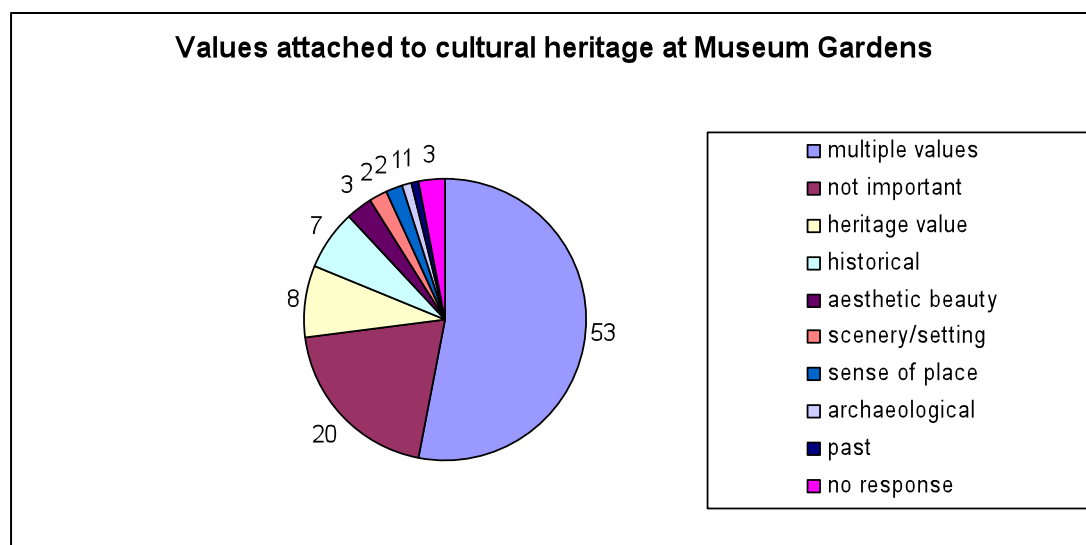
The feedback provided by the 100 interviewees will be discussed in the following sections by looking at what values were attached to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens on three levels: personal, local/regional, national/international. Not all of the respondents expanded their comments to discuss values beyond personal or local neither did some of them distinguish the three levels mentioned above (personal, local/regional, national/international). However, as with all kinds of qualitative audience research work and public engagement exercises it is only reasonable to

acknowledge that issues about meaning, importance and values can not always be easily “pigeon-holed” to fit certain clear-cut categories.

## 4.2 Personal values

### 4.2.1 Interest towards cultural heritage

At this point it is worth stressing that more than half of the respondents (%53) stated that these specific heritage places or historic sites mattered to them for more than one reason. In the same way, this cultural heritage was attributed with several layers of importance. This important outcome may confirm the widely recognised views that cultural heritage means different things to different people but can be valued for many reasons at the same time (see for example: Lowenthal 1998, 227; Graham *et al.* 2000, 1-3; Howard 2003, 1-9). Nevertheless, the multiplicity of the values attributed by the public to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens (and the city of York in general) amplifies the need to better understand audiences and underlines the importance of public engagement with the present and future management of these heritage places.



*Fig. 24: A very broad overview of the values attached to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens by the 100 respondents.*

The afore-mentioned chart is based on a very broad overview of the responses provided by the 100 interviewees. More than half of the respondents (%53) provided more than one answer as to why do the historic sites/heritage places at the Museum Gardens matter to them or what importance do they have for them personally. These

“multiple values” will be analysed more thoroughly in the next paragraphs along with the frequency and the variety of specific values mentioned by the interviewees.

Quite interestingly, 1 out of 5 respondents (%20) stated that the cultural heritage in the Museum Gardens does not matter much or is not important to them. However, it is important to clarify that after giving this initial response to Question 5 (see Appendix 1) the vast majority of these people (16 out of 20) later admitted (usually in Question 6) that they do value certain aspects of this heritage. From these respondents the majority (8 out of 16) added that the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens makes the place pretty or beautiful/aesthetically pleasing while 6 people claimed that it adds to the atmosphere (3), scenery (2) and feeling (1) of the place. One respondent admitted that there is historical value and another one that there is both historical and wider heritage value. In the end, only four interviewees (out of 20) consciously remained adamant about the fact that the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens had no personal meaning or importance to them.

The demographics of this group of 20 respondents are revealing. The vast majority of the people (16 out of 20) who answered that the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens is not important or does not matter to them were young people (all belonging to the “16-24” age group) with two belonging to the “45-54” and only one to the “25-34” and “35-44” age groups respectively. Furthermore, the vast majority of these respondents were residents of York (14 out of 20) or Yorkshire (3 out of 20) – with only 3 people being visitors from elsewhere in the UK – and had “A Level/High School” or “GCSE/Secondary” educational qualifications (8 out of 20 each). The occupation of the main income earner in the household did not seem to have any particular significance to the responses given by these 20 people as a whole. Although constituting statistically a very small sample, the demographics of the four respondents who insisted that the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens had no personal value to them are interesting. All four respondents were young (“16-24” age group) and local people (3 residents of the city of York and one from elsewhere in Yorkshire). Three of these respondents had “A Level/High School” qualifications and one “GCSE/Secondary” while it is worth noting that three of them were living in a household where the main income earner had a lower managerial or professional position.

In terms of the other responses – where one specific value was singled out as important:

- 8 people mentioned heritage value (with 2 people referring to the need to preserve, one emphasising the good state of preservation and another one stressing the fascination of preserving heritage)
- 7 people presented history or historical value as dominant
- 3 people appreciated the aesthetics and/or beauty of the cultural heritage
- 2 people highlighted the value of the setting and scenery (1 each)
- 1 person mentioned the archaeological value
- 1 person mentioned the value of the past by stating the importance of knowing about the past and knowing where one lives

#### **4.2.2 Multiple values attributed to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens**

Overall, the majority of the 100 interviewees (%39) mentioned that the heritage places within and around the Museum Gardens were important to them personally due to their historical values. Approximately 1 out of 3 respondents (%33) also emphasised the aesthetic-beauty qualities of the afore-mentioned heritage. The more general concept of heritage value featured also quite strongly (%28) in the responses with most of the interviewees linking this to the importance of preservation. Finally, almost 1 out of 10 interviews highlighted the value that the historic buildings and places have for providing a sense of place to the gardens – whether by adding to the atmosphere, the scenery or to the overall feeling of the place.

<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Historical value	39
Aesthetic-beauty value	33
Heritage value	28
Sense of place	19
Architectural value	8
Tourist value	7
Past	7
Personal memories	6
Identity	4
Scenery/setting	4
Picturesque	3
Memory	3
Craftsmanship/workmanship	3
Living history	2
Interesting	2
Impressive/awe	2
Educational value	2

Archaeological	1
Synergy between old buildings and garden landscape	1
Sense of continuity	1
Research value	1
Environmental value	1
Local pride	1
For children to enjoy	1
Everyday use value	1

Fig. 25: A break down of all the personal values attached to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens by all 100 respondents.

Here are some characteristic examples of how different interviewees have articulated the personal values imbued to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens – it is worth noting the disengagement that several young York or Yorkshire residents feel with the historic environment of the place:

Male Yorkshire resident (age group 25-34): “...*the historical architectural heritage we have, that’s definitely one of the reasons I came to York, to study history in a historical environment. I think without it, it would be a very different city; it wouldn’t be the place that it is now. Arguably I wouldn’t be living here if it was that different place*” (Interview 4, MG KF 2b).

Male visitor from North East Essex (45-54): “*Ah...they are interesting, they are heritage, they show you different building styles, different structures, and also, the most interesting thing, is how they built such fantastic structures with such little mechanisation*” (Interview 6, MG KF 4).

Young (16-24) female Yorkshire resident: “*Hmm...I wouldn’t say they matter but I wouldn’t want anything bad to happen to them. I wouldn’t want them to be taken down or been rebuilt or anything. But I think they add something nice to the Gardens*” (Interview 9, MG GA 2a).

Young (16-24) male York resident: “*It’s part of York’s history, although I don’t have a massive concern for the history of it. I know for a fact that’s part of the reason we get tourists, we need them as a community and as a society in general. Sad life that I know that (laughs)!*” (Interview 19, MG GA 8a).

Male university lecturer born in York but living in Nottinghamshire: “*...in York we’re always in tune with the past so they’re part of anything that is as it is, in many respects. And it’s also because it’s a reason that people come here which is...ehm...it’s increasingly part of York in terms of...commercially and as a tourist industry’s importance (laughs). That’s possibly a cynical view but it is part of it*

*because it wouldn't be what York is if they weren't there. But I am also very clear that it's not...that's not all York is, having lived here and, you know, I hate York to be just a living museum cause – and that's what a lot of people think it is but I know it isn't – so these buildings are also more than just historical buildings, they aren't just pretty things to look up, they are working buildings as well and part of the city in that respect, in the social sense” (Interview 40, MG GA 23).*

Male taxi driver from North East England: *“It's part of our heritage, part of our heritage that we're losing. We're losing everything else we don't want to be losing our heritage and our heritage is in our buildings and our parks” (Interview 49, MG GA 28a).*

Young (16-24) female York resident: *“Hmm...they don't matter that much they just look nice!” (Interview 53, MG GA 30a).*

Young (16-24) female Yorkshire resident: *“It wouldn't be like the tourist place it is. But, for us, cause we can kind of live here we're not like that interested in going to see them and that, so...” (Interview 64, MG GA 35b).*

Young (16-24) female York resident: *“Ehm, ... (laughs) They don't really matter, no. We don't visit them much so ...” (Interview 66, MG GA 37a).*

Young (16-24) male York resident: *“We're just used to them so we don't go to them. Once you've been, you've sort of been” (Interview 68, MG GA 37c).*

Young (16-24) male York resident: *“Ehm, well obviously they don't matter, they've got not real like thing for me, they're just here to see, rather than go in .. it's the 'spot' really” (Interview 70, MG GA 39a).*

Young (16-24) female York resident: *“I think they're interesting from an educational point of view. Also, from quite a cynical point of view they bring in a lot of tourism, and this brings in a lot of business for the city” (Interview 80, MG GA 44a).*

Young (16-24) female York resident: *“Ehm, again because we're residents we probably take them for granted a little bit, so not that much, but it's nice living in a historical setting” (Interview 99, MG GA 55a).*

Young (25-34) male Yorkshire resident: *“I think personally, you know, there is that living history link between me and the environment and the past which is quite resonant. I think there are also a lot of personal memories around here – ehm, well, I've been in York for what, nine years now. And this is one of the spaces that, you know, you come to use a lot especially if the weather is nice. It's one of the best places in York for just sitting and relaxing. So...a lot of good memories within this*



*place...Yeah, it's very lovely here! Two of my best friends got married here last summer. So it's, you know, it's a very happy place, it's that for us"* (Interview 4, MG KF 2b).

Young (16-24) male York resident: *"Ehm...certainly for some of them because I've lived quite close to here as a child so I obviously visited them as a child and I have fond memories of going to see them and something like that. So it reminds me of childhood"* (Interview 14, MG GA 5b).

#### **4.2.3 Dominant personal values according to the origin of the respondents**

Among the residents of York who provided comments about the importance of the heritage places at the Museum Gardens at a personal level (35 out of 38) the majority valued the aesthetic-beauty and historical aspects (13 and 12 responses respectively). The sense of place was mentioned by 8 (out of 35) interviewees, with most referring to the fact that the historic monuments add to the atmosphere of the place. The importance for the past was brought up by 5 respondents who valued the role of the specific heritage places for providing a link to, knowledge of and understanding of the past. For five of the York residents the heritage at the Museum Gardens was linked to personal memories as well.

<b>York residents</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Aesthetic-beauty value	13
Historical value	12
Sense of place	8
Past	5
Personal memory	5
Tourist value	4
Heritage value	4
Picturesque	3
Identity	2
Scenery/setting	2
Architectural value	2
Educational value	2
Pride (being from York)	1
Associations	1

*Fig. 26: Values attached by York residents to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a personal level.*

For the Yorkshire residents interviewed for this audience research the personal values with regard the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens were related to the wider

heritage value (8 out of 18 responses), the historical value (6 responses) and the sense of place (6 responses). The associations of these specific heritage places with memory are also worth noting. Two respondents emphasised importance for personal memories while the memory of the past and the city were mentioned by 1 respondent each.

<b>Yorkshire residents</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Heritage value	8
Historical value	6
Sense of place (adds to scenery, atmosphere)	6
Memory	4
Tourist value	3
Archaeological	2
Architectural	2
Identity	1
Picturesque	1
For children to enjoy	1
Everyday use value	1
Research value	1

*Fig. 27: Values attached by Yorkshire residents to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a personal level.*

Most of the respondents who came from elsewhere in the UK (20 out of 35) mentioned the importance that the heritage places of the Museum Gardens have for their historical value. A significant number of responses stressed the value of the places in terms of aesthetics-beauty (14 responses) as well as the general heritage value (13), the latter in most cases referring to the importance of preservation.

<b>UK visitors</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Historical value	20
Aesthetic-beauty value	14
Heritage value	13
Sense of place (nice addition to the place)	2
Architectural value	2
Craftmanship/ workmanship	2
Scenery/setting	2
Awe (impressive, makes you feel small)	2
Sense of continuity	1
Memory (of the past)	1
Environmental value	1
Interest	1

*Fig. 28: Values attached by UK visitors to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a personal level.*

The sample of interviews included very few visitors from outside the UK (1 European and 5 overseas respondents). Nevertheless, the comments provided with regard the importance of the heritage places within and surrounding the Museum Gardens on a personal level are interesting. Overseas respondents seemed to emphasise the broader heritage value (3 responses), the importance for the past (for knowing and offering a link to the past) and the value in terms of aesthetics-beauty. The only respondent stating to be a visitor from Europe seemed to emphasise for their link with the past and particularly for enlivening the past and showing how the latter shaped the present. The aesthetic-beauty value was also highlighted along with the special “synergy between the old buildings and the garden landscape”.

#### **4.2.4 Dominant personal values according to age**

Respondents belonging to the “16-24” age group seemed to favour the aesthetic-beauty values (11 out of 30) and historical values (10 out of 30) of the old and historic buildings within and surrounding the Museum Gardens. General heritage value was mentioned by 6 respondents of this age group. The same values were also dominant in the “25-34” age group but with a slightly different order of frequency: heritage value 6 responses (out of 13) and aesthetic-beauty and historical values 5 responses respectively.

Half of the respondents from the “35-44” age group (6 out of 12) stated heritage and historical values (5 responses) as important while 4 (out of 10) respondents from the “45-54” age group stressed the value of the heritage places for providing a sense of the place. The “55-64” age group clearly favoured the aesthetic-beauty values (8 out of 15) and to some extent the historical (6 responses) and wider heritage values (5 responses). Finally almost all of the interviewees belonging to the “65+” age group (11 out of 12) emphasised the historical value – it is worth noting that the only person from this group that did not opted chose to refer to the wider heritage value. The aesthetic-beauty value of the cultural heritage also fairly frequent in the responses of this particular group.

#### **4.2.5 Dominant personal values according to education qualification**

In terms of the personal values attached to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens around half of the respondents with tertiary education qualifications (%35 of

the sample) favoured the aesthetic-beauty values (18 out of 35 responses). Quite strong was also the preference to the historical value (13 responses). Although this group expressed a wide range of reasons for which the specific cultural heritage was important to them it would be, perhaps, worth mentioning that sense of the place featured stronger (9 responses) than the wider concept of heritage value (5 responses). On the other hand, almost half of the respondents with “A Level/ High School” qualifications (9 out of 20) mentioned the historical value as important to them personally while aesthetic-beauty value was also a fairly frequent answer (6 responses). At the same time, the importance of the cultural heritage for providing a sense of place (4 responses) and for reasons related to memory (4 responses) – particularly personal memories (3 responses) were almost equally popular reasons to the wider heritage value (3 responses). The aesthetic-beauty and historical values were dominant among the interviewees with “GCSE/Secondary” qualifications (7 out of 17 responses each) followed closely in popularity by the more general heritage value (5 responses). The majority of the respondents with “HNC/Technical” or trade qualifications (%16) attached heritage value (10 out of 16) while half of them also considered the historical values as important (8 responses). Finally, all respondents with no formal qualification (%3) stressed the value of the afore-mentioned places as heritage.

#### **4.2.6 Dominant personal values according to occupation**

Certain observations could be made when examining the personal values towards cultural heritage according to the occupation of the main income earner of the household to which the 100 respondents belonged. The most frequent values mentioned by the respondents of the “Higher managerial or professional” category were the historical and aesthetic-beauty values (10 out of 22 responses each) followed by the importance of the cultural heritage in terms of the sense of place (7 responses). For the respondents of the “Lower” and “Intermediate managerial or professional” category heritage value was more prominent (7 out of 18 responses) while references to the historical value and sense of place were also fairly frequent (5 responses each). No clear preference could be identified for the categories of “Smaller employers and own account workers” and “Lower supervisory and technical occupations” with aesthetic-beauty and heritage values (4 responses out of 12) as well as historical values (3 responses) being the most common.

For the vast majority of the respondents belonging to the “Semi-routine” and “Routine occupation” categories the historical value was dominant (13 out of 17 responses) followed by the general heritage value (7 responses). 5 out of 8 students stated that the cultural heritage at the Museum Gardens was important for its aesthetic-beauty qualities while more than half of the retired respondents appreciated the heritage value (6 out of 11 responses) with an emphasis also on aesthetic-beauty values (4 responses).

### 4.3 Local/regional values

Overall, %27 of the respondents mentioned that they valued the heritage places within and around the Museum Gardens for their historical importance on a local or regional level. A quarter of the interviewees also highlighted the value of these places for York’s tourism industry. Local heritage value was mentioned by %8 of the respondents whereas the economic value by %5, the latter linking this to the importance of cultural heritage for tourism.

Values	Frequency
Historical value	27
Tourist value	25
Heritage value	8
Economic value	5
Local pride	4
Identity	3
Aesthetic-beauty value	2
Everyday use	2
Easy and free public access	1
Adds to the atmosphere	1

*Fig. 29: Values attached to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.*

Most York residents (29 out of 38) emphasised that the cultural heritage at the Museum Gardens had importance for their city or for the wider Yorkshire area. The vast majority of the respondents (24 out of 29) belonged to the “16-24” age group. The most popular values by far were the tourist and historical values (19 and 15 individuals respectively). The economic value featured in 5 responses, often in close relation to the tourist value, while heritage value and importance for local pride were mentioned 3 times each. Quite interestingly almost all (18 out of 19) of the younger respondents – age group “16-24” – highlighted the importance of the cultural heritage

for tourism. Education and occupation did not seem to have any significant impact on the nature of the responses.

<b>York residents on local/regional value</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Tourist value	19
Historical value	15
Economic value	5
Heritage value	3
Local pride	3
Identity	2
Aesthetic-beauty value	1
Sense of place (Adds to the atmosphere)	1

*Fig. 30: Values attached by York residents to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.*

More than half of the Yorkshire residents (14 out of 21) stressed that the cultural heritage at the Museum Gardens had importance for their county or the city of York. The historical and tourist values (7 and 6 responses respectively) featured most prominently followed by the more general heritage value (4 responses). Most of the respondents (9 out of 14) came from households the main income earner of which had a managerial or professional job while half of them (7 out of 14) had tertiary educational qualifications. It is worth noting that 5 out of 6 interviewees who mentioned tourist value as an important factor belonged to the “16-24” age group.

<b>Yorkshire residents on local/regional value</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Historical value	7
Tourist value	6
Heritage value	4
Everyday use	2
Local pride	1

*Fig. 31: Values attached by Yorkshire residents to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.*

From the UK visitors, 7 (out of 35) stated that the cultural heritage at the Museum Gardens had importance for the city of York or Yorkshire. Among these most responses seemed to clearly favour the historical value. The educational qualifications and the occupation of the respondents had no significant impact on the answers.

<b>UK visitors on local/regional value</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Historical value	5
Heritage value	1
Aesthetic/beauty	1

Easy and free public access	1
Identity	1

Fig. 32: Values attached by UK visitors to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.

These are some of the reflections of the interviewees on the importance that the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens has for the city of York or the wider Yorkshire area:

Young (25-34) female Yorkshire resident: *“Locally, York has an extraordinary high level of medieval culture left in it, material culture, which is very lucky. I mean, obviously the abbey is in ruins but we still can know a lot about it and it is very interesting going to the museums because of all the reconstructions there. So OK, I think it is important because it reminds us of how significant York has been since, I don’t know, the Romans... I do think parks are important in cities, even a small city like York, it is really important to have these open green spaces. It is really lovely to come here, especially in the summer, and see all the families using it and that is really nice. And I think having this...the kind of...the abbey does make it a good backdrop...”* (Interview 3, MG KF 2a).

Female Yorkshire resident (age group 34-44): *“Well, I think it’s important because if you visit York, with York being a historical city anyway, if it didn’t have the buildings and things that you could actually look at and sit and just look at, the aspects of York would be lost. See, like when I was a child they didn’t have the Jorvik Centre – that was built when I was a teenager – and that, in itself, brought a bigger aspect of York to life than was, you know, when I was a child. So, I think it’s important to keep all the historical things in the public eye”* (Interview 5, MG KF 3).

Young (35-34) male York resident: *“...Everyone I know who was born in York is very proud of their heritage. So it’s nice to be able to see it”* (Interview 12, MG GA 4).

Young (16-24) male York resident: *“For the city of York I think it’s namely the tourist factor, it’s a heritage factor but for me personally it’s none of those. It’s just the memories. I’ve just got all good memories in these areas, from here up and the bowling green that works. And it makes a nice picture (laughs)!”* (Interview 19, MG GA 8a).

Female Yorkshire resident (age group 55-64): *“Ehm...they’re very important because it’s part of our history and history matters because they seem to...in the school curriculum now they seem to be forgetting about the history of England and I think it*

*must be kept going. Yeah, because this is where we all came from!”* (Interview 21, MG GA 9a).

Young (16-24) female York resident: *“Well, they bring in a lot of tourism, don’t they? Like the whole of York is obviously but this adds to the tourism so it’s therefore bringing money to the area and I think that’s obviously quite valuable, and jobs, and things like that (laughs)!”* (Interview 55, MG GA 31).

Young (16-24) male York resident: *“I think it’s a big deal for York ‘cause it attracts a lot of tourists and stuff, they come to see a historical city. It’s the most haunted city, there’s a lot of history”* (Interview 70, MG GA 39a).

#### **4.4 National importance of cultural heritage at Museum Gardens**

Very few local people, York or Yorkshire residents, stated that the heritage places at the Museum Gardens were of national importance beyond the regional level. Two young York residents (out of 38), one of which an undergraduate student, mentioned the historical value while the other referred to national identity and heritage value (particularly for preservation). On the other hand, the Yorkshire residents (6 out of 21), most of them above the age of 55, seemed to stress the importance for the national history (4 responses) with two respondents specifying for English history. Two responses mentioned importance for national heritage and one interviewee added also educational value.

<b>York and Yorkshire residents</b>	
<b>Values</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Historical value	6
Heritage value	3
National Identity	1
Educational value	1

*Fig. 33: Values attached by York and Yorkshire residents to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.*

Most visitors from elsewhere in the UK visitors (23 out of 35) identified certain reasons for which the heritage places at the Museum Gardens had national importance. Most respondents emphasised the values for the national history (14 responses) and national heritage (8 responses) although very few (3 out of 23) specified whether the values they attributed to these places were of importance to England of Britain. The age and the occupational background of the respondents did



not seem to have a particular influence on the answers – it is worth mentioning that none of the UK visitors that talked about national values were below 25 years old. However, the vast majority of the interviewees did not have tertiary educational qualifications.

UK visitors on local/regional value	
Values	Frequency
Historical value	14
Heritage value	8
British identity (origin of the British nation)	1
National pride	1
Tourist value	1
Past (knowing the past)	1
Public enjoyment	1

*Fig. 34: Values attached by UK visitors to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.*

The following quotes are comments that demonstrate a combination of national pride with recognition of national historical values as expressed by some of the respondents:

Female Yorkshire resident (age group 35-44): *“Yes, definitely! Because I think too many places now that they don’t keep the history alive as it is. I mean, apart from bringing in tourists and everything, it gives younger people, the children and everything, it gives them a better understanding of the country where they live. Because, especially with foreign holidays and everything, a lot of them go abroad and they’ve seen all these different places and they don’t actually realise that in this country we have loads of things as well”* (Interview 5, MG KF 3).

Young (25-34) male UK visitor: *“Yeah, well, I think it kind of...it gives...it kind of helps put Britain in context and just kind of show, you know, where we’ve come from as a nation all the way through from, well, Roman times, I guess. So...ehm...yeah, it’s just a...yeah, it kind of...it gives a certain depth to the country, I think. I think I remember Tony Blair saying that, when New Labour came to power, that Britain was a young country and that’s...that’s nonsense. I think that Britain is a very old country and I think that we should be kind of proud of that history that we have”* (Interview 18, MG GA 7b).

Male UK visitor (age group 35-44): *“I would say it’s important for the country rather than personally”* (Interview 24, MG GA 10b).

Young (25-34) female visitor from Lincolnshire: *“Yeah, I think people need to see, you know, the British heritage, what we have, you know, and instead of going abroad actually visit a UK resort, towns and things like that, you know”* (Interview 62, MG GA 34b).

#### **4.5 International importance of cultural heritage at Museum Gardens**

Most of the overseas visitors (3 out of 5) mentioned that the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens is important on an international level. All three respondents belonged to the “35-44” age group, had university education and came from households the main income earner of which had a managerial or professional occupation. The historical value was mentioned by two respondents while a Portuguese lady emphasised that the cultural heritage of the place was of international interest and important for public enjoyment not only for the British people.

Local people (York and Yorkshire residents) and visitors from the UK did not articulate any specific values or reasons for which the heritage places of the Museum Gardens are important internationally. Nevertheless, the strong emphasis on the significance of tourism and the flow of visitors to the city could be considered an indication of the awareness of the general worldwide interest that the historic monuments/visitor attractions of York have.

Retired female Yorkshire resident: *“Yes and it has a value of its own. I think it attracts people – well, really from all over the world, hasn’t it? So that shows in itself that it’s worth preserving, in’t it?”* (Interview 15, MG GA 6a).

Female Portuguese visitor from Canada (age group 35-44): *“I think, you know, you say quietly, a link into the past, but I think from an international perspective it’s there for everybody. I mean I’m not British, I’ve got nothing British on me but it’s still there so it’s nice to see”* (Interview 44, MG GA 25b).

## 5. Presentation of cultural heritage at the Museum

### Gardens: public views and aspirations

#### 5.1 What presentation would help you understand and appreciate what you are looking at?

When presented with Question 6 – “What meaning do these heritage places within the Museums Gardens have for you and for the country?” – %20 of the respondents clearly stated that they were satisfied. The intention of this audience research though was not to assess the level of satisfaction of the Museum Gardens visitors *per se* but rather to gain insights on potential improvements identified by the general public. Therefore, this section will focus on providing an overview of the suggestions expressed by the interviewees. The vast majority of the respondents (47 responses) suggested improvements in the existing panels, plaques and boards or the introduction of new informative material in order to offer better information about various aspects of the Museum Gardens. The second most popular suggestion (14 responses) was the provision of printed material (leaflets, maps, pamphlets etc) for information and orientation and better awareness of what exists in the area.

In addition to the other specific comments (see Fig 35) 7 interviewees mentioned that the presentation of the ruins of St Mary’s Abbey should be improved and similar comments were made for the Observatory (3 responses), the Hospitium (2 responses) and the Yorkshire Museum (2 responses). For the latter one respondent suggested that the museum entrance should be made more welcoming while another stressed that the wider audiences should be engaged.

Although these constitute exceptional examples, three respondents stated that they would rather not see any changes made in the presentation of the heritage places within the Museum Gardens. Particularly one retired lady from Hertfordshire stressed that: “*So people have to be led to discover, they have to be able to find how to discover themselves*” (Interview 27, MG GA 13a).

Suggestions for improvement of presentation	Frequency
Better signposting: panels, plaques, billboards	47
Posters, leaflets, pamphlets distributed to visitors for better orientation, guidance, information	14
Guided tours	8
Better advertisement	5
Activities/events:	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- about heritage preservation and engagement of children</li> <li>- something targeting the local people (not only tourists)</li> <li>- about the wildlife of the gardens</li> <li>- about bird-watching</li> <li>- Mystery Plays to be used for events</li> <li>- educational activities fro children</li> </ul>	
Audio devices/tours	3
Live re-enactments	3
Suggested routes	3
Improve visibility of existing plaques for trees and plants	2
Drawings of how the buildings looked like originally	2
Information on the internet	2
Attract the local people (not only tourists)	1
Bigger print on the signs (for elderly people)	1
Booklet about the trees of the gardens	1
Centre with tourist information	1
Computer graphs	1
Engagement with schools kids for better knowledge of their local history	1
Exhibitions with photographs	1
Information boards with slides and music	1
Information on restorations and possibilities to donate for up-keeping	1

*Fig. 35: Values attached by UK visitors to the cultural heritage of the Museum Gardens at a local and regional level.*

Below are some interesting and diverse comments provided by some of the respondents that reflected on the potential improvements of the presentation of the cultural heritage at the Museum Gardens:

Young (25-34) female Yorkshire resident: *“I do think...ehm...I mean, I’m lucky because I have obviously quite a specialist knowledge but it might be nice for visitors to have more sort of plaques in the abbey because there isn’t really any information provided there. And so...I mean, if you’re not kind of a specialist it can be very difficult looking around and to know what you’re looking at. So, I mean, I know that if you go into the museum there is stuff there but it would be quite nice just to have more details outside what different things were and...”* (Interview 3, MG KF 2a).

Young (25-34) male Yorkshire resident: *“I think that not just in the abbey but also the observatory, it can be really overlooked you know. Because it’s surrounded by trees, you can walk past it and never really know it’s there or it’s that it’s open or...”* (Interview 4, MG KF 2b).

Young (25-34) female Yorkshire resident: *“Yeah, I’ve never really seen any promotion for the observatory. It would be nice to may be have a bit more. And I*

*don't think that most people know what the Hospitium is. Cause I've mainly seen it just being used for weddings but I don't think that people tend to know anything about the history of it or what it's for. So it might be nice just to have some information outside, you know, so like a brief history clearly presented would be quite useful"* (Interview 3, MG KF 2a).

Young (16-24) female York resident: *"Sometimes the information about them can be hard to find. I mean, obviously I know but I think that if you were a visitor and really knew nothing you might...it's not always 100 percent obvious what they are or their significance, I suppose"* (Interview 13, MG GA 5a).

Young (16-24) male York resident: *"Personally because we're residents and we've lived all our life here, we haven't got the interest, we've grown up with these things so we don't show that much of an excitement. I don't look at these things and think "what was that?". It's just not how I am. So I don't think it would matter if they put a giant billboard saying "Read me"! I just wouldn't pay attention to it. As far as other people...I've...I mean a decent sized sign something which actually shows something...colourful images sort of thing...something to draw attention to it is what people would like to be able to see because it makes them more aware that it's there. So tourists and things would bother to notice but for residents I think it's the case, if they want to know they'll find out"* (Interview 19, MG GA 8a).

Male university lecturer born in York but living in Nottinghamshire: *"Right, I don't think it's necessary or desirable to have huge big displayed...because that does emphasise that this is just something to be looked at within a context of this being an educational part of the past or just heritage or leisure rather than being real buildings. Where if it's just a big plaque with a man next to it then you don't take it seriously as a building which is fundamentally part of the city. So I don't think it needs to have a great big extra cutter. Ehm...I think it should be there for people to try and explore but I think the information must be available. So discrete publications, leaflets available, possibly on-line information that is easily accessible...it's fine but it shouldn't be...such information shouldn't be screamed at you. Yeah. It's...I don't know how that would work but I think it's very important"* (Interview 40, MG GA 23).

Young (16-24) female Yorkshire resident: *"I don't know, I think like...if they did anything I wouldn't probably go anyway. That's quite harsh, isn't that (MG GA 35a laughs)?"* (Interview 63, MG GA 35a).

Female European visitor (45-54): *“Well some plaques wouldn’t be bad, I mean like something like, we were talking about the Observatory and I don’t know which one that is and I didn’t go like close enough, and actually not everything is marked on the city map actually, not all the ruins or buildings actually are designated as what they are on the city map so just looking at the map I wouldn’t of come specifically to see certain buildings”* (Interview 82, MA GA 45).

Young (16-24) male Yorkshire resident: *“Ehm, well there are already notice boards up, I think if there was display points on the path showing a map of the park, and pinpointing what each thing is and how to get to it that would be good because you actually have got to walk up to the buildings to see what they are, so I think a general map at the entrance of the park showing where everything is would help a lot. And a, maybe build a visitor centre, like a small tourist information where you could walk in and get leaflets and ask questions, rather than, because you have to make your own way round at the moment”* (Interview 95, MG GA 53a).

## **5.2 What more would you like to learn about the Museum Gardens?**

The majority of the 100 interviewees (%59) responded that they would like to learn more about the Museum Gardens – as opposed to %31 who did not. As a result, one quarter of the respondents (%25) provided specific comments (e.g. information about a specific monument or aspect of the place), %16 stated that they wanted to know more about the history of the place while %9 mentioned that they wanted to have more general information. It is worth mentioning that 4 comments focused specifically on aspects of the ruins of St Mary’s Abbey (see also Fig. 37).

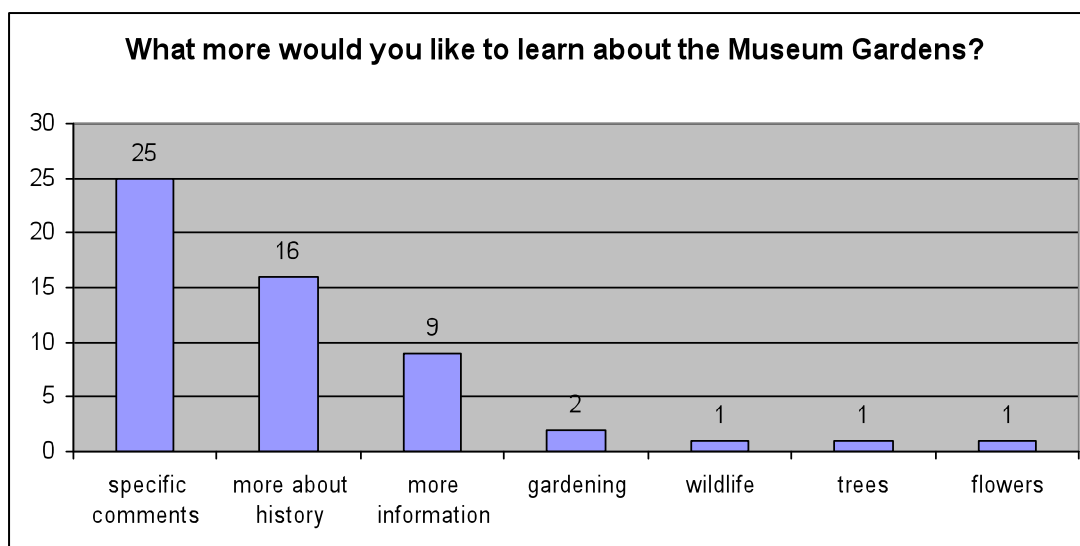


Fig. 36: An overview of the responses to the question: “What more would you like to learn about the Museum Gardens?”.

<b>“What more would you like to learn about the Museum Gardens?”: some comments</b>
How did the walls disintegrate; Information about the fighting, the Romans, the Vikings
How long has this place been here?
How the place originally looked like
More information about the pre-Roman period, Why certain buildings are ruined and others not?
More information or events with regard the Time Team excavation at the Museum Gardens
More information about St Mary's Abbey: what is it and why is it there? who lived there, how and why, why is it in ruins?
More information about the ruined walls
History of museum and observatory
The development of the place through the years
The original purpose and use of the buildings
Use and chronology of buildings
How can one visit the observatory
What are the plans for the future of this place?
Who owns the gardens?
Who takes care of the Museum Gardens?
Why certain buildings are ruined and others not?
Who designed the gardens?
How are the buildings used now and how could they be incorporated in events and activities

Fig. 37: Some specific comments provided by respondents to the question: “What more would you like to learn about the Museum Gardens?”.

The following examples are illustrative of the types of answers people were inspired to provide when asked about what more they would like to learn about the Museum Gardens:

Young (25-34) female Yorkshire resident: *“I never thought of it, I need to look into that! I don’t know! It might be a nice thing to know a bit about the Hospitium, would be good for general knowledge. Cause I think again most people, if I was thinking of a general sort of sense, people just see it as a sort of background and you don’t really see people going into it so it might be nice to have some more information provided about that. And I know that there are walks that happen around here but I don’t think that they are really as advertised as they could be perhaps. So you give us a sign at the front but it might be nice if, I don’t know, there was more advertising than that because I think that’s a good resource”* (Interview 3, MG KF 2a).

Young (16-24) male York resident: *“Probably more of its significance and history cause, I mean, I’ve seen it all my life and yet most of the things which I look at but I don’t really know anything about. I see it everyday and say it’s nice and pretty but I don’t know what it is there for”* (Interview 14, MG GA 5b).

Male undergraduate student living in York: *“Yeah, the same, it’s quite hidden away. You wouldn’t...you could go around in the centre like we had...we’ve lived here for a year but we didn’t know it was this big or this nice before. It could be advertised more or signs in the city”* (Interview 42, MG GA 24b).

Young (16-24) female York resident: *“I’ve only ever been to the observatory once of a school trip, but I’ve never like really seen it open but I don’t know what it is, or whether you can go in it, but I’ve never seen it open”* (Interview 81, MG GA 44b).

## REFERENCES

- Graham *et al.* 2000: Graham, B., Ashworth, G. J. and Tunbridge, J. E., 2000. *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture & Economy*. London: Arnold Publishers.
- Howard, P., 2003. *Heritage: Management, Interpretation, Identity*. London and New York Continuum.
- Lowenthal, D., 1998. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## APPENDICES

### **Appendix 1: Questionnaire employed for the audience research**

**Would you call yourself a resident or a visitor? (Tick boxes below)**



Resident of York	
Yorkshire	
UK	
Outside the UK	

- 1) Why are you here in the Museum Gardens today?
- 2) What meaning/importance does this public space have for you?
- 3) Is the setting, with the historic buildings, your main reason or part of your reason for being here?
- 4) Could you tell me what of the following places: a) do you know?; b) have you seen?; c) have you visited? (Tick boxes below)

	Know	Seen	Visited		Know	Seen	Visited
Toilets by the river				Ruins of St Mary's Abbey			
York Art gallery (out front)				King's Manor			
Observatory (in the gardens)				St Olave's Church			
Fragments of stones in the gardens				Roman Multangular Tower			
Yorkshire Museum				St Leonard's Hospital			
The Hospitium				Abbey walls			

- 5) How do these old buildings matter to you?

[Local residents ONLY] 6a) What meaning do these heritage places within the Museums Gardens have for you and for the city of York?

[Visitors ONLY] 6b) What meaning do these heritage places within the Museums Gardens have for you and for the country?

- 7) What presentation for the heritage places within the Museum Gardens would help you understand or appreciate what you are looking at?

- 8) What more would you like to learn about here?

**Finally, just for our records, in a completely anonymous way, can you point to the following as they apply to you:**

i) Gender:  
MALE

FEMALE

ii) Broad Age Range

Under 16    16-24    25-34    35-44    45-54    55-64    65+

iii) Highest Educational Qualification:

No formal qualification	
GCSE/Secondary	
A Level/High school	
Undergraduate	
Postgraduate	
HNC/ Technical qualification	
Trade qualification	

iv) What is the occupation of the main income earner in your household?

v) And how would you define your ethnicity?