



## **Flooding in the JORVIK Viking Centre**

28/12/2015

The severe flooding in York has caused major flooding to the city's JORVIK Viking Centre in Coppergate.

The visitor attraction is located in a basement below the Coppergate Shopping Centre. The world-famous ride around a recreation of the Viking-age street of Coppergate, is under around 50cm of water.

"When we first became aware of water leaking into the basement, we immediately transported all of the historic artefacts within JORVIK up to the first floor, and they have now been moved off-site to a safe location. However, around half of the attraction is currently submerged, with water under the raised floor upon which the remainder sits," comments Sarah Maltby, director of attractions for York Archaeological Trust. "We are devastated by the scale of the water incursion in what, until now had been a watertight basement."

The team from York Archaeological Trust, owners of the JORVIK Viking Centre, is already implementing plans to get the water pumped out and repairs complete as soon as possible.

The other attractions owned and managed by the JORVIK Group in York remain open to the public during this period and plans are still underway for the 32nd Viking Festival in February. The centre will remain closed until further notice.

**ENDS**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

*Under embargo until 06:00am on Tuesday 9 February 2016*

### **PLANS FOR JORVIK'S RE LAUNCH WITH CAMPAIGN CANUTE**

**£2 Million target to reimagine Viking-age York**

On the eve of the 32<sup>nd</sup> JORVIK Viking Festival, the owners of JORVIK Viking Centre, York Archaeological Trust, have launched a large-scale fundraising campaign to re-imagine the world famous attraction, and announced three major exhibitions for the city to celebrate its Norse heritage whilst the attraction is being rebuilt.

York Archaeological Trust is looking to raise £2 million to recreate the Viking city for the next generation of visitors, building on its unprecedented success from the last 32 years. This new visualisation is part of the overall project to rebuild the centre over the forthcoming year.

“Over the last 32 years, we’ve had three major refurbishments and as our team of archaeologists and specialists have learned more about the Vikings in York, we’ve updated to incorporate the latest research. Whilst we could simply replicate the pre-flood displays, our mission to educate in an accessible way drives us to plan how we can do it even better than before – and to do this, we will need to raise a significant sum of money,” comments chief executive, David Jennings. “Whilst this is an ambitious plan for an independent charity, we have 18 million ambassadors for the JORVIK experience, and the high profile nature of the flooding means that people around the world are aware of our plight.”

The Trust’s aim is to have the JORVIK Viking Centre open for business by February 2017 at the latest. This gives a full 12 months of fundraising, launching with this year’s JORVIK Viking Festival, which begins on 15 February. “We know how important JORVIK and the Vikings are to the city, which is why we’re continuing to host Europe’s largest Viking festival, and hopefully welcome another 40,000 people into the city, particularly as York’s experienced a very quiet January,” comments York Archaeological Trust’s director of attractions, Sarah Maltby. “Our theme for this year’s festival is King Canute, who took the English throne 1000 years ago, and given that he is probably best known

for the story where he commanded the waves to turn back, we're using his name to launch our fundraising initiative - Campaign Canute – as part of the Festival.”

Facing the prospect of York having a Viking-free year while work continues to reopen the attraction, the JORVIK team has been working with other major players in the city to ensure that tourists and education visitors alike can encounter their Viking heritage during 2016, with aspects from the centre's exhibitions going on display at key venues around York. “We are delighted to be partnering with the York Theatre Royal and in talks with two other central venues to host three Viking exhibitions, the first of which will open in April and the other two in time for the summer,” says Sarah. “JORVIK Viking Centre was created because we wanted as many people as possible to see the world-class artefacts and understand the story of the Vikings in York, and we intend to carry on doing this even while we rebuild JORVIK.”

An exhibition, planned before the floods, will continue to visit locations including Shrewsbury, Barnsley and the Isle of Man during the year as part of The JORVIK Group's touring exhibition programme.

Even before the launch of Campaign Canute, supporters have been offering help and donations to the cause, with £4500 donated already. Anyone wishing to donate to #CampaignCanute can do so at [www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk](http://www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk), or at any of the JORVIK Groups other attractions – DIG, Barley Hall, the Richard III Experience at Monkbar or the Henry VII Experience at Micklegate.

More information on the JORVIK Viking Festival, which runs from 15 – 21 February 2016, can be found at [www.jorvik-viking-festival.co.uk](http://www.jorvik-viking-festival.co.uk). Several of the major events are already sold out, with the last remaining tickets for the grand fiery finale on Saturday 20 February now available.

ENDS

**Notes to editors:**

JORVIK Viking Centre closed on the 27<sup>th</sup> December 2015, when water from the flooded River Foss penetrated the building, resulting in up to a metre of water in some parts of the recreation of Viking-age York. Pictures from the flooding were broadcast around the world, with messages of support coming from all corners of the globe.

All of the artefacts from the Viking Centre were recovered to a safe and secure location before the main incursion of the water.

York Archaeological Trust is currently working with its insurers to determine the process for restoration of the attraction and to establish a timescale for relaunch.

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