



February 2021

Dear Annual Badgeholder,

Thank you for your continued support of York Racecourse.

As the month turns and the track has its first cut, I wanted to give you an update, as best we understand it.

It is encouraging for everyone that recent scientific data and the ongoing vaccination programme give cause for genuine optimism for the summer ahead. The "Government roadmap" as announced by the Prime Minister on Monday 22nd February, gives hope that we might see a lifting on the restrictions on social contact over the months ahead and indeed the return of our most loyal supporters.

Though positive in overall direction, there are details still to be clarified regarding specific racedays and what protocols may be in place on any given date. More detail is expected from Government over the weeks and months ahead. Thank you in advance for your patience, whilst we as a sport and venue await that detailed further guidance, to be able to give a more detailed response.

As the Welcome to Yorkshire Ebor Festival (Wednesday 18th to Saturday 21st August) and four racedays in July (Friday 9th, Saturday 10th, Friday evening 23rd and Saturday 24th) are all due to be held later than the current date of Step 4 (indicated by the Prime Minister as being no earlier than Monday 21st June), we feel positive about welcoming you for these and any subsequent racedays.

Three of our racedays (Saturday 22nd May, Friday 11th and Saturday 12th June) are scheduled to operate during the current Step 3 dates, which will not be sooner than Monday 17th May. The roadmap indicates we may be able to welcome a limited crowd. Existing Annual Badgeholders would be our priority, for these three dates, although the final capacity and operational protocols are yet to be confirmed.

The Dante Festival (Wednesday 12th to Friday 14th May), is indicated to operate under Step 2 requirements of the roadmap, meaning it is most likely to be staged "behind closed doors". Were that to be the case, we would hope to further count on your support by offering a further credit towards your 2022 subscription. As during last season, we would provide a complimentary day pass for Racing TV to follow all the action, the first four races each day are scheduled for ITV4 coverage.

We have been asked whether there might be an option to delay the Dante Festival by a week, though we both share and applaud the enthusiasm of this request, sadly it would not be possible. As you'd appreciate, in the racing world, the very quality of the runners at Dante sees them progress to the Classics and Royal Ascot, so the wider season would need to be rescheduled. There also remains the risk, as clearly articulated by the Prime Minister, that the dates of the respective steps might yet slip, so a later Dante Festival could still find itself under step 2 protocols.

For those of you who may also be supporters in your professional lives, please note that hospitality enquiries for racedays including Saturday 22nd May and dates thereafter, can be made to [events@yorkracecoursehospitality.co.uk](mailto:events@yorkracecoursehospitality.co.uk)

The team at York continue to plan for a range of scenarios in response to the hoped-for change in circumstances set out in the roadmap. We remain in contact with the appropriate bodies, both nationally and locally, to best inform these plans.

Consequently, though the formal 2021 racedays are now confirmed after the recent publication of the national fixture list by the British Horseracing Authority, general admission is yet to go on sale.

Turning to an update on that fixture list, York Racecourse is scheduled once again for an eighteen-day season, with the pattern of the majority of those dates, familiar to you. The one change to recent years, sees Saturday 26th June as no longer a York raceday, however Friday 24th September becomes a York raceday.

This switch is part of the wider response of racing to the Covid-19 pandemic. The British Horseracing Authority is understandably keen to reduce the number of journeys made by jockeys and others. Since the successful resumption of racing last June, this has meant only one meeting per day, per jockey. Looking ahead to summer 2021, it has been decided to reduce the strain on the riders by reducing the number of fixtures on some Saturdays. Consequently, York is no longer scheduled to stage a fixture on Saturday 26th June, a situation that will be replicated at other tracks over those busiest weekends. As the world may look brighter again by early autumn, the new raceday on Friday 24th September might hold more appeal.

If you would like to buy a gift voucher ahead of our 2021 season please [click here](#).

**The racedays for 2021 are as below;**

**Dante Festival:** Wednesday 12th, Thursday 13th, Friday 14th May

**First Saturday:** Saturday 22nd May

**50th Macmillan Charity Meeting:** Friday 11th & Saturday 12th June

**John Smith's Cup Meeting:** Friday 9th & Saturday 10th July

**Music Showcase Weekend:** Friday (e) 23rd & Saturday 24th July

**Welcome to Yorkshire Ebor Festival:** Wednesday 18th, Thursday 19th, Friday 20th & Saturday 21st August

**Family Day:** Sunday 5th September

**William Hill Raceday:** Friday 24th September

**Finale Meeting:** Friday 8th & Saturday 9th October

To meet with Government requirements, the Racecourse Office is currently working at reduced capacity. Some members of the team, including Debbie Shirt, have access to email and phone messages, remotely. Thank you in advance for your patience with regard to any delayed response.

Our best wishes for the weeks ahead, we look forward to seeing you before too long.

**James Brennan**

Head of Sponsorship and Marketing