

**From:** Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>  
**Sent:** 28 April 2021 10:18  
**To:** richard@hanage.com  
**Subject:** Friends of York Walls Newsletter - April 2021

Friends of York Walls Newsletter - April 2021

[View this email in your browser](#)



## Friends of York Walls Newsletter

[Click here to sponsor a stone](#)

### Next Open Days:

Sat 22nd May: Please check [website](#) closer to time

Sat 29th May: Late Spring bank holiday. Please check [website](#) closer to time

Mon 31st May: Late Spring bank holiday. Please check [website](#) closer to time

**Contents:** Open Days .... Re-opening Plans .... Annual Leaflet .... Covid Grants .... City Walls .... Red Tower .... Festival Plans .... Hyacinths .... Locked Down .... Chalking Walk .... Spring by Barbican .... Volunteers .... Twitter .... Facebook

### FPT Open Days.... Getting Closer?

The Fishergate Postern Tower (FPT) is currently closed. However, we are hoping to open in May - probably first on Sat 22nd and then on Sat 29th and Mon 31st, for the Late Spring Bank Holiday. Please check news of openings on our [website](#) closer to the time. Also please keep in touch via our social media channels: [TWITTER](#), [FACEBOOK](#) and [INSTAGRAM](#)

See below for more details of the plans for the remainder of 2021.

### FPT - Re-opening Plans (Bill Hill)

We are gearing up for the reopening of Fishergate Postern Tower to visitors on 22 May from 10 am to 4 pm. If you are able to help out as a volunteer for part of the day, that would be really appreciated. Just add your name to the rota: [Click here to follow the link to the 2021 rota.](#)

We now have agreed dates for the rest of the year, and they are as follows:

#### Revised opening dates for 2021

Sat 22 May

Sat 29 May: Bank Holiday weekend  
Mon 31 May: Bank Holiday weekend  
Sat 19 June  
Sat 3 July  
Sat 17 July  
Sat 14 August: York Walls Festival 2021  
Sun 15 August: York Walls Festival 2021  
Sat 28 August: Late Summer Bank Holiday  
Sat 11 September: Heritage Open Days  
Sat 18 September :Heritage Open Days  
Sat 2 October  
Sat 23 October  
Sat 30 October: Halloween Saturday  
Sat 13 November

## **Annual Leaflet (BII Hill)**

Now that we have re-opening dates the Annual Leaflet in its traditional format is just being printed, and we are also close to approving a redesigned version which will be available soon. We will be asking for feedback on what you think of the two versions, so please stand by to comment as they come into circulation.

## **COVID and other grants**

We are very grateful to the City of York Council for 'Covid Lock Down' and 'Covid Business Restart' grants. These place us in a stronger financial position than we had expected, and we will be discussing at the next Management Committee meetings which priorities we might address with this income, and our prior reserves.

In the past we have drawn up list of priorities, which have included the following:

- Enhancing the interpretation in Fishergate Postern Tower including
  - Re-design of the ground floor
  - Upgrade of the 'Time Line' on floor 2
  - Upgrade of the model of the postern gate on floor 2
  - Enhanced interpretation on the top floor, including a central island display
- Refurbishment of the roof.
- Installation of electrical cables, sockets and lighting points to all four floors.
- Repointing internally to replace modern cement with traditional lime mortar (to arrest the spalling of the stonework).
- Full-scale installation of a replica portcullis in the postern gate archway, with winding mechanism, so that the public can both see and touch the portcullis and take part in raising and lowering it.

If you have any preferences for the priorities, please let us know by email to: [friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com)

We have also secured a grant of £1,250 from the 'Growing Greener Spaces' scheme to plant agreed pollinator friendly wildflowers on areas of the ramparts agreed with the Council. We will be matching this with our own funds, so the working total is £2,500.

## News from the City Walls (Louisa Hood)

Work has restarted at **Tower 2** and we are looking forward to continuing our archaeological investigations, installing the new walkway, undertaking masonry repairs and commissioning a small amount of interpretation to help people understand more about how the city walls were built. *[See next section]*

Work is progressing well at the **arch in the city walls** facing Rougier Street; defective stones have been replaced and improvements to water management to slow further decay are underway.

Designs for improved access to the **Anglian Tower** are being prepared, we are looking forward to people being able to go into the tower once again.

## York Walls Hidden Spaces Special: Tower 2 (Baz Jones)



*Tom Coates talking about Tower 2 - Film by SharpStick Films*

Watch our **new video** on the first stage of the excavation and stabilisation of Tower 2 on York's Bar Walls. What have they found so far? What new understanding do we have of the tower and the rampart? York Archeological Trust's Tom Coates tells us about the project's first phase in December last year. With thanks to YAT, City of York Council and SharpStick Films.

The film is available to view now on our [Twitter](#) feed.  
It is also coming soon to our Facebook page and website.

## Closure of Micklegate and Monk Bars

You are probably aware that Micklegate and Monk Bars are currently closed. This item from York Mix gives a bit more information: [Jorvik Group](#)

## The Red Tower (Ian Tempest)



*Red Tower open again - Photo: Ian Tempest*

On Monday 12 April the Red Tower set out tables and chairs for the first time this year following the opportunity for eating outdoors provided in the new government guidelines. Customers using the food services were able to sit out on the lawn outside the Tower for the first time since the autumn. The Red Tower is open every Monday at the moment for its food distribution to the local community, and thanks are due to the supermarkets for their support.



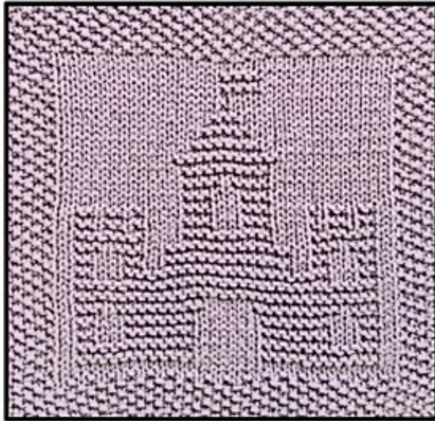
*Unexpected visitors - Photo: Ian Tempest*

We even had some feathery visitors today (Mon 19th!).

For more information on the history of the Red Tower and current activities, see the website [www.redtoweryork.org.uk](http://www.redtoweryork.org.uk)



## Festival 2021: Woollen Walls (Baz Jones)



As part of this year's York Walls Festival, we'd love you to join in with our 'Woollen Walls' project! We want to create a wall-hanging/tapestry inspired by York's history and heritage, by combining knitted squares designed and made by you! Please knit a square 8.5 x 8.5 inch (22cm x 22cm). Make it as simple or as intricate as you like! The final wall-hanging combining all submissions, will be on view during the festival (14th/15th August), and also displayed at Holgate Windmill and Fishergate Postern Tower at dates TBC.

Please feel free to dedicate your square to someone you've not been able to see over the past 12 months, and we'll add pictures of the squares and the dedications to the Festival website.

Post to York Walls Festival c/o 27 Millfield Road, York YO23 1NH, making sure postage is paid and the package can fit through a letter box. Sadly, we are not able to return the squares or repay postage. By sending a square you agree we can use it and the image. We may edit dedications for clarity. Please provide name and contact details. You can choose to remain anonymous. Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> July.

Questions: contact [yorkwallsfestival@gmail.com](mailto:yorkwallsfestival@gmail.com) York Walls Festival is run by volunteers.  
[yorkwallsfestival.org](http://yorkwallsfestival.org) twitter: @YorkWallsFest

See details in [attached flyer](#)

## Festival 2021: A Green Labyrinth



Green labyrinth and fort to be created in York city centre as part of York Walls Festival this summer | Yorkshire Post

Home Green labyrinth and fort to be created in York city centre as part of York Walls Festival this summer  
Momentous pivots in history have played out before York's city walls, which has borne ...

This [item](#) from the [Yorshire Post](#) explains our plans for a 'green labyrinth' just outside the walls near Red Tower, and includes a fine picture of our Chair amongst the daffodils.

## Hyacinths (Julian Crabb)

An email from long-time supporter and volunteer, Julian Crabb:

Really interesting edition [last month] and thanks to Simon for his sharp vision in spotting wild plants on the walls. He tells me that the bluebells he is featuring this month were once called 'wild hyacinths'. We have had a pink hyacinth bloom in the garden this week and it reminded me of that lovely poem attributed to the Gulistan of Moslih Eddin Saadi:

"If of thy mortal goods thou art bereft,  
And from thy slender store two loaves alone to thee are left,  
Sell one, and with the dole  
Buy hyacinths to feed thy soul"

I hope to be around to volunteer in due course - both jabs under the belt, or rather in the arms and I can hear the antibodies whizzing around waiting for a virus meal. Regards to all. Julian.

## Locked Down (Simon Mattam)



*April 10th: half-way up the stairs at Fishergate Postern Tower - Photo: Simon Mattam*

I found this hibernating[?] butterfly and at least 3 others in Fishergate Postern Tower when I was checking the sealed windows there to see what possibilities there are for increasing ventilation in time for this year's first projected opening in late May.

There were plenty of peacock butterflies around in York during the warm week before Easter but perhaps these were better off inside during the frosty days that followed. I hope the top floor is so well ventilated that the butterflies can get out that way led by currents of air. If they are led by the light they are in trouble on the middle floors. Perhaps we should leave them some flowers or sugar-water as a breakfast?

## Chalking the Walk (Simon Mattam)



*Catching attention at Monk Bar - Photo: Simon Mattam*

Louisa Hood, CYC's City Walls Manager, has managed real improvements in the signage that supports the current one-way system on the city walls. Groups of 'No Entry' messages like the ones shown here at Monk Bar will almost certainly catch the eye of any WWWW [wrong-way-wall-walker].

The only chalking extra that might still be needed is where the wall-walk itself begins - as it is possible that someone might think 'They don't want me to use these stairs for some reason but I'll be up in a couple of seconds and then I'll be on the public wall-walk'. Since the new chalkings I've not noticed any WWWW but I'm sure there will be some - will any claim to have seen no signs?

### **Spring by the Barbican (Simon Mattam)**





*Celandine amongst speedwell on the flat - Photo: Simon Mattam*

These photos are of the ramparts opposite the Barbican Centre. You can walk beside these slopes, on the flat but off the pavement and enjoy the flowers of spring earlier here than in most places around York. The slopes face south, in places there is shelter from trees - and perhaps the busy road brings warmth too. Celandines have probably been in flower here for a month, they are one of the early spring flowers which FoYW chair, Bill, is hoping to plant more of. The speedwell is a little later and will last longer in flower, though its individual flowers are said to be specially fragile, making its old Yorkshire names 'remember me' and 'forget-me-not' seem a little sad.

### **Bluebells**



*Bluebells invaded by a slope of daffs - Photo: Simon Mattam*



Bluebells have a claim to be THE British flower, the 'fallen sky' or 'risen lakes' of blue in British bluebell woods being one of the botanical wonders of the world. These, also, are on Bill's list of wild-flowers-for-pollinators; it would be good to see them on Baile Hill because a Tudor Herbal notes that their 'rootes' were scraped to make glue for arrows and there were archery butts - and arrow-head finds - there.

### **Puzzles**

The big patches of bluebells by the Barbican bring us puzzles. York's previous city ecologist did not know how they had got there on slopes that were very probably cut back for cattle market stalls and then restored about 50 years ago. Could they have been specially planted? Could they have come in accidentally in earth brought in to restore the ramparts? Could they have spread down from the old bits of the ramparts that were not removed for the stalls? - and what is their relationship to the daffodils which certainly have been specially planted?

### **Clues**

Unlike most urban bluebells, for example those just inside the walls soon after Bootham Bar, these bluebells seem to be what is called the English bluebell, little, or not-at-all hybridised with the newer-to-Britain, Spanish bluebell.

The Spanish bluebell stands stiffly with shorter, unscented bells on all sides of the stem. The English bluebells by the Barbican seem commonest at the very top of the slope by the walls and, to a lesser extent at the bottom, though a few are scattered amongst the daffodils - perhaps planting of the daffs here ruined what was once a seasonal sea of blue.

Personally, I'd like to experimentally pull the greenery from a patch of daffodils in the bluebell area - but at this time of year you'd need to be careful to avoid trampling on the bluebells; perhaps it would be better done in early March?

## **Volunteers [Always] Needed**

As always, we would like to welcome more volunteers to help run the Friends of York Walls and especially to greet visitors at the Fishergate Postern Tower. If you think you might like to join us, please email [friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com) or just turn up for a chat when we are open.

**Follow us on [Twitter](#):**

A lovely painting of a [#York](#) view from long ago. [#heritage](#)



**HistoryandHeritageYorkshire** @GenealogyBeech · Apr 10

Layerthorpe Bridge and Postern, York (1829) George Nicholson (1787–1878) The site of the postern was first documented in 1280 and was demolished in 1829-30. The bridge has been replaced and rebuilt on several occasions. Painting courtesy of York Museums Trust.



..... and follow us on [Facebook](#):

🍀 English Bluebells one day on the ramparts? 🍀

📷 Photo thanks to The Woodlands Trust

In future there could be a mass of English Bluebells on the York ramparts – as in our photograph here – to follow on in April/May after the daffodils. Also native Primroses and Cowslips, all very valuable to bees and other pollinating insects.... [See more](#)



**Richard Hanage** ([richard@hanage.com](mailto:richard@hanage.com))

Editor, on behalf of the FoYW Committee.

Bill Hill - Chair

Penny Heptonstall - Treasurer

Sam McDermott - Secretary

Alan Fleming - Website

Glen McGowan - Committee member

Simon Mattam - Committee member

Baz Jones - Committee member

The Committee may be contacted at [friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com)

If you would like to attend a Committee meeting, please contact Sam McDermott.

The [virtual] 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](http://www.yorkwalls.org.uk)

Postern Tower location: YO1 9AF (please do not send mail here - no letterbox!)



*Copyright © 2021 Friends of York Wall, All rights reserved.*

You are receiving this email because you are a supporter of the 'Friends of York Walls'

**Our mailing address is:**

Friends of York Wall  
50 Grey Towers Drive  
Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS7 0LT  
United Kingdom

[Add us to your address book](#)

We send you this newsletter because you signed up with us and are on our mailing list. We keep your data secure, do not share it with any other organisations and only use it for our newsletters and relevant mailings.

To opt out just email '[friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofyorkwalls@gmail.com)' or unsubscribe by clicking below.

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)





