

# York Civic Trust



Chair of the Board of Trustees Recruitment Pack

## Andrew Morrison Chief Executive



### Thank you for your interest in York Civic Trust and the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees.

York is an ever-developing city with a proud heritage. It is now at a pivotal point, facing environmental, political and economic challenges and opportunities. The Civic Trust has a unique role in representing the voices of its members as well as the residents and organisations living and working in the York city region.

I am looking forward to working with the Board of Trustees and our small team of staff and volunteers, in adapting and responding to the evolving pressures on the city and its heritage.

Since I was appointed in 2019, the Civic Trust has overcome several challenges including the pandemic, emerging stronger for the experience. . With the help of new Trustees and the various expert advisers who support our committees, we can tackle a far wider range of issues than ever before.

Over the past four years, the strong working relationship I have developed with our current Chair, Stephen Lusty has been essential to bringing about the necessary changes as well as driving the new initiatives.

I look forward to working closely with the new Chair of the Board of Trustees as we approach our 80th anniversary in 2026 and an exciting new chapter in the evolution of our remarkable city region.





“In 2024 we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the opening of Fairfax House.”

## The Search for a New Chair

---

York Civic Trust and its members care about York, striving to promote heritage whilst shaping tomorrow.

Since its foundation in 1946, the Trust has worked closely with city partners at the highest levels, contributing to major changes in the city such as the establishment of the University of York in the 1960s.

We have invested in the conservation of York’s heritage and historic buildings, including Fairfax House, opened to the public in 1984 as a historic house museum.

In addition, we have celebrated over 155 people and places in York through our blue plaques scheme.

We are looking for a Chair of the Board of Trustees to lead the organisation during a period of change as our city region looks to adopt its first Local Development Plan since 1956, creates a new Local Transport Plan and from May 2024 will be impacted by the election of a mayor to head up the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Next year marks the 40th anniversary of the opening of Fairfax House, whilst in 2026 we celebrate the 80th birthday of York Civic Trust.

# Who are we?

---

York Civic Trust, through its reputation in York and further afield, is a key influencer in the enhancement, conservation and development of the city. We work with a wide range of partners across the city, to understand the many facets of opinion in order to create advocates for a sustainable and thriving historic city, a centre of influence and innovation as it has been for 2000 years.

York Civic Trust is part of a network of place-based Civic Societies and Civic Voice, the national charity for the civic movement in England. We share a common interest in making places more attractive, sustainable, enjoyable and distinctive, a proactive consultee on planning applications, conserving our historic environment and celebrating our shared past. We work with people of all ages and backgrounds.



# Planning for the future

---

Each year the Civic Trust's professional staff, supported by expert and student volunteers assess over 2500 planning applications across the City of York's boundaries. We work with developers, architects, planners, local communities and a wide range of experts to encourage quality, to safeguard irreplaceable assets and to retain the distinctiveness that makes York so attractive. The Civic Trust has a unique partnership with the University of York - our Heritage Planning Studio - where 70 post-graduate students each year work with the Trust to develop their skills and experience on live planning applications as early career professionals.

The Civic Trust has a number of specialist advisors who support our work. One of the most active is our Transport Advisory Group which brings together 16 separate organisations and individuals from across the transport spectrum. This expert resource led the Civic Trust to publish its Transport Strategy for York in 2022, a document that has provided a solid foundation for the City of York Council as it develops its new Local Transport Plan.



*Heritage Planning Studio students*

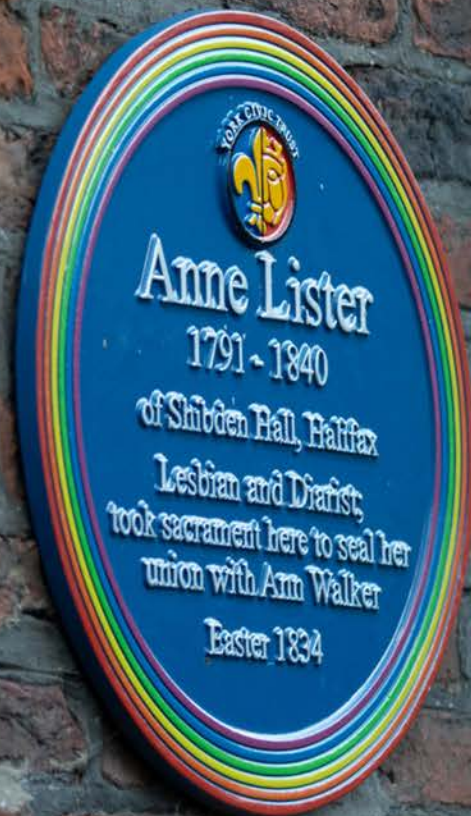
# Enhancing York

---

The Civic Trust continues to enhance the city of York. Commissions have included the statue to the Roman Emperor Constantine in the new precinct on the south side of York Minster and Fossgate Banner. Amongst the 155 plaques installed around the city, celebrating significant people and places in York's story, is the world's first rainbow plaque to Ann Lister (brought to life in the BBC drama series, Gentleman Jack). Other cities have been inspired to use the design to celebrate significant people in their own LGBTQ histories.

At times of more affordable property prices in York, the Civic Trust was able to restore a large range of historic buildings across the city centre including several Medieval Churches, the City's Mansion House, Peasholme House and Fairfax House. Since 2013, we have concentrated our heritage conservation work on smaller-scale improvement projects across the city, from restored original lamps on the city's river bridges to 'pocket parks' in the city centre. This work is funded through public or partnership fundraising or grants and donations from charitable trusts.

"We have installed over 155 plaques celebrating significant people and places in York's story including the world's first rainbow plaque."



# Our engagement

---

Our members and the wider public are welcome to attend the Civic Trust's extensive events programme of walks, talks and exclusive visits to buildings not usually open to the public. As well as offering valuable social activities, our events programme often provides opportunities to delve deeper into contemporary ongoing planning and development work.



Fairfax House welcomes over 20,000 visitors every year. Post-Covid, the museum's audiences have changed, which has led the museum to innovate within its interpretation programming, creating new ways of connecting people with life in 18th century York. We have recently completed a draft Conservation Management Plan for the building which will form the basis of a major capital project over the next five years. The Civic Trust plans to improve the museum's accessibility, its environmental sustainability and historic fabric conservation.



A highlight of our engagement with York's schools are our two annual Public Speaking Competitions. Attracting teams for public and private schools, these contests are part of our commitment to developing young people's awareness and a love for their city, together with an understanding that their views matter.



# How are we financed?

---

York Civic Trust is a financially independent charity. Our income is generated by our museum and shop, our investments, membership subscriptions, commercial property and grants, legacies and bequests. The Board of Trustees maintains strong reserves. Our latest accounts can be downloaded by [clicking here](#).

# How are we governed?

---

York Civic Trust is a Registered Charity (229336) and Company Limited by Guarantee (486282). We are a membership organisation with nearly a thousand members. A Board of Trustees of up to 15 Trustees is responsible for the strategy and governance of the organisation. The Board of Trustees latest Annual Report is available on our website - [you can click here to access](#). The Board of Trustees employs a Chief Executive to lead the delivery of the organisation's strategy, supported by a team of 12 employees and over 100 volunteers.





# What does the Chair do?

---

The role of the Chair is to:

- work closely with the Chief Executive in delivering the organisation's strategic priorities.
- provide strategic leadership to the Trust in line with its vision and mission.
- lead the board of Trustees in governing the Trust, ensuring it meets its legal requirements and achieves best practice within the charitable sector to ensure a sustainable future for the organisation.
- alongside Trustees and senior staff, champion collaboration and partnerships with organisations from multiple sectors across the city region and especially the City of York Council.

In addition to the strategic leadership of the Board of Trustees of York Civic Trust, the Chair is also a public-facing role, representing the organisation at external events and on some key advisory groups such as the Strategic Advisory Board for York Central, the largest brownfield development site in the UK.



# Are you our next Chair?

---

We are looking for someone:

- Working for the benefit of residents, employers and visitors in a commitment to the heritage, built and natural environments of the City of York region, championing its character, ambience and economy.
- Bringing particular focus to the impact of climate change and sustainability.
- Who is a resident of York or within easy commuting distance of the city.
- Who as a strategic thinker can provide strategic leadership to the Civic Trust.
- Who can network effectively, representing the Trust in public forums across different sectors and demographics.
- Who has the time and energy to devote to the role.
- With an ability to engage with and command the respect of, members, employees, volunteers, trustees and leaders working in the community.
- With diplomatic sensitivity.
- Who has an awareness of opportunities and a willingness to seize the initiative on behalf of the Civic Trust.

If this sounds like you, get in touch with Andrew Morrison by emailing [info@yorkcivictrust.co.uk](mailto:info@yorkcivictrust.co.uk).

