

8 Lord Mayor's Walk/ Goose Lane Moat

Known as Goose Lane before the 18th century. The moat surrounding the walls is lined by lime trees which provide shade and cover for wildlife. The bank below the trees is home to a range of woodland wildflowers including spring bulbs earlier in the year.

9 Holy Trinity

Discover the secret garden in the heart of York that is Holy Trinity Goodramgate. A glimpse of the medieval world behind a busy street. To visit, you pass through an eighteenth-century archway tacked on to buildings that served as artisans' workshops in the fourteenth century. The garden is a haven for urban wildlife including friendly foxes, birds and insects.

10 St Anthony's Hall Gardens

St Anthony's Hall Gardens offers a quiet spot to sit with nature in the shelter of York's ancient city walls. The award-winning gardens are fully accessible and open to the public during daylight hours. A programme of maintenance and planting continue throughout the year.

11 Foss Walk

The River Foss flows for 23 miles before reaching its confluence with the Ouse. Its course, particularly in the lower reaches, has been altered considerably over time. In the 11th century, the river was dammed in York to create a lake that formed an integral part of the city's defences, which is why no defensive wall was needed between Red Tower and Monk Bar. Though the river may not always appear teeming with life, it provides valuable habitat for a variety of aquatic plants, insects and fish, contributing significantly to the city's natural environment.

12 Foss Islands Wildflower area

Created in 2025 by importing low nutrient sub soil, this York Walls in Bloom site supports many dozen native wildflowers and a large amount of pollinators and other insects. Patches of bare soil amongst the vegetation create important microhabitats for ants, spiders and beetles, making this a high biodiversity site. To the north of the site you can see the Red Tower, with parts dating back to c.1490, the Tower was part of the York's wall defences.

13 St Margarets Church

The National Centre for Early Music is housed within the stunning medieval church of St Margaret's off Walmgate. In 1648 the tower and roof of the church were being rebuilt, around this time the porch from recently demolished St Nicholas Church (next to what is now St Nicks Nature Reserve) was transferred here where it can be seen today. Mature trees provide shade in these tranquil gardens.

14 Fishergate Postern Tower

As you are walking past Fishergate Postern Tower, take a look at the wildflowers which appear every spring and summer on the rampart next to the tower. These have been planted by the Friends of York Walls, with the approval and support of the City of York Council. They are above all pollinator-friendly, but they are also native species, non-invasive, and require no ongoing maintenance.

Step into Nature and History within York's City Walls

Discover York's nature and heritage by exploring our historic City Walls and ancient architecture. Follow the 'Stepping Stones' Trail and uncover hidden connections between nature, heritage and historic spaces.

FREE
self-guided trail
- explore at
your own
pace!

Locations
across the
city



The River Foss Society



DIGITAL
TRAIL
MAP



1 North Street Gardens

Peer over the wall and discover North Yorkshire's first floating ecosystem. Floating Ecosystems provide a low maintenance approach to restore riparian waterway edge ecosystems and hard-edged waterways such as the Ouse through York city centre. They are engineered to improve water quality within rivers, lakes, ponds and canals as their range of native wetland plants increase aquatic life, leading to a balanced and revitalised waterscape.

2 All Saints North Street

Discover this beautiful and fascinating medieval church and grounds, home to a unique collection of 14th and 15th century stained glass. The church is open daily for self-guided tours between 10am and 4pm with printed interpretation cards available around the church to enhance your visit. The grounds at the front include mature lime and sycamore trees and the ground vegetation is managed for wildlife as part of the Green Corridors project. Details of events and service times are available at allsaints-northstreet.org.uk

3 Station Rise

Station rise is home the the first York Walls in Bloom site on our ancient city walls. The project was inspired by the Tower of London, Moat in Bloom, to deliver spectacular floral displays between May and September and allow many different pollinating insects to thrive. The wildflower area is in two parts which are split by Station Avenue. For the best experience, begin at Lendel Bridge for a close up view and then walk the walls up to an amazing view of the flowers with the minster in the background.

4 Multangular Tower and St Leonards Hospital

The Library Lawn is a fascinating quiet garden situated between York Explore Library and the city walls. An accessible space, it is surrounded by ancient remains, including the Multangular Tower, the west corner tower of the Roman fortress, and the 13th-century undercroft of St Leonards Hospital, the largest hospital in medieval England. Take a break from the bustle of the city centre and experience here the rich and complex history of York's bar walls.

5 Museum Gardens Meadow

Orchards are brilliant habitat and food sources for pollinators and wildlife generally. The trees were planted in 2023 in an area set aside for wildflowers, including nearby Tansy. A quieter part of the Garden.

6 Museum Gardens Orchard

The meadow, originally planted as an annual meadow in 2024, has been carefully transitioned to become a beautiful and biodiverse traditional perennial meadow, providing a wealth of habitat for wildlife

7 York Minster Gardens - walls access only

Walk the walls from Bootham Bar or Monk Bar for a fantastic view of the hidden Minster gardens within. This rare expanse of natural habitat within the city walls is managed by the Minster gardeners for nature conservation. Regular visitors include foxes and resident hedgehogs.

