



York Civic Trust

Annual Report 2024-25



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Foreword

In December 2024, I was honoured to be elected Chair of the Board of Trustees, and my first task is to formally thank my predecessor Stephen Lusty for having both steered the organisation through five challenging years, and for so generously offering his valuable time to guide me through the first few months of office.

Highlights of the year include: the celebration of Planning Club – a highly successful partnership with the Department of Archaeology at the University of York, now in its 10th year, which has been recognised with an award for the professional development experience it offers to post-graduate students.

Fairfax House continues to engage visitors with new experiences and is becoming recognised both locally and nationally as a leader in the field.

Partnership working deepens the impact the Trust can make in the city. We continue to work very closely with the City of York Council, York BID, the University of York, as well as a wide range of community groups in the city.

Learning is at the heart of the organisation. The events programme for our members and the public continues to grow with highlights this year including talks by Peter Addyman and Professor Laurie Taylor, and visits to the King's Manor with Professor Kate Giles in the last year of the University of York's tenure of the buildings.



The Trust and its membership have been a mainstay of York's development as a thriving historic city for nearly 80 years – an achievement we will be wholeheartedly celebrating in 2026.

Along with the Board of Trustees I am looking to the future, at a key moment in York's history with the city having a new Local Plan, York Central taking shape, the Mayor and the Combined Authority embedding themselves in the region's redevelopment and the city's cultural life blossoming.

Delma Tomlin, MBE

Chair of York Civic Trust

Education



Planning Club @ 10

On Friday 13th June 2025, York Civic Trust and the University of York celebrated the tenth anniversary of Planning Club (more formally known as the Heritage Planning Studio).

Planning Club is a unique and award-winning collaboration between York Civic Trust and the University. Its distinctive model of hands-on planning and heritage education has helped train over 350 postgraduate students in its decade of existence.

The celebration brought together students, practitioners, policymakers, and academics to reflect on the programme’s development, explore its unique approach to casework, and consider its relevance in a national context.

The programme opened with remarks from Cllr. Claire Douglas, Leader of City of York Council, and Jane Grenville, archaeologist and heritage specialist who established Planning Club in 2015. They introduced the day’s themes; Planning Club’s impact, the importance of planning, and the value of local collaboration in a sector under increasing pressure.

Talks from Max Reeves, Director of Developments at the Helmsley Group, and Mark Andrews, Design Director at architects Vincent & Partners, offered reflections on recent changes in York’s built environment and the need for thoughtful planning within the constraints of a growing city.

The highlight of the day for many was hearing from former Planning Club participants. They shared how their experience at York had shaped their work in planning, heritage, and related fields. Planning Club alumni are working in heritage and planning across the world, from Hawaii to Seoul.

To close the day’s celebrations, Rachael Maskell (MP for York Central), stepped out from the debates in the House of Commons to congratulate Planning Club on 10 years.

Students who have been directly involved with Planning Club since its founding in 2015 350

Planning Club 2024-25 Planning cases critically appraised by Planning Club 282

49 Number of students involved with Planning Club this year

Approximate total hours contributed to Planning Club by students this year 1994

“

Planning Club has been incredibly important in helping me figure out what I want to do. It has been informative and has taught me skills I never previously thought I'd acquire. I have developed a deep love and passion for the built environment and planning applications. This is something I definitely was not expecting when I went along to the first session at the start of the academic year.

Whilst it is bittersweet that my time at Planning Club has come to an end, I am excited to put the skills it has taught me to use! I have found so much enjoyment in Heritage Planning and am excited to pursue a career in the field, starting with the next six months as the Trust's newest Heritage Planning Caseworker!"

Abi Kashman

Heritage Planning Caseworker, York Civic Trust



Public Speaking Competitions

York Civic Trust hosted their Primary and Secondary School Public Speaking Competitions at the Merchant Adventurers' Hall in June and November 2024. The two evenings saw teams from 16 schools in the city deliver lively and creative debates on subjects ranging over heritage, architecture and the environment. Lord Deramore's School and All Saints Catholic School took home the trophy for the primary and secondary school competitions respectively.

The Trust would like to thank the dedication and hard work of its Education Committee who, for the last 12 years, have organised this successful initiative for young people in the city. Education is core to the Trust and a new Learning Plan for the whole organisation is currently being developed to build on the success of the Education Committee, as the organisation looks to celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2026.

Student Placements and Projects

Curated Placements

Four postgraduate students from the University of York's Department of Archaeology worked with the Trust on a variety of Curated Placement projects.

The projects included: an understanding of the history and significance of the Lychgate and Dovecote in Rowntree Park, creating a new accessible walking tour of Micklegate, and an assessment of how best to design and place a future blue plaque in the city to Alfred Hollins (1865–1942), a blind organist of international repute in his day.

Sustainability Clinics

The Trust also worked with the University of York to deliver a series of Sustainability Clinic projects. Working in groups, students undertook a study on how best the Trust might fund small-scale but big-impact biodiversity boosting projects in the city's inner suburbs. Meanwhile, another six students appraised how a new pocket park in York might best be approached. Building on the Trust's past successes in pocket park making, the students chose to focus on what one day could be known as 'Monkgate Green' – land on the corner of Lord Mayor's Walk and Monkgate, where St. Maurice's Church once stood.

These Sustainability Clinic group projects enable undergraduates to work through 'live' briefs to gain career development experience of working as a professional consultant. Some are already reaping the rewards, now in paid graduate positions. The Clinic reports will be used by the Trust to inform projects and events in the coming year.



Monkgate Green



Fairfax House

Since 2020, Fairfax House has proudly hosted student placements from the University of York's Department of History of Art, offering hands-on curatorial experience as part of their 120-hour placement scheme. This year, Ellie Martin joined the team. Her time with the Trust coincided with the winter clean and post-Christmas reset, giving her the opportunity to assist with de-installation, collections auditing, and in-depth research into the history of the House and its decorative schemes.

These placements are always mutually rewarding – offering students invaluable, real-world museum experience while bringing fresh perspectives to our work. This partnership has a lasting impact, with three former placement students going on to join the Fairfax House front-of-house team.

York College: College of Fashion

York Civic Trust, through Fairfax House, was delighted to collaborate again with York College's BA Fashion Garment and Technology course. Three talented students used the house, its rich history, and their own family stories to inspire the creation of original garments. Following an in-depth tour with Curator Sarah Burnage, the students explored the collections and Georgian design traditions, translating their insights into bold, imaginative fashion pieces. The collaboration offered a unique opportunity for these students to connect heritage with their own creativity and offer striking and personal interpretations of these historic interiors.

**Total number of
placements students who
worked with York Civic
Trust and Fairfax House**

84

“

The students (and the staff) have absolutely loved the project from start to finish. It has been a real highlight of the academic year, offering students the chance to draw inspiration from your exhibition within the gorgeous Georgian townhouse, together with the students' own heritage. Thank you for giving the students the opportunity to exhibit their work in a public, professional space. Your continued support for York School of Art (part of York College & University Centre) is very much appreciated.”

Lynn Wood, Award Leader

BA (Hons) Fashion Design and
Garment Technology, York College



Learning for the Future

As York Civic Trust approaches its 80th anniversary in 2026, learning and education will remain a central element of the organisation. Since 1946 the Trust has hosted Summer Schools exploring architecture and historic archives (which ultimately led to the foundation of the University of York), talks, seminars, and walking tours that have introduced both its members and the public to new parts of the city and its heritage. The Trust has organised competitions for schools and young people including public speaking, art and design challenges and developed formal education resources to bring the city's archives and history into focus for the national curriculum.

How people learn is always changing. Podcasts are now a popular medium and the Trust has begun to develop a programme available on our website focussing on the city's past – John Snow and cholera, The Luddites, the life of a young Roman woman and the Suffragettes.

The Trust has always approached learning with people of all ages in mind. We are developing a new learning plan that will build on these past successes and equip the organisation to remain relevant and topical into the future, meeting the needs of York residents and visitors.



Environment



Heritage & Planning Review

If there is a theme for this year's heritage and planning review, it is temporality. Heritage is often measured in time: how old a place is, how long it has served its purpose, and how its meaning has deepened with age. York, approaching its two-thousandth anniversary, has no shortage of historic depth – nor of quality – in its buildings and spaces.

Something worth waiting for

At one end of the spectrum is the long-awaited adoption of York's Local Development Plan in February 2025, the first since 1956. Its journey was lengthy: four years of public consultation, followed by seven years from submission to approval. Ironically, having taken so long, it will soon need reviewing to keep it effective until 2033.

The Plan now provides a clearer steer on York's future growth – what, where, and at what scale. Developers have already responded, with schemes for major urban extensions at Monks Cross, Haxby, and Metcalfe Lane submitted. Other strategic sites – including York Central and the former British Sugar site – are progressing, while Hungate and the Civil Service Sports Ground are nearing completion.

Storm in a teapot

At the opposite end of scale and timescale was the saga of a painted teapot on the medieval Lady Row in Goodramgate. The advertisement, painted without permission in 2023 on this Grade I listed building which dates from 1316, sparked heated public debate. Enforcement action led to its removal in July 2025, a brief episode in the building's 700-year history, but one of the year's most enduring local stories.

Numbers game

National planning policy is focused on reducing time lags, with a target of 300,000 new homes a year. For York, new mandatory targets could mean the need to deliver 52% more homes annually. Should the city fall short, penalties could raise the figure to 1,501 homes per year, compared to the Local Plan's 822. Ensuring the Plan remains fit for purpose will be a formidable challenge.

Paving on the Green Belt?

Failure to meet housing targets will also increase pressure for Green Belt development. A small precedent came in May 2024 when local business success story, Pavers Shoes, was granted approval to expand onto farmland. Hemmed in by commercial units, edging into the green space reduces York's Green Belt by 0.0098%. Faced with the alternative of losing the company to another location, Councillors supported the scheme – for many, an act of 'common sense'.

Total planning
cases reviewed
in detail by
York Civic Trust

366



200 Not Out

This year's bicentenary of the railways has brought significant change to York's railway heritage. The removal of Queen Street bridge has dramatically reshaped the setting of both the Station and City Walls. At the Railway Institute, the world's oldest surviving railway water tank will soon find new life as a band practice room.

Meanwhile, the vast York Central site is taking shape. With railyards cleared, public realm works advancing, a new access bridge underway, and the controversial spine road complete, momentum is building. Development partners McLaren Property and Arlington Real Estate are preparing the first major

work package, including a new station frontage, a public park, and major residential elements. For a project first submitted in 2018 and expected to complete around 2038, the challenge is not the pace of change, but ensuring design quality endures.

Total planning
comments
submitted by
York Civic Trust

122

The great, the good... and the less so

Several major schemes have reached completion:

- *The Cocoa Works and adjacent Cocoa Gardens, along with the restored Memorial Library* – all of which is timely, as 2025 marks the centenary of Joseph Rowntree's death.
- *York Minster's Centre of Excellence for Heritage Skills* – crowned Best New Building at this year's York Design Awards, its elegant roof now shelters the next generation of stonemasons and craftspeople.
- *Fishergate student housing (on the site of the former Mecca bingo hall)* – broadly successful in its urban fit.

Less convincing, however, are the Aparthotel near Micklegate Bar and the townhouses at 79 Fulford Road. Both suffer from material choices that jar with York's historic context, that time may or may not soften, and represent missed opportunities.

Approximate total words of
York Civic Trust planning comments

50,000

Looking forward, finding new uses

The future of York's heritage buildings depends on sensitive adaptation. Positive signs include:

- The King's Manor – secured under a long-term lease by York St John University.
- Sainsbury's, Foss Bank – earmarked for large-scale student housing; success will hinge on strong public realm and connectivity improvements.
- The Retreat – being converted into 120 residential units, with efforts made to preserve and interpret its history for public benefit, of which the Trust is helping to facilitate.

By contrast, Bootham Park Hospital remains empty and future unknown. Each passing year without use risks accelerating deterioration, a reminder that time is not always a friend to heritage.

Closing thought

From 14th-century almshouses to 21st-century garden villages, York's planning and heritage story is one of time, patience, and adaptation. Some changes arrive after decades of waiting; others appear and vanish in a season. But across them all lies the same challenge: balancing growth with the duty to honour York's remarkable past.

Planning Success of the Year

This year, we have been able to demonstrate the value in working with local community groups and developers to enable positive redevelopment in the city.

This came in response to a proposed conversion in Aldwark of a former joiner's workshop and synagogue for residential use. The building dates from the 1770s. It has been home to many generations of joiners, and, between 1892 and 1975, an Orthodox synagogue operated on the first floor.

The advice of the Trust helped ensure the redevelopment continues to represent an industrial aesthetic on the ground floor.

York Liberal Jewish Community (YLJC) worked with the Trust to make sure the religious associations of the building will be evident in the longer term. A deconsecration service was held in July, led by Rabbi Albert Chait, MBE of the United Hebrew Congregation in Leeds. A planning requirement for the former synagogue's deconsecration is that a 'plaque or equivalent' will be erected on the outside of the building in due course.

“

We are grateful to York Civic Trust for alerting us to this application and are delighted to work with them to ensure that the longstanding Jewish history of York is appropriately and respectfully preserved and commemorated as required as part of its wider civic life and story. We look forward to continuing to work with the Trust on other important Jewish sites in the city, including at Clifford's Tower and Jewbury.”

Lilian Coulson

Engagement Officer for the
York Liberal Jewish Community

“

I'm grateful for the Trust's input on the scheme. I think it has been really helpful, and we have ended up with a building that has been enhanced architecturally whilst respecting its heritage”

Richard Marchant
Local Developer



No.1 Aldwark



Nether Hornpot Lane

Partnerships

Working with partners across the city ensures that the Trust can deliver projects far in excess of our own resources. Partnerships also ensure that the Trust remains current and topical.

ArchaeoYork

The archaeology of York is well known across the world. However, the organisations that are responsible for making it so significant have for 50 years only sporadically worked together. A new partnership ArchaeoYork, convened by York Civic Trust, was established in 2023 to develop a more strategic, and hopefully permanent, approach to collaboration in the city. To demonstrate the first product of the partnership, York Museums Trust generously offered the 2025 Roman Festival as a demonstrator project. The Festival successfully took place in May with activities spread across the city and the partners' venues including York Minster, the Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens, and York Archaeological Trust's Dig. Students and academics from the University of York developed a city centre treasure trail and Mary Beard headlined a week of talks and walks across the city.

Snickelways

York's Snickelways and the city's telecoms boxes have been greatly enhanced through projects working with YorkBID, Explore York and the University of York. Lighting and interpretation of seven city centre Snickelways and contemporary street art inspired by the city's archives have created a whole new layer of public engagement with these often-neglected elements of the city centre.

“

Our collaboration with York Civic Trust is constantly evolving. One of the most exciting developments is the formation of a Universities and Heritage Cities Partnership, exploring common issues, solutions and initiatives with universities and heritage partners in Bath, Cambridge, Exeter, Lincoln and Norwich, and bringing Yorkshire's civic societies together to explore common ground and help us shape new projects together.”

Professor Kate Giles

Department of Archaeology,
University of York



Conservation

Over the past year, there has been a strong focus on collections work at Fairfax House, including a full audit, targeted conservation, and the early stages of a rationalisation project. This joined-up approach has helped the team better understand the scope and condition of the collection, improve records, and plan for long-term sustainability.

The Grand Staircase works in January 2025 prevented the usual winter conservation clean from going ahead as planned. Instead, we trialled a new approach: cleaning and auditing one room at a time while the House remained open. This made the work more manageable and allowed visitors to engage with the process. Staff and volunteers also deepened their knowledge of the collection, uncovering new details – from secret drawers in furniture to re-identifying portrait sitters. Over 450 objects have now been fully audited.

The audit has run alongside a rationalisation process, reviewing items that fall outside the museum's collecting policy – including duplicated items, unsolicited bequests, or objects in poor condition. This ensures the collection remains relevant, purposeful, and manageable. As part of this, 39 long-term loan items were returned to York Museums Trust.

Fundraising for the Collection

The museum's modern reference library was reduced by about half. Surplus books were offered for sale in the newly launched second-hand section of the Fairfax House shop, with all proceeds supporting conservation. So far, 350 books have been sold, funding the conservation of two important works: *Iconologia* (1699) by Cesare Ripa and architect John Carr's own copy of *Vitruvius Britannicus* (1717).

The current fundraising focus is on the porcelain collection. Much of the decorative porcelain came from Kathleen Terry as part of the Noel Terry Bequest, but her contribution has often been overshadowed by her husband's. Several broken or fragile pieces have been in storage for years or never displayed. We aim to raise funds to conserve 17 porcelain items and give proper recognition to Kathleen Terry and the Leetham family's role in the House's story.

Number of collection items
condition checked & audited

Over **450**

Second-hand
books sold

350 = £1500

Towards collections
conservation

Conservation of the Grand Staircase Ceiling, Fairfax House

In January 2025, York Conservation Trust, in partnership with Pinnacle Conservation, undertook a major month-long programme of restoration and conservation on the Grand Staircase ceiling at Fairfax House – the first significant intervention since the House’s restoration in the 1980s.

The project required full floor-to-ceiling scaffolding to access the intricate 18th-century stuccowork. Pinnacle Conservation conducted a detailed inspection of the ceiling’s structure, responding to the appearance of cracks and assessing the stability of the original plasterwork. Extensive repairs were then carried out to prevent the detachment of the plaster from the historic reed bedding beneath. A system of discreet penny washers was installed to secure the ceiling, which was then carefully concealed to preserve the visual integrity of original stuccowork design.

Following conservation, the ceiling was repainted. Informed by recent archival discoveries, the original 1760s ‘dead white’ finish was reinstated – replacing the contrasting stone tone introduced in the 1980s by Francis Johnson. This shift both honours the original vision of stuccoist James Henderson and brings new clarity to the ceiling’s exquisite relief details.

Casts of selected decorative elements were also taken to aid future conservation work. For the Fairfax House team, this rare opportunity to examine the ceiling up close revealed breathtaking craftsmanship, and possibly even the faint impression of Henderson’s own signature, etched into the plaster more than 260 years ago.





A Gift for the Present

While many supporters choose to leave a legacy through a bequest, this year Fairfax House received a generous and thoughtful donation from a long-standing York Civic Trust member who wished to see their support put to work now, rather than later. With strong personal ties to Fairfax House, the donor – who prefers to remain anonymous – made their gift to help restore the Noel Terry Collection of furniture and bring more of it into public view.

Thanks to their generosity, conservation is now underway on an extraordinary and intricate silver tea table from c.1760. This ornate piece, with its finely carved fretwork, has not been on display for over 30 years due to its fragility and previous damage. The donation is enabling us to restore this table to its former elegance, ensuring that it can be enjoyed by visitors once again.

This act of giving is a powerful reminder that support for our heritage work doesn't have to wait for the future. Meaningful impact can be made in the present.

“

I love beautiful 17th and 18th century furniture which is what drew me to Fairfax House in the first place. I'm very happy to have been able to give some money now, rather than when I won't be around to see what can be done with it, so I am delighted that the impressive silver table is getting the restoration it deserves and will soon be able to be displayed once again.”

Anonymous Donor

Engagement

Blue plaque Celebrating York's Medieval Synagogue

York Civic Trust's latest blue plaque is dedicated to mark the location of York's 13th-century Synagogue and the house of Aaron of York. It was revealed on 9th September 2024 on the facade of the 'Next' building on Coney Street, where the Synagogue stood.

The Synagogue was at the heart of Jewish medieval life in the city at a time when York was amongst the most important Jewish centres in the country. Indeed, Aaron of York was the arch-presbyter, or 'Justiciar', of all English Jews, a role appointed by the Crown to oversee the financial administration of the Jewry in England, particularly in matters of taxation.

Dating from c.1205 to 1290, the Synagogue provides fresh perspective on the history of York's Jewish community. After the tragic events of 1190 at Clifford's Tower, where the city's Jewish community died as a result of antisemitic sentiments following the coronation of Richard the Lionheart, a group of Jewish individuals returned to live, work and prosper in York. It makes for a story of resilience, co-operation and success that had previously been overlooked in the face of the massacre of 1190.

This new insight has come out of the research as part of the 'StreetLife York' project, run by the University of York with support from the Trust, that explored the history of Coney Street.

The uncovering of the plaque was performed by Rabbi Dr Elisheva Salamo and attended by several dozen people, including representatives from local and national Jewish communities, which have helped to make the plaque possible.



York Trailblazers

The National Lottery Heritage Fund supported York Civic Trust's project 'York Trailblazers' concluded in March 2025. The project was a partnership of over 80 local organisations, community groups and businesses led by York Civic Trust and Make it York. It successfully raised the profile of lesser-known people and events in York's history.

The project delivered a community grants scheme benefitting 23 local community groups, a city-wide sculpture trail, a targeted education and learning programme and digital commissions to help celebrate York's UNESCO status as City of Media Arts.

Prioritising communities and groups that had not previously worked in the heritage sector broadened the Trust's network across the city and created opportunities for more residents to discover their city's past and its heritage.

An evaluation of the project undertaken by York St John University concluded that it had successfully achieved what it had aimed to do in raising the presence of under-represented groups in the city's more established historic narrative.

New blue plaque suggestions

11

Number of York Civic Trust members who voted for our next blue plaque

93



Fairfax House: A Year of Celebration and Creativity

Fairfax House marked a vibrant and engaging year in 2024–25, celebrating the 40th anniversary of its public opening following its landmark restoration by York Civic Trust. Central to the anniversary was our summer exhibition, *Restoration: A Townhouse Reborn*, which opened in June 2024. This immersive exhibition explored the building's extraordinary transformation from a damp and decaying shell back into an architectural and decorative masterpiece. Through 'recreated' damage, newly uncovered archives, rich imagery, and film of the restoration shown in a homage to the building's cinema days, visitors were given an insight into the scale and significance of the 1980s restoration.

“

Number of visitors to Fairfax House

23,620

Christmas Mice
in the House

Over

350

Stumbled across this house during a visit to York and it was hands down the best find. I can't believe the detail that has gone into curating it. The volunteers made our visit though, they were knowledgeable about each room and very friendly.”

Sarah, visited March 2025



October saw our ever-popular contribution to York Ghost Week: Annus Horribilis, which transported visitors back to 1763, a year of hardship for the Fairfax family. An engaging trail challenged visitors to uncover secrets of the past, offering a fun and accessible route into the House's history.

Fairfax House's Christmas experience, 'A Christmas Mousetery: The Case of the Stolen Ruby', brought festive storytelling to life with over 350 mischievous mice hidden throughout the decorated rooms. The event proved especially popular with families, many of whom returned after enjoying our previous marvellously mousey Christmases.

Throughout the year, Fairfax House also continued to offer bespoke curator-led tours, Friday guided tours and participation in special events including York Georgian Festival in August 2024. Together, these activities have helped grow audiences, deepen engagement, and underscore the House's role as a much-loved part of York's heritage.

Mice sold in
Fairfax House's
gift shop

1677

“

One of the best examples of a Georgian house I have seen. The ceilings are amazing and the rooms are beautifully decorated.”

Susan, visited April 2025

“

Amazing, stunning, this is a highlight of my visit to York, all staff very friendly and informative, rooms are exceptional.”

Julie, visited March 2025



Volunteering

York Civic Trust, and particularly Fairfax House, could not operate without volunteers. In March, Fairfax House held its first-ever Volunteer Open Day, and the results exceeded all expectations. Over the course of two hours, almost 50 guests visited the museum, enjoyed refreshments, met the team, and learnt about what it means to volunteer here.

The day was designed as an open house, with current volunteers positioned throughout the rooms to share their experiences and answer questions. Dedicated information stations outlined student opportunities and room-hosting roles, while those who joined on the day received welcome packs and our Fairfax House gold pin badge.

By the event's close, 11 people had signed up immediately, with further applications arriving in the days that followed. To date, there have been over 50 prospective volunteers wanting to join the team.

This overwhelming response marks a significant milestone for Fairfax House. For the first time in recent history, demand for volunteer roles has outstripped capacity, allowing an opportunity to create a waiting list. This has come at a time when, anecdotally, much of the industry is struggling to recruit volunteers.

We are deeply grateful to all the volunteers and staff who made the day possible, and to our new recruits, who will help shape the next chapter of Fairfax House's story.



Number of volunteer applications at Fairfax House in the last year **79**

“

When I was welcomed as a volunteer, it felt like a gift. I love sharing the story of this amazing survivor, the huge efforts that have gone into its restoration and now the delight in seeing it as a home, not just a house.”

Paula Linklater





Acomb Manor House

Communications

This year has seen exciting developments in how both Fairfax House and York Civic Trust are presented to the public. York Civic Trust has been progressing its 'brand refresh', working closely with local design agency Lazenby Brown to create an updated logo, brand colours, and overall brand personality. This refreshed identity will provide a stronger, more consistent platform for the Trust's public presence, especially as we prepare to celebrate our 80th anniversary next year. This will be rolled out across print and digital materials in the coming months.

The Trust has also developed a new portfolio of images, most recently with Colin McLean, a photographer renowned for capturing historic buildings and places. Colin has photographed sites with notable heritage value, such as Aldwark, Acomb, and other areas the Trust will engage with as part of its 80th anniversary next year.

In July, Fairfax House launched its new website, supported by a refreshed brand identity, logo, and colour palette. The new site has been designed to be more engaging

and accessible, offering visitors clearer information about visiting the House. To prepare the website, we commissioned some photography by the historic house photographer Christopher John Doyle.

At the same time, we have developed a new Fairfax House leaflet, which has been printed and distributed by Yorkshire-based company Infodisplay. Copies have been placed at key locations across the city, including the train station and the Designer Outlet, to increase the museum's reach and visibility to visitors.

**Number of people reached by
Fairfax House on social media**

128,377

Finance and Governance

Accounts

After the exceptional income accounted for in 2023–2024, this year's accounts reflect more normal levels of income. Our total income of £500,305 compares with £464,295 received during the financial year to 31st January 2023.

The current year ended with net expenditure of £193,811 compared to a net income of £686,445 in the previous year.

The £120,277 increase in expenditure on charitable activities was largely attributable to the York Trailblazers project. The associated grant from the National Heritage Lottery Fund was accounted for in 2024.

This project has enabled us to reach far broader audiences, deepening our engagement with young people and under-represented communities.

Fairfax House saw an 18% rise in its visitor numbers. Our shop trading income rose by 4.5% but an increase of 19% in cost of sales reduced the gross profit to £12,775.

As of 31st January 2025, the market value of the charity's investments had increased by £313,425 on the valuation at the previous year end. During the year we sold underperforming investments in the charity's portfolio.

To allow us to increase our charitable activities, we are taking further steps to maximise the income we earn from our investments. As part of that process, we have recently appointed a new firm of investment managers, WIM in place of Budge & Co.

Our impact continues to benefit from the involvement of our volunteers, who gave over 23,000 volunteer hours to the Trust.

2024/25 2023/24

£ £

Income

Donations & Legacies	69,016	572,977
Charitable Activities	110,896	403,842
Other trading activities	45,406	43,460
Investment and other income	274,987	233,997
Total Income	500,305	1,254,276

Expenditure

Raising Funds	58,437	52,429
Charitable Activities	635,679	515,402
Total Expenditure	694,116	567,831

Net income/(expenditure)	(193,811)	686,445
Gains on investments	313,425	(88,078)
Net movement in Funds	119,614	598,367

Measurable Performance Indicators

Fairfax House Visitors	23,620	20,011
Plaques	1	4
City Enhancement Projects Completed	1	1

Our staff



Evie Andrews
Volunteer Coordinator
and Front of House Officer

Julie Bunney
Housekeeper

Sarah Burnage
Curator

Viv Davis
Front of House Officer



Christina Henzel
Heritage Engagement
Officer

Emily Heywood
Communications Officer

Duncan Marks
Heritage and
Planning Manager

Andrew Morrison
Chief Executive Officer



Imogen Myles
Front of House Officer

Louise Precious
Finance Manager

Linda Scarbro
Front of House Assistant

Rachel Wallis
Collections Manager
and Assistant Curator



Natalie Yemelyanova
Administrative Assistant

Our trustees



Wendy Bundy

Helen Dobson

Elizabeth Heaps

Stephen Lusty



Anthony May

Sue Palmer

Andrew Scott

Matthew Seddon



Richard Smith

Richard Thompson

Delma Tomlin

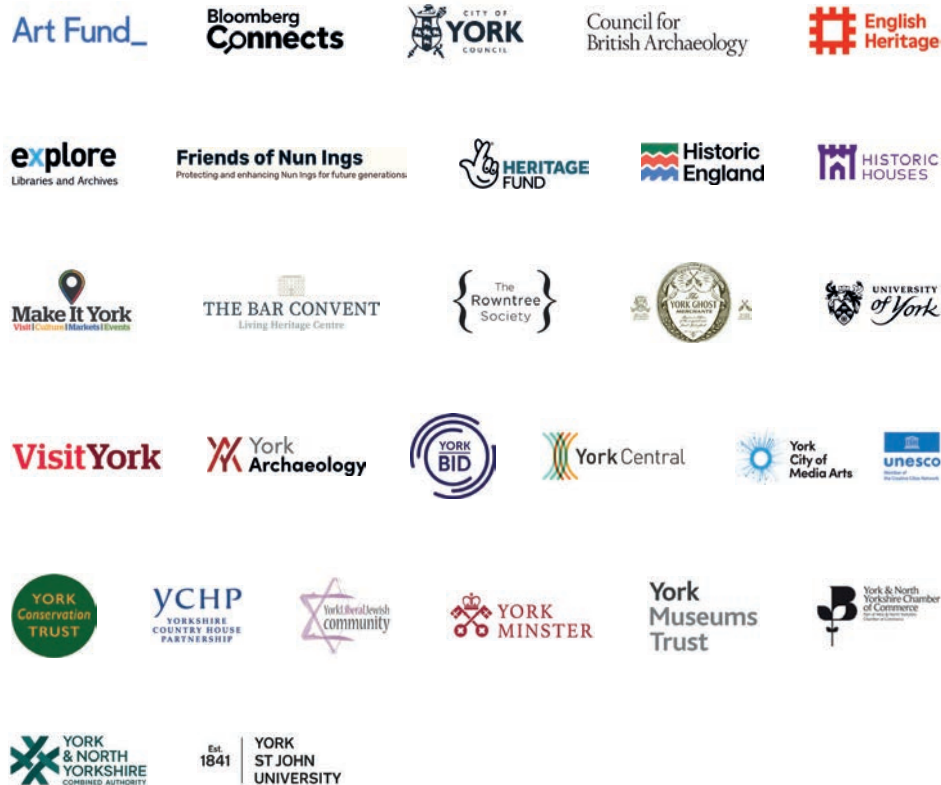
Roy Wallington



Christopher Webb

William Woolley

Partners



Corporate Partners



David Foster - obituary

David Foster, a former Trustee of York Civic Trust, sadly passed away at his home in Heslington in July 2024.

David was one of York Civic Trust's longest serving members and was central to overseeing the Trust's governance and Trusteeship for many years.

His career was a remarkable commitment to the development of the University of York. David joined the then fledgling institution as a junior administrator overseeing students' examinations in 1965 – in its second year, when there were only 490 students. He rose through the ranks to come to serve as Registrar from 1986 until his retirement in 2003.

The importance of knowledge and learning to David crossed over from his time at the university to his roles with the Trust. In the early 2000's,

David established the Trust's Events programme and developed it into the hugely popular and varied programme that it is today.

His impact in York was felt across a range of organisations due to his extensive volunteering. Aside from the Trust, David led York Housing Association for many years, was Chair of Governors of Lord Deramore's School, overseeing the building of the new school, and Chair of Heslington Parish Council.

Those of us who had the privilege to know him will remember him fondly. He was someone who 'lit up a room' with his endearing personality and good humour. He imbued a constant positivity and was confident to operate in a relaxed style, yet all the while being engaged and committed in all that he did.



Poppleton Station Signal Box

Leave a Gift that Helps Shape York's Future

For almost 80 years, York Civic Trust has worked to protect and celebrate the city's heritage. Thanks to the generosity of people like you, we have been able to safeguard many of York's most treasured places for generations to enjoy.

By remembering York Civic Trust in your Will or making a gift now, you can help ensure that York's heritage and character are cared for well into the future. If you would like to talk about how your gift could make a lasting difference, we would be delighted to speak with you. Please contact our Chief Executive at info@yorkcivictrust.co.uk.

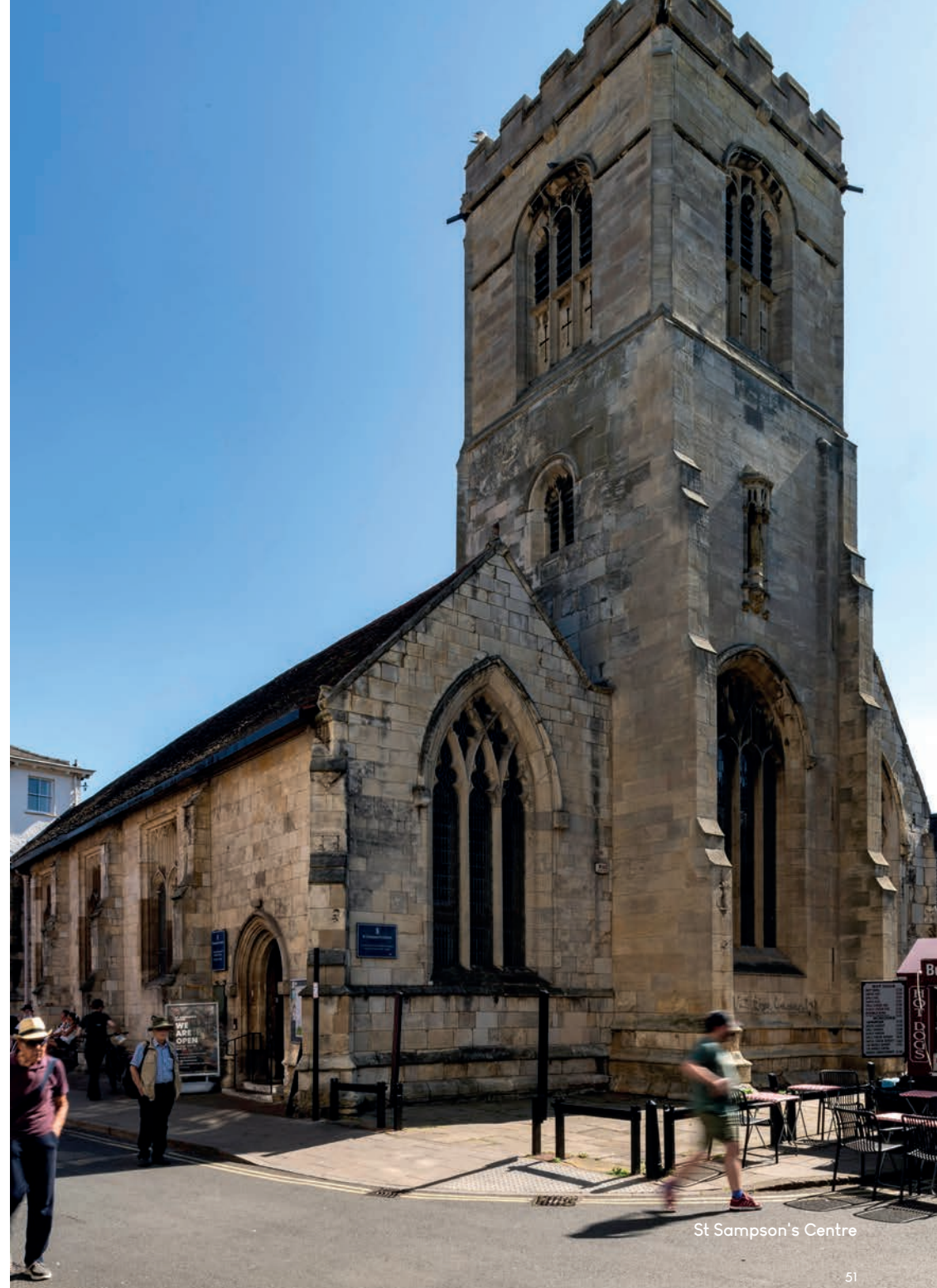
Our York: Celebrating 80 Years of York Civic Trust

Next year marks a major milestone for York Civic Trust – our 80th anniversary. Founded in 1946, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Trust set out to balance priorities that remain central to its mission today; to promote the sensitive conservation of York's heritage, and ensure that the city develops as a thriving, modern place for its residents and visitors. In 1946 the purpose of the organisation was summed up as 'preservation, amenity and design.'

Eighty years on, we are proud of what the Trust has achieved. From supporting the foundation of the University of York and co-sponsoring the influential Esher Report, to campaigning for the pedestrianisation of the historic city centre and conserving or reusing twenty-one important historic buildings, the Trust's work has helped shape the city we know today. Our plaques, gifts of artefacts and trees, and investment in public spaces all stand as visible reminders of this legacy.

To mark this special anniversary, we are delighted to introduce **Our York**, an ambitious programme of events and initiatives for 2025–2027. Our York is designed both to celebrate the city's diverse history and to look to the future, engaging new audiences and celebrating York's rich heritage. We will refresh and expand the Trust's much-loved blue plaques scheme, with new installations, events, and publications that bring York's stories to life in fresh ways.

The Trust's community outreach programme, led by a new Heritage Engagement Officer, will ask residents what York's heritage looks like to them. This work will inform a refreshed Local Heritage List and an innovative programme of community grants designed to invest directly in York's neighbourhoods.



St Sampson's Centre



Joining the Trust

York Civic Trust exists to celebrate, protect and enhance the unique heritage and character of our city. For nearly eighty years, the Trust has worked to inspire people to place heritage at the heart of shaping York's future, and promoting high standards in planning and design. By becoming a member, you will play a direct role in ensuring this vital work continues for generations to come.

Membership offers opportunities to engage with York's history and future through lectures, guided visits, and special events. Members have free entry to Fairfax House and shop discounts. It also provides access to a community of like-minded individuals who share a commitment to civic pride and responsibility. Your support enables the Trust to advocate for high-quality urban design, undertake conservation projects, and invest in engagement programmes that inspire people to feel connected to their city.

If you have skills or experience in areas such as architecture, planning, education, or event organisation, we'd love to hear from you when you join.

Membership is open to individuals and couples. You can choose annual or lifetime membership. Join online at yorkcivictrust.co.uk/contact/support-us-become-member/, or pick up a membership form at Fairfax House.



The photos in this Annual Report were taken by Christopher John Doyle (2025), Colin McLean (2025) and Gareth Buddo (2025).



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