

## FRIENDS OF YORK WALLS

# TRUSTEES REPORT 2023

The trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023.

## 1 Structure, Governance and Management

The Friends of York Walls was established in 2010. It is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation first registered on 20 November 2014, registration number 1159300. The charity was established with objects and powers, and is governed under the terms of its Constitution.

The trustees who served during the year were:

Bill Hill (Chair)  
Samantha McDermott (Honorary Secretary)  
Simon Mattam  
Alan Fleming  
Barry Crump  
Rachel Hollingworth  
Laura Patrickson

The trustees served on the Management Committee, which had in addition the following members:

Penny Heptonstall (Honorary Treasurer)

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All the trustees guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

The trustees have assessed the financial risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to them and to other major risks.

## 2 Objectives and Activities

The objects of the charity as expressed in its articles/constitution are:

- 1 To educate the public in the history, natural history and architecture of the historic defences of York and its city walls.
- 2 To secure the preservation, protection and improvement of their features.

The Fishergate Postern Tower has been the venue for the regular activities of the charity along with the walls more generally.

The Friends of York Walls have the aims to:

1. Influence the management, care and presentation of York's City Walls and Defences for the benefit of local residents and visitors.
2. Organise and undertake practical work and public events in cooperation with the City of York Council and other like-minded groups or individuals.
3. Encourage people generally to utilise the Walls as an amenity.
4. Identify opportunities for potential improvement of the Walls.
5. Establish links with local residents.
6. Monitor and act where appropriate to protect the historical views from and towards the Walls.
7. Act as a pressure group, when necessary, to maintain high standards of maintenance of York's Walls and fortifications.
8. Identify opportunities for possible improved access, physical and intellectual.
9. Explore the potential of Fishergate Postern and the Red Tower.
10. Establish Fishergate Postern Tower as a historical attraction.
11. Explore fundraising avenues such as grants and bequests.
12. Involve schools.
13. Create resource packages, leaflets and other material to help people appreciate the Walls.
14. Arrange walks and talks.
15. Participate in and foster local cultural events.
16. Support other like-minded organisations.
17. Consult with those interested in the Walls.
18. Develop the Friends website, Instagram, Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) accounts.
19. Communicate with members via email addresses and newsletters.
20. Raise the public profile of the group by generating local media coverage.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

### **3 Achievements and Performance in 2023**

#### **3.1 Opening Fishergate Postern Tower to the public**

The tower was visited by 6,800 people compared with 6,003 in 2022.

The donations made by visitors to the Tower in 2023 were £3,700 compared with £3,627 in 2022, confirming that the organisation has a steady income to assure its viability.

#### **3.2 Planting wildflowers on the ramparts – Growing Greener Spaces grant**

The aim of this project is to increase the critical mass of pollinator-friendly wildflowers on the ramparts, thus adding to their visitor interest and through this, adding to visitor engagement with the heritage of the ramparts and walls.

It also contributes to implementing the City of York Council's Pollinator Friendly Strategy for York, and to developing the concept of Citizen Scientist in collaboration with St Nicks.

Planting on the ramparts next to Fishergate Postern Tower continued experimenting with which flowers could out-compete the grass.

#### **3.3 Guided Walks**

These were continued, confirming our role of providing well-researched, accurate guided walks, but bespoke tailored to what visitors want.

#### **3.4 Redesign of Timeline Display in Fishergate Postern Tower**

As part of our strategy of gradual improvement of the standard of visual displays in the Tower, work continued with the designer Dianne Turner to revise the Timeline Display on the second floor. The main developments were to create two colour ways of the Roman panel then consult on them with visitors and volunteers. This work will continue into 2025.

#### **3.5 Geology of the Stone used in the Walls**

We secured a grant from the Geologists Association Curry Fund towards researching the geology of the stone used in the walls. This enabled us to work with a group of specialists including Dr Liam Herringshaw, geologist and palaeontologist who runs Hidden Horizons, Dr Dav Smith from the University of York (Building Archaeologist), and Professor Mike Rogerson from the University of Northumberland (Specialist in Carbonates) from the University of Northumberland. We also had inputs from the Head Stonemason at York

Minster, John David, and from the Council's Bar Walls Manager and Council's stonemason team.

### 3.6 Masons' Marks

The work on the geology of the stones of the tower brought renewed attention to the masons' marks in the building, triggered by our experts finding several we hadn't spotted in the past. A thorough survey was instigated and we now have 65 marks identified, covering 7 different shapes.

Our aim is to form a comprehensive database of the marks, which is then made available to the public and academic community on our website, and is then donated to York Explore Archives so that it has a long-term and secure home.

### 3.7 Artists' Works

We continued this project, which is to commission local artists to create a work with some aspect of the City Walls as their subject matter. This has included works from the past, and also the commissioning of local artists to generate new works. The results will be put on display in Fishergate Postern Tower to enrich the visitor experience.

### 3.8 Interactive Virtual Tour of Fishergate Postern Tower

This was created at no financial cost to us and is available free on our website. Users choose to move to places around and inside the tower. In each place they can look all around them, zooming in on details and choosing to call onto screen short description of each place along with extra information about the special features they can see.

### 3.9 Friends of York Walls main website and 'Sponsor a Stone' scheme

The FOYW website was initially produced in 2010 and continues to provide a useful information resource on York's City walls and the activities of the Friends of York Walls. During 2023 the website was viewed over 130,000 times by a worldwide visitor base of almost 72,000

Work is continually needed to update the website's detailed guide to the City Walls Trail, a guide that City of York Council direct visitors to at the start of their own web pages on the walls. In 2023 all the text was checked and revised.

The York City Walls Trail sections of the website received some 90,000 hits in 2023, more than 250 a day, underlining what a substantial piece of work it is and how valuable visitors find it.

The website continues to host the "Sponsor a Stone" scheme, started in 2012, where anyone can pick a specific stone on the west or north wall of FPT and

in return for a £20 minimum donation they get a personalised certificate and listing against their selected stone. In 2023 17 stones were sponsored with an income of £400. Most dedications were of an “In Memoriam” or “special occasion” nature.

### 3.10 York City Walls Audio Trail

The audio trail of the walls, which was first created in July 2022, had its first full year of operation in 2023.

Users down-load the Audio Trail for a one-off fee of £1.99 and for this they get the 27 map points and over 100 minutes of informative audio. Each new user's download provides the Friends with an income of 80p.

During 2023 766 people downloaded the trail, establishing that it is proving popular with visitors. These downloads generated an income £443.20.

### 3.11 Annual Leaflet

Our Annual Leaflet with its map of the walls had an increased print run to 12,000 mainly to meet demand from Visit York (it is one of their most ‘in-demand leaflets’) and the demands of our ‘help-yourself’ box in Bootham Bar which we keep stocked for about 60 days a year. We supply the only maps which show the full route of the ‘City Walls Trail’, the official circular walking trail marked with distinctive brass studs.

### 3.12 E-Newsletter

Our e-newsletter had 9 issues, reaching 500 plus people each issue. These cumulatively form a valuable record of our activities and past issues are accessible through our website.

### 3.13 Twilight Walks

Two twilight walks were held in the Autumn attended by 40 members of the public. They covered the section of the walls between Bootham Bar and Monk Bar, and have attracted wide praise for the charm of being able to experience the walls and views of the Minster at night.

### 3.14 Links with York University

Links with the university have been strengthened through the initiative from the Deputy College Manager of the Graduate College/Associate Lecturer to include a visit to Fishergate Postern Tower as part of postgraduate orientation in September. Arising directly from this visit, two students became volunteers contributing to our projects on the Time Line and Turret.

The Deputy College Manager also delivered a 15 minute introductory talk about the walls as part of the International Student Welcome event for all new

international students at the University (these typically have hundreds of attendees) as well as Walls Talk and Tour for new postgraduate students.

### 3.15 Electrical Installation at Fishergate Postern Tower

During 2023 the electrical installation at Fishergate Postern Tower was finalised and approved by all the relevant authorities, including City of York Council and Historic England.

The installation was professionally carried out in November 2023 and included permanent supplies to all floors, emergency lighting and additional lighting installations.

The major outlay was just over £11k, which was funded from reserves of the Friends, but it has produced significant improvements to the lighting in the tower, increase visitor safety, reduced fire risk, and is all-round a good investment for the future.

### 3.16 Tower 39 Opened as part of York Unlocked

Tower 39, the corner tower 200 meters south of Fishergate Postern Tower, was opened as part of York Unlocked, and visitors were able to see details of the construction of this 14<sup>th</sup> century building. It has surviving stonemason marks too, which were highlighted for visitors and a proper record made for future research.

## 4 **Financial Review**

- 4.1 The charity continues to be in a financially resilient position with £25,000 in the bank and a reliable income flow of £5,000+ a year.
- 4.2 The Management Committee has reiterated its commitment to ensuring that unrestricted funds of £10,000 are held as a reserve to ensure a continuing robust financial position, but otherwise envisages the cash in hand should be used to further the objects of the charity as set out in its plans for the future below.

## 5 **Plans for the Future**

The plans for the future are to focus on:

- a) Continue with the mainstream work of the charity which is the implementation of 21 Open Days at FPT and promotion of knowledge of the Walls of York and their heritage.
- b) Working with the local authority to respond to whatever conclusion they come to about refurbishment of the roof of Fishergate Postern Tower, and repointing of the interior with lime mortar to reduce spalling of the stone.

- c) Building on the work to plant pollinator friendly flowers on the rampart next to Fishergate Postern Tower, working with the Council and St Nicks, the latter helping to develop the expertise of local people in becoming Citizen Scientists on the plants on the ramparts.
- d) Preparing and publishing the results of the work on the geology of the walls, creating leaflets, media posts and information boards which enable visitors to engage more deeply with this aspect of the walls.
- e) Continue to establish a collection of art works using the walls and towers as their subject matter/inspiration, including images from the past and commissions to contemporary artists and designers.
- f) Continue to improve the quality of the displays in Fishergate Postern Tower, including the time-line, the maps on the top floor and redesigning the ground floor.
- g) Undertake a detailed record of the masons' marks in Fishergate Postern Tower using photography and digital drawings, thus creating a database for use by the public including the academic community.
- h) Taking forward the development of school packs and other ways to engage young people in the heritage of the walls.
- i) Continuing the project focusing on the families who have lived next to the walls in the Walmgate area, using this as a means of increasing the engagement of local people in the heritage of the walls and Fishergate Postern Tower.
- j) Initiating a project to create a display of all the historical maps of the area round Fishergate Postern Tower, and using this as a means of attracting local people to visit and engage with the heritage of the walls.
- k) Pressing ahead with the project to imagine what form of turret might have been on the top of Fishergate Postern Tower before the current tiled roof was installed and creating a visual display of the results.
- l) Seeking grant funding for projects which engage local people in practical activities related to the walls and their heritage.
- m) Recreate a portcullis in the postern gate, supported by explanatory models.

**Bill Hill**  
**Chair, on behalf of the Management Committee**  
**September 2024**







## Friends of York Walls CIO

### Treasurer's Report: 2023

#### Overview

Having fully recovered from the problems of Covid, the Friends of York Walls CIO had a further good year. Our core operations made a surplus of £4,486 in 2023 (£2,816 in 2022). This enabled us to implement several projects that broadened the range of our contribution to the knowledge and understanding of the city defences and to the community of people who have an interest in them.

This report is split into two. The first covers the core activities of the FoYW and is a good guide to our basic finances. It includes the operation of the Fishergate Postern Tower (FPT) and related external events, such as the annual 'Twilight Walls'.

The second part covers our one-off projects, some of which are partially externally funded, and are best looked at individually.

The combined finances of both parts together are shown in the attached Profit/Loss account and Balance Sheet. The overall outcome for the year was that we made a loss of £8,932 (£19 gain in 2022), comprising a large operational gain of £4,486, offset by project spending of £13,418 (mainly the electrical installation project)

Our total financial assets, as of Dec 31 2023 were therefore reduced by £8,932 to £22,060. The Trustees are retaining this for unforeseen problems or opportunities.

The table below summarises the outcomes. A detailed listing of transactions is also available on request. If you have any queries, please contact Richard Hanage [richard@hanage.com](mailto:richard@hanage.com)

		<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Operations</b>	HMRC 'gift aid'	1,154	971	316
	Open day donations	3,672	4,062	2,869
	Other donations	1,832	1,346	822
	Other operations income	1,323	633	424
	Festival income	1,153	167	937
	<b>Operations total income</b>	<b>9,134</b>	<b>7,179</b>	<b>5,368</b>
	<i>less</i> Festival expenses	1,063	1,256	2,717
	<i>less</i> operations expenses	3,585	3,107	3,506
	<b>Operations surplus</b>	<b>4,486</b>	<b>2,816</b>	<b>-855</b>
	Covid support	0	0	17,431
<b>Totals</b>	<b>Total operations surplus</b>	<b>4,486</b>	<b>2,816</b>	<b>16,576</b>
	<i>less</i> projects net spend	13,418	2,797	1,500
	<b>Total surplus</b>	<b>- 8,932</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15,076</b>
<b>Assets</b>	<b>Cumulative assets</b>	<b>22,060</b>	<b>30,992</b>	<b>30,973</b>

## 1.0 Operations

### Operations Surplus

The 'Operations surplus', which is a measure of the basic health of the FoYW, showed an excellent gain at £4,486 (up from £2,816 in 2022).

**Operations income** was very strong at £9,134 (up from £7,179). Donation income continued strong which is very encouraging as it reflects our reputation and contribution to the heritage of the city.

Open day donations were £3,672, (down from £4,062 ) partly due to some of the takings being earmarked for the 'Art' project – see below. Sales of maps and books were also a little weaker at £459 (down from £573).

Regular donations from supporters were also a little weaker at £390 (down from £445). We need more of these, with gift aid declarations, as the tax we can reclaim on bucket donations is limited to ten times the gift-aided donations.

Donations from walks was, at £415, much lower than the unexpectedly high figure of £721 last year. The donations also include a very generous £287 from sales commission arising from Simon Mattam's 'Walking Guide to York City Walls'.

The increased eligible donations in tax year 2022/23 were reflected in a further increased 'Gift Aid' of £1,154 (estimated), which is received a year in arrears. Income from sponsored stones was much improved at £367 (up from £180)

The very successful Twilight Walls event, which provides a unique experience for our visitors, brought in a useful £1,153 of ticket income over four nights, though this was mainly offset by £1,063 of costs.

The 'Audio Guide to York City Walls' generated £430 income and very few costs. A success financially as well as being popular with visitors.

Finally, we earned £434 interest on our savings account – a very welcome improvement on prior low interest income.

The continued robust FPT Open Day income is a tribute to our volunteers and shows that any time we want to bring in extra income we can do so by opening the FPT more often at weekends – weather and volunteers permitting.

**Operations expenses** were still well under control at £3,585 (up from £3,107). This figure hides some large differences item by item. For instance we spent £2,100 (up from £352) on publicity and marketing – mainly printing leaflets and some student work on our social media. We also spent £715 on displays/interpretation (up from £472) but spent nothing on office/computer expenses (down from £598).

## 2.0 Development Projects

External project funding we receive is entered into the accounts in full in the year that it is received, along with any match funding we are committed to providing. Any unspent funding at the end of each year is carried over as a 'Unspent project income' on the balance sheet to the following year. When the project is completed any over/underspend is treated as operations expenses. In this way the projects do not impact on the normal profit/loss account until they are closed. Also, any unspent funding is treated as restricted asset.

## Externally Funded Projects

During 2023 we received a new grant of £2,000 from the Two Ridings Dulverton Fund for the 'Walmgate Family History' project and are committed to £1,000 matched funding.

Unspent funding of £1,650 was carried forward from 2022 but a much larger amount (£4,033) was carried forward to 2024 – nearly all from the 'Walmgate Family History' and 'Twins Diary' projects.

**Growing Greener Spaces** (York CVS: £1,500 and Buglife: £300 plus FoYW matching: £1,500). Total spending in 2023 was £572, leaving £78 to be carried forward to 2024.

**Twins Diary.** (Fishergate ward: £1,000)

There has been no spending on this project so the whole £1,000 is carried over to 2024.

**Geology of the Walls.** (Curry Fund: £1,000 plus FoYW matching: £1,000). This project has been offered a grant of £1,000 by the Curry Fund which will be paid in 2024 on project completion. In the meantime a further £608 has been spent from FoYW funds bring the total to £2004 – an over-spend of £4.

**Walmgate Family History** (Two Ridings Community Dulverton Fund: £2000 plus FoYW matching: £1,000). This project has only just started, with a spend of £45. As a result, there is a £2,955 carry forward to 2024.

## Self-funded projects

**Artists' Works project.** This project purchases art related to the walls for future display. It has no external funding and is internally funded mainly by ear-marking extra income generated by, for instance, by staffing extra open days. Earmarked new funds in 2023 were £368 and spend was £978. Overall, at end 2023 we had a total income of £1,213 and total expenditure of £1,563.

**Electrical installation.** The electrical installation project was completed successfully in November 2023. It has greatly improved the building and enhanced safety on the spiral stairs. The costs were £10,832 for the contractor, plus £557 of other costs.

## 3.0 Concluding thoughts

The FPT Open Days continue to be a good steady earner, making at least £150/day. We need to ensure that we have the volunteers to sustain this.

Even after completing the electrical project, we have a large surplus of £22,060, (down from £30,992), some of which could be spent (wisely), as a smaller reserve is probably sufficient.

Unspent project income is sharply higher at £4,033 (up from £1,650) perhaps reflecting a shortage of people resources to implement projects.

*Richard Hanage 7 May 2024*

**Friends of York Walls**  
**UK Balance Sheet - Standard**  
As of 31 December 2023

	<u>31 Dec 23</u>	<u>31 Dec 22</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Other Current Assets		
Expected Income	1,154.00	194.33
Total Other Current Assets	1,154.00	194.33
Cash at bank and in hand		
Cash	840.32	1.41
HSBC Current	6,024.55	3,089.59
HSBC Save	17,496.81	29,062.62
PAYPAL New	578.10	294.42
Total Cash at bank and in hand	24,939.78	32,448.04
Total Current Assets	26,093.78	32,642.37
Current Liabilities		
Other Current Liabilities		
Unspent project income	4,033.31	1,650.04
Total Other Current Liabilities	4,033.31	1,650.04
Total Current Liabilities	4,033.31	1,650.04
NET CURRENT ASSETS	22,060.47	30,992.33
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILIT...	22,060.47	30,992.33
NET ASSETS	<u>22,060.47</u>	<u>30,992.33</u>
Capital and Reserves		
Additional Net Assets	19,150.73	19,131.59
Initial Assets	11,841.60	11,841.60
Profit for the Year	-8,931.86	19.14
Shareholder funds	<u>22,060.47</u>	<u>30,992.33</u>

# Friends of York Walls

## Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison

### January through December 2023

	Jan - Dec 23	Jan - Dec 22
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
OPERATIONS INCOME		
Audio Guide Income	430.40	0.00
Donations		
Donations - Buckets	2,509.59	2,975.76
Donations - Contactless	1,162.41	1,086.15
Donations - Other	367.59	0.00
Donations - Publishing	287.00	0.00
Donations - Stones	366.69	180.00
Donations - Supporters	396.14	445.00
Donations - Walks & Talks	415.00	721.00
Total Donations	5,504.42	5,407.91
Festival Income	1,153.26	166.58
HMRC Gifts Aid Income	1,154.00	971.39
Interest Earned	434.19	59.42
Product Sales	458.50	573.00
Total OPERATIONS INCOME	9,134.77	7,178.30
PROJECTS (FUNDED) GRANTS		
2020 Growing Greener Spaces	0.00	300.00
2023 Walmgate Family History	2,000.00	0.00
Total PROJECTS (FUNDED) GRANTS	2,000.00	300.00
Total Income	11,134.77	7,478.30
Expense		
Festival Expenses	1,062.89	1,256.00
OPERATIONS EXPENSES		
Books/Maps/Images	0.00	439.36
Display/interpretation	715.00	472.38
Electricity	5.95	16.85
Fraudulent DDs	0.00	0.00
Health & Safety	30.00	0.00
HSBC Fees	60.00	60.80
Insurance Expense	41.40	272.60
Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	95.30
Office Expense	0.00	598.41
Paypal Fees	8.01	0.00
Phone & Broadband	135.16	210.16
Project over/under spend.	0.00	3.61
Publicity & Marketing	2,099.90	351.60
Rent and Rates	216.34	204.80
Repairs and Maintenance	130.01	183.91
SumUp Fees	0.00	17.72
Venue expenses	143.88	179.08
Total OPERATIONS EXPENSES	3,585.65	3,106.58
PROJECTS (FUNDED) EXPENSES		
2019 Heritage Sharing	0.00	0.00
2020 Twins Diary	0.00	0.00
2021 Growing Greener Spaces	0.00	300.00
2022 Walls Geology	607.50	1,395.86
2023 Walmgate Family History	3,000.00	0.00
Total PROJECTS (FUNDED) EXPENSES	3,607.50	1,695.86
PROJECTS (SELF-FUNDED) EXPENSES		
2022 Home Schooling Project	0.00	950.00
2023 Electrics	10,832.59	0.00
Art Collecton	978.00	450.72
Total PROJECTS (SELF-FUNDED) EXPEN...	11,810.59	1,400.72
Total Expense	20,066.63	7,459.16
Net Ordinary Income	-8,931.86	19.14
Profit for the Year	-8,931.86	19.14