**STEP OFF THE HAMSTER WHEEL & EXPLORETop of Form**

**Visit Ripon and the Skell Valley**

**Please see the bottom of this sheet for ideas on how to use this information.**

Step off the hamster wheel of life: explore Ripon, full of special treasures. Delight in awe-inspiringly beautiful and ancient buildings, quirky details and places to visit, all set in the lush green frame of Skell Valley and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Ripon has been welcoming visitors since 672 when Saint Wilfrid laid the foundations for what became today’s impressive Cathedral. The tapestry kneelers inside Ripon Cathedral bring Ripon 1350 years of history to life. Make sure you visit the ancient crypt, look up at the magnificent medieval screen, and search for the misericords said to have inspired *Alice in Wonderland*.

Nearby Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal are stunningly beautiful and historically very significant (hence their UNESCO World Heritage Status). You can still experience the peace and tranquillity that attracted the original monks, almost 900 years ago.

These layers of history make Ripon a comforting place to visit: the city is also full of contemporary businesses run by independent people, proud of where they live.

At the heart of Yorkshire’s smallest city is the cobbled market square. It was described by Defoe as ‘*the finest and most beautiful square… of its kind in England’* and is surrounded by places to shop, eat and drink.

You’ll immediately notice the strikingly tall Obelisk, one of many legacies left by John Aislabie. His other important contributions to the local area include Studley Royal Water Gardens, and the folly-filled woods at Hackfall.

The Obelisk is the starting point for Ripon’s famous nightly tradition: setting of the watch by the Ripon Hornblower every night at 9.00 pm.

Just off the square you’ll find three fascinating museums that tell the story of less fortunate times, prisoners and poverty. Discover what it was like to be truly poor at the Workhouse Museum and Garden. Learn about crime and punishment at the Prison & Police Museum, where children can dress up or be a detective. You can even stand in the dock at the Courthouse and imagine waiting for a guilty or innocent verdict.

Ripon’s neighbouring attractions are grander, telling a very different tale. Newby Hall (Yorkshire Attraction of the Year 2022) showcases the creativity and skill of Sir Christopher Wren, Robert Adam and Chippendale. Cares melt away in the gorgeous gardens, or as you enjoy the sculptures. Children can run off their energy in the excellent playground, and enjoy a ride in a pedal boat or on the miniature railway.

Medieval Markenfield Hall describes itself as ‘the loveliest place you’ve never heard of’. Join one of the Tiny Tours with afternoon tea and you’ll agree – it’s a magical, romantic place to visit, and even has a moat!

The Himalayan Garden at Grewelthorpe is another unexpected pleasure – the 20 acre gardens will transport you to foreign climes. The beautiful woodland garden is an ever-evolving setting for their internationally-recognised collection of sculptures.

As the signs to Ripon proudly suggest, it’s well worth planning to ‘*stay awhile amid its ancient charms*’.

**HOW TO USE THIS INFORMATION**

We’d love you to use this information, or any of the other sections, in your own promotional activity – on your website, mailings or social media.

You can edit it and change it as much as you want.

You can use all of it, or just small snippets.

You’re welcome to add your own angles, and customise the info.

This is just a starting point.

We’ve created this information to encourage more collaborations between businesses.

For example, if you run a visitor attraction you might talk about other activities in the area to show there’s a critical mass of things to do and Ripon is worth the journey.

Accommodation providers might use some of this information to talk about their location and encourage longer stays.

See the other information on [www.tourismknowhow.com/Ripon](https://www.tourismknowhow.com/ripon).