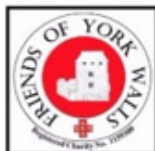


Richard Hanage

From: Friends of York Walls <richard@hanage.com>
Sent: 24 September 2020 12:05
To: richard@hanage.com
Subject: Friends of York Walls Newsletter - September 2020

Friends of York Walls Newsletter - August 2020

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Friends of York Walls Newsletter

[Click here to sponsor a stone](#)

Open Days:

Sats 3 and 24 October
Sat 31 October (Halloween)

Contents: Coronavirus Update Walls Festivals 2021 FPT Openings Tower 2 Evaluation Volunteers Still Needed FoYW Videos Louisa Hood Anyone for Golf? New Walls Plan Good Walls News! Which Elm?

Coronavirus Update - Open Now!

The Fishergate Postern Tower (FPT) is now opening on the previously planned dates for the remainder of the year (subject to any changes to Covid regulations). The next openings are on the 3rd, 24th and 31st October.

Please keep in touch on the [WEBSITE](#), and through our social media channels on [TWITTER](#) and [FACEBOOK](#)

Walls Festival 2021 (Baz Jones)

The Festival are very interested in speaking with **York groups** (charities, organisations and communities) who would be interested in partnering with the York Walls Festival next year.

We are also looking for **volunteers to help over** the festival weekend itself (14th/15th August) approx. 08:30 to 18:30 both days, and/or for time in the seven days leading up to festival weekend (for flyer distribution etc.).

Anyone interested can contact Baz Jones at the Walls Festival email address:
yorkwallsfestival@gmail.com

Heritage Weekends FPT Openings

The FPT is gradually entering a new routine for Open Days, but with restricted numbers and strict 'Covid' rules in place. For those that would like to be re-assured, click for the [risk assessment](#).

As we attract most of our visitors from people coming down the steps off the walls, it's a good thing for us that the current one-way system on the walls is clockwise.

Our restriction to 16 visitors in the Tower caused us to ask people to queue at times, but normally only for a few minutes. We had 517 visitors over the two 'Heritage Weekend' days and £322 of donations.

The higher donations were partly the result of using our new SumUp device for card-less donations, as we have noticed that people using SumUp donate larger individual amounts compared with putting cash in the bucket.

York Walls Tower 2 Stabilisation

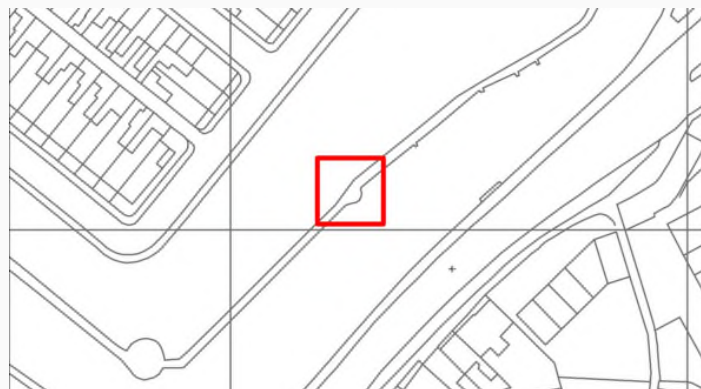
As part of the Tower Two stabilisation project, the City of York Council, in collaboration with York Archaeological Trust, will be hosting special events for the public to learn more about the project and the archaeology and conservation of the city walls more generally.

Alongside YAT's evaluation of the tower, conservation engineers at Historic England and Mason Clark Associates also evaluated the tower's stability: illustrating how many people have to be involved in projects like these!

STOP PRESS: The CYC have just released more information on the project.

Click [here](#) to see 'Stabilising Tower Two for the next 100 years'.

The Royal Commission on Historic Monuments in the reference work "Historical Monuments in City of York, Volume 2, the Defences" numbers the towers along The Walls in a clockwise direction starting with Tower No.1 at Baile Hill. So Tower 2 is along the walls section between Baile Hill and Bitchdaughter Tower - overlooking Bishopgate Street.



Location of Tower 2. Source: YAT report 2019

The tower has suffered some settling and was 'archeologically evaluated' by YAT in 2019. Their full report can be [downloaded here](#)



Archaeological Evaluation at Tower 2, York City Walls

By Becky Wilson

YAT Report 2019/107 November 2019

YAT report on Tower 2 evaluation.

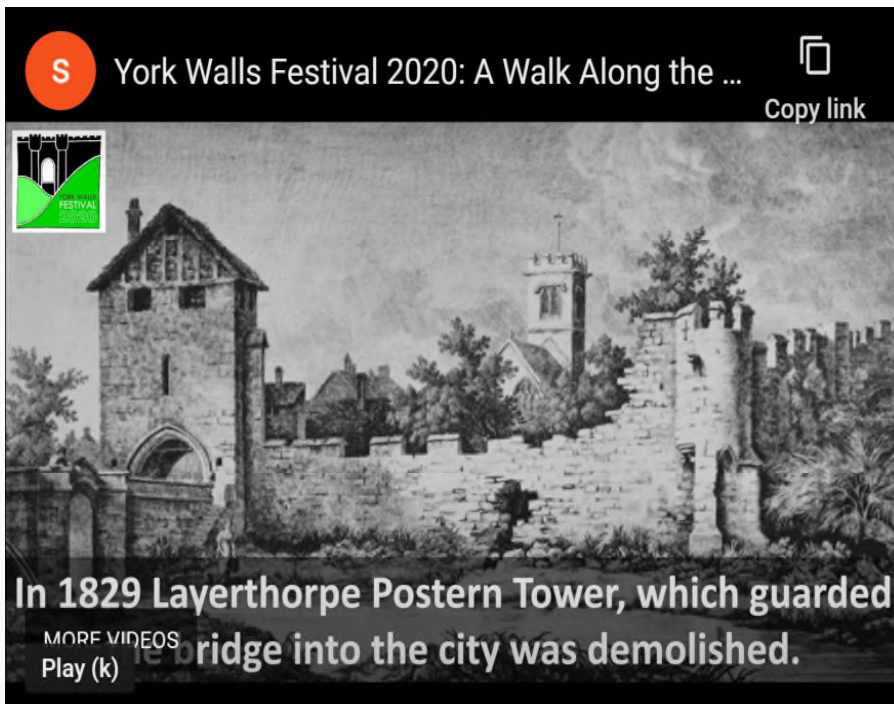
Volunteers [Always] Needed

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 or just turn up for a chat when we are open.

FoYW Videos (Baz Jones)

The 2020 Festival videos can be viewed for free via the [SharpStick YouTube channel](#):

One of the videos is a historical walk along the River Foss from Layerthorpe Bridge to Foss Bridge, which we made in partnership with The River Foss Society, comparing old photos with the current buildings on the riverbanks.



Layerthorpe Postern Tower - Source: York Walls Festival film

Two of the others show you inside two usually locked 'Hidden Spaces' on the Walls - Tower 39 at Fishergate, and Tower 7 ('Sadler Tower') next to Victoria Bar. Many thanks to CYC for the access.



Inside Tower 39 - Source: York Walls Festival film



Martin getting into Tower 7 - Source: York Walls Festival film



Tower 7: Sketch of interior - Source: York Walls Festival film

The fourth video was shot at Clifford's Tower (many thanks to English Heritage for access), and is an interview with the York Liberal Jewish Community:



Shannon Kirshner (York Liberal Jewish Community) - Source: York Walls Festival film

Louisa Hood

We have already mentioned Louisa in this FoYW e-News. No doubt she will be in our news often in the future, so we asked her to provide a picture and 'bio'.



Louisa Hood (City Walls Manager) - Source: Louisa Hood.

Louisa Hood joined City of York Council in July 2019 as City Walls Manager. She works closely with the City Archaeologist and CYC's team of stonemasons to care for, and provide access to, York's city walls.

Prior to joining CYC, Louisa was Assistant Curator for the National Trust at Stowe Landscape Gardens (home to one of the earliest haha walls) and she completed her PhD in museum studies in 2018.

Louisa was born and grew up in North Yorkshire, so feels at home in York and on the walls.

Anyone for Golf? (Simon Mattam)



The Explore York library lawn - Photo: Simon Mattam

The walls on the right of the photo above are from around 100 AD, the arches at their end are from around 1300 AD. Should the lawn they border have crazy golf in 2021?

Should we see this plan as a threat to, or a rescue for, what is almost certainly the best 'public' quiet place by the City Walls? York Explore's managers feel committed to making money from the library lawn and they think they may do it this way without financial risk.

The local course-creators prefer the term 'mini golf' as they seem to plan something that is more dignified than Disneyfied, with low-rise installations themed on York's history - starting with the Romans, right by the Multangular Tower, and ending with chocolate]. The non-playing, non-paying public could still wander round and through the area which they hope would continue to be dominated by the extraordinary ruins that have been so little visited in recent years. Day-time and early evening opening is planned.

There have been two Explore-hosted zoom consultation meetings but otherwise details seem scarce, I think the last meeting suggested comments should be sent in via contact@exploreyork.org.uk

From the Walls Liaison Group (Simon Mattam)

1. New Plan for the Walls

At last the professional updating of the 2004 plans for the City Walls is underway. These are plans for the conservation, management and interpretation of the City Walls, and the hope is they will guide the City of York Council's treatment of the Walls for some years to come.

Consultation with interested groups started this month and you can contribute your thoughts through us. There should be a chance to comment on the draft report/plans later, but at the moment your views on the 2004 plans and ideas for the new one are welcome. I can email you the 2004 plan and/or you can pass on your thoughts via ps.mattam@outlook.com.

2. Good Walls News! (Simon Mattam)

Louisa Hood, Bar Walls Manager, tells us that within CYC 'our' masons have taken over the management of greenery on the walls. This means the end of the previous 'poison-everything observe-nothing' policy. Initially the masons have been trained in spot poisoning and will target bad buddleia, and damaging dandelions, but spare 'small creeping perennials, such as toadflax'.



Buddleia (left) and Ivy-leaved Toadflax (right) on the walls - Photos: Simon Mattam

Even more hopefully, conversations are planned with Historic England which should result in observations and evidence-led management of plants on the walls; already some ivy on St Mary's Abbey's defensive walls has been at least temporarily spared as inspection suggested that it is doing no harm to the masonry.

Which Elms? (Simon Mattam)



Mature Elm (?) at Tower 1 (Baile Hill) - Photo: Simon Mattam

This item is full of question marks. I'd be very happy to get a emails from readers to help me understand things I mention better ps.mattam@outlook.com.

I have recently read of mature elm trees on Baile Hill and the ramparts east of Micklegate Bar. A report in the 2004 Walls Conservation and Management Plan mentioned above, suggested the elms were in good condition and were well worth keeping. The background to these suggestions is that in the 1970s England's elms were almost all killed by a beetle-spread fungus that clogged the water channels under their bark. This was the grimly-named 'DED' - Dutch elm disease.

York had a row of mature elms by the Ouse along New Walk. They were dead by 1980. I was living in London at the time but I think the New Walk elms were the tall 'English elm', shaped like a giant ragwort plant with a big leafy 'crown' and leafy suckers up the strong, upright trunk. This is the sort of elm that Constable painted, dwarfing and shading his countryfolk, but also the sort planted in posh town parks.

There is a record that in 1722 Henry Pawson, tenant, '*leveled the Top of Old Bail Hill and set it about with young Fir Trees and Other Forest Trees*'. Now things get complicated. I can't find any tree on or by Baile Hill that reminds me of the mature English elms of my youth and It seems that the English elm was not really a 'forest tree', it was a tree of hedgerows and parks.

The 'wych elm', also decimated by DED, was a forest tree, without suckers and less tall with lower branches [I think]. The wych elm is not named after witches, the English elm has a more sinister

reputation: it was said of it that 'the elm hateth man and waiteth' - probably because its tall heavy branches could fall without warning and it was the main wood used for coffins; 'wychness', was flexibility, that special sort of 'weakness' which is a sort of strength. There are other sorts of elms too.



Elm (?) leaves by Tower 1 - Photo: Simon Mattam

The elms[?] in the photographs are at the foot of Baile Hill. Others, even younger ones, are on its slopes but I am a bit too disabled for a thorough survey. 'Younger' may be a confusing term for some small elm trees because it seems that the English elm rarely grows from seed but the roots of trees 'killed' by DED can send up new shoots that can grow into a small tree before it becomes vulnerable again to DED.

I could find no elm-like seeds under the elms[?] I found, but I am rather late in the year for identifying elms this way. I could find nothing that looked like any sort of elm on the ramparts east of Micklegate Bar. I'd have asked for the help of the city ecologist but the job is still vacant[?]. I'd have checked in the old botanical survey of the ramparts but this isn't easily available[?].

Uncertainty can be dispiriting so I'll end this with a fine photo that needs no question mark. It is plainly of a London Plane.



Mature plane tree in the moat by Tower 4 - Photo: Simon Mattam

Richard Hanage (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

Martin Hetherington - Committee member

Baz Jones - Committee member

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



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