



Friends of York Walls secures National Lottery support for festival

The Friends of York Walls have received a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £10,000 to share the heritage of York Walls this year. The money will be used to run an enhanced version of the York Walls Festival, this year on 10th/11th August, and also fund the creation of a family and a school pack about the walls, create a dedicated website for the Festival, improve visitor information and displays, and provide a programme of expert talks and volunteer training leading up to and following on from the Festival itself.

Supported through the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the project will enable local people and visitors to York to discover more about the history of the Walls. They will have the opportunity to walk the Walls with well-informed guides, or to walk round under their own steam but have the experience enhanced through information packs. There will also be a series of heritage-related talks in the run-up to York Walls Festival.

Various landmarks around the Walls will be given additional prominence during the Festival, for example, Fishergate Postern Tower will have a display of the findings of the archaeological dig which took place under its floor just before Christmas as part of bringing electricity into the building. Also Baile Hill, a less well-known feature of the walls, will be the focus of new visitor information and its neighbouring wall features highlighted. There will also be community benefits in the form of enhanced events during the Festival, for example a community food event at the Red Tower on the Saturday.

There will be activity packs for schools, and interested members of the public will be able to attend workshops on searching archives, understanding the technical properties of the stone used for the walls, and how we can enhance the ecological value of the ramparts to pollinators and other wildlife.

Quotes

Glen McGowan, Chairman of the Friends of York Walls and himself a practising archaeologist in York, said: "We have been given a terrific opportunity by National Lottery Heritage Fund to give real momentum to the York Walls Festival this year, to the benefit of both the people of York and to visitors. Needless to say, I am delighted."



John Oxley, York City Archaeologist, said: “Well done the Friends of York Walls and thanks to the National Lottery players. York’s Historic Walls are a jewel in the crown of the city and the more people can get the bug of cherishing them and enjoying them the better.”

Notes to editors

About the Friends of York Walls

The Friends of York Walls is a charity formed to educate the public in the history of the city walls and encourage people to utilise them as an amenity. It is run entirely by volunteers and depends on donations to maintain itself. In 2018 the Friends launched the first ‘York Walls Festival’, which was successful in attracting new visitors and raising the profile of the walls in the eyes of the public. This year, thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Festival will be a much more substantial event, over two days instead of one, and offering the public a rich programme of information, activities and guidance.

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **Inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK’s heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. www.heritagefund.org.uk.

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Further information

For further information, images and interviews please contact Martin Hetherington at Friends of York Walls on 07403 75517 or yorkwallsfestival@gmail.com