

York Walls Festival 2019 – A review

The second York Walls Festival took place on August 10th & 11th 2019 at venues across the city centre. There were also talks held in the lead-up to the festival in July. This review contains many photos; those marked (LO) are by Lewis Outing, all others are by the festival team. The festival was supported by a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant.



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|---|---|
| Thanks to: | Festival Information Point |
|  | Volunteers from Friends of York Walls manned an information point on both days of the festival. The windy weather on Saturday meant we had to relocate to the foyer of Explore York, and we were thankful they could accommodate us. On Sunday we were back in our planned position in Museum Gardens with a sturdier gazebo. Thanks to York Museums Trust for having us, and also letting us publicise the festival during the Roman Festival earlier in the summer. |
| York Museums Trust | |



Visitors loved the new map

Even owls became wiser about the walls!

L to R: Holly & Leo at the gazebo on Sunday; Martin on the phone; Bill guiding visitors





Carolyn with visitors stamping their explorer trails. See page 24 for more details of the map, activity booklet and explorer trail that were produced for the festival.



Inside the library on Saturday



A family plan their day. An A1 size version of the map and programme was on display.



Red Tower

It was a busy weekend of activities over on Foss Islands Road. The Saturday saw a community BBQ, with Lord Mayor Janet Looker in attendance and a goat stew prepared by Mariama, a Sierra Leonian local resident. Not even a flying gazebo could dampen the spirits. The tower, which dates to 1490, held its first music and performance art event on the Sunday, thanks to Sharpstick Productions. See p20 for the films shown here.

Visitors: 498



The BBQ was prepared by York Nurturing Community



(LO)

People tucking in to the tasty offerings on Saturday afternoon



Lord Mayor Janet Looker speaks to the crowd at Red Tower. [Photo LO]



Time for a cuppa



Visitors and locals fill their plates



Mariama (far right) and friends at Red Tower. [Photo LO]



The goat stew went down well. It is a traditional West African dish.



Above: the moment the gazebo came down on the Saturday [photo : LO].

Right: Bill and Holly to the rescue! No-one was hurt.

Below: willing volunteers made sure nothing else blew away!

L to R: Bill, Mike, Rebecca





Lizze, Baz & Claire – they brought the words and music of Curious Alice to Red Tower to close the festival.

sharpstick films



Visitors: 1,145

Fishergate Postern Tower

Volunteers gathered on the Thursday before the festival to ensure all was spick and span. Saturday saw the unveiling of the new display on the second floor, showcasing the finds from the excavation the previous winter by York Archaeological Trust. On the first floor there was a book stall by Fox Lane Books. The ground floor hosted 'Rot or Not' and the top floor 'On the Scent'. Visitor numbers across the weekend were the highest ever at Fishergate Postern Tower.



Wendy & Ruth litter-picking outside



Richard & Sally sweeping the top floor



Ground Floor crowds at the tower



Above: a family discusses whether objects rot or not



Right: there were around 25 objects to classify into columns for 'rot', 'not' and 'maybe'. Sometimes it is hard to say what will survive the passing of time and what won't



The first floor hosted a bookstall by Fox Lane Books, with a wide range of books for adults and children. The owner Kirstie is pictured.





January 2019 saw mains electricity connected to Fishergate Postern Tower for the first time. In the weeks before this happened, York Archaeological Trust (YAT) led a community excavation of the ground floor, involving several FOYW volunteers. For the York Walls Festival, FOYW, YAT and local designer Dick Raines worked to produce a new display to tell the story of what was found. The NLHF grant helped towards this new addition to the second floor. YAT archaeologist Arran Johnson, who led the dig, was on hand to show visitors the finds, including a 400-year-old ivory comb.



A visitor reads about the dig [LO]



Bill discusses what he found at Fishergate Postern Tower



Arran Johnson (YAT) with a handling collection. The Friends of York Walls are grateful to Arran for giving up 12 hours of his time over festival weekend to show the public finds from the Fishergate Postern Tower excavation.

During festival weekend we surveyed visitors to find out what they thought. You can read some of this feedback on page 35. Our interns from York St John University, Holly & Rebecca, helped design the surveys. You can read more about how they helped the festival take shape on page 30.



Holly with our online survey



Hooked in by Bill, a visitor completes a survey with Holly



Volunteer Steve on the top floor, explaining 'On the Scent' to visitors. Nine herbs and spices used in medieval times were displayed, with info on their uses



Crowds on the top floor

explore

Libraries and Archives

Visitors: 142 (tile-making) + 36 (Found Fiction)

Explore York

Thanks to Laura, Wendy and the team at the main library, families took advantage of the chance to make a tile based on the city's heritage. They also hosted our info point on the Saturday (see page 4).

Steve from Found Fiction brought two story-writing activities to the festival. The writing desk saw a story build line-by-line, while the 'Writing's on the Wall' board encouraged people to complete sentences using post-its.



Wendy sizes up the venue

Young artists getting creative with the tile paint



A festival review from Found Fiction is online at <https://foundfiction.org/events/writings-on-the-wall/>

explore

Libraries and Archives

Attendees: 25 (talk at Explore + 46 (talks at King's Manor)



Pre-festival talks

During July 2019 talks about York's heritage were held in the run-up to the York Walls Festival. July 9th saw City of York Council archaeologist John Oxley and chair of the World Heritage bid steering committee Janet Hopton talk about previous work to join the UNESCO list and current work to get on the UK's tentative list of sites for inclusion in future.

July 27th saw Barry Crump of the University of York's Centre for Lifelong Learning give two talks on what the walls meant to the city in the medieval period. A great selection of images helped Barry cover the City Walls, the walls of the abbey, and the castle walls too.



For notes on what Janet and John spoke about in their talk on World Heritage, please visit:

<http://yorkwallsfestival.org/walls-weekly-6> and scroll down through the blog.

Above: John (L) & Janet (R) listen as Bill discusses a point.

Left: John on medieval York



A review of Barry's talk by festival intern Rebecca is available here. Scroll to the end of the blog:

<http://yorkwallsfestival.org/walls-weekly-8>

Above: Bill introduces Barry

Left: Barry talks about the RCHME map of York's defences. The last major work on York's walls dates to 1972.

Below: Both talks were well attended. The Q&A sessions at the end lasted 30 minutes.



Attendees: 25

Red Brick Treasures walk, Ian Tempest

Red Tower stalwart Ian Tempest led a walk through York on the Saturday afternoon of the festival. The group had the worst of the weather, but those who made it learned much about some of York's built heritage.

Below: the poster for Ian's walk



Walkers gather in Exhibition Square at the start



YORK'S RED BRICK TREASURES SATURDAY 10 AUGUST, 2.00pm START OUTSIDE THE KING'S MANOR

A free walking tour which celebrates a number of York's most important red brick buildings, and the city's history

Starting at Kings Manor at 2.00 pm the tour takes in Duncombe Place, Deans Park and a stretch of the city walls from Monk Bar to Layerthorpe. The tour concludes at the Red Tower on Foss Islands Road, and highlights some of York's prominent red-brick houses, religious buildings, guild halls, offices and hotels and their history.

www.yorkwallsfestival.org





Ebor Morris Dancers

The Sunday lunchtime of the festival saw the Ebor Morris dance at both Walmgate Bar and Fishergate Bar along the southern section of York's walls.

Spectators: 30



The men of the Ebor Morris dance in front of York's Walls, by Walmgate Bar [LO]



Mid-air dancers

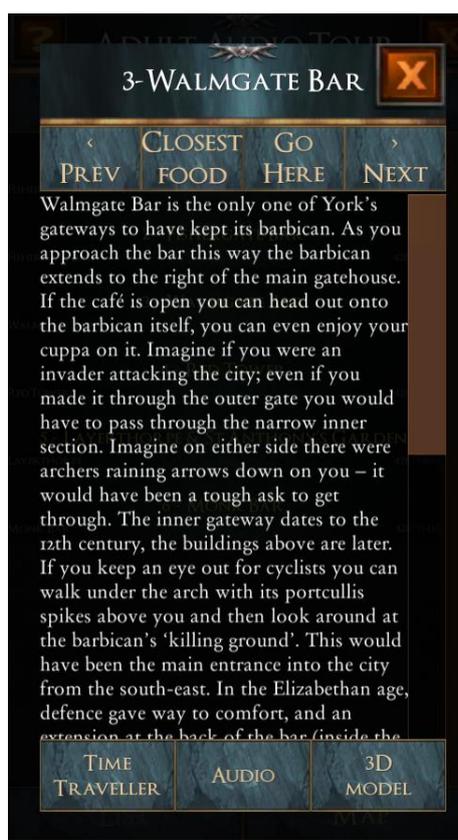


The group in front of Walmgate Bar [LO]

York Walls Festival App

In the six months leading up to the festival we worked with Yorgame to develop an App for use by walls walkers. It contains features on 12 locations along the walls, split into two sections. There is text to read or listen to at each point, and most locations also have a photo-slider that takes you back from the present day to show you an indication of how things would have looked in medieval times. Finally, there is a 3D flyover of the sites, and users can zoom in-and-out as they circle around the models.

Around 150 users downloaded the App over the festival weekend, and it remains available at the links below.



Far left: home screen

Left: Text for Walmgate Bar section of trail

Top right: Micklegate Bar 3D flyover

Centre right: Walmgate Bar photo slider

Download links

Google Play:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.yorgame.yorkwallsfestival2019>

App Store (iPhone):

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/york-walls-festival/id1462419922>

sharpstick films

The Walls in 14 minutes

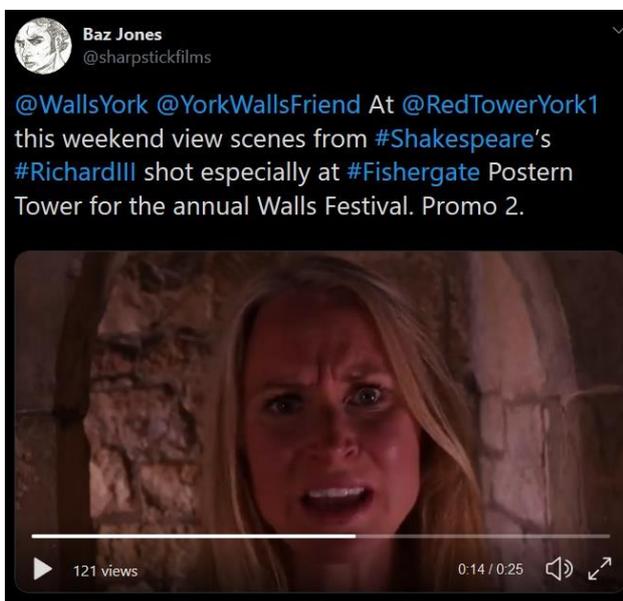
Scenes from Richard III

Displayed at Red Tower during the festival

Two short films were produced for York Walls Festival 2019, and shown at Red Tower over the weekend. Both are on YouTube and can be viewed at the links below.

The first film is a full circuit of the City Walls, beginning near Lendal Bridge and heading clockwise via Bootham Bar, Monk Bar, Walmgate Bar and Micklegate Bar to show the key points of interest. Filmed without commentary, it provides a visual record of how the walls looked in summer 2019.

The second film is a series of six excerpts from Shakespeare's Richard III, some of which were filmed at Fishergate Postern Tower. Richard's short reign (1483-85) included many key events in York, and the medieval walls make a great backdrop to the clips.



A screengrab from Twitter (@sharpstickfilms) showing Kate Hampson in the Richard III scenes

Festival visitors at Red Tower take a breather and watch the walls video

Link to Richard III video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f12Cx47Be8>

Link to Walls in 14 minutes video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZxJndICeQQ>



River Foss Society (Stall on Foss Islands Rd)

Visitors: 260

Volunteers from the River Foss Society manned a gazebo on both days of the festival, informing visitors about the history of the area where there was never a need for a wall – the King’s Fishpond. The railings along the Foss showed off five new display panels, created using NLHF money. There was lots of info about the river in the gazebo, and children were able to have a go at sampling the water.



The gazebo withstood Saturday’s rain better than most. Here are some festival visitors learning about the river.



Gazebo boards



RFS volunteers plus Leo and Rebecca

goodorganisation

Good Organisation – walks & postcards

This local charity works with people affected by homelessness. In spring 2019 they started walks around York, led by guides trained by the charity. FOYW volunteer Simon helped train Gavin (pictured below in yellow) to lead a walk around Museum Gardens and Exhibition Square. This ran twice on Saturday and twice on Sunday. Many children enjoyed the walk.

Attendees: 31

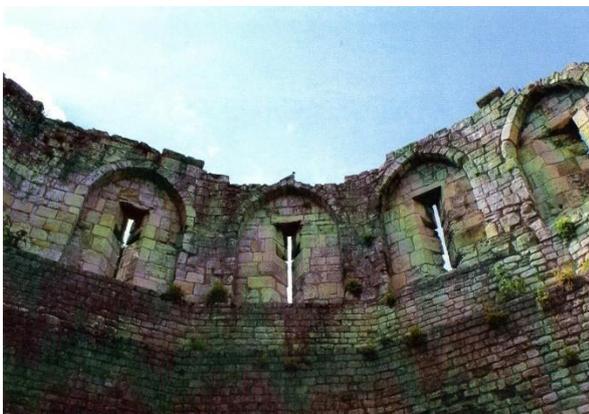
A further project saw two photos taken by homeless people turned into postcards, which were distributed to publicise the festival and the work of Good Organisation.



Gavin in Museum Gardens, with activities near the Roman Wall



A walk reaches Exhibition Square.



Postcard of Multangular Tower



Postcard of Mason's Marks on Bootham

EDH!

Print Run:
2,500 maps
1,000 activity booklets
1,000 explorer trails

Festival map, activity booklet & explorer trail

One of the key aims of the 2019 festival was to produce a new walls map. The first staging of the event in August 2018 highlighted that many different maps were available, and that visitors often struggled to bridge the gaps between sections of the City Walls.

Illustrator Emily Hayes worked with us to design a combined map and programme. The A3 size map, with the main bars shown clearly along with sights of interest and street names, was a great success during the festival weekend.

See below for more on the other printed materials. Thanks to Fulprint for helping supply our maps & leaflets in good time.



Martin, Holly & Rebecca with Emily in June



Mini maps, for choosing a cover



A draft takes shape, late June

YORK WALLS FESTIVAL



www.yorkwallsfestival.org



explore york

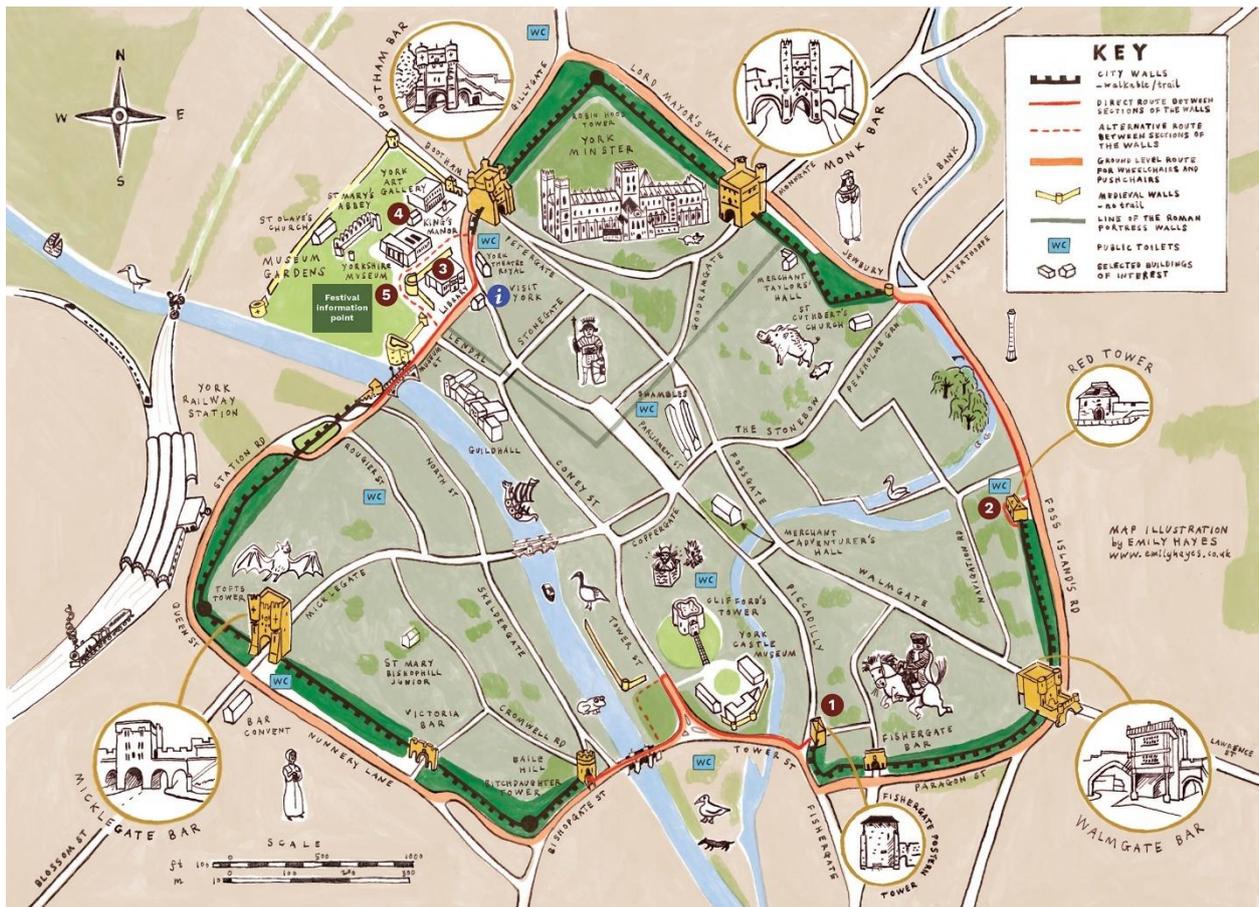
Welcome to a weekend packed full of fun, free, family friendly events to showcase York's heritage. There are open days, walks and activities for everyone. Find your way around the York City Walls using our new map, and enjoy using our Festival App.

We hope you have a great day!

#YorkWallsFestival

- ✉ yorkwallsfestival@gmail.com
- 🐦 @wallsyork
- 📘 @yorkwallsfestival
- 📷 @yorkwallsfestival

www.yorkwallsfestival.org

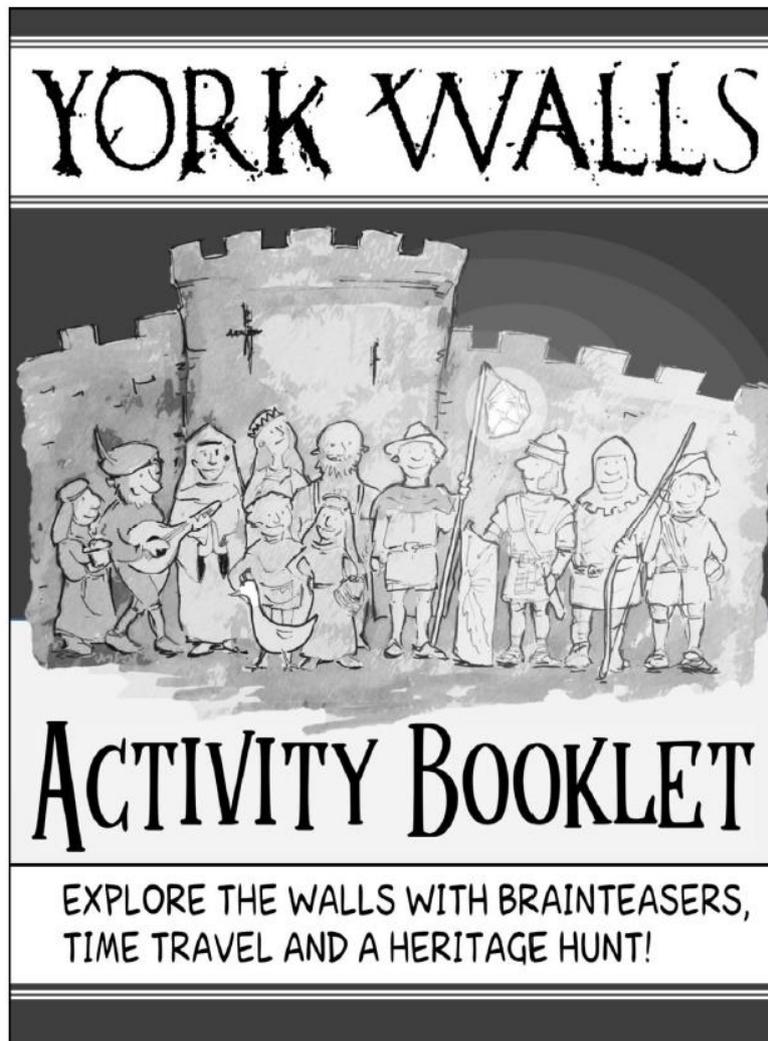


A new addition for 2019 was the York Walls Activity Booklet. Designed and drawn by Leo, it was given out for free on festival weekend thanks to the NLHF support.

It contained a dot-to-dot, a maze, i-spy, a word grid and a matching game, all linked with the walls or medieval times in general.

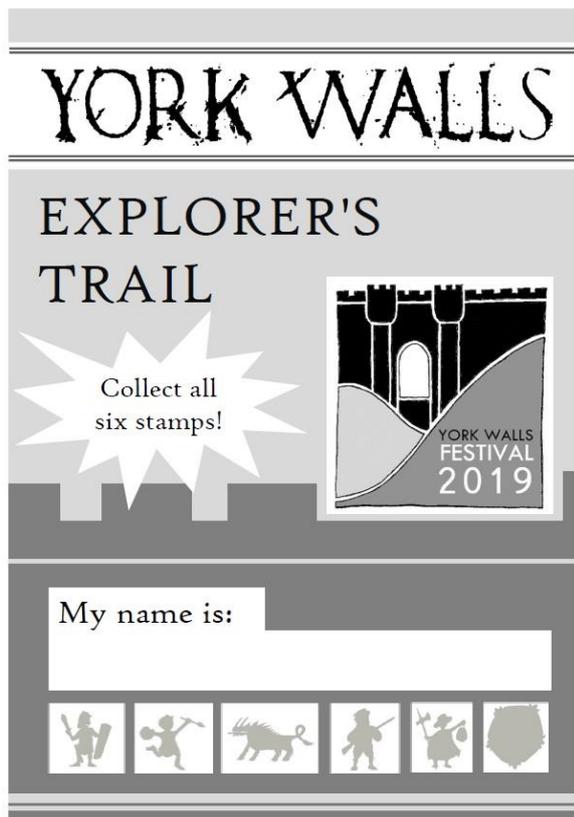


Early designs for the cover (L), word grid (C) and dot-to-dot (R)

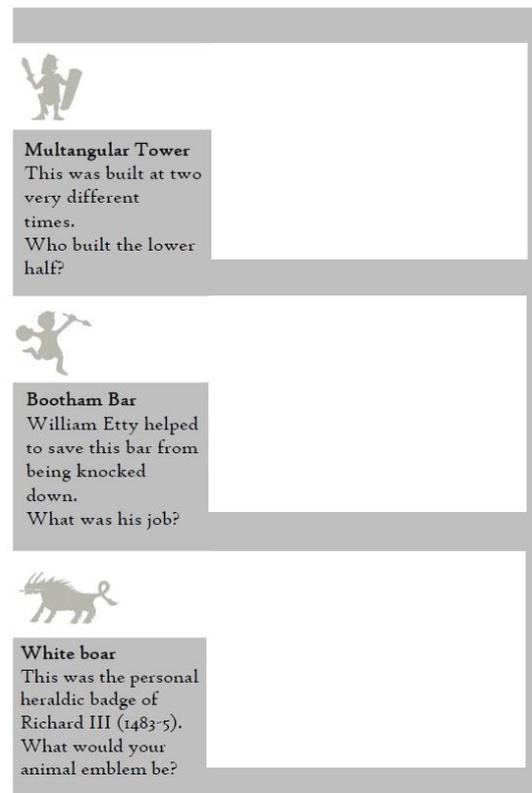


The front cover of the 8-page booklet

Returning for 2019 was the Explorer's Trail. Young walls walkers collected six stamps as they made their way around the walls. See p3 for the stamps in action, at the Festival Information Point.



Front cover



Questions for young minds inside

Million Step Man – charity event

In May 2019 the festival was approached by Brian Mullins, who was raising money for mental health charity York Mind by walking one million steps every month during 2019. This includes a 24-hour challenge each month, and August saw York Walls as the venue.

The challenge began at 11am on the Saturday morning of festival weekend, with York town crier Ben Fry on hand to set him off. Brian walked clockwise around the walls, with a short rest for food every six hours. By 11am on Sunday he had completed 26 laps of the walls, and a whopping 182,119 steps (101 miles).

Brian raised over £350 over the weekend, including from guesses as to how many steps he would manage. His sponsorship page is still live, and by mid-September he had walked over 6,000 miles in 2019!

Fundraising page for York Mind: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/remember-breathe



The town crier announces the start of the walk. [LO]



L to R: Rebecca, Martin, Brian, Ben Fry & Holly by the Art Gallery. [LO]



Saturday afternoon: Brian at Red Tower



9pm – the sun sets on Marygate



1millionstepsman



1millionstepsman Last planned 'pit stop' Last 5 and half hours. This will undoubtedly hurt a bit. First coffee shop open, I may just have a swim in a big mug of the stuff.

11pm – halfway. Brian near his van at Exhibition Square

5am – the regular updates on Instagram and Twitter kept people updated



Tired but happy, Brian celebrates at the end of his challenge. [LO]



York St John University interns & media coverage

The decision to take on extra staff in the 12 weeks before the festival was crucial to the success of the festival. Bill and Martin approached the Internships Team at York St John, and with help from Suzanne and Eliza, we appointed Holly Graham and Rebecca Spencer to help with the events.

Fab assistants: 2

YORK WALLS FESTIVAL



10th and 11th August 2019

Fishergate Postern Tower



- Open days
- Dig Display
- Bookstall
- 500 year old watch tower!



Red Tower

- Barbecue Plus
- Live Music
- Open days

York Explore

- Make a Tile workshop
- Story writing activities with Found Fiction



YORK WALLS



Follow us on Social Media to keep updated!

yorkwallsfestival.org

[@WallsYork](https://twitter.com/WallsYork) [#YorkWallsFestival](https://twitter.com/WallsYork)

[@YorkWallsFestival](https://www.instagram.com/YorkWallsFestival)

[@YorkWallsFestival](https://www.facebook.com/YorkWallsFestival)



Date: July 7, 2019

Categories:

Uncategorized

Comments: 0

Walls Weekly 5

As we celebrate the fifth instalment of our Walls Weekly blog posts and only five more weeks until the festival itself, I thought I'd keep with the theme of five and give you five exciting updates that have taken shape this week.



Festival Meeting

See www.yorkwallsfestival.org for the blogs

Festival poster

Adding to the blog

Welcome Blog Planned Events Past Festivals Contact Us Links Privacy Policy Mobile Phone App



Holly & Rebecca made frequent updates to the website and wrote a weekly blog

York Walls Festival Mini-website on Visit York

Thanks to Alan and Ben at Visit York, the interns assisted with getting a festival mini-site created for the main tourism website for the city.

Language | Search Site | Sign up for our E-newsletter | My Adventure 0 | Book Tickets

VisitYork

Explore Sleep **What's On** Eat & Drink Shopping Beyond York Visitor Information Blog



FISHERGATE POSTERN TOWER - YORK WALLS FESTIVAL

RED TOWER OPEN DAY - YORK WALLS FESTIVAL

MAKE A TILE WORKSHOP - YORK WALLS FESTIVAL

WALKS AND TOURS - YORK WALLS FESTIVAL

CHILDREN'S QUEST ADULT TOUR

NEWS FOOD

YORK WALLS FESTIVAL APP

YORK PASS Official Sightseeing Pass

Choose your adventure

YORK PASS - YORK AND BEYOND EXPLORER PASS

Publicity – online

Minster FM: <https://www.minsterfm.com/news/local/2927132/video---looking-ahead-to-the-york-walls-festival/> (includes a link to our festival Youtube video)

YorkMix: <https://www.yorkmix.com/event/york-walls-festival-2019/>

Publicity – print

The festival featured in the York Press, Yorkshire Post & Metro in the lead-up to the weekend. There was also a review in the York Press.

NEWS

6th August

York Walls Festival activities to celebrate historic city walls



By Daniel Willers
Reporter



<https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/17819350.york-walls-festival-activities-celebrate-historic-city-walls/> (published in print edition of Weds 7 Aug)



Metro, p40, Fri 9 Aug



Our festival assistants made it onto Page 3 of the Yorkshire Post

https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/heritage/plans-to-reveal-roman-gateway-buried-for-800-years-under-york-s-walls-1-9919480/amp?_twitter_impression=true

Publicity – TV and Radio

Holly and Martin featured on That's York TV. On the Sunday morning of the festival, Radio York breakfast show presenter Jon Cowap interviewed Martin.



TV link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trqrSpZS9tQ>

Festival Signage



Left: directional signs on Lendal Bridge

Above: Rebecca and Holly putting signage on Foss Islands Road

It was an aim of the festival to make it easier to bridge the gaps between sections of the City Wall. The map (p25) also tried to do this.

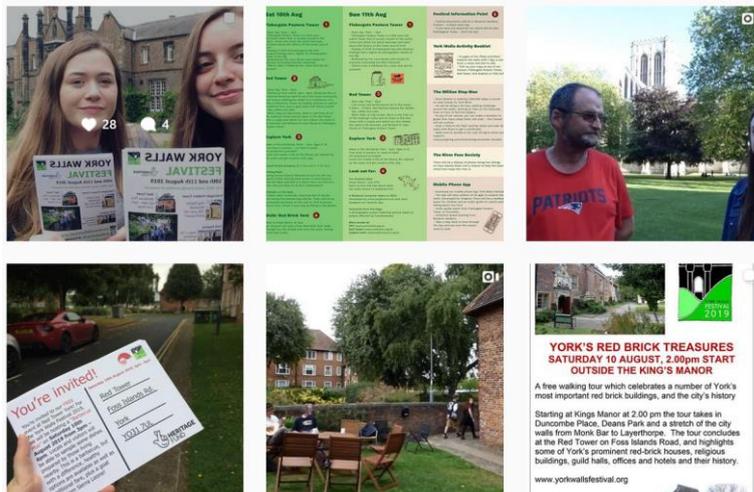
Social Media – Twitter, Instagram & Facebook

Rebecca managed all three accounts in the lead-up to the festival. The new Instagram page attracted over 300 followers, whilst Twitter and Facebook rose to 700+ and 150+.

<https://www.instagram.com/yorkwallsfestival/>

<https://twitter.com/WallsYork>

<https://www.facebook.com/yorkwallsfestival>



Festival Feedback

Here are some comments from visitors to the 2019 York Walls Festival:

3. What have you learned from this talk?

This talk has widened my understanding of the purposes of the walls - toll, trade, civil pride etc - and given me a greater appreciation of them.
Nice to understand the preservation of the walls over the past few hundred years.

4. Has this talk changed your attitude toward the Walls? If yes, in which ways?

Whilst I have always enjoyed the walls this talk has given me a greater appreciation of their purpose and pride in their uniqueness on a national scale.

An attendee at the Barry Crump talk

Do you think York should be a world Heritage site? If so, why?

Yes. It would add a sense of pride for all residents to think that they were on a par and outstanding.

7/9/2019 7:47 PM

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

Yes. It clearly has a terrific heritage which I partly knew about but seeing it put together in this way gives you a new sense of its richness.

7/9/2019 7:45 PM

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

Two responses on Survey Monkey to the John Oxley & Janet Hopton talk

Which event/ venue did you enjoy the most and why?

The wall as a whole. Close second Fishergate Postern Tower

8/11/2019 1:31 PM

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

Fishergate Postern Tower because the archaeological display

8/11/2019 1:18 PM

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

And two replies to surveys on festival weekend

And finally, from our visitor books at venues over the weekend. Top: Explore York;
Middle (shaded): Info Point; Bottom: Fishergate Postern Tower

| # Adults | # of kids | Where do you come from? | How did you find out about the event? | Space for your comments |
|----------|-----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 3 | 2 | York | Museum Gardens - Info Point | Lovely activity for kids (tile making) - loved it! |
| | | | | Fantastic workshop to experiment with something new. |
| 2 | 2 | Liverpool | Festival Information Point | |
| 1 | 1 | Ely, Cambridgeshire | Visit York website | Enjoyed being creative with my daughter. |
| 2 | 1 | Washington DC, USA | Festival Information Point | Great activity for kids and adults |
| 1 | 1 | York | Signs in the library | Enjoyed the tile painting |
| 2 | 4 | Norwich, Norfolk | Internet | Engaging tile painting and wonderful assistance |
| | | | | Really enjoyed this and the volunteers were wonderful with my children |
| 2 | 2 | Birmingham | Volunteer in library reception | |
| 4 | 4 | York and Darlington, Durham | Walls poster | Two happy tile painters |
| 4 | 5 | York | Walls Festival | Brilliant idea, thank you |
| 1 | 3 | York | The library | Fun and exciting |
| | | | | |
| 2 | 3 | Nuneaton, Warwickshire | Person on wall | Awesome city/awesome festival - please do again!! |
| 2 | 0 | Australia | Online | Interesting visit |
| 1 | 0 | UK | Passing visitor | V interesting, good information |
| 2 | 0 | Cambridge | Passing | Enthusiastic volunteers |
| | | | | Very interesting, great to be able to explore, love everyone's enthusiasm |
| 10 | 0 | Cheshire | Walking wall on Sunday | |
| 5 | 0 | Cyprus | Walking around | Very interesting! Learnt a lot about the history |
| | | | | Good to refresh memory and see developments e.g. Red Tower hub |
| 1 | 0 | York | Local link | |
| 3 | 0 | St Andrews | Leaflet in hotel | Interesting and great to hold the artefacts |
| 2 | 0 | York | Passing by a volunteer advised | Really interesting piece of York history |

All told, the total of visitors was approx. 2,250. This was well up on the 1,200 in 2018.



Cheers, and see you next year!

York Walls Festival 2020:
Sat Aug 15 & Sun Aug 16

www.yorkwallsfestival.org