

From: Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>
Sent: 26 September 2019 09:19
To: richard@hanage.com
Subject: Friends of York Walls Newsletter - Sept 2019

Friends of York Walls Newsletter

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Friends of York Walls Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Open Days:

Saturdays 5 and 26 Oct

Saturday 2 Nov

Committee: Tues 1 Oct; Tues 5 Nov

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FoYW Newsletter - September 2019

York Walls Festival (Martin Hetherington)

We are still working our way through photos and videos from the event and hope to share the Festival Report with you shortly. See a glimpse of the draft below:

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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In the meantime, here's a great picture of the top floor of the Postern Tower while we were cleaning up just before the Festival:

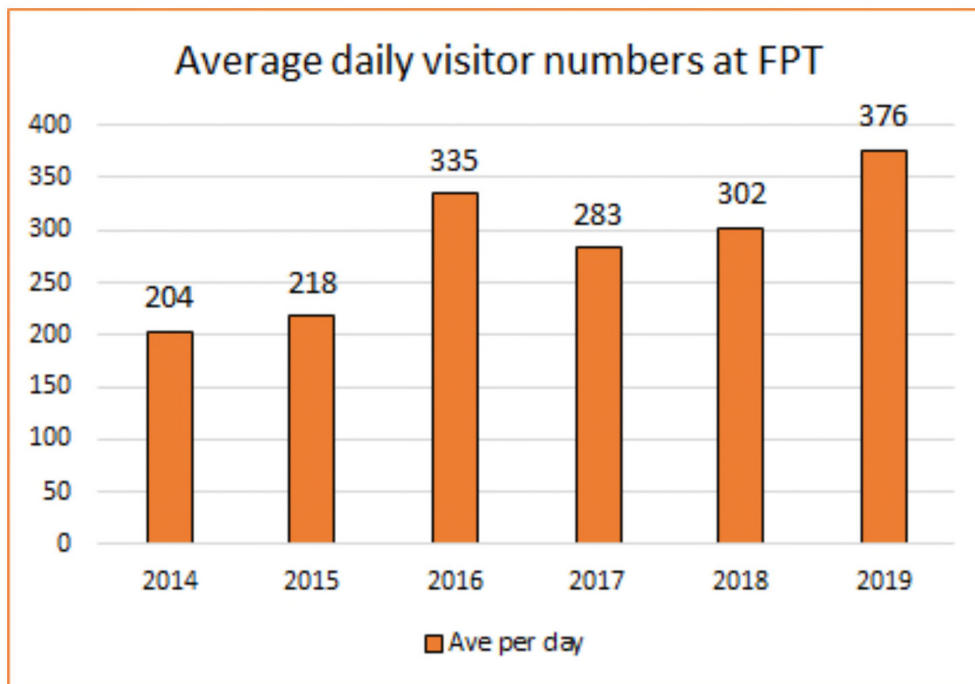


Cleaning the Top floor - Photo: Sally Hauser

Busiest Heritage Open Days Yet (Martin Hetherington)

A gorgeous sunny day in York last Saturday brought another busy day at FPT. Indeed, the 426 visitors, added to the 414 the previous Saturday, made it our busiest Heritage Open Days yet.

More than that though, we have now had a run of five successive openings with over 400 visitors, which is a first. As the graph below shows, the average for the year is far exceeding any previous year.



Average number of visitors per day - Graph: Martin Hetherington

Annual Friends Meeting - 2020 (Sam McDermott)

A date for your 2020 diary: the 2020 Annual Friends Meeting will be at 2pm on Saturday 16th May. The location will be confirmed later.

New Bar Walls Manager - Louisa Hood (Simon Mattam)



Louisa Hood was recently appointed as the new 'Bar Walls Manager'. A quick internet search found this photo - of about 5 years ago. The photo is from when she was researching public engagement with art museums for her doctorate. For this research she was embedded with Tate galleries all over the country. She has also worked for English Heritage and for the National Trust at Stowe and, since July, has been York's first permanent Bar Walls Manager.

Mid-September she said: "I'm enjoying the new role so far, and I shall work closely with City Archaeologists, John and Claire, as well as other special interest groups and supporters of the walls."

At Fishergate Postern Tower we are already grateful to Louise for managing to get the 21st century electric cable removed from our early 16th century toilet. The cable, tapping into a city-controlled floodlight as if we were in an enterprising but ramshackle shanty town, had been an

unused annoyance for years. She is now working on getting the tree pruned back to protect the roof - CYC's tree person has said he's happy for it to be done but can't do it from his budget.

One of her first big jobs is to write the brief for the updating of the 2004 'Walls Management and Conservation Plan' which will, this time, include interpretation and ecological plans. This job was originally timed for last autumn. We will be invited to comment on the draft.

News from the Walls Liaison Group (Simon Mattam)

This group meets quarterly with the aim of exchanging information and views about the current state of the city walls and, in particular, their management by CYC. The new CYC Walls Manager, Louisa Hood, was introduced at July's meeting and will convene, chair, minute and report to future meetings.



Access to the Walls? - Photos: Anon and Alamo Stock

York Minster was represented for the first time at this meeting and we learned that, following consultation, it had dropped the idea of a new route through to the wall-walk from Dean's Park, but was considering very ambitious ideas for the space between the Walls and the Minster Library. It was hoping to develop a plan for a disabled-friendly ramp up to the wall-walk - and was, of course, also considering the complications of accommodating wheelchairs etc. on enough parts of the wall-walk to make such access worthwhile. Along with this it was considering if the inside of Robin Hood Tower could be brought into public use.

Neither Councillor Jonny Crawshaw nor the local group concerned with the misuse of Baile Hill was represented but John Oxley reported that together they had got £5,000 from CYC. Of this, £2,000 was probably going to the Civic Trust for interpretation board[s] there. Bill added that he hoped FoYW might be involved with creating these, especially as there could be money for these from our sharing heritage lottery grant.

[Since the meeting I have heard from Jonny that York Civic Trust are planning to contribute £10,000 and to develop plans for extra railings and the formalisation of access to the hill, we will be consulted on these plans later in their development].

John Oxley said he was still very keen on opening access to the roof of Monk Bar for its remarkable views, especially of the Minster.

York Transport Consultation (Civic Trust)



Press Release
York Civic Trust launch
transport consultation
for firms across the city
Ben Pilgrim
August 29th 2019

York Civic Trust has launched a major City-wide transport consultation to find out what people travelling to work in York think are the key issues, and how to tackle them. They are partnering with the York Environment Forum and the York Bus Forum. The Trust has launched a survey that will start on the 2nd September and run until 30th September.

Commuters travelling into York can take part in the survey which can be found at:

<https://surveys.qaresearch.co.uk/YorkTransportCommuters.asp>

Employees who are York residents can take part in the survey by visiting:

<https://surveys.qaresearch.co.uk/YorkTransportResidents.asp>

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'Rougier Street Arch' (Simon Mattam)



'Rougier Street Arch' - Photo: Unknown

The new Bar Walls Manager, Louisa Hood [Louisa.Hood@york.gov.uk], would like to hear from you if you could help her have access to any architectural drawings of the road arch through the

Walls that takes traffic coming into the city from the railway station. It was remodelled around 1965.

Flower of the Month (Simon Mattam)



'Common Ragwort below York Castle Walls' - Photo: Simon Mattam

September's flower is ragwort, AKA 'Stinking Willy' or 'Staggerwort'.

Don't let this photo mislead you, it was taken early last month in the happy little riot of wild flowers below the most southerly of towers in the curtain wall that once surrounded York Castle, the tower that sticks out towards the busy inner ring-road. This September ragwort is in less showy flower in many places, for example beside and in the Roman walls at the back of Explore Library and on the ramparts between Micklegate Bar and Toft Tower. These 'Queen Street ramparts' are not being mowed till "September/October" to encourage wild flowers.

Common ragwort has, as the name suggests, long been very familiar to many people. In the early 19th century the farm labourer and poet, John Clare said its brightness made sunlight seem shadowy while Rabbe Burns gave it a romantic wickedness by saying "withered hags" on "ragweed nags" skimmed "the moors and dizzy crags with lightning speed" – when witches flew with the devil.

It is the leaves that are specially ragged though the whole plant does not have a tidy, prettily perfect look so it doesn't seem to matter when the smart yellow and black caterpillars [can you see them in the photo?] of the cinnabar moth feed on it; it is their main food.

It is a controversial plant and has suffered from misinformation and organised assault –mainly because it can cause fatal liver damage in horses and cattle [this explains 'staggerwort']. As with buttercups, they avoid ragwort when it is living but, unlike buttercups, it is also poisonous to them when it is dead and dry. A landowner can be given a government order to control the ragwort on their land but Friends of the Earth see it as a valuable part of nature, just to be kept out of hay.

Now I am wondering about October's flower. Will yellow corydalis still be shouting from the walls for attention? Should ferns and/or fungi be considered honorary flowers? What flowers will be hanging on in there -as surely none will be at their best?

Suggestions on this – or offers of help with increasing people's enjoyment of nature on the ramparts [perhaps by devising a nature trail] – are very welcome. Simon Mattam ps.mattam@outlook.com

Richard Hanage (richard@hanage.com)
Editor, on behalf of the FoYW committee.

| | |
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| Bill Hill | Fund-raising |
| Martin Hetherington | Volunteers |
| Simon Mattam | |
| Guy Newton | |

The committee may be contacted at friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com
If you would like to attend a committee meeting, please contact Sam McDermott.
The meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of the month.

The 'Friends of York Walls' is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation representing York's walls & defences. Registered Charity: No. 1159300 www.yorkwalls.org.uk



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