

York Festival of Ideas



YORK FESTIVAL OF
1ideas

PLACE & **SPACE**

30 May to 12 June 2026
yorkfestivalofideas.com

Over 150 **Free** Events to
Educate, Entertain and Inspire

York Festival of Ideas 2026 Key Supporters



We are proud of the University of York's role in establishing and leading York Festival of Ideas since 2011. The Festival is an expression of the University's commitment as a university for public good: through the Festival we demonstrate the major contribution of education to the economic, social and cultural vitality of York and Yorkshire.

Together with our Festival partners we are committed to showcasing the importance and relevance of ideas and research, and to engaging with new and diverse audiences.

The University is pleased to support the Festival through the Higher Education Innovation Fund, which facilitates the communication of new knowledge and its benefits to society.

Charlie Jeffery, Vice-Chancellor



Yorkshire Water provides essential water and wastewater services to more than five million customers across Yorkshire and the Humber, playing a key role in the region's health, wellbeing and prosperity. Our vision is for a thriving Yorkshire, one that's right for customers and right for the environment.

We are very pleased to support York Festival of Ideas in bringing together communities, experts and innovators to share knowledge and inspire positive change for our region.



The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) is an independent social change organisation whose mission is to speed up and support the transition to a future free from poverty, in which people and planet can flourish. JRF is therefore delighted to support York Festival of Ideas in its ambition to provide a platform for informed debate on key contemporary issues through a programme of accessible events.

In collaboration with York Festival of Ideas, we are proud to present Festival Focus sessions on *Mapping Wealth, Ownership and Place in York* (page 95).



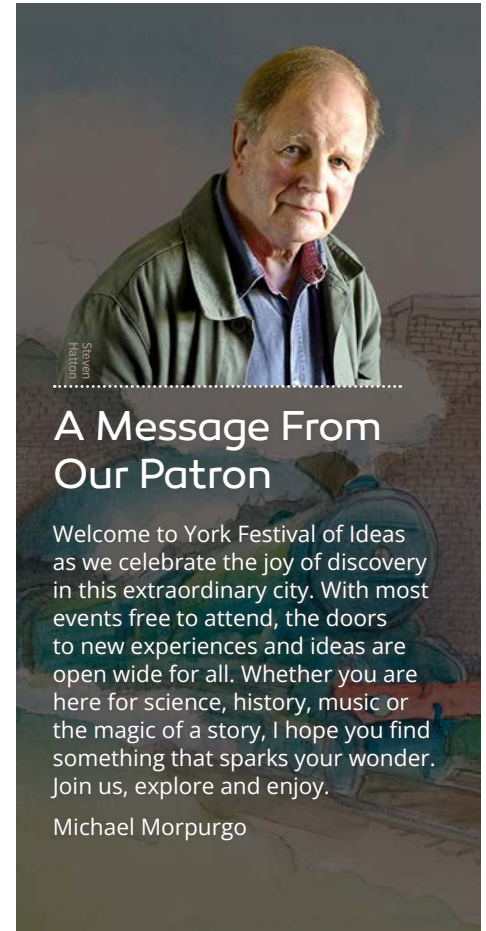
For more than a century we have been bringing families and friends together across the UK by train. We provide vital transport links that connect cities along our over 900-mile-long route stretching from Aberdeen and Inverness to York and London. Our passion is to connect businesses and communities supporting them to thrive. Our ambition is to be the most responsible and sustainable way to travel for generations to come.

We are proud to support three Festival events: *All Aboard the Story Time Express* (page 9), *Full Steam Ahead @Discovery Zone* (page 15) and *Step Aboard: Rail's journey to a responsible future* (page 60).



York Central is the UK's largest brownfield regeneration scheme and is set to add a 21st-century urban quarter to York's extraordinary ancient history. Located next to the railway station and the National Railway Museum, York Central will bring a hitherto hidden site to life, with an eclectic mix of homes, commercial development and vibrant public spaces for residents, workers and visitors to explore.

York Central is delighted to be able to present Festival Focus sessions on *From Brownfield to Blue Sky* (page 47).



Steven Hatton

A Message From Our Patron

Welcome to York Festival of Ideas as we celebrate the joy of discovery in this extraordinary city. With most events free to attend, the doors to new experiences and ideas are open wide for all. Whether you are here for science, history, music or the magic of a story, I hope you find something that sparks your wonder. Join us, explore and enjoy.

Michael Morpurgo

Welcome to York Festival of Ideas 2026



Nicola Sturgeon



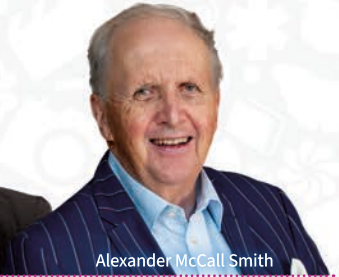
Clive Myrie



Sian Williams



Dame Kelly Holmes



Alexander McCall Smith

Welcome to the 2026 edition of York Festival of Ideas as we showcase an extraordinary programme of over 200 mostly free in-person and online events.

York Festival of Ideas is led by the University of York and this year is particularly special as we celebrate the University being named Community University of the Year 2026 by the Daily Mail University Guide. This prestigious accolade, awarded in recognition of the Festival, reflects our commitment to public good and our belief that the power of education and ideas should be accessible to all.

Our 2026 theme, Place and Space, shines a light on how place shapes – and is shaped by – identity and community, and the vital importance of thinking space for discovery, new ideas and solving global challenges.

We are delighted to welcome a truly stellar lineup of headline speakers who have each shaped their own unique ‘spaces’ in the world. These include former First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon, award-winning broadcasters Clive Myrie, Sian Williams and Dallas Campbell, double Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes, visionary screenwriter Sally Wainwright, veteran of British retail Stuart Rose, celebrated historian Kate Williams and bestselling author Alexander McCall Smith. We are also thrilled to host our second Michael Morpurgo Celebration Day honouring our Festival Patron, Michael Morpurgo, who returns to the Festival for a ninth time.

As we navigate a rapidly changing global landscape, the Festival continues to serve as a vital platform for rigorous enquiry and robust debate. Our Festival Focus sessions interrogate issues including whether democracy can

truly meet 21st-century challenges, how we can foster a more equitable distribution of wealth and how rail is advancing sustainable travel. Crucially, we are also focusing on the economic development of York and North Yorkshire, examining how our own local ‘place’ can innovate and thrive in an increasingly complex world.

York Festival of Ideas remains a collaborative effort, working with over 100 partners to bring world-class thinkers to a regional and global audience of tens of thousands. We owe a debt of gratitude to our supporters and donors whose generosity ensures most of our events remain free of charge. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to you, our audience. Your curiosity and engagement are the heartbeat of this festival.

Joan Concannon
Director of York Festival of Ideas

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The Festival is a collective effort – find out who is involved this year

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A huge thank you to our donors and supporters

Information is correct at the time of going to print.

Any programme alterations, our full up-to-date programme and further details can be found at yorkfestivalofideas.com.



Making the Most of the Festival

We are proud to present a packed programme of more than 200 inspiring in-person and online events. Here are some handy hints to help you make the most of your Festival experience.



PLANNING AHEAD

Festival programme

Browse the Festival brochure to find your perfect events. Look out for world-class speakers, exhibitions, performances, guided walks, family-friendly activities and more. Most of the events listed in the brochure are in person, but you'll also find brief details of 29 online events which you can enjoy from the comfort of your own home. You can find more information about all our events and speakers on the York Festival of Ideas website.

Calendar of events

All our events are listed in date order beginning on page 14. Don't miss our Pre-Festival Events, including our interactive family activities, and remember to check out the Throughout the Festival pages.

Exploring York

Themes

To help you find events that are right for you, we've divided our programme into 15 broad themes, such as Exploring York, Performances and Of Women. You'll find a list of this year's themes on page eight. As you browse our in-person events, look out for the coloured tab above each entry as this tells you the theme it falls under (examples above).

Accessibility

Information about accessibility can be found on the web page for each individual event. Please contact the Festival team if you require a large print or braille copy of the Festival programme, cannot find the answer to your query or have a specific request. Email yorkfestivalofideas@york.ac.uk or phone 01904 324778.

Venues

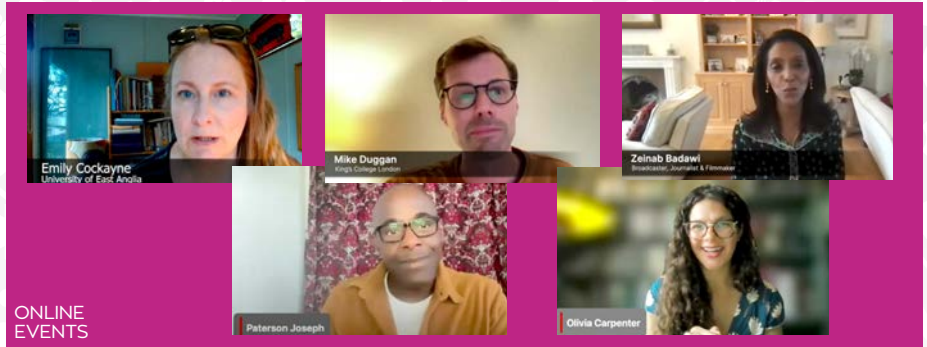
Festival events take place across the city of York. You'll find a list of venues with brief information about wheelchair access on page 99. Further information about event locations and meeting points can be found on the web page for each event.

Family activities

A number of our events are specifically designed for families to enjoy. Search for the pink Fun for Families tab as you look through the brochure. You'll also find a selection of family events on pages ten to 13.

Booking your ticket

To avoid disappointment, check if your chosen event requires a pre-booked ticket. To reserve a ticket, simply follow the instructions given for each event in this brochure. Most events are bookable online.



ON THE DAY

In-person events

For ticketed events, please show your ticket on your smartphone via the Eventbrite app or print out a copy to bring along. There are no reserved seats and admission is on a first-come, first-served basis, so make sure you arrive in good time if you'd like a front-row view.

Online events

Most of our online talks take place live via Zoom, so you'll need to download the free app/software. Please be aware that our online sessions provide automated live-captioning but this may not be 100 per cent accurate and can vary in quality.

Photography and videography

Photography, filming and/or recording will be taking place at a number of our events. Please inform a member of the Festival team before the event if you do not wish to be photographed, filmed or recorded.

Food and drink

A number of our city venues have cafés serving refreshments. Check the organisation's website for details. If you are attending events at the University of York, refreshments will be available to purchase at most campus venues.

Travel and transport

Festival events are taking place at a wide range of venues across the city. You can plan your journey by public transport using the

York Journey Planner at itravel.york.info/plan-journey. For those travelling to York by car, the planner also includes details of the city's six park and ride sites. Information on central York car parks can be found at york.gov.uk/parking. Parking facilities at venues outside the city centre will vary, so please see the venue's website for information.

Many of this year's Festival events are taking place on Campus East and Campus West at the University of York. First Bus runs a frequent service (bus numbers U1, U2 and U3) between the city centre and the University. If travelling by car, parking on both campuses is free after 6pm and on weekends. You can find more information about travel and transport on the Festival web pages.

Our Festival Themes

All our events are grouped under 15 broad themes to make it easier for you to identify what might be of interest to you. Just look out for the matching coloured tab at the top of each column (page 14 onwards).

A Date with History

Arts and Creativity

Eoforwic: Anglian-era York

Evolving Society

Exploring York

Fun for Families

Health and Wellbeing

Natural World

Of Women

Performances

Power of Politics

Revealing the Ancient World

Science and Technology

The Mind and the Brain

Way with Words

Natural World



Exploring York



Performances



Fun for Families



Science/Technology



Of Women



Arts and Creativity



All Aboard the Story Time Express with Michael Morpurgo

Wed 10 June, 10am to 10.45am
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

It's full steam ahead with children's author Michael Morpurgo as he reads from his much-loved book *Flying Scotsman and the Best Birthday Ever* – from a locomotive!

School and home-educated children are invited aboard our story time express for an online journey into the golden age of steam travel. Enjoy an inspiring tale celebrating the world's most iconic train, *Flying Scotsman*, and its greatest fan, a young girl named Iris.

Surrounded by the gleam of brass at York's National Railway Museum, Michael will read excerpts from his joyfully illustrated book and answer questions about his life and inspiration. Our live online event is hosted by Katie Razzall, BBC News Culture and Media Editor.

Flying Scotsman and the Best Birthday Ever is published by Thames & Hudson in association with the National Railway Museum.

Please note, this event is for schools and home-educator groups, not for the general public. Sign your school up at yorkfestivalofideas.com.

Michael Foreman/Thames & Hudson

Michael Morpurgo Celebration Day

After the runaway success of our inaugural Michael Morpurgo Celebration Day – enjoyed by more than 18,500 children online and hundreds more families in person – we are proud to present our second chapter. Prepare for a double bill of storytelling magic, from the thundering tracks of the *Flying Scotsman* to the vibrant melodies of *Carnival of the Animals*. (Please also see page 86.)

LNER
LONDON NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY



FUN FOR FAMILIES

FULL STEAM AHEAD @ DISCOVERY ZONE



Wed 27 May, 10am to 4pm
National Railway Museum,
Leeman Road

Free. Booking required.



All aboard for a day of
high-speed discovery at the
National Railway Museum!

SEE PAGE 15

SNICKLEWAYS AND SILLY STREET NAMES TRAIL



Throughout the Festival
Starts at Parliament Street
Free. No booking required.



Giggle your way through York's
most ridiculously named
streets on a fun trail.

SEE PAGE 17

FOSS FAIRY TRAIL



Throughout the Festival
Starts at Heworth Green Gate
Free. No booking required.



Enjoy a magical hidden world
built by fairies on the banks of
the river Foss.

SEE PAGE 18

STORYTELLING IN A VIRTUAL WORLD



Sat 30 May, various sessions
The Guildhall, Coney Street
Free. Booking required.



Immerse yourself in the
world of 3D animation,
motion capture and
storytelling.

SEE PAGE 20

FUN FOR FAMILIES

TOILET TALK: FLUSHING OUT BETTER SCHOOL LOOS



Sat 30 May, 11am to 3pm
Quad South Hall, York St John
University

Free. No Booking required.



Help improve school toilets!
Explore life-size cubicles and
graffiti your thoughts.

SEE PAGE 22

D-DAY WITH THE EAST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT



Sat 6 June, 10am to 3pm
Eye of York, Tower Street
Free. No booking required.



Explore Second World War
East Yorkshire Regiment kit,
vehicles and demonstrations.

SEE PAGE 55

LITTLE PAWS CREATIVE CLUB



Sat 6 June, 10.30am to
12 noon
All Saints' Church, North Street
Tickets: £2. Booking required.



Get crafty at a special
Festival edition of All Saints'
Church's Creative Club.

SEE PAGE 58

ADVENTURES IN SPACE



Sat 6 June, 10.30am to
12 noon
Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green
Free. Booking required.



Discover how layout, scale and
placement can change the
meaning of words.

SEE PAGE 58

FUN FOR FAMILIES

GRAPHIC NOVEL WORKSHOP



Sat 6 June, 12 noon to 1.30pm
The Place, Bramham Road
Free. Booking required.



Explore the world of graphic novels and learn how to create a book.

SEE PAGE 60

FESTIVAL FRINGE FAMILY FUN AFTERNOON



Sat 6 June, 1pm to 4pm
Ron Cooke Hub,
University of York
Free. No booking required.



Enjoy an afternoon of energetic, creative, crafty, puzzling, scientific and historical fun.

SEE PAGE 63

WHERE ARE ALL THE ALIENS?



Sat 6 June, 2pm to 3pm
Bootham School, Bootham
Free. Booking required.



What might extraterrestrial life be like and how are we trying to find it?

SEE PAGE 64

CONNECTING WITH NATURE ON CAMPUS



Sun 7 June, 10.30am to 12.30pm
Campus East Gazebo,
University of York
Free. Booking required.



Join us for interactive nature games, a guided walk and hands-on creative activities.

SEE PAGE 69

FUN FOR FAMILIES

DISCOVERY ZONE



Sun 7 June, 11am to 3pm
Ron Cooke Hub,
University of York

Free. No booking required.



Meet robots, play a treescape board game and get crafty making a simple pot.

SEE PAGE 70

TREASURE-HUNTING AND ORIGAMI-MAKING FUN



Sun 7 June, 1pm to 3pm
Ron Cooke Hub,
University of York

Free. Booking required.



Listen to an exciting tale, take part in a treasure hunt and make origami figures.

SEE PAGE 73

FRESH AIR, FRESH ROOTS



Sun 7 June, 3.15pm to 4.15pm
Piazza Building,
University of York

Free. Booking required.



Explore, play and learn as you dive into a fast-paced strategy board game.

SEE PAGE 75

SONGS OF NATURE WITH MICHAEL MORPURGO



Tues 9 June, 6pm to 7.35pm
Central Hall, University of York

Free. Booking required.



Don't miss a spectacular concert featuring readings by author Michael Morpurgo.

SEE PAGE 86



Community University of the Year

The University of York is proud to have been named Community University of the Year by The Mail University Guide 2026 in celebration of York Festival of Ideas.

One of the largest free festivals of its kind in the UK, York Festival of Ideas is an expression of the University of York's commitment as a university for public good.



PRE-FESTIVAL EVENTS

Performances

John McCusker Trio



Fri 29 May, 7.30pm to c9.30pm

National Centre for Early Music, Walmgate 
Tickets: £23 (£21 concessions, £8 under 35)
ncem.co.uk 01904 658338

The John McCusker Trio is led by John McCusker, a multi award-winning fiddle player, producer and composer. His distinctive, emotionally charged playing and masterful compositions have made him a linchpin of contemporary Celtic music. He is joined by two of the most sought-after talents on the UK folk circuit – singer and multi-instrumentalist Sam Kelly and Toby Shaer, a virtuoso performer on flute, whistles and guitar.



Full Steam Ahead @Discovery Zone

Wed 27 May, 10am to 4pm

National Railway Museum, Leeman Road 📍

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

All aboard for a day of high-speed discovery at the National Railway Museum! From the magic of the Victorian era to the tech of tomorrow, we're bringing the rails to life.

Master the art of railway signalling, go head-to-head with robots or step into a digital world with our immersive VR goggles. Whether you're building Lego masterpieces or watching an intricate miniature railway in motion, there's a world of wonder awaiting.

Join us to ignite a passion in the next generation of engineers and scientists.

Presented in partnership with the National Railway Museum and with the generous support of LNER.

LNER
LONDON NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

**RAILWAY
MUSEUM**



Don't miss:
Welcome onboard rail's most important journey yet – towards greener travel and a future-proofed national network. Please see page 60.

THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL

Printed Portraits and the Scientific Revolution



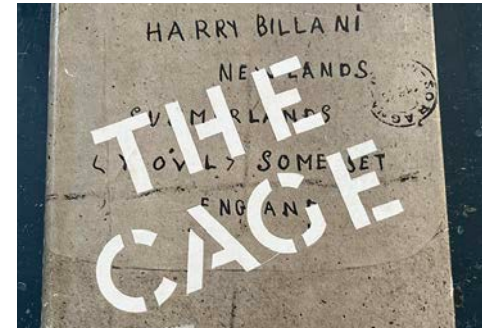
Throughout the Festival

Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green **157**
Free. No booking required.

How do printed portraits depict the changing and expanding knowledge about nature in the 16th and 17th centuries? Discover the portraits of early modern astronomers, anatomists and natural historians, and explore how images shape scientific identity at this illuminating exhibition. *Visit thinicepress.org to find out more about the Centre's regular programme of events and opening times.* (Please also see page 93.)

**THIN
ICE
PRESS**
The York Centre for Print

Words Behind Barbed Wire



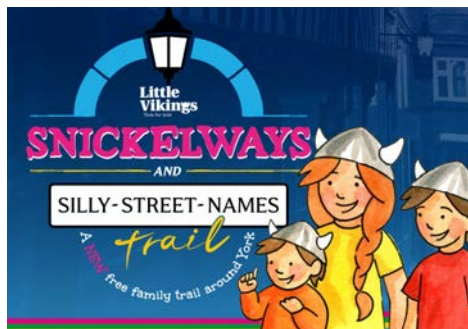
Throughout the Festival

York Army Museum, Tower Street **162**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Explore the powerful story of Second World War novelist Dan Billany who served with the East Yorkshire Regiment and became a prisoner of war in Italy. Featuring personal objects and rare archives, the York Army Museum exhibition reveals how wartime experience had a lasting personal impact and shaped a writer's voice. Come along and discover how creativity can endure even in the most challenging circumstances.

**YORK ARMY
MUSEUM**

Snickleways and Silly Street Names Trail



Throughout the Festival

Starts at Parliament Street **37**
Free. No booking required.

Giggle your way through York's most ridiculously named streets on the family-friendly Snickleways and Silly Street Names Trail. From the little-known Little Peculiar Lane to the world-famous Shambles and the tongue-twisting Whip-Ma-Whop-Ma-Gate, uncover hidden gems, have a go at silly activities and pick up a historical fact or two. Simply download a map or collect one from the Visit York Information Centre.



Sociologically Imagining York: Podcasted-walk



Throughout the Festival

City Centre **11**
Free. No booking required.

Prepare to see our city in a new light on a self-guided sociological tour of York's historic city centre. Developed by University of York sociologists, the Sociologically Imagining York podcasted-walk features an exploration of 16 sites, including Museum Gardens, Evil Eye and SPARK. At each location enjoy a short podcast by York researchers offering new perspectives on familiar sights via a sociological lens. Visit sociologicallyimaginingyork.com



Thin Ice Press: the York Centre for Print



Throughout the Festival

Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green **57**
Free. No booking required.

Explore the fascinating history and vibrant future of traditional printing at Thin Ice Press: the York Centre for Print. Set in the idyllic gardens of St Anthony's Hall, the Centre's working pressroom, museum and gallery offers exhibitions, workshops and activities for all ages. Visit thinicepress.org to find out more about the Centre's regular programme of events and opening times.



Foss Fairy Trail



Throughout the Festival

Starts at Heworth Green Gate 
Free. No booking required.

Enjoy the Foss Fairy Trail, a magical hidden world built by fairies on the banks of the river Foss. Explore the fairy village and discover the folklore, flora and fauna of their enchanted home. Walk into a small woodland to find another fairy village, further hidden fairy houses and a wildlife area. From there, head up to the cycle track which leads to other interesting areas including St Nicolas Fields.




York Death & Culture Walk



Wikimedia Commons/
Vale Center for English Art

Throughout the Festival

Starts at St George's Graveyard 
Free. No booking required.

Explore death, dying and the dead on a self-guided podcast walking trail around the ancient city of York. Beginning at St George's Graveyard, the trail takes you to locations including the cholera burial ground and the North Eastern Railway War Memorial. Download the podcast and discover more about human mortality, both past and present.



York Crime Walk



Throughout the Festival

Starts at Walmgate Bar 
Free. No booking required.

Delve into York's dark past with this self-guided podcast walking tour and prepare to view the city's buildings, landmarks, people and places in a new light. Starting at Walmgate Bar – where in the 14th century heads of executed criminals were displayed – the trail reveals York's hidden history of crime, justice and punishment.



Confluence for Change: Making the invisible visible

Throughout the Festival
Please see the Festival website
for further information
Free. No booking required.

Discover the hidden story of Yorkshire's waterways at *Confluence for Change*, a thought-provoking multimedia exhibition revealing the silent crisis of chemical pollution in our rivers.


Powered by cutting-edge science from the NERC ECOMIX project, this audio-visual experience blends stunning photography with immersive audio to make the invisible visible. Drop by, gain a deeper understanding of the science behind river health and leave empowered to help protect our rivers.



© Images - William O'Connell / iStock.com



The Future's in Our Hands: Reclaiming our rivers

Sat 6 June,
4.30pm to 6pm
Law and Sociology Building,
University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Antibiotics, cosmetics, insecticides, and herbicides: our rivers are exposed to thousands of chemicals every day. But the story doesn't have to end there.

Join our panel of experts as they decode the chemical cocktail in our waterways and share actionable steps we can all take to restore the health of our rivers.

SATURDAY

30

MAY

Unfolding Potential: Fidgets to soft robotics



Sat 30 May, 10am to 11am

Bootham School, Bootham 15

Free tickets:

trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/68013

From humble paper baubles to high-fashion runways and soft robotics, paper engineer Darryl Bedford reveals that a simple sheet of paper is a gateway to infinite possibilities. Enjoy a captivating talk and discover the hidden mathematics of the universe, the neuroscience behind creativity, and how the ancient art of Origami intersects with AI and biomimicry. Join Darryl to explore craft as a tool for lifelong learning. *Designed for adults – open to ages 11+.*



Storytelling in a Virtual World



Sat 30 May, 10am to 11.30am, 12.30pm to 2pm and 2.30pm to 4pm

The Guildhall, Coney Street 154

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Immerse yourself in the wonderful world of 3D animation, motion capture and storytelling in a series of interactive family-friendly demonstrations and workshops with the team from XR Stories. Storyboard a script, choose your main character, build your own story world and watch as a motion capture actor brings that world to life on screen. *Suitable for ages nine to 12. Family and friends are welcome to watch the action.*

xR StCries

England and York Before and After 1066



Sat 30 May, 10am to 1pm

St Oswald's Church Hall, Main Street, Fulford 46

Tickets: £5 (Booking essential)

ffhyork.weebly.com

The Bayeux Tapestry is coming to the British Museum, provoking searching questions about the causes and consequences of the invasions of 1066. Why did Tostig Godwinson and Norwegian king Harald Hardrada sail an invasion fleet up the Ouse in September 1066? How did William of Normandy impose his power? Was there resistance and resilience? How did the Normans change York and rule the north?

Hear from our expert speakers.
Registration from 9.30am. Parking by prior arrangement only.



First Helpings: A history of children and food



Sat 30 May, 10.30am to 11.30am

York Explore Library, Museum Street 63

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What should children eat and why? How should they eat it and what should they learn about food? Answers to questions like these have differed over time. Writers Deborah Albon and Amy Palmer explore the relationship between children and food in history, covering topics including breast versus bottle feeding, the difference between 'adult' and 'children's' food and drink, table manners, school meals and learning to cook.



The Power of Anxiety: How to ride the worry wave



Sat 30 May, 11am to 12 noon

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens 51

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Anxiety can have an immense power. It keeps us inside, away from people, places and opportunities. Makes us question, doubt or criticise ourselves. Sian Williams, broadcast journalist and counselling psychologist, looks at anxiety differently: rather than squaring up to anxiety, we should listen to what it is saying. Join Sian for tips, expert research and stories from those who've learnt how to ride the worry wave to thrive.



Toilet Talk: Flushing out better school loos



Sat 30 May, 11am to 3pm

Quad South Hall, York St John University 📍
Free. No booking required.

Help researchers reimagine school toilets at our interactive, family-friendly event. Step into life-size cardboard toilet cubicles and graffiti your thoughts, build Lego models of your perfect loo and find out about York St John University research. School toilets significantly impact children's health and well-being with 78 per cent of pupils avoiding them. Discover how the Toilet Talk project is on a mission to improve these spaces.

Est. 1841 | YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Swing Dance Festival



Sat 30 May, 11am to 4pm

Belfrey Hall, Stonegate 📍
Free. No booking required.

York Lindy invites you to a free one-day swing dance festival, featuring a pop-up exhibition, dance classes, music and history talks. Come along and learn about the musicians and dancers that made Harlem swing, listen to authentic music and discover how the dance has evolved into the 21st century. Don't miss the opportunity to try Lindy Hop, Charleston and Jazz dancing.

YORK
LINDY

The Folded Pleat: A creative play lab



Sat 30 May, 11.30am to 12.30pm

Bootham School, Bootham 📍
Free tickets:

trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/68013

Join Kirigami artist and educator Darryl Bedford for an immersive, hands-on session dedicated to the art of pleated paper. Far from being just a simple fold, the pleat is a building block of design, capable of transforming a flat sheet into complex, sculptural forms. Discover new techniques at this creative play session designed to ignite curiosity and spark fresh ideas for your artistic practice. *Designed for adults* – open to ages 11+.



The Final Chapters: Two writers on ageing and care



Sat 30 May, 12 noon to 12.45pm
York Explore Library, Museum Street 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

As our society ages, questions of how we care for our loved ones are more urgent than ever. Join authors Caleb Klaces and JT Welsch for a vital, compassionate conversation about navigating the ‘final chapters’ and the ethics of care in later life. Hear readings from Caleb’s poignant novel *Mr Outside* and JT’s nonfiction book, *The Poetry of Suicide: Lessons in Grief from the Lives and Deaths of Poets*, followed by an open discussion.



Pride Parade March




Sat 30 May, 12 noon to 1.30pm
City Centre 
Free. No booking required.

York Pride gets off to a fabulous start with the Parade March through the city centre streets to the Knavesmire. The loud and proud Parade is a colourful celebration of our community and a march for equality and LGBT+ human rights in the UK and around the world. It’s our chance to show what a diverse and inclusive place York is and to show that hatred and prejudice have no place in our city.

York Pride Festival



Sat 30 May, 1pm to 7pm
Knavesmire 
Free. No booking required.

York Pride returns to the Knavesmire with a vibrant afternoon of entertainment and family-friendly activities. Why not come along and celebrate inclusivity and diversity, and make some new friends? Featuring live entertainment, food vendors, a bustling Pride marketplace and the iconic main and cabaret stages, there’s something for everyone to enjoy. Join us for music, laughter and unforgettable moments.



Lintukoto: Mythical places at the edge



Henna Asikainen

Sat 30 May, 12 noon to 3pm

King's Manor, Exhibition Square 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


In Finnish mythology, lintukoto is a paradise at the world's edge where the sky and earth meet and birds migrate for winter. Through an immersive installation, artist Henna Asikainen reinterprets this myth for the Anthropocene – an era of ecological collapse, displacement and political instability. Join Henna for the installation launch as we explore what refuge means for those forced to flee their homes. *(Please also see page 33.)*



A Living Tradition: Baroque meets contemporary



**Sat 30 May, 12.30pm to 1.10pm (recital),
3.30pm to 4pm (talk) and 4pm to 4.45pm
(service)**

All Saints' Church, North Street 
Free. No booking required.


Join organist Robert Sharpe as he puts the recently overhauled organ at All Saints' Church through its paces with a recital celebrating the baroque splendour and intimacy of Buxtehude and J S Bach. Robert will then return to discuss York's living tradition of music with the composer Philip Moore, whose music will be sung at Choral Evensong.



The Sun Rising: James I and the dawn of a global Britain



Sat 30 May, 12.45pm to 1.45pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


1603: England is on the brink. As Queen Elizabeth I's death ends the Tudor line, King James I ascends to the English throne establishing a new dynasty and the first 'united' kingdom of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Join historian and broadcaster Anna Whitelock for a panoramic account of the arrival of the Stuarts and discover how the reign of King James I saw England reach new corners of the globe.



After the Bombardment



Sat 30 May, 1.15pm to 2.15pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


On 16 December 1914, Scarborough suffered a devastating naval attack – the first to target civilians on English soil during World War I. Jonathan Brockbank of the University of York discusses the bombardment and compares two fictional responses – Osbert Sitwell's *Before the Bombardment* and Winifred Holtby's *The Crowded Streets*. While Sitwell depicts the events as the end of an era, Holtby sees the birth of a new world.



The Evolution of Maternity Care in York



Sat 30 May, 2pm to 2.45pm

York Medical Society, Stonegate 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


In the 19th century, childbirth was perilous for both mother and baby with frequent days-long labour at home. Pain relief and caesarean section were unavailable, and GPs had no training in the use of forceps. Obstetrician James Drife explores the history of maternity care from the era of untrained midwives through to the introduction of national maternity care and beyond. *There will be an opportunity to view some of the objects from the talk from 3pm to 4.30pm.*



Fear in the Therapy Room



**Sat 30 May, 2pm to 3.30pm (in person) and
Thurs 4 June, 7pm to 8.30pm (online)**

Friargate Quaker Meeting House, Friargate 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Michael Guilding, a retired psychotherapist with 30 years of clinical practice, lifts the lid on the process of counselling and psychotherapy and examines what goes on in the room between therapist and client. Using the perspective of our biological fear-system, he examines how this rather strange activity can sometimes end up helping no one but has the potential to heal trauma and enable transformative personal growth.



Behind the Scenes of All Creatures Great and Small



Sat 30 May, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens ⁵¹
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

How have the creators of Channel 5's *All Creatures Great and Small* reimagined James Herriot's Yorkshire Dales characters for 21st-century audiences? What are the challenges of adapting semi-autobiographical books for the screen? Taking us into the writers' room and onto set, the show's script executive Donna Metcalfe reflects on the experience of re-adapting the books. Join Donna and the series' historical consultant Mark Roodhouse.



ARTivism: From feeling to resisting



Sat 30 May, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street ⁶³
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Discover the impact of art as a form of protest. Our powerful exhibition and accompanying talk bring resistance against gender-based violence into the spotlight. Learn how a York-Mexico City collaboration is foregrounding the work of diverse ARTivists from across Mexico, and view photographs and a zine generated as part of an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded project. *The exhibition is on view from 11am to 4.30pm.*



Taking Up Space: An act of resistance



Sat 30 May, 3.45pm to 4.45pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street ⁶³
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Why do some negative experiences hold us back while others propel us forward? Psychologist Karisha George of the University of York explores why engaging with life's trials is key to building confidence and personal growth. Join Karisha and find out how to turn setbacks into superpowers, transforming past experiences into the confidence you need to boldly take up space.



Fulvia: Breaking the rules in Ancient Rome



Sat 30 May, 4.15pm to 5.15pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens **51**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Born into wealth, privilege and prestige around the year 80 BCE, Fulvia was neither an empress nor a queen. Yet by her death in 40 BCE, she had amassed a degree of political and military power unprecedented for a woman. Using Fulvia as a guide, historian Jane Draycott reveals the crucial – and frequently over-looked – role played by women during Rome's violent transition from a republic to the dictatorship of the Roman Empire.



The Tudor Heart



The Trustees of the British Museum

Sat 30 May, 6pm to 7pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens **51**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Discover the Tudor Heart, a unique 24-carat-gold pendant linked to Henry VIII and his first wife Katherine of Aragon. Dating from the late 1510s and found by chance in 2019, this masterfully crafted piece of jewellery was recently saved for the nation following a £3.5m fundraising campaign. British Museum curator Rachel King explores the dazzling object's making, its broader historical context and its own extraordinary story.



York's Rivers: Place, space and people



Charlotte Sawyer

Sat 30 May, 7pm to 9pm (Doors open at 6.30pm)

Clements Hall, Nunthorpe Road **1B**
Tickets: £6.13
tinyurl.com/4t24u8mk

Join us for a screening of the documentary film *Rave on for the Avon*, a powerful exploration of people's deep connections to rivers through swimming, science, art and activism. Afterwards, enjoy a panel discussion as we mark the public launch of Ouse It or Lose It, a new, York-based community initiative focused on the River Ouse. Speakers include the filmmaker Charlotte Sawyer and environmental scientist Alistair Boxall.



Clive Myrie's African Adventure



Sat 30 May, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens ⁵¹
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Award-winning journalist Clive Myrie discusses his deeply personal journey filming the BBC series *African Adventure*. From the anti-poaching front line protecting rhinos to a moving encounter with Nelson Mandela's granddaughter, enjoy behind-the-scenes stories from an unforgettable expedition. Prepare to step into an Africa rarely seen, as Clive reveals his most memorable experiences and the discoveries he made along the way.



Back to the Garden



Sat 30 May, 7.30pm to 10pm

City Screen, Coney Street ¹²
More information and ticket prices:
ticketsource.co.uk/navigators-art-performance

Gardens create place from space in a myriad of ways and are celebrated in many different art forms. Join Navigators Art and a range of local talent in an eclectic programme of music and words celebrating the beauty, peace and wild inspiration of the garden. You may also be interested in the accompanying *On Location* exhibition, running from Sunday 7 June to Friday 3 July. (Please also see page 69.)



SUNDAY

31

MAY

Tempest's Volcano Trail



Sun 31 May, 10.30am to 12 noon (guided walk) and 2pm to 3pm (talk)

Museum Gardens (guided walk) 

York Medical Society, Stonegate (talk) 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Follow in the pioneering footsteps of volcanologist Tempest Anderson (1846-1913) as Tempest's Volcano Trail brings urban volcanology to the historic streets of York. Enjoy a city centre walk with volcanologist Rebecca Williams and geologist Liam Herringshaw and find out more fascinating volcanic facts at Rebecca's afternoon talk.



Meet Our Campus West Trees



Sun 31 May, 11am to 3pm (drop in) and 11am to 12 noon (guided walk)

Near Derwent College, University of York 

Free. No booking required.

Help us celebrate the launch of the reactivated University of York Campus Tree Trail, where the trees come alive with folklore, history, ecology, music and poetry. Visit featured trees, discovering hands-on activities, stories and QR-linked information at each stop. Whether you're a nature lover or a family explorer, come and see how trees connect our past, present and future. *Booking required for the guided walk.*



Pixar Films and Drug Costs: What's the link?



Sun 31 May, 11.15am to 12 noon

York Explore Library, Museum Street 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

How do decision makers decide what the NHS should pay for new medicines? What factors are likely to influence the price? Drawing on well-known family films including *Up*, *Monsters Inc* and *Ratatouille*, researchers from the York Health Economics Consortium discuss key economic ideas such as opportunity cost, marginal productivity and equity, and discuss how value, scarcity and social priorities shape healthcare spending.



Riot Women with Sally Wainwright



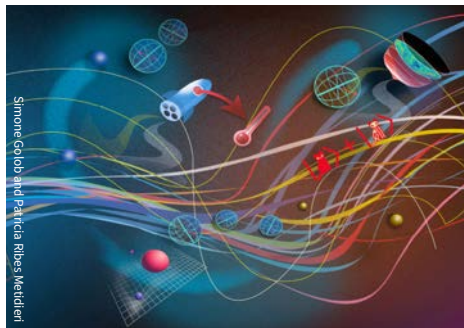
Sun 31 May, 12 noon to 1pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens **51**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

With a new series of *Riot Women* in production, BAFTA-winning creator Sally Wainwright discusses the origins of the hit BBC drama. Join the acclaimed writer, director and producer (*Happy Valley*, *Last Tango in Halifax*) in conversation with award-winning journalist Emma Barnett. Enjoy a behind-the-scenes look at the creative process as they explore the vital, universal struggle of women reclaiming their voices in the modern world.

The Jane Moody in
Memoriam Event

Entangling Stories: From the cosmos to the lab



Sun 31 May, 12.15pm to 1pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street **63**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

The everyday world feels simple, but at atomic scales we enter the quantum realm, where a quantum coin can be both heads and tails and particles slip through walls. Theoretical physicist Patricia Ribes Metidieri of the University of York explores quantum entanglement – the resource that fuels quantum computers – and discusses how its patterns may reveal clues about the universe's first moments after the Big Bang.



Lights, Camera, Cognition



Sun 31 May, 1.15pm to 2pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street **63**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Do popular films nail psychology, or is it just movie magic? Join expert researchers for a deep dive into some well-known films as they unpack the real science of emotion, memory and behaviour. Through short clips and analysis, they'll bridge entertainment and scientific evidence, highlighting where cinema gets it right and where it strays from reality. Come along and explore the mind through the lens of the big screen.



Creative Bookbinding Skills



Emma Lloyd-Jones

Sun 31 May, 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Borthwick Institute for Archives,
University of York **6**

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Discover the art of bookbinding at an inspiring hands-on workshop dedicated to mindful making. Make space for creativity as you explore traditional skills and techniques with archive conservator Catherine Firth and book and paper conservator Emma Lloyd-Jones. No experience is necessary, but practical hand skills are required. All materials and tools are provided. *Suitable for ages 16+.*



The Medieval Guide to Healthy Living



Sun 31 May, 1.45pm to 2.45pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens **51**

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

We often think of medieval medicine as strange, unhygienic and unscientific. But long before modern wellness trends, people in the Middle Ages were actively thinking about how to live well. Historian Katherine Harvey reveals how medieval individuals followed detailed health regimens, balanced diet with exercise, considered the effects of emotions and sought to avoid illness through environmental awareness and routine care.



A Queer Walk of York



Sun 31 May, 2pm to 3.30pm

Meet at the City Screen entrance, Coney Street **12**

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


A Queer Walk of York takes you on a journey through the city, commemorating spaces where queer folk used to meet, chat, dance and organise. Complete with personal reflections on venues long since defunct, it invites you to reflect on experiencing and living in York as a queer person. Echoing this year's Festival theme, the guided walk focuses on taking, making and fighting for spaces, particularly nightlife.



Garden Stories and Living with Dementia



Sun 31 May, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Discover how gardens support memories, identity and social connections through a talk and exhibition sharing the 'garden stories' of people living with dementia at home. Drawing on an ESRC-funded project, 'My Home, My Garden Story', hear from sociologists Christina Buse and David Dobson and view sketches by artist Lynne Chapman. Why not add your own reflections to the display? *The exhibition is on view from 11.30am to 4pm.*




Economic and Social Research Council

Space Journal



Sun 31 May, 3.30pm to 4.30pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Enjoy a visual celebration of our perception of the cosmos across centuries and cultures with broadcaster and collector Dallas Campbell. From Galileo's shopping list to speeches annotated in President John F Kennedy's own hand, from *The War of the Worlds* to *Space Invaders*, Dallas sets out the radical thinkers and creatives who envisioned us leaving our planet – or having guests stop by – and in some cases, made it happen.



York Minster Precinct: Rediscovering lost palaces



Sun 31 May, 5.15pm to 6.15pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Peel back the layers of York's hidden history with archaeologist John Creighton and discover what ground penetrating radar has revealed about the evolution of York. Explore the changing uses of what is now Dean's Park and the Deanery Gardens from their legionary Roman origins through to St Edward's Minster and the grandly titled York Palace and beyond. Join John for a fascinating journey into the city's complex, layered past.



Arts and Humanities Research Council

The Experimental Sutton Hoo Ship



Andy Mills: The Sutton Hoo Ship's Company

Sun 31 May, 6.45pm to 7.45pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens **51**

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

In 1939, an astonishing discovery was made at Sutton Hoo – the remains of a 27m long ship with a burial chamber full of dazzling riches. While the wood had rotted, its ghostly imprint in the sand provided the blueprint for an extraordinary reconstruction. Martin Carver, Director of Research at Sutton Hoo, explores the story of the 7th-century vessel, its ambitious rebuild and planned trials to see how the ship performed in water.



Lintukoto: Mythical places at the edge



Henna Asikainen

Mon 1 to Fri 5 June, 9am to 5pm

King's Manor, Exhibition Square **27**

Free. No booking required.

In Finnish mythology, lintukoto describes a paradise-like place at the far edge of the world where the sky and earth meet – a mythical refuge where birds were once believed to migrate for the winter. Drawing from the experiences of those who have been forced to leave their homes, this installation asks what lintukoto might mean in the Anthropocene – a time marked by ecological collapse, displacement and political instability. (Please also see page 24.)



MONDAY

1

JUNE

Echoes of the Past: Exploring sound heritage



Mon 1 June, 6.30pm to 7.30pm

School of ACT, University of York (In person and live-streamed) [48](#)

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What is sound heritage and why does it matter?

Mariana J López of the University of York introduces methods for studying the sounds of the past and explains the importance of moving beyond vision-centred approaches to heritage. Find out how historic soundscapes are measured and simulated to help create immersive museum and online experiences, and why sound is so important to a community's sense of place.



Tap Dancing Classes: Beginner to advanced



Mon 1 and Wed 3 June (various times and levels)

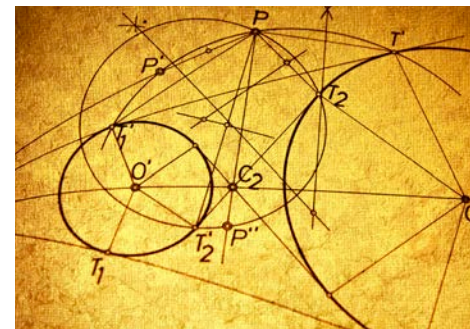
Southlands Methodist Church, Bishopthorpe Road [49](#) and Belfry Hall, Stonegate [3](#)

Free tickets: info@yrtap.co.uk

York Rhythm Tap runs fun and inclusive adult tap dance lessons at four different levels, with classes suitable for complete beginners through to those who are seasoned tap dancers. Rhythm tap concentrates on the musicality of tap as a percussive instrument using all parts of your tap shoes. Why not come along and join in the fun? Please see the *Festival website* for further details.



The Mathematical Renaissance and Modern Era



Mon 1 June, 7pm to 8pm

Bootham School, Bootham [5](#)

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Take a whirlwind trip through the history of mathematics with James Ratcliffe of Bootham School as he continues his mission to make maths fun for all. Journey through the renaissance looking at how maths can plan your strolls around town and how to check when you're at the top of a hill in dense fog. Discover modern mathematics including the works of Turing and Fry Richardson and explore where maths will go next. *Suitable for ages 11+.*



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS



🕒 **Mon 1 June, 1pm to 2pm**

Dusana Dorjee of the University of York provides a roadmap for those looking for more effective ways to support primary school pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

ACROSS MOUNTAINS, LAND AND SEA



🕒 **Mon 1 June, 6pm to 7pm**

Hear the extraordinary true story of Mir Rahimi's perilous journey from Afghanistan to the UK as a 13-year-old and his search for a better life and education.

MAN UP



🕒 **Mon 1 June, 6pm to 7pm**

Leading expert on extremism Cynthia Miller-Idriss reveals how an explosion of misogyny is driving a surge of mass and far-right violence throughout the West.

CHARM: HOW MAGNETIC PERSONALITIES SHAPE POLITICS



🕒 **Mon 1 June, 8pm to 9pm**

Sociologist Julia Sonnevend examines the use and weaponisation of charm in politics – the everyday magic spell that politicians cast using mass and social media.

THE CAT'S TALES: FELINE FAIRY TALES AND FOLKLORE



🕒 **Mon 1 June, 8pm to 9pm**

Mysterious, roguish and endlessly lovable. From ancient gods to witches' familiars, writer Charlie Creed explores the global folklore of our beloved feline friends.

⌘ YorkIdeas

WATCH AGAIN

Missed an event that sounded fantastic? Want to see a talk you enjoyed once more? Good news – we're recording many of our festival events. Watch these as well as previous years' content on youtube.com/YorkIdeas

TUESDAY

2

JUNE

Filling a Holy Space with Joy



Tues 2 June, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Square 
Free, but a retiring collection will be taken.
No booking required.

Direct from Cincinnati, Ohio, 25 members of the Glee Club at Elder High School are crossing the Atlantic with a joyful programme of music. On tour to England and Scotland, catch them at St Helen's Church for a mixed repertoire of popular, musical theatre, folk, spiritual and sacred music. Gaining prominence in the US in the late 19th century, Glee Clubs remain a vibrant tradition in American high schools.

Climate Resilience Jam with the York St John Living Lab



Tues 2 June, 3pm to 5pm

Creative Centre, York St John University 
Free tickets: yorks.j.ac.uk/events/

Join this collaborative cohort for an interactive panel on ecological justice and climate resilience. Featuring students, staff and partners, we'll explore community hubs, democratic decision-making, storytelling and research partnerships. The session, which includes a poster exhibition and creative activities designed to spark hopeful, holistic solutions, is hosted by the Institute for Social Justice, York St John University.

GAMING FOR HUMANITARIANISM



📶 **Tues 2 June, 12 noon to 1pm**

Come and learn about and see a demo of the BEYOND training tool, a serious game supporting individuals and organisations who work to address harm and need in war.

PLUNDER? HOW MUSEUMS GOT THEIR TREASURES



📶 **Tues 2 June, 6pm to 7pm**

Join historian Justin M Jacobs as he challenges the widely accepted belief that many of Western museums' treasures were acquired by imperialist plunder and theft.

THE AGE OF HITLER AND HOW WE WILL SURVIVE IT



📶 **Tues 2 June, 1pm to 2pm**

Join historian Alec Ryrie for a fresh take on modern history and pop culture as he examines our Nazi fixation and the unravelling of post-war moral consensus today.

I WENT OUTSIDE... THE GRAPHICS WEREN'T GREAT



📶 **Tues 2 June, 7pm to 8pm**

In our increasingly digital world, what even is real life? Join us to explore the ever-changing (even disappearing) distinction between digital and physical worlds.

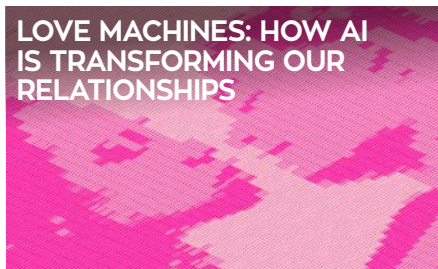
JAMES JOYCE'S TREES



📶 **Tues 2 June, 6pm to 7pm**

Lost in Joyce? Chris Wogan of the University of York reveals how you can use trees as your map, including for his most difficult texts, *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.

LOVE MACHINES: HOW AI IS TRANSFORMING OUR RELATIONSHIPS



📶 **Tues 2 June, 8pm to 9pm**

Friends. Lovers. Therapists. 'Deathbots'. Sociologist James Muldoon explores what happens to our relationships with each other as AI enters our personal lives.

EATERS OF THE DEAD

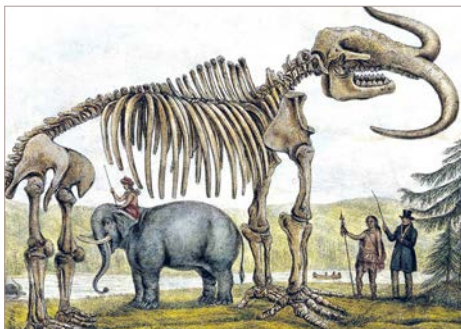


Tues 2 June, 8pm to 9pm

Moving from myth through history to contemporary popular culture, writer Kevin Wetmore explores cannibal monsters and ghouls that feast on human flesh.

A Date with History

Extinction's Futures



Tues 2 June, 5.30pm to 7pm

Vanbrugh College, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


Anyone alive today is among a tiny fraction of the once living: over 90 per cent of species that ever existed are now extinct. But the idea that species loss is a routine feature of life on earth is a surprisingly modern concept – and not as natural as we might think. Exploring the tangled histories of extinction and empire, historian Sadiya Qureshi reveals that extinction is both a natural process and an unnatural human act.

Eoforwic

Beer and Beowulf



Tues 2 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

The Black Swan Inn, Peasholme Green 
Free. No booking required.

Beer and poetry often went together in Anglo-Saxon England and the hall was celebrated as the place of community and creativity. Join us in the *beorsele* or beer-hall of The Black Swan Inn for an evening of beer and Anglo-Saxon poetry and prose. A retinue of reciters from the University of York perform a selection of readings, both in translation and in the original, on the theme of place and space.



Share your photos and experiences from the Festival using **#YorkIdeas**

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 [yorkfestivalofideas](https://www.instagram.com/yorkfestivalofideas)

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 [yorkfestofideas.bsky.social](https://www.yorkfestofideas.bsky.social)


Annual Aylmer Lecture



Building for Community: Ownership and land



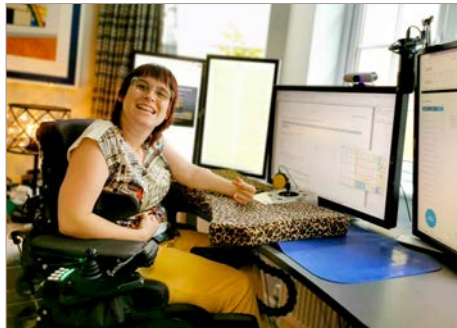
Tues 2 June, 6pm to 8pm

The Angel on the Green, Bishopthorpe Road 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

York's affordability crisis is pushing people and communities out of the city. YorSpace aims to challenge this by developing co-operative, community-owned models that unlock local investment, protect land from speculation and create affordable homes and buildings. Discover alternatives to traditional, private ownership and explore how this shift not only impacts our economics, but also our society, relationships and environment.



Discoveries without Understanding?



Tues 2 June, 7pm to 8pm

Bootham School, Bootham 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

In *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the supercomputer Deep Thought announces the answer to life, the universe and everything to be 42 – illustrating a dilemma that is fast becoming a scientific fact rather than merely science fiction. Join artificial intelligence specialist Claire Malone to explore the questions raised by using AI tools in scientific research. Is AI extending the power of human curiosity – or reshaping it?



Astronomy Is Looking Up!



Tues 2 June, 7pm to 8pm

Merchant Taylors' Hall, Aldwark 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

From the shifting face of the Moon and constellations that return with the seasons to the glowing band of the Milky Way and eclipses and even auroras, discover how our everyday skies are filled with science and wonder. Astronomer Emily Brunsdon and science communicator Chris Stewart invite you to look up and explore with just your eyes, curiosity and a sense of awe.



WEDNESDAY


3

JUNE

Step into Nature with St Nicks



Wed 3 June, 10am to 12 noon

Meet at the University Boathouse, Fulford Ings  158
Free. No booking required.

Join us for an educational walk and some Himalayan balsam bashing. Help protect the important habitats on Fulford Ings by removing the invasive plant, minimising its spread across our watercourses and floodplains. Your efforts will make room for native wildflowers and plants which support other species like bees, butterflies and water voles. *Suitable for all abilities and ages 8+.*



Words Matter: Language and inclusive spaces



Wed 3 June, 12 noon to 1.30pm

De Grey Court Building, York St John University  15
Free tickets: yorks.ac.uk/events/

Why does the way we communicate matter? Explore why language – and the analysis of language – is crucial to creating inclusive spaces for diverse populations. An expert panel examines how challenging and offering alternative language practices can foster spaces that value diversity and drive social change. Join researchers from York St John University's Centre for Language and Social Justice Research as they discuss spaces including schools, universities, workplaces and social media.

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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

What Will Education Look Like in the Future?



Wed 3 June, 6pm to 7pm

Church Lane Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

How can we better support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities? How can we ensure greater equity and inclusivity? How should we respond to social and technological change, including the challenges associated with climate change and AI? Join our panel discussion to explore how research is answering education's biggest questions.



ONLINE EVENTS



 **Wed 3 June, 12 noon to 1pm**

Economist John Rapley reveals how rich countries can grow their economies and mitigate the effects of climate change by helping poor countries to decarbonise.



 **Wed 3 June, 6pm to 7pm**

In a world of 'brain rot' and digital noise from ads, Chrysopigi Vardikou of the University of York Europe Campus examines how we protect our free will.

THEY CALLED IT PEACE: WORLDS OF IMPERIAL VIOLENCE



 **Wed 3 June, 6pm to 7pm**

From Asia to the Americas, historian Lauren Benton provides a sweeping account of how small wars shaped global order in the age of empires, redefining war and peace.

THE INVENTION OF THE FUTURE



 **Wed 3 June, 8pm to 9pm**

Join Bruno Carvalho of Harvard University for a kaleidoscopic and original new history of urbanisation, from Lisbon to New York and Buenos Aires to Lagos.

Printing Birds and Wildlife in Linocut



Wed 3 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green **157**

Tickets: £5

thinicepress.org/events

Step into the world of professional printmaking with Michelle Hughes. Discover how she transforms the beauty of the British countryside and wildlife into striking linocut art and see examples of her creations. Much of her work depicts Yorkshire landscapes and its wildlife, including the Yorkshire Coast, the Dales and the North York Moors. Join Michelle as she shares insights into her process, techniques and creative practice.

**THIN
ICE
PRESS**
The York Centre for Print

York Minster: A sustainable future



Wed 3 June, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

York Minster, Deangate **166**

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

The Centre of Excellence for Heritage Craft Skills and Estate Management has established the York Minster Precinct as a world-class campus facility for research, education and training in traditional craft skills. Alex McCallion of York Minster explains the many benefits it brings to York and the wider heritage sector including continuing the craft of stonemasonry and encouraging global learning and knowledge sharing.

 **YORK
MINSTER**

HANDS ON! Catherine Laws with Teresa Brayshaw



Wed 3 June, 7.30pm

School of ACT, University of York **48**

Tickets: £5

tftv.ticketssolve.com/shows

Hands On is a playful piano performance all about touch: the important nuances of touch, especially for the wonderful resonances of piano music, but also for how playing and listening to music touches us. Devised and performed by pianist Catherine Laws, with theatre maker Teresa Brayshaw and composers Damien Harron, Jenn Kirby and Lynette Quek. With additional music by Ruth Crawford Seeger.

**YORK
CONCERTS**

Masters of the Renaissance: Monteverdi, Byrd and Tallis



Thurs 4 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Square [42](#)

Free, but a retiring collection will be taken.

No booking required.

York-based vocal ensemble Capriccio Five met while studying solo voice and ensemble singing at the University of York. United by a shared passion for high-level consort singing and a commitment to music-making, the five singers place great value on communication and connection with audiences. Join them to experience beloved early music pieces shared with openness and enthusiasm in an intimate space.



York: Its churches, organists and composers



Thurs 4 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm

St Saviourgate York [47](#)

Free, but a retiring collection will be taken.

No booking required.

Join organist Matthew Collins for a recital celebrating the rich and fascinating connections between organ music and the city of York – its composers, churches and musical life. The programme ranges from a dramatic *Rhapsody* composed during a Zeppelin raid over the city in 1918, to the famous *Toccata* from Widor's *Fifth Symphony*, played at the wedding of Katherine Worsley and HRH The Duke of Kent in York Minster in 1961.

THURSDAY

4

JUNE

SERIOUS PLAY: ADULT LEARNING THROUGH GAMES



🕒 **Thurs 4 June, 12 noon to 1pm**

Specialists in playful learning explore how new or 'hacked' games can enhance adult learning experiences and add value to organisations' in-person training sessions.

RETHINKING ENVIRONMENTS FOR NEURODIVERGENT MINDS



🕒 **Thurs 4 June, 1pm to 2pm**

Psychologist Kalliopi Megari examines the effects of bespoke 'safe places' on the cognitive and emotional processing of people with neurodevelopmental disorders.

CTRL+ ALT+ CHAOS



🕒 **Thurs 4 June, 6pm to 7pm**

BBC cyber correspondent Joe Tidy tracks the global rise of teen hackers, drawing on his exclusive interviews with gang members and the police trying to stop them.

THE LAND WHERE NOTHING WORKS



🕒 **Thurs 4 June, 6pm to 7pm**

What has happened to Britain? Historian A G Hopkins argues the country's current problems stem from 1980s US-style deregulation and privatisation.

ENDLESS ENDINGS



🕒 **Thurs 4 June, 8pm to 9pm**

Life's endings can be just as fascinating and varied as life itself. Join Ricard Solé of Pompeu Fabra University, Spain, for a scientific exploration of death.

THE HAPPINESS OF DOGS



🕒 **Thurs 4 June, 8pm to 9pm**

What can we learn from our canine friends? Philosopher Mark Rowlands explores the way dogs experience the world to bring us closer to an understanding of ourselves.

Printing History Walking Tour



Thurs 4 and Thurs 11 June, 2pm to 4pm

Meet at Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green **157**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Step back in time on a guided walking tour of York's rich printing history led by Thin Ice Press: the York Centre for Print. Drawing on research, the tour uncovers hidden corners of the city to show how printing has shaped – and still shapes – York's culture and creativity. From early presses and enterprising printers to frost fairs and the once-tallest house in York, explore the human stories behind York's vibrant past.



York Cares Summer Sparkle



Thurs 4 June, 5.30pm to 7pm

The Hiscox Building, Peasholme Green **155**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Put a bit of sparkle in your life as York Cares, in partnership with Hiscox, hosts its third Summer Sparkle Social Club. Enjoy cake, music and dancing with the added bonus of building connections with people from across the city. Designed to bring older and younger neighbours together, this event is aimed at younger neighbours (18+) and older neighbours (65+).



Shakespeare's King Lear: Place and the unplaceable



Thurs 4 June, 6pm to 7pm

Church Lane Building, University of York **110**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Long admired as Shakespeare's greatest work, *Lear* also baffles readers by remaining stubbornly unplaceable. To mark the release of the Oxford World's Classics *King Lear* with a new Critical Introduction, the author Namratha Rao explores, in conversation with James Williams, the brilliance and problem of this tragedy – character and dramatic form, Lear's Britain and Shakespeare's England, and the play's astonishing afterlives.



Change is Coming: A new vision for York

Thurs 4 June, 10am to 11.30am
The Guildhall, Coney Street 🏠
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What makes a successful city centre and who are we designing it for? York is at a pivotal moment, meeting the challenges of rising costs and environmental pressures and embracing a unique opportunity to harness our heritage, creativity and vibrant communities.

Join our diverse panel of design leaders and urban visionaries to help shape a city centre that's inclusive, accessible and future proof for all. Whether you're a resident, business owner, student or simply someone who cares about the future of our city, help us build a centre that works for you.

Following our panel discussion, you're warmly invited to stay for drinks and a chat.

Presented in partnership with City of York Council with the support of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.



From Brownfield to Blue Sky

Free tickets:
yorkfestivalofideas.com

York Central is the UK's largest brownfield regeneration site and will be pivotal in the city's history, adding a new urban quarter of homes, commercial development and public spaces to an unparalleled ancient built environment.

Taking the twin themes of Space and Place, the team at York Central are bringing together some of the country's foremost thinkers, hosted by Bloomberg economist and former BBC economics editor, Stephanie Flanders, to ask how we build our collective future and understand our place in the universe while treading lightly on our own planet.

Space: The final frontier



Thurs 4 June
10.30am to 11.15am (keynote)
11.30am to 12.45pm (panel)

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Street 

Is there anybody out there? As we hurtle through the 21st century, grabbing at new inventions and technologies that forever change the way we think and behave, our speakers consider the bigger questions of the day. With Astronomer Royal for Scotland Catherine Heymans and cosmologist Carlos Frenk, our panel asks where our knowledge, gleaned from our own small blue planet, fits in the vastness of an ever-expanding universe.

Place: The sky's the limit



Thurs 4 June
1.45pm to 2.30pm (keynote)
2.45pm to 4pm (panel)

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Street 

Back down to earth, our panel of experts, including environmental campaigner Feargal Sharkey and former Chair of Homes England and developer of King's Cross, Peter Freeman, join York Central's Director of Development Karen Stafekis and co-CEO of Historic England Emma Squire. They debate whether it's possible to imagine new spaces and places into existence in ways that are sympathetic to the needs of future generations while respecting our heritage and environment.



Chaos or Revolution? AI and jobseeking



Thurs 4 June, 6pm to 8pm

University of York Library 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Generative AI is throwing recruitment into chaos. Applications are soaring, competition is fiercer than ever and trust is eroding. Recent University of York research – Applying for jobs and generative AI: What do employers really think? – exposes a growing disconnect between employers and jobseekers. Our expert panel asks: are we witnessing a recruitment revolution or descending into a stalemate of AI assessing AI?



Discover the History of Askham Bog, York



Thurs 4 June, 6.30pm to 8pm

Friargate Quaker Meeting House, Friargate 

Tickets: £5

ywt.org.uk/our-events

Join our expert panel from Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for a captivating event uncovering Askham Bog's 15,000 years of history, from its glacial origins to its present status as one of the nation's most ecologically diverse – but most vulnerable – wildlife havens. Learn why this rare remnant of ancient peatland has become deeply woven into York's cultural and environmental heritage.



Shakespeare 2026: Relevance and resilience



Thurs 4 June, 7.15pm to 8.15pm

Church Lane Building, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Which Shakespeare play speaks to our moment? While some periods and places have found particular go-to plays (*Troilus and Cressida* during the Vietnam War, *Julius Caesar* during the first Trump presidency), *Hamlet* seems to be a perennial. Emma Smith of the University of Oxford dismisses *Hamlet* as the play for the early 21st century and proposes an alternative. You'll need to come along to find out which play – and if you agree.

The Annual Distinguished
Patrides Lecture



UNIVERSITY
of York

#1 in Yorkshire
and the Humber
(Complete University Guide, 2026)



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*We guarantee to make you an offer (or to invite you for an interview, where one is required) if you meet all the criteria. Visit our website for more details.



York Air Walk



Fri 5 and Fri 12 June, 10.30am to 12.30pm

Meet at Bar Lane, just inside Micklegate Bar 

Tickets: £6
yorkfestivalofideas.com

Take to the skies on the York Air Walk and enjoy an aerial stroll through the city's ancient, natural and scientific history. Join your expert guide Simon Rogerson as he leads you around the city's medieval walls, taking in the sights and sounds (and smells) on this York's Hidden History tour. Along the way, meet a pioneering weather forecaster, a demon stargazer and the local lad who gassed Queen Victoria.



A Family Business: Kendrew, printers of York



Fri 5 June, 10.30am to 12.30pm

York Minster Library, Deans Park 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Welcome to Mr Kendrew's Colliergate printing shop – a true family enterprise in early 19th-century York. Explore some of the pamphlets, primers, ballads and children's chapbooks produced there and see pages from the book the family assembled to record their work. Discuss what made their printing distinctive and have a go at creating a chapbook from a single printed sheet. *Suitable for ages 12+.*



FRIDAY

5

JUNE

Sax Forte: Four sax in a sacred space



Fri 5 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Square 
Free, but a retiring collection will be taken.
No booking required.

Sax Forte returns to the Festival with a fresh programme of music and an entertaining talk on the history of the saxophone. The saxophone is most commonly associated with jazz, blues and pop, but the quartet demonstrates just how well the instrument sits with a far wider range of music, including classical and baroque. Come early to enjoy their exuberant style as previous Festival performances have played to a full house.



Live Better: Midlife and menopause



Fri 5 June, 6pm to 7pm

Piazza Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Struggling with joint pain or insomnia? You aren't alone. Double Olympic champion Dame Kelly Holmes reveals that even elite athletes feel the effects of ageing. Drawing on personal experience, Kelly shares tips on managing middle age and the menopause. Discover how weight training, daily steps, nutrition and a positive mindset can help you maintain vitality and navigate your life journey with confidence.



York's Three Minute Thesis Competition



Fri 5 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Be inspired and hear from ten talented University of York postgraduate researchers about their cutting-edge work. In a challenge against the clock, the competing York Three Minute Thesis finalists have just three minutes to outline the power of their research and explain how it will improve society and our lives. Join us at the live final, vote for your favourite and see who wins.



Beyond Borders: York climate narratives



Fri 5 June, 7pm to 9pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


What happens when personal stories meet the climate crisis? They spark connection, challenge perspectives and inspire action. Enjoy a unique event where storytellers from the Global Majority – who live, study or work in York – take centre stage to share their experiences with climate change, ecological shifts and resilience. All our storytellers have completed a six-week story-crafting process to bring you their unique performance.



Pen Friends: 1 war, 11 women, 200,000 words



Fri 5 June, 7pm to 9pm

Friargate Theatre, Lower Friargate 
Free tickets: friargatetheatre.co.uk

In 1914, 11 girls leaving the Mount School in York invented the WhatsApp Group – a round robin notebook of letters that continued for decades, allowing us to eavesdrop on the lives of young Quaker women entering a world at war: fighting for suffrage, throwing themselves into social action and political activism. Historian Krista Cowman and playwright Bridget Foreman introduce staged extracts from this unique correspondence.



Creative Technologies Showcase



Fri 5 June, 7pm to 11pm; Sat 6 and Sun 7 June, 10.30am to 3.30pm

School of ACT, University of York 
Free. No booking required.

Join us at the Creative Technologies Showcase, an annual event hosted by the School of Arts and Creative Technologies at the University of York. Enjoy the phenomenal work and ideas created by York students and explore projects ranging from games, mobile applications and humanities to virtual reality experiences, web designs and sound. *Booking required for the Gala on Friday.*



Regina: A new history of women and power



Fri 5 June, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Piazza Building, University of York 🏠

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Stories about royal women form some of our most foundational myths about femininity – yet their legacies have been almost entirely constructed by the words and images of men. Delving into the lives of queens, empresses, princesses, mistresses and ladies-in-waiting, historian Kate Williams shatters these myths, revealing women's remarkable lives. Join Kate as she redefines our views on women, politics and power.



Olivia Chaney, Sons of Art: Purcell revisited



Fri 5 June, 7.30pm to 9.30pm

National Centre for Early Music, Walmgate 🏠

Tickets: £15/£25/£35

ncem.co.uk 01904 658338

Olivia Chaney is one of the most distinctive singer-songwriters of her generation. A Grammy-nominated artist, with her music featured in this year's *Wuthering Heights*, she has built a reputation for her unmistakable voice, bold arrangements and genre-defying songwriting. Performing everywhere from Glastonbury to the Royal Albert Hall, Olivia has carved out a rare space between folk, classical and contemporary music.



Anyone for Coffee?



Planning to attend events at the stunning Ron Cooke Hub or elsewhere on Campus East, University of York? Then why not pay a visit to the Hub Café?

With an impressive lakeside setting, the Hub Café offers an excellent selection of snacks and drinks, including York Emporium coffee, delicious homemade cakes and pastries, sandwiches and a selection of hot food.

Ask about the YORCUP scheme and find out how you can save money and reduce the number of disposable cups on the University campus.

Card payment only.

SATURDAY

6

JUNE

Taking the Plunge: Cold water swimming



Sat 6 June, 10am to 11am

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

From boosting your mood and immune system to helping you keep fit and make friends, cold water swimming is hailed as a miracle cure for the modern age. But what are the risks and potential benefits of cold-water immersion? Why does the cold have such a profound effect on our mental well-being? With thousands of Britons taking the plunge, our expert panel dives into the psychology and mental health benefits of cold-water swimming.



The Rivers and Us: Stories from the York rivers trail



Sat 6 June, 10am to 11.15am

Meet at King's Staith Landing 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

York's rivers have shaped the city for centuries. Join a curated boat journey introducing the York rivers trail. Discover stories of nature, heritage and adaptation, see how upstream and downstream places connect, and how flood resilience and natural flood management can support people, wildlife and place. Share your feedback before our summer 2026 launch. *Optional walking or wheeling tour after disembarkment (11.15am to 12.30pm).*



D-Day with the East Yorkshire Regiment



Sat 6 June, 10am to 3pm

Eye of York, Tower Street 

Free. No booking required.

York Army Museum commemorates the 82nd anniversary of D-Day with a free living history event. Explore Second World War East Yorkshire Regiment kit, vehicles and demonstrations, and discover soldiers' experiences and the regiment's role in D-Day and beyond. Come along and meet members of the East Yorkshire Regiment Living History Group as they bring this period vividly to life.

**YORK ARMY
MUSEUM**

Installing Charge Points: From planning to operation



Sat 6 June, 10.15am to 11.15pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join sustainability expert David Trousdale for a practical look at the journey of installing EV charge points. David breaks down the entire process from initial planning to full operation, highlighting the many stakeholders involved. Discover how a holistic approach and real-world lessons can ensure smooth deployment and overcome technical hurdles. Join us to learn about the future of transport and the path to a sustainable city.

IET The Institution of
Engineering and Technology

Babylon: The mother of all cities



Sat 6 June, 10.30am to 11.30am

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Babylon often appears more myth than history. Purportedly the site of the Hanging Gardens and the Tower of Babel, its infamous presence in the Bible has made it a byword for sinful decadence. But Babylon was a real place teeming with life, a bustling mega-city on the Euphrates. Historian Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones brings the city vividly to life, tracing its foundation through to its world domination and subsequent decline and fall.

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YORKTALKS
RESEARCH IN THE SPOTLIGHT

HERITAGE REFRAMED


Experience a reimagined YorkTalks this June as we celebrate our incredible research community in a special collaboration with York Festival of Ideas.

YorkTalks celebrates the University of York's research at its best. For this edition, we are stepping out of the lecture theatre and into the historic surroundings of Heslington Hall. As the new home of the Humanities Research Centre and our renowned period-based centres, spanning the Middle Ages to the present day, it's an ideal location to explore heritage research at York.

Heritage matters. It makes sense of our past and informs our response to current and future challenges. As a UNESCO City of Media Arts, York provides the perfect stage to prove that heritage isn't just something to be preserved – it is a living, breathing part of who we are and our collective future.

We invite you to immerse yourself in a dynamic landscape of curated talks, exhibitions and hands-on activities staged throughout the Hall's historic exterior and grounds.



Sat 6 June, 10am to 4pm
Heslington Hall, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join us at YorkTalks for a day of intellectual discovery in a city infused with social, architectural and cultural significance.

From a celebration of York-born painter and printmaker John Langton (1932-2025), to our pioneering work in digital heritage and heritage science, discover how University of York research and community partnerships are breathing new life into the past.



Alex Holland

Events include:

The 18th-Century Discovery of Britain

Explore how 18th-century domestic travel came to rival the famous European Grand Tour as we delve into the practice and representation of tourism on 'home' ground.

Skills of the Past, Skills for Tomorrow

Enjoy live stone masonry demonstrations, hands-on activities, and inspiring talks as we reveal the artistry, precision and care behind preserving historic structures.

Henry on Tour: The summer progresses of Henry VIII

Discover the 'real' story of what happened when Henry VIII and Katherine Howard visited York in 1541 as we share discoveries and digital resources from an AHRC-funded project.

Jane Austen, Her Writing and Her Craft

Through an exploration of Jane Austen's novels and needlework, we delve into how and why Britain's best-loved writer styled herself as the consummate craftswoman.

Gardens and Grottos: Fashions and landscapes in 18th-century Britain

Learn about the evolution of a distinctive national gardening aesthetic, including a discussion of the gardens at the University of York's Heslington Hall.

Softly Gentleman-Like: Anne Lister's music

Known for her words, Anne Lister, the lesbian diarist of Halifax (1791-1840), was also a committed musician. Discover the music she knew and loved.

The Geometry of Wellbeing: Mapping ancient skills

Join us as we explore how combining heritage crafting and outdoor natural spaces can offer a powerful way to boost our mental health and resilience.

Heritage360: Revealing the past

From the secrets of the dead to reconstructing lost landscapes and buildings, find out how digital heritage technologies are revealing new insights about the past.

Little Paws Creative Club



Sat 6 June, 10.30am to 12 noon

All Saints' Church, North Street 

Tickets: £2

yorkfestivalofideas.com

Get crafty and enjoy a special Festival edition of All Saints' Church's regular Creative Club. Have a go at the Children's Trail to discover a thousand years of history in a York parish church and take part in fun creative activities inspired by the stunning medieval stained glass. The church's friendly team are on hand to help you discover this fascinating space and there's even hot drinks, biscuits and juice on offer.



Adventures in SPACE: A printing workshop



Sat 6 June, 10.30am to 12 noon

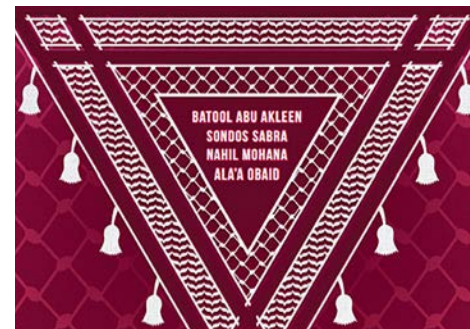
Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Journey through space to discover how layout, scale and placement can change the meaning of words at our out-of-this-world hands-on children's workshop. Choose a quotation, experiment with composition and print a fun souvenir. All materials and guidance are provided. *Adult sign-in is required but grown-ups may leave during the session. Suitable for ages 8+.*



Voices of Resistance: Diaries from Gaza



Sat 6 June, 11am to 12 noon

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Voices of Resistance: Diaries of Genocide is a collection of diaries from four Gazan women – Batool Abu Akleen, Sondos Sabra, Nahil Mohana and Ala'a Obaid – offering first-hand accounts of Israeli airstrikes, forced displacement and what the UN described as 'man-made' famine. Hosted by Comma Press, our event includes readings from this powerful collection by Sondos and a Q+A panel discussion with James Harker, co-editor of *Voices of Resistance*.



From Broadway to Birdland: Rhythm and shoes



Sat 6 June, 11am to 12 noon

Southlands Methodist Church,
Bishopthorpe Road [49](#)

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

In a thrilling fusion of jazz, tap dance and song, this show explores the connection between musical theatre and jazz. From Broadway classics to jazz standards, our trio of a musician, dancer and singer brings the music to life with rhythm, energy and swing. Expect a mix of dynamic solos, playful duets, and full-throttle trio performances that celebrate the timeless magic of these genres. *Free, but donations welcome.*

York
Rhythm
Tap

Can Games Save the Planet?



Sat 6 June, 11am to 12.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York [40](#)

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Could board games help save the planet? Can they be both fun and have a serious purpose and impact in the real world? From flooding to climate action, join us to find out how innovative games are addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. Hear from the experts behind the designs and then experience the games first hand as you discover the power of play.

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The Hollywood History of Art



Sat 6 June, 11.30am to 12.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York [40](#)

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Ever since the dawn of the sound era, Hollywood has made a series of elaborate feature films about the lives of the great visual artists, including (among many others) Charles Laughton as Rembrandt, Charlton Heston as Michelangelo and Salma Hayek as Frida Kahlo. What impact did these films have on the real world and what do they reveal? Take an illustrated journey into Tinsel Town's history of art with writer Christopher Frayling.

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Why It's Time to Stop Talking About 'Ultra Processed' Food



Sat 6 June, 12 noon to 1pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York **30**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Could stigmatising ultra-processed foods be doing more harm than good? Public health nutritionist Beverley O'Hara argues framing foods as inherently 'dangerous' risks distorting the science and can lead to psychological resistance. She reveals how the 'processed equals bad' narrative can fuel guilt, anxiety and disordered eating, while also vilifying foods that are widely eaten, particularly by people on lower incomes.



🎯 FESTIVAL FOCUS

Step Aboard: Rail's journey to a responsible future



Sat 6 June, 12 noon to 1.15pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York **40**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

At this special Festival Focus event, discover how train operator LNER is leading the charge to be a truly responsible business: embracing cutting-edge technologies, supporting communities and embedding sustainability to create a better journey for people, places and planet. Step aboard and explore how rail is enabling a cleaner, greener way to travel across the UK.



Graphic Novel Workshop



Sat 6 June, 12 noon to 1.30pm

The Place, Bramham Road **56**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Meet author-illustrator Salomey Doku for an interactive exploration of the world of graphic novels. Learn how to create a book, from the who, what, where and when of a graphic novel through to the process of crafting and colouring the pages. An ideal workshop for aspiring writers and artists, why not come along and gain the tools you need to create stories and worlds of your own? *Free lunchtime snacks provided. Suitable for ages 12+.*



The HumanCoffee Shop



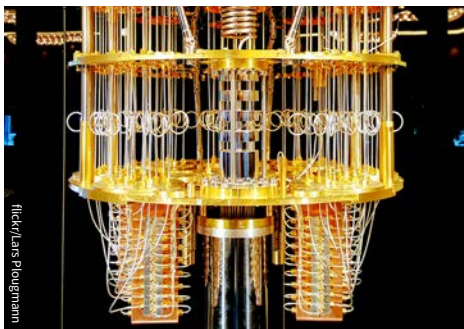
Sat 6 June, 12.15pm to 1.15pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Did you know that the world's most expensive coffee is produced through the digestive tract of an animal? Now imagine that animal is human. Our bold and provocative session introduces the world's first and only human-digested coffee. Blending art, anthropology and biological inquiry, our event invites coffee lovers, critical thinkers and the curious into a mind-bending exploration of consumption, ethics and embodiment.



Quantum Actually



Sat 6 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

The word 'quantum' is everywhere – in movies, on dishwasher tablets and even on antiperspirant cans. Are these things really using quantum physics? If not, then what is? Postgraduate researchers Zulekha Samiullah and Hugh Barrett of the University of Bristol demystify the hype. Discover how much 'quantum' is around you and how these wonders weave into everyday life, from supercomputers to the tech that will reshape our cities.



All the Rage: Why anger drives the world



Sat 6 June, 1pm to 2pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Anger is all around us, from divisive social media arguments to road rage and personal spats. When it materialises, it seems to cry out for recognition and response. It affects our bodies and can transition into violence. It can be inherited through the generations; it can manifest in criminal acts. What should we do with it, and can it ever be put to good use? Author and psychoanalyst Josh Cohen offers a new understanding of anger.



CLIMATE RESILIENCE: PERSONAL SPACE TO OUTER SPACE



Sat 6 June, 1pm to 3pm

From smart clothing and climate resilience to lunar living, discover US scholars' ground-breaking research in the UK on adapting to changing world(s).

Soapbox Science



Sat 6 June, 1pm to 4pm

Parliament Street

Free. No booking required.

Hear from women and non-binary scientists as they take science to the streets of York – while standing on a soapbox. Soapbox Science promises a summer of fun and fantastic science with events across the world. Catch the York event and meet inspirational speakers from the University of York as they explain their research and promote the visibility of women in science.



Athens and Sparta



Sat 6 June, 1.30pm to 2.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Athens and Sparta stood as the titans of Ancient Greece: one a radical democracy with a maritime empire, the other a fortress of discipline. United, they helped lead the Greeks in defeating the great Persian invasion. Divided, they spread conflict and destruction throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Historian Adrian Goldsworthy reveals how the cities were not simply rivals for power, but polar opposites in culture and ideology.



YorkIdeas WATCH AGAIN

Missed an event that sounded fantastic? Want to see a talk you enjoyed once more? Good news – we're recording many of our festival events. Watch these as well as previous years' content on youtube.com/YorkIdeas

The Numbers Game: Data and modern football



Sat 6 June, 1.45pm to 2.45pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Decision making in football has historically been based on instinct and tradition. However, as teams seek innovative ways to gain a competitive advantage, data-driven decisions are revolutionising every facet of the game – from player performance evaluation to scouting and strategy development. Join us as we explore how data and analytics are transforming football.



Festival Fringe Family Fun Afternoon

Sat 6 June, 1pm to 4pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free. No booking required.

Join us for an afternoon of energetic, creative, crafty, puzzling, scientific and historical fun with the University of York's Humanities Research Centre at this year's Festival Fringe Family Fun Afternoon.

Activities are particularly suitable for five to 11-year-olds, but other family members are welcome too. No ticket needed – just come along.



Discovering York's City Walls



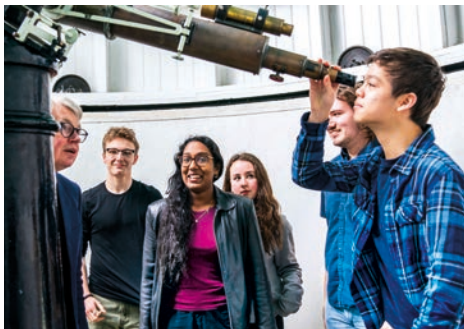
Sat 6 June, 2pm to 3pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York 📍
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

York's city walls are often understood as medieval defences, surviving as part of the modern city after Victorian repairs. But the truth is far more complicated and interesting. Archaeologist Barry Crump reveals how the city's walls had a wide range of uses linked with everyday life, from trade and taxes to industry and animals. Learn about the walls' rich history and discover how each part has its own story to tell.



Where Are All the Aliens?



Sat 6 June, 2pm to 3pm

Bootham School, Bootham 🏠
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Space is quite big. Lots of oceans, moons and planets. There's plenty of room for alien life out there. What might extraterrestrial life be like and how are we trying to find it? What could it mean if we did? Mike Shaw, Bootham School's Head of Astronomy, presents an exploration of the search for life beyond the Earth, aimed at young people from eight to 80. Aliens welcome.



Going to Bed in Late-Medieval England



Sat 6 June, 2pm to 3.30pm

All Saints' Church, North Street 🏠
Free, but £5 suggested donation.
Booking recommended but not essential.
yorkfestivalofideas.com

All Saints' Church's Pricke of Conscience window includes two people lying in bed, while the apocalypse rages around them and Death stands ready. Another bed in the Corporal Acts of Mercy window is occupied by a sick inhabitant attended by his wife. Why are these beds in church windows? Inspired by All Saints North Street, discover stories of what happened in bedchambers in the Middle Ages with historian Hollie Morgan.



Five Evil Women



Sat 6 June, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Myra Hindley, Rosemary West, Aileen Wuornos, Karla Homolka and Karla Faye Tucker. Why do certain women become icons of evil? Writer Joanna Bourke examines five notorious women's lives, crimes and cultural reception, asking how violence committed by women is understood, judged and remembered. Going beyond moral outrage or tabloid headlines, she explores how concepts of 'evil' are shaped by history, belief systems and social context.



King's Ely Prep Jazz Band on Tour



Sat 6 June, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Square 

Free, but a retiring collection will be taken.

No booking required.

King's Ely Prep Jazz Band returns to York with an eclectic mix of jazz, rock and funk tunes to enjoy at St Helen's Church. The programme features classic big band chart hits such as *St Louis Blues* and *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* alongside a bossa nova, funk music and the joyful *Grazing in the Grass* by South African trumpeter, Hugh Masekela. Join pupils from the cathedral school at Ely for a toe-tapping programme.



Adventures in Time, Space and Television



Sat 6 June, 3pm to 4pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Discover the remarkable legacies of David Whitaker and Terrance Dicks – two giants of *Doctor Who* and British popular culture. From Whitaker's shaping of the show's earliest years to Dicks' beloved scripts and over 230 children's books, biographer Simon Guerrier explores how their words inspired generations of readers and viewers. Our event features exclusive insights into their work from their own archives at the University of York.



Demystifying South Indian Classical Music



Sat 6 June, 3pm to 4pm

Piazza Building, University of York
 Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Enjoy performances by one of the UK's most sought-after Carnatic vocalists, Supriya Nagarajan, alongside an eclectic ensemble of instrumental artists. This richly interactive workshop/concert invites you to engage deeply with South Indian classical (Carnatic) music – its aesthetics, structure and cultural logic. Discover raga, tala and vocal ornamentation, learn how melodic and rhythmic systems shape emotional expression and join in the Q&A.

Annual Bruce Wannell
Memorial Lecture

Football's Physical and Virtual Spaces



Sat 6 June, 3.15pm to 4.15pm

Law and Sociology Building, University of York
 Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

From the archaeology of football grounds to giving walking tours of historic football sites, to editing and hosting Middlesbrough FCs fanzine and internet chat forum, Robert Nichols reflects on his work championing the people's game. Join him in conversation with the University of York's Soccer-Mad Boffins Alex Gillett and Kevin Tennent as they examine football's places and spaces and look ahead to this year's FIFA World Cup.

Celtic Magic: A practitioner's guide



Sat 6 June, 3.45pm to 4.45pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York
 Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Druids and divination, curses and charms: the Celtic world was filled with magic and intrigue, but how and why did people practice magic? Join writer Brigid Ehrmantraut for a captivating introduction to Celtic magic as she reveals its integration into daily life from antiquity to the Middle Ages. Discover how some sought aid through deities and dedications, while others used spells and curse tablets to wish ill on their enemies.

Members Behaving Badly



Sat 6 June, 4.30pm to 5.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Over the centuries, the House of Commons has been full of MPs standing up against tyranny; remarkable people doing remarkable things for the good of all. Yet there have been just as many cheats and liars who have played games, played the markets and played the people who put their trust in them. Historian Debbie Kilroy tells the story of our nation from 1603 to 1945 through some of these parliamentary villains.



Creative Business PechaKucha



Sat 6 June, 6pm to 8pm

School of ACT, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Enjoy a fast-paced storytelling PechaKucha event showcasing the work of Business of the Creative Industries students from the University of York. The presenters have just six minutes and 40 seconds to present 20 slides with each slide displayed for just 20 seconds. Come along and hear the innovative ideas of tomorrow's creative industries business leaders at this rapid-fire and highly visual event.



Frankly: Nicola Sturgeon in conversation



Sat 6 June, 6.15pm to 7.15pm

Piazza Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's first female and longest-serving First Minister, is one of the most influential political figures of our time. In conversation with author, journalist and political commentator Gavin Esler, she reflects on a remarkable career in an era marked by Brexit, Covid and five UK prime ministers. Gain insights into her achievements and her vision for the future of Scotland and the global political landscape.



Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*



Sat 6 June, 7.30pm to 9.30pm

York Minster, Deangate 

Tickets: £12/£20/£27.50 (£6 students/u18)

yorktheatreroyal.co.uk 01904 623568

Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* is a massive, awe-inspiring and uplifting work, touching on themes of mortality and hope. For this performance, York Musical Society (YMS) is joined by its partner choir from Münster, York's twin city in Germany. YMS celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. The combined choir, soloists and orchestra will be conducted by David Pipe.



An English Choral Garland



Sat 6 June, 7.30pm to 9.30pm

St Lawrence Parish Church, Lawrence Street 

Tickets: £18 (£16 concessions, £5 students)

ncem.co.uk 01904 658338

Join Yorkshire Bach Choir for a captivating concert inspired by nature, gardens and transcendent landscapes. Featuring a unique arrangement of Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*, re-imagined for choir and solo violin, the programme also includes Moeran's *Songs of Springtime*, Pearsall's *Lay a Garland* and Britten's choral masterpieces, *Hymn to St Cecilia* and *Rejoice in the Lamb*.
Pre-concert talk 'Music in the Garden' with Gillian Parker of the University of York at the concert venue at 6.30pm.



SUNDAY

7

JUNE

Other Voices



Srinivasan Nagarajan

Sun 7 June, 11am to 12 noon

Piazza Building, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Other Voices explores the interconnectedness between humanity and the natural world through human voice and electronics. Rooted in South Indian musical traditions and informed by philosophical and ecological thought, the work seeks to give voice to the voiceless – the flora and fauna of our planet – through an immersive soundscape that merges organic vocal expression with electronic transformation. Enjoy a performance and talk.



MANASMITRA



Alex Holland, University of York

Discovery Zone

Sun 7 June, 11am to 3pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free. No booking required.

Join us for some family fun as we spark children's imaginations with a range of hands-on, interactive activities. Meet robots, play our treescape board game and get crafty making a simple pot. Or maybe find out some fun facts about British animals or try on VR goggles?

Come along and meet York researchers and find out how their cutting-edge work is improving the world we live in.



UNIVERSITY
of York

The Uncomfortable York Tour



Sun 7 June, 11am to 12.30pm

Meet outside Bennett's Café & Bistro,
High Petergate 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Enjoy an insightful walking tour of York, highlighting untold histories and diverse narratives. Created by Uncomfortable York, it goes beyond the conventional stories of the city, exploring the impact of women, people of colour and LGBTQIA+ individuals from York's past. Join us and see beyond the stone facades as we uncover the lesser-known narratives of York, while learning about the long history of the medieval city.



AI, Care and Psychological Safety for Older Adults



Sun 7 June, 11am to 12.30pm

Institute for Safe Autonomy, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a fixture in social care and our daily lives. But how do we ensure it's safe for older adults? Our expert panel discusses a critical challenge: delivering the vast benefits of AI without introducing unacceptable risks or harm. Join us as we examine AI's psychological impacts and explore how to ensure AI systems are safe by design, prioritising the wellbeing of our ageing society.



Imag[e]ining the Past



Sun 7 June, 11.15am to 12.45pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What do you think of when you think about the past? Does what you read in the media help? Our hands-on collaging workshop provides a relaxing and creative space to reflect on the narratives we share about our history and how we might use these to build better futures. Uncover the stories that matter to you with University of York researchers Andrew Hill, Clemency Cooper and Lindsey Büster. *Suitable for ages 16+.*



Democracy on Trial

Free tickets:
yorkfestivalofideas.com

Every day it feels like the world is fracturing. Trust in leaders is gone, money dictates politics and the future can seem bleak. Has democracy outlived its usefulness – or is it our only hope?

Join our citizens' jury as we put our system on trial. Hear the evidence, witness the cross-examination and cast your vote. The defendant is democracy. The verdict is yours.



Presented in collaboration with the Morrell Centre for Legal and Political Philosophy, which is generously supported by the C and JB Morrell Trust

The Promise of Democracy



Sun 7 June
10.45am to 11.30am (keynote)
11.45am to 1pm (panel)

Ron Cooke Hub,
University of York

Democracy is in the dock. Looking back at its origins, was the system always flawed? Is the current crisis simply the result of an economic model that was always at odds with political equality – the 'one person, one vote' ideal? Big tech insider-turned-critic Dex Hunter-Torricke takes to the stand, followed by other expert witnesses.

The Stress Test: Can democracy survive?



Sun 7 June
2pm to 3.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub,
University of York

Digital disruption, the rise of authoritarianism and polarisation, a failure to deliver for marginalised groups and future generations. Is democracy fundamentally incapable of navigating 21st-century threats? Expert witnesses, including digital journalism strategist Emily Bell, present the evidence of modern-day collapse.

The Verdict and the Road Ahead



Sun 7 June
4pm to 5.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub,
University of York

Members of the citizens' jury, the evidence is in. Now we decide: is democracy too flawed to save or can it be reclaimed? Our expert witnesses examine whether a radical shift to hyper-local, citizen-driven action could be the way forward. After the summing up, the verdict is yours.

The Writer's Room



Sun 7 June, 12 noon to 1pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What is it that so fascinates us about the places where writers live and create? Why are the rooms of certain writers mythologised almost as much as the works themselves: the Brontës' study in the parsonage; Virginia Woolf's garden room; Sigmund Freud's study, with its famous couch? Join writer Katie da Cunha Lewin as she dismantles the familiar furniture of the writer's room and opens it up to view.



Treasure-Hunting and Origami-Making Fun



Sun 7 June, 1pm to 3pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Step into a world where stories come to life. Listen to an exciting tale via a Kamishibai – a centuries-old traditional Japanese form of storytelling with picture cards – before taking part in a treasure hunt and making origami figures to take home. Join Géraldine Enjelvin, Yumi Nixon and Ulrike Wray of the University of York for this fun, interactive event. *Suitable for children aged five to 11 who must be accompanied by one adult.*



Graveyards: A history of living with the dead



Sun 7 June, 1.30pm to 2.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Why, how and where do we inter our dead? How have people throughout history responded to the problem of laying their dead to rest? Join author Roger Luckhurst for an unforgettable tour of the rich and unusual visual culture of the grave, from the pyramids of Giza and the catacombs of Rome to the cenotaphs erected to the world's war dead. Along the way, discover the diverse role of graveyards in literature, art, film and television.



Dissent in York: Architecture and community



Sun 7 June, 2pm to 3.30pm

Meet at Castlegate House, Castlegate 18

Free tickets: education@york-unlocked.org.uk

York has a long history of religious non-conformists, many holding active roles in the community and taking an interest in politics, philanthropy and intellectual debate. Explore the effects that protestant non-conformists had on the cityscape and how the architecture and streetscape around them helped to shape their lives, communities and worldviews. Join Achilles Dunster of York St John University for a York Unlocked walking tour.

YORK UNLOCKED

Dancing For Royalty



Sun 7 June, 2pm to 5pm

St Lawrence Church Hall, Lawrence Street 43

Tickets: £10 (+£1.55 booking fee)

dancethepast.co.uk/events

Discover how people danced at the top levels of society throughout history and perfect these skills yourself as you learn a selection of period pieces. Explore dance in the medieval courts of Europe, Henry VIII's Tudor court and the moves that would have impressed Queen Charlotte (as seen in *Bridgerton*). Find out how courtly life functioned and the vital role dance played in the political roleplay of the time.



Things We Found in the Ground



Sun 7 June, 3pm to 4pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 40

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join writers Eleanor Bruce and Lucilla Gray on a metal detecting journey through Britain as they share their fascination with unearthing historical artefacts. Hear about the cousins' startling discoveries over many weeks and months of digging countless holes: about the objects they found and what they tell us about our ancestors, about the power of community – and what they found out about themselves along the way.



A Cosmic Odyssey: Our place in spacetime



Sat 7 June, 3pm to 4pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Throughout the ages we have wondered about our place in the universe – from Galileo and Newton’s rigid space and time to Einstein’s warped reality. Join Benito Juárez-Aubry of the University of York for a cosmic odyssey as he explores what we understand – and don’t understand – about space and time today. Starting with the insights of Einstein, discover the concepts of spacetime and how our notion of the universe has evolved.



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council

Fresh Air, Fresh Roots: Explore, play and learn



Sun 7 June, 3.15pm to 4.15pm

Piazza Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What does the future hold for the trees in our towns and cities? Dive into Urban Labor-a Tree, a fast-paced strategy board game where you are the architect of a greener city. Team up with researchers from the Stockholm Environment Institute to uncover the perfect future treescapes, balancing climate, nature and people. No experience is needed, just creativity and teamwork. *Suitable for ages 10+.*



In Conversation with Tina Makereti



Sun 7 June, 4.30pm to 5.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

How does ‘place’ shape Indigenous literatures? From Aotearoa (New Zealand) to London, and from the early 19th century to the near future, Tina Makereti’s novels explore Māori histories of displacement and mobility, British colonialism, climate change and climate refugeeness. Join Tina in conversation with David Stirrup of the University of York and enjoy readings from the Māori author’s novels, including *The Mires* (2025).



Medieval Neighbours: Minster and city parishes



Micha Seiler

Sun 7 June, 5pm to 6pm

Holy Trinity Church, Goodramgate 

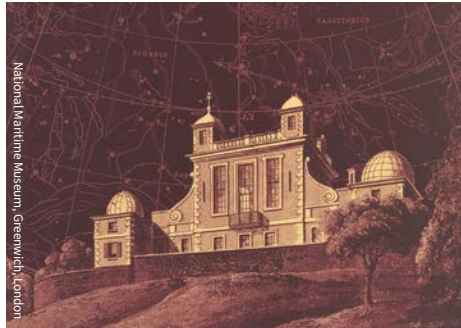
Free, but with a collection for the
Goodramgate Gate

Booking recommended but not essential.
yorkfestivalofideas.com

Between a bust-up at a baptism and daggers drawn near St William's College, the parish of Holy Trinity, Goodramgate lay, sometimes uneasily, between the precinct of York Minster and the city parishes. Historian Pat Cullum explores the complicated map of barriers and jurisdictions that made up the city, focusing on the development of Holy Trinity from the Norman Conquest to the Reformation (and a little beyond).



Royal Observatory Greenwich



National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Sun 7 June, 6pm to 7pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Explore the enduring history of the Royal Observatory Greenwich as we celebrate its collections and the varied work of three centuries of astronomers, navigators and clockmakers. The Observatory's Senior Curator Louise Devoy presents a beautifully illustrated talk charting the development of Britain's first state-funded scientific institution, from its founding by royal warrant in 1675 to the present day.



Hearth of Darkness



Sun 7 June, 6pm to 7pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Hear the powerful true story of how journalist Matt Blake discovered his new house was once the lair of the E17 Nightstalker. It was meant to be a refuge for him and his four-year-old daughter after a painful divorce, but unravelling the chilling secrets of the past threatened to suffocate the present. Discover how, instinctively sceptical, he set out on a scientific quest to make sense of the paranormal and find peace at home.



Human Kindness in a Volatile World



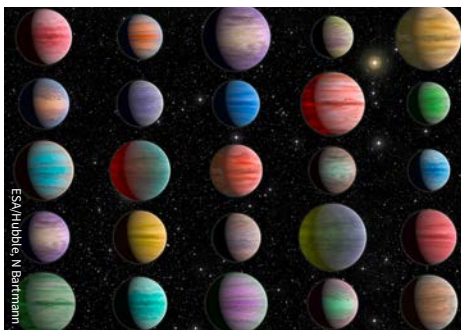
Sun 7 June, 6.30pm to 7.30pm

Piazza Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

While the headlines often focus on what divides us, acclaimed author Alexander McCall Smith has spent decades chronicling what connects us: friendship, community and the importance of being kind. From the dusty streets of Gaborone to the cobblestones of Edinburgh, his characters remind us that the smallest acts of kindness are often the most revolutionary. Join the creator of the iconic *No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* at our in-conversation event.



Fantastic Planets and How to Find Them



Sun 7 June, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Imagine basking in the warmth of three suns in the sky, or exploring lush crimson jungles, or waking up on a planet where night never ends. Science fiction is becoming reality as astronomers uncover thousands of incredible worlds in our galaxy. But how do we detect these planets and know what they are like? Join astrophysicist Emily Brunsten and science communicator Chris Stewart for an amazing journey beyond our solar system.



Manchester's Music Soul: Oasis and beyond



Sun 7 June, 8pm to 9pm

Piazza Building, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Oasis, The Stone Roses, Happy Mondays, James: the Mancunian music scene is legendary. Join ultimate industry insiders Mike Pickering and John Robb for a journey through Manchester's musical soul, from the 1950s backstreets to the present day. Hear revelatory accounts from their lives at the heart of the industry and the icons they've met along the way – including the Gallagher brothers and the city's most explosive export, Oasis.



MONDAY

8


JUNE

Sound and Conservation: Small orchestra of destruction



James Williamson/The Sunday Post

Mon 8 June, 12 noon to 6pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free. No booking required.

When restoration or repair is not cost effective, old pianos are often discarded. But they are ripe for reimagination. Experience the sounds and smells of a piano being dismantled and transformed into a playable 'strung back': the piano's frame and strings only. Hear the sounds of the dismantling and the strung back in performances at 1pm and 5.30pm with instrumental ensemble The Assembled.



Mon 8 June, 6pm to 7pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join us for a talk exploring what can happen to old pianos when their upkeep becomes too expensive. How can we reimagine them and transform them for reuse? Katie Harrison from York Consortium for Craft and Conservation discusses the issues for conservation and the circular economy with piano restorer Tom Binns.



 York Consortium
for Craft and
Conservation

 UNIVERSITY
of York

Guy James: Emerging ensembles



Mon 8 June, 6pm to 7pm

National Centre for Early Music, Walmgate 
Free tickets: ncem.co.uk 01904 658338

Guy James, a founding member of The Gesualdo Six, details how the acclaimed vocal ensemble investigates interacting traditions across renaissance Europe in their programming. Discover how their new Emerging Ensembles scheme explores what it means today to be an 'early musician' in areas such as research, collaboration and vocal technique.



Why the UK Needs a Nature's Rights Bill



Mon 8 June, 6pm to 7pm

Merchant Taylors' Hall, Aldwark 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Human wellbeing and prosperity are entirely dependent on the health of nature. Mumta Ito is rewriting the rules with the UK Nature's Rights Bill – a bold legal framework that puts nature's health first, ensuring our laws and economy work within the planet's limits, not against them. Hear about Mumta's journey from high-flying lawyer to nature advocate and explore how we move beyond sustainability to a truly regenerative world.



PLANETARY HEALTH: DISSOLVING THE HUMAN FRAME



Mon 8 June, 12 noon to 1pm

Planetary health sees Earth as a living system. Pim Martens of Maastricht University explores why actively regenerating nature, not just doing less harm, is vital.

⌘ YorkIdeas

WATCH AGAIN

Missed an event that sounded fantastic? Want to see a talk you enjoyed once more? Good news – we're recording many of our festival events. Watch these as well as previous years' content on youtube.com/YorkIdeas

Medieval Britain in Twelve Illuminated Manuscripts



Mon 8 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Merchant Adventurers' Hall, Fossgate **31**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join us for Illumino Part Two c1180-1550. Take a journey across time and space as you explore the history of medieval Britain through the biographies of illuminated manuscripts and their creators. Each remarkable manuscript serves as a gateway into the lives of its makers and commissioners and as a springboard into the era of its creation. Author Michelle P Brown examines this intricate and fascinating form of medieval evidence.



The Marker Committee: Poems for deep time



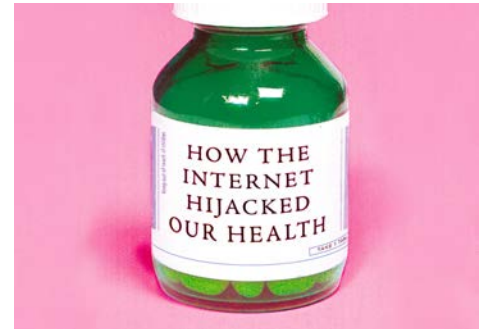
Mon 8 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green **57**
Tickets: £5
thinicepress.org/events

Lydia Kennaway, Poet-in-Residence at Thin Ice Press, introduces *The Marker Committee*, a collection of poems addressing the ephemerality of the written word. Enjoy readings of the poems and discover how each one came into being, the stories behind them and the collaborative process of creating the book. *Tickets include a drink upon arrival.*



Bad Influence: How the internet hijacked our health



Mon 8 June, 6.15pm to 7.15pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York **40**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Want to lose weight? Build muscle? Get pregnant? Advice is just a click away. With long waits for treatment and fewer face-to-face GP appointments, influencers have stepped into the breach. Writer and former BBC *Newsnight* Health Correspondent Deborah Cohen explores the transformation of a healthcare system driven by online trends. Discover the truth behind Ozempic influencers, AI-powered diagnoses, 'preventative' screening and Instagram's favourite wearable tech.



Taylor Swift: Out of the woods – or into them?



Mon 8 June, 6.30pm to 7.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Is pop megastar Taylor Swift an eco-icon or an environmental villain? While her jet use and album variants spark heated debate, might her lyrics be singing us back to nature? Elly McCausland of Ghent University, Belgium, dives into the friction between Swift's massive carbon footprint and her ability to tackle 'plant blindness' through song. Join Elly to explore the messy, melodic relationship between the star and our planet.



Sensing the 17th Century



Mon 8 June, 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Merchant Adventurers' Hall, Fossgate 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Taste and smell your way through the 17th century in a session that uses chocolate – and an ancient additive, vanilla – to connect York to Mesoamerican orchids, Aztec life and ladies' salons in Restoration England. Lose yourself in the crunch of grinding beans, the smell of cocoa and the lustre of porcelain, with the chance to handle objects from an authentic cabinet of historic artefacts.



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Independent bookseller Fox Lane Books will be providing both in-person and online sales of many of our speakers' books.

Visit foxlanebooks.co.uk

Poetry and Place in the Viking World



Mon 8 June, 7pm to 8pm

North South Café Bar, Bootham 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com


Come and discover the pleasures and surprises of Viking verse, with poetry about journeys and landscapes, halls and battlefields, and the many places of the Viking world. In keeping with our Festival theme, Alicia Maddalena and Matt Townend of the University of York host an evening of Viking poetry exploring ideas of place and space. *Early booking is advised as previous years' events have sold out.*



Stuff and Nonsense



Mon 8 June, 7.30pm to 9.30pm

York Explore Library, Museum Street 
Tickets: £10
yorkfestivalofideas.com

Enjoy improv comedy with a historical twist. Yorkshire-based improvisers Fool(ish) create an evening of spontaneous comedy inspired by curious documents and artefacts from the city archive. Join us as one knowledgeable historian and six fools present laughter from York's past. Forget dry and dusty versions of history because the truth is often way funnier than fiction.



There's a Ghost in My Room: Living with the supernatural



Mon 8 June, 7.45pm to 8.45pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Aged five, writer Sanjoy Roy encountered his first spirit in his ancestral house in Calcutta. A few years later, the otherworldly made its presence felt again in his parents' home in Delhi. Over the succeeding decades he, his family and friends have come across a variety of apparitions, spectres and phantoms both in India and abroad. Join Sanjoy for a fascinating travelogue through the mysterious world of the supernatural.



Northumbria AD 367-867



Mon 8 June, 8pm to 9pm

Merchant Adventurers' Hall, Fossgate 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

The story of the lands between the Forth and Humber from the end of the Roman period to the Viking kingdom of York is one of the most richly fascinating in British history. This is the age of Lindisfarne and Bede, and of names that resonate even now: Edwin, Oswald, Hild, Cuthbert, Wilfrid. Join archaeologist Colm O'Brien as he explores themes of landscape, power, creativity and intellect in Early Medieval Northumbria.



Beyond the Matrix: The reality of AI risk



Mon 8 June, 8pm to 9pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Is Artificial Intelligence (AI) a Hollywood-style threat or a tool we can trust? Join experts from the University of York's SAINTS AI Centre for Doctoral Training to explore how chatbots like ChatGPT and Gemini have changed the conversation. What are the real-world risks of advanced AI, what are researchers worried/not worried about and how are they working to keep these systems safe? Come along and find out.



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TUESDAY

9

JUNE

Kite Drone: Reimagining the Earth from above



Tues 9 June, 12 noon to 8pm

Ron Cook Hub, University of York  Free. No booking required.

Experience how new perspectives on a changing planet emerge from the fusion of old and new technologies: aerial kites and artificial intelligence. Join us for an exhibition of multimedia artworks that seek to tell new stories about how humans and machines sense and make sense of the environment, suggesting paths towards a better future. Enjoy the exhibition and meet its creator, Richard Carter of the University of York. *Don't miss short talks at 6.30pm and 7.30pm.*

Echoes and Renewals

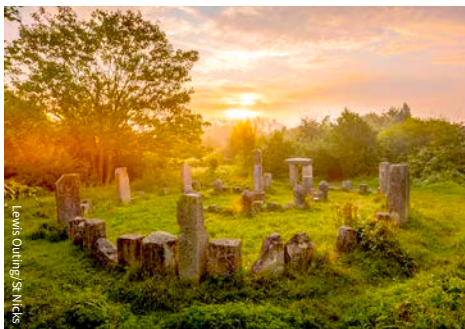


Tues 9 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Square  Free, but a retiring collection will be taken. No booking required.

Discover the organ as an instrument of place – shaped by architecture, ritual and memory. While music by Praetorius and Bach reflects the inherited sacred spaces of early modern Europe, works by Judith Bingham and Rachel Laurin engage more directly with space itself: its resonance, tension and capacity to transform sound into experience. Join organist James Short.

Poetry in the Woods



Tues 9 June, 2pm to 4pm

St Nicks Environment Centre, Rawdon Avenue **45**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Experience an afternoon of poetry and music at the meadow of St Nicks Nature Reserve. Jonathan Brockbank and Freya Sierhuis of the University of York explore the life and work of the Romantic poet John Clare, viewed by many as the finest poet about nature and the natural world in the English language. Afterwards, stroll through the woodland areas with St Nicks' rangers and learn about the reserve and its links to Clare's day.



Stonehenge: Old rocks, new theories



Tues 9 June, 6pm to 7pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York **40**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

For centuries Stonehenge has been the subject of fascination and speculation, spawning countless theories about its origins and purpose. But, over the last century, excavations and the development of new analytical techniques have enabled a far greater understanding of this enigmatic monument. Archaeologist Julian Richards explores Stonehenge's 'old rocks' and the theories that have emerged from newly available information.



Campus Nature Walk: Birds, blooms and biodiversity



Tues 9 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Meet at the Ron Cooke Hub, University of York **40**
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Vibrant orchids, dragonflies and migratory birds thrive across the University of York's Campus East, creating the perfect landscape for some wildlife spotting. Join campus wildlife expert Robin Perutz for a guided walk through this special habitat and learn about the many species of flowers, birds and insects that call this site home. Discover how careful campus design has enhanced biodiversity, wellbeing and research.



Songs of Nature: An evening of words and music with Michael Morpurgo and Clare O'Connell

Tues 9 June, 6pm to 7.35pm
Central Hall, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join one of Britain's favourite storytellers, Michael Morpurgo, for a spellbinding evening of words and music exploring our deep connection to the natural world.

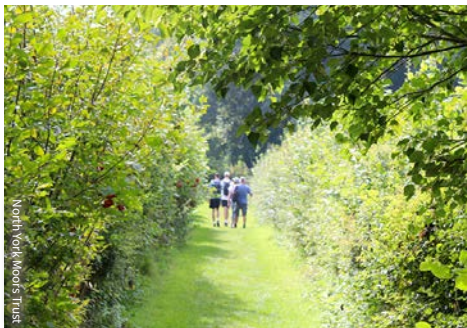
Through a journey across land and sea, Michael celebrates the vibrant beauty of our planet and our shared responsibility to protect it. Featuring readings from the *Carnival of the Animals*, *A Song of Gladness* and *Driftwood*, his evocative stories are beautifully interwoven with music by cellist Clare O'Connell.

Full of humour, energy and emotion, the acclaimed writer's inspiring performances are always a highlight of the Festival programme. Come along and rediscover the wonder of the wild with Michael, our Festival Patron, at this very special family concert.

Suitable for ages 8+.



A Dose of Nature: Our natural health service



North York Moors Trust

Tues 9 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Creative Centre, York St John University 

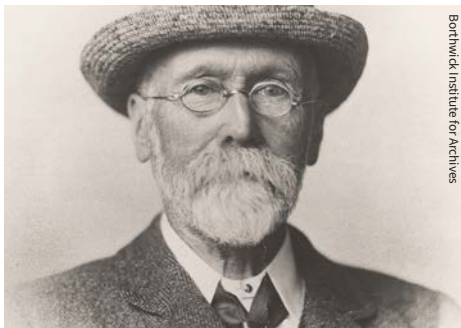
Free tickets: yorks.ac.uk/events/

Welcome to the Natural Health Service! In this interactive workshop, we'll step into the great outdoors to discover the powerful impact on human health and wellbeing of spending time in our protected landscapes. Explore why access to nature matters and how a green social prescribing programme through the NHS can support our health and wellbeing. Join us for insights, discussion and a dose of nature.

Est.
1841

YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Six Penn'orth of Hope



Borthwick Institute for Archives

Tues 9 June, 6.15pm to 7.15pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

In 1911, the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust was publicly denounced as a 'moral cesspool of cant and hypocrisy'. The catalyst? Several newspapers owned by the Trust were publishing prophecies (horse racing tips) which critics argued fuelled poverty and deprivation. Drawing on material from the Trust's archive, Sue Mendus of the University of York investigates the circumstances and the Trust's response.

 THE BORTHWICK
INSTITUTE FOR ARCHIVES

Uncovering York's Black History



Wikimedia Commons

Tues 9 and Wed 10 June, 7pm to 8pm

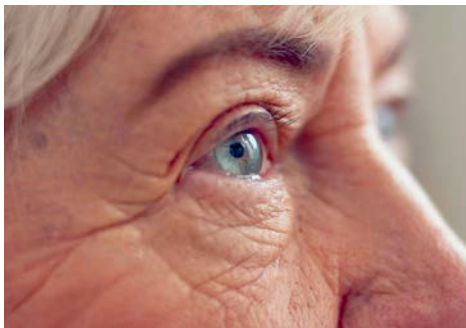
Meet at Museum Gardens, Museum Street 

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Discover York's rich Black history on a fascinating journey spanning nearly 2,000 years – from Roman Eboracum to the 1950s. Join Olivia Carpenter of the University of York for a historic guided walk as she introduces ten key sites where people of African descent stayed, worked or visited. Starting out with the ancient period and Roman ruins, find out more about this vital but less well-known part of the city's past.

 UNIVERSITY
of York

How Much Vision Can We Save in the Future?



Tues 9 June, 7pm to 8pm

Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens ⁵¹
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What does the Marathon des Sables teach us about endurance, hope and transforming outcomes in age-related Macular Degeneration? Richard Gale, a renowned expert in medical diseases of the retina, explains how both demand the same thing – relentless endurance when the finish line is nowhere in sight. Join him as he asks: how much vision can we save in the future? Presented in partnership with the Yorkshire Philosophical Society.

The James Burgess Lecture

A Life in Retail: Past, present and future



Tues 9 June, 7pm to 8pm

Bootham School, Bootham ¹⁵
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Stuart Rose, a veteran of British retail, shares insights into his career and thoughts about the future of the UK economy. Rising from Marks & Spencer trainee to leadership roles at the Burton Group, Argos, Booker/Iceland and Arcadia Group, Stuart famously turned around the fortunes of Arcadia. Returning to M&S in the top job, he defeated a major takeover bid and restored the retail icon to profit and public affection.



Chasing Jessop



Tues 9 June, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York ⁴⁰
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

In 1902, playing for England against Australia, Gilbert Jessop set a record for the fastest Test century for England – a milestone which still stands today. But the precise circumstances of England cricket's oldest record have long been a mystery. Journalist Simon Wilde reconstructs one of the game's most famous matches to establish what really happened. Might Jessop have got to his hundred even faster than previously believed?



Making Waves: The art of Japanese woodblock print



Tues 9 June, 7.45pm to 8.45pm
Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

York Art Gallery's exhibition, *Making Waves: The Art of Japanese Woodblock Print*, explores over 300 years of printmaking in Japan. Dig deeper into the exhibition's themes at a special event celebrating Japanese art and history. Expert speakers from York Art Gallery and the University of York share some of their favourite objects on display and discuss the histories behind them. Discover the world of artists, samurai and *Great Waves*.



York Museums Trust

Church, Chocolate and a Changing Neighbourhood



Wed 10 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm
Meet at All Saints' Church, North Street 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Enjoy a guided walk through some of the often-overlooked areas of York's history. Focusing on the streets around the church of All Saints North Street, church volunteer Abby Jones reveals hidden histories obscured by an ever-changing environment. With the help of imagery, see how the area has changed since the 19th and 20th centuries, and explore the historic church with its world-famous stained glass.



Climate Fresk Workshop



Wed 10 June, 1pm to 4pm

Sustainability Clinic, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Want to help tackle climate change but don't have the time to become a climate scientist? Our interactive Climate Fresk workshop will teach you the fundamental science behind climate change in just three hours. Based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, Climate Fresk empowers you to take action through small group discussion, reflection on emotions and collaborative action planning. *Suitable for ages 16+.*



Our Future, Our North: Building jobs and prosperity



Wed 10 June

Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

In March 2021, the government announced an ambitious plan to relocate civil servants outside London and the Darlington Economic Campus (DEC) was born. Five years later, discover how DEC is driving economic growth, creating new job opportunities and benefitting the pockets of everyone in the North of England. Our keynote speakers include Tom Riordan, the government's first envoy dedicated to northern growth.

From Local Roots to Regional Wealth

11am to 11.30am (keynote)
11.45am to 1pm (panel)

Expert speakers discuss how York and North Yorkshire can become the premier region for investment and new opportunities in the UK.

Regional Growth: The new tech trio

1.45pm to 3pm

Join us for a dynamic session spotlighting the 'growth opportunity trio' – BioTech, RailTech and CreaTech.

Good Growth: From strategy to your street

3.30pm to 5pm

Our panel discusses how we ensure economic success isn't just a headline, but a reality for every York and North Yorkshire neighbourhood.



Hidden Treasures: Guided campus art walk



Wed 10 June, 6pm to 7pm

Meet at the University of York Library entrance 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Established over six decades, the University of York's impressive art collection contains a wide range of works, including pieces by renowned masters. Following last year's popular event, curator Helena Cox returns to reveal more of the University's artistic treasures. Join Helena for a guided walk and learn the stories behind these exciting works of art. *Please note, this session involves one hour of walking and standing.*



FROM SPACE EXPLORATION TO UNDERSTANDING EARTH



Wed 10 June, 6pm to 7.15pm

In the run up to the Space Summit in Paris this year, our panel of experts from France and the UK explores the scientific, geopolitical, security, environmental, and societal issues and challenges related to space exploration.

Join us for an insightful discussion presented in collaboration with the French Embassy in the UK.



Higher Education,
Research and
Innovation
Department

THE BOOK OF KELLS: UNLOCKING THE ENIGMA



Wed 10 June, 6pm to 7pm

Join historian Victoria Whitworth as she presents a new account of one of the most famous and mysterious manuscripts in the world, *The Book of Kells*.

THE ESCAPE FROM KABUL



Wed 10 June, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Journalist Karen Bartlett offers a searing insight into the challenges of safely building a new life overseas and the captive fate of women in Afghanistan.

Anne Lister and Friends: Life, words and music



Ellie Smith

Wed 10 June, 7.30pm to 9.30pm

York Mansion House, St Helen's Square 

Tickets: £12 (£5 concessions)

yorkfestivalofideas.com

Diarist Anne Lister is celebrated the world over for her extraordinary contribution to literary heritage, but did you know she was also a keen musician? Join us for a concert that draws together spoken passages from the writings of Lister and her contemporaries, including Jane Ewbank of York, Jane Austen and others, interwoven with live performances of music from her own collection. Together they illustrate music's role in elite women's lives. *Ticket includes a drinks reception after the concert.*

Calderdale
Museums



IMAGINING THRUTOPIAS: HOW WE MADE IT THROUGH



 **Thurs 11 June, 6pm to 7pm**

Find out about a York community creative writing project that used 'thrutopia' fiction as an alternative to dystopian/doom-laden narratives about climate change.



Share your photos and experiences from the Festival using **#YorkIdeas**

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 [yorkfestivalofideas](https://www.instagram.com/yorkfestivalofideas)

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 yorkfestofideas.bsky.social

York's Energy Story: Past, present, future



Photo: Pauline Smith for FestivalofIdeas.com

Thurs 11 June, 6pm to 7.30pm

Meet at Foss Islands Chimney, Layerthorpe ¹⁹
Free tickets: [tickettailor.com/events/yce](https://www.tickettailor.com/events/yce)

Join York Community Energy (YCE) on a short guided walk around some of the key sites in York's energy story, exploring the places that have been most important in powering our city. At the end of the tour, enjoy refreshments at York Explore Library as YCE shares their vision for a future solar-powered city. Join in the discussion and tell us about your priorities for the energy future of the city's most important spaces. *Walking tour lasts approximately 30 to 40 minutes.*



Printed Portraits and the Scientific Revolution



The Kees Collection

Thurs 11 June, 6pm to 8pm

Thin Ice Press, Peasholme Green ⁵⁷
Free tickets: [yorkfestivalofideas.com](https://www.yorkfestivalofideas.com)

How do printed portraits depict the changing and expanding knowledge about nature in the 16th and 17th centuries? Irina Tautschnig of the University of York explores what the portraits of early modern astronomers, anatomists and natural historians can tell us. Join Irina at Thin Ice Press: the Centre for Print to discover how images shape scientific identity. *Don't miss an accompanying exhibition. (Please see page 16.)*



Bioscience: The musical



Thurs 11 June, 6pm to 8pm

School of ACT, University of York ⁴⁸
Free tickets: [yorkfestivalofideas.com](https://www.yorkfestivalofideas.com)

Inspired by the hit musical *Six*, Biology and Biomedicine researchers at the University of York have collaborated closely with student performers to develop musical performances about their work. Come along and learn more about the innovative bioscience research being carried out in our city as you watch a concert-style musical. Afterwards enjoy a 'meet the researchers' session and find out more about their exciting work.



Unlocking the Chains: Madness and medicine



Thurs 11 June, 6.30pm to 7.30pm
Ron Cooke Hub, University of York 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

What does York's past reveal about how we have cared for bodies and minds? Vaccine historian Paula Larsson traces the city's evolving history of medicine and mental health, exploring how ideas of illness, treatment and control have shaped York and its people. This Uncomfortable York event foregrounds the experiences and contributions of women, people of colour and LGBTQIA+ individuals whose stories are often overlooked in this narrative.



Carbon-Based Gems, Carbon-Based Consequences



Sarah Steele

Thurs 11 June, 7pm to 8pm
Tempest Anderson Hall, Museum Gardens 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Diamonds promise forever love, but the first synthetic 'forever' belonged to jet. When Victorian demand for Whitby jet outpaced supply, the quest for a substitute led to plastic. Today, lab-grown diamonds are marketed as sustainable, but history warns us: synthetic gems rarely disappear when their beauty fades. Sarah Steele, Curator of Jet at Whitby Museum, explores why some forevers are measured in catastrophe, not in carats.



FRIDAY

12

JUNE

Mapping Wealth, Ownership and Place in York

Free tickets:
yorkfestivalofideas.com

From Rowntree's historic maps of poverty to today's 'York model' of community wealth, how does our city truly prosper? How can we make sure money spent in York actually stays in York? In partnership with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, we explore how our city can nurture a grassroots movement of community-driven change.



Rowntree Revisited: 125 years on



Fri 12 June
11am to 12.30pm

St Saviourgate York

125 years after Seebohm Rowntree's landmark study of poverty in York, a new question is coming into focus: how do we study wealth today and what might it reveal? In revisiting Rowntree's study, our panel discusses new research into the ownership of land, housing and assets. Poverty remains a pressing concern, but it cannot be understood without examining wealth. As ownership becomes more concentrated and disconnected from place, we explore how studying wealth might reshape our understanding of inequality in York today.

The York Model: Community wealth



Fri 12 June
1pm to 2.30pm

St Saviourgate York

Could York and North Yorkshire become a national beacon for community wealth building, reshaping who owns, controls and benefits from the local economy? What if more wealth generated in the region stayed here, building stronger communities, supporting good work and growing shared assets? Join the Mayoral Community Wealth Building Commission to explore a bold vision for a fairer, more resilient economy rooted in local ownership, social enterprise and community-led action. Hear how the Commission is laying the foundations for change and turning it into reality.

The Art of the Spanish Guitar



Fri 12 June, 12.30pm to 1.30pm

St Helen's Church, St Helen's Square 
Free, but a retiring collection will be taken.
No booking required.


Internationally acclaimed guitar virtuoso Galina Vale makes her seventh Festival appearance with a new programme of classical, flamenco and folk guitar music from Spain, Latin America, Eastern Europe and beyond. Praised in reviews for her 'deep fiery performance' and exuberant style, critics have styled her 'La Diva de la Guitarra'. *Early arrival is advised as previous visits have attracted a full house.*



From Cocoa Works to Curtain Calls



Fri 12 June, 7pm to 8.45pm

Joseph Rowntree Theatre, Haxby Road 
Free tickets:
josephrowntreetheatre.co.uk/FestivalOfIdeas


Step back in time and explore 90 years of the Joseph Rowntree Theatre as you discover the remarkable story of one of York's most cherished cultural institutions. Hear from an expert panel and the Theatre's dedicated volunteers as they reflect on the theatre's rich history, the Rowntree family legacy and the enduring importance of community theatre. Come along and share your own reflections and put your questions to our panel.



Living Lore: Contemporary York ghost stories



Fri 12 June, 8pm to 10pm

The Black Swan Inn, Peasholme Green 
Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Collecting the real haunted experiences of York residents, *Living Lore: The Ghost Stories of Contemporary York* is a new co-production between Skald Theatre Group and the York Society of Hauntologists. This live storytelling event centres real, contemporary tales of local haunted happenings to help us preserve the ghost stories future generations will call legends.



York Design Awards: Winners presentation



Mon 6 July, 6pm to 9pm

York Racecourse **168**

Free tickets: yorkfestivalofideas.com

Join us for the 18th annual York Design Awards winners presentation in categories covering residential, community and commercial buildings, and open spaces. York Design Awards promotes and celebrates excellence in architectural design and innovation in the York area. Good sustainable design and conservation support the city's special heritage and contribute to the wellbeing of its residents and visitors, creating a vibrant future.



Free Walking Tours



Walking through York history for 75 years...

Explore York and enjoy its rich and distinctive history at any time of the year on a free guided walking tour of the city.

Celebrating 75 years of storytelling, the volunteer team of local experts from the Association of Voluntary Guides to the City of York (AVG) is on hand to showcase our beautiful city every day except Christmas Day. Find out more about the two-hour tours and pre-book your ticket at avgork.co.uk.

Step into 2,000 years of York history with us.

POST-FESTIVAL EVENTS



**FOX LANE
BOOKS**

Independent bookseller Fox Lane Books will be providing both in-person and online sales of many of our speakers' books.

Visit foxlanebooks.co.uk



York Festival of Ideas is one of the largest free festivals of its kind in the UK.

At the centre of the Festival is a belief that education and ideas have the power to transform lives. That's why we feel passionately that everyone across the world should have free access to ideas, as well as an opportunity to learn, explore and discuss those ideas together in a safe and welcoming environment.

If you share our belief, please consider supporting York Festival of Ideas with a donation today. Every pound given really does make a difference.

Support us:

yustart.hubbub.net/p/festival-of-ideas



Festival Venues

- 1 All Saints' Church**
North Street
- 2 Bar Lane**
- 3 Belfrey Hall**
Stonegate
No wheelchair access
- 4 Bennett's Café & Bistro**
High Petergate
- 5 Bootham School**
Bootham
- 6 Borthwick Institute for Archives**
University of York
- 7 Campus East Gazebo**
University of York
- 8 Castlegate House**
Castlegate
- 9 Central Hall**
University of York
- 10 Church Lane Building**
University of York
- 11 City Centre**
- 12 City Screen**
Coney Street
- 13 Clements Hall**
Nunthorpe Road
- 14 Creative Centre**
York St John University
- 15 De Grey Court Building**
York St John University
- 16 Derwent College**
University of York
- 17 Eye of York**
Tower Street
- 18 Fabrication Crafts**
Stonegate
- 19 Foss Islands Chimney**
Layerthorpe
- 20 Friargate Quaker Meeting House**
Friargate
- 21 Friargate Theatre**
Lower Friargate
No wheelchair access
- 22 Heslington Hall**
University of York
No wheelchair access to H/G09
- 23 Heworth Green Gate**
- 24 Holy Trinity Church**
Goodramgate
- 25 Institute for Safe Autonomy**
University of York
- 26 Joseph Rowntree Theatre**
Haxby Road
- 27 King's Manor**
Exhibition Square
- 28 King's Staith Landing**
- 29 Knavesmire**
- 30 Law and Sociology Building**
University of York
- 31 Merchant Adventurers' Hall**
Fossgate
- 32 Merchant Taylors' Hall**
Aldwark
- 33 Museum Gardens**
- 34 National Centre for Early Music**
Walmgate
- 35 National Railway Museum**
Leeman Road
- 36 North South Café Bar**
Bootham
- 37 Parliament Street**
- 38 Piazza Building**
University of York
- 39 Quad South Hall**
York St John University
- 40 Ron Cooke Hub**
University of York
- 41 St George's Graveyard**
Lead Mill Lane
- 42 St Helen's Church**
St Helen's Square
- 43 St Lawrence Church Hall**
Lawrence Street
- 44 St Lawrence Parish Church**
Lawrence Street
- 45 St Nicks Environment Centre**
Rawdon Avenue
- 46 St Oswald's Church Hall**
Main Street, Fulford
- 47 St Saviourgate York**
- 48 School of ACT**
University of York
- 49 Southlands Methodist Church**
Bishophthorpe Road
- 50 Sustainability Clinic**
University of York
- 51 Tempest Anderson Hall**
Museum Gardens
- 52 The Angel on the Green**
Bishophthorpe Road
- 53 The Black Swan Inn**
Peasholme Green
No wheelchair access to upstairs room
- 54 The Guildhall**
Coney Street
- 55 The Hiscox Building**
Peasholme Green
- 56 The Place**
Bramham Road
- 57 Thin Ice Press**
Peasholme Green
- 58 University Boathouse**
Fulford Ings
- 59 University of York Library**
- 60 Vanbrugh College**
University of York
- 61 Walmgate Bar**
Foss Islands Road
- 62 York Army Museum**
Tower Street
- 63 York Explore Library**
Library Square, Museum Street
- 64 York Mansion House**
St Helen's Square
- 65 York Medical Society**
Stonegate
Enquire at the front door for wheelchair access
- 66 York Minster**
Deangate
- 67 York Minster Library**
Deans Park
- 68 York Racecourse**

Accessibility: All indoor venues are wheelchair accessible unless otherwise stated. For guided and self-guided tours, please check the event details on the Festival website.

Festival Partners

We would like to thank the following partners for making York Festival of Ideas 2026 happen:



Alex Holland

Thin Ice Press

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York St John University

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Yorkshire Philosophical Society

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 Philosophy
 MySight York
 National Railway Museum
 Navigators Art & Performance
 North South Café Bar



York Cares

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The National Centre for Early Music

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Soapbox Science

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All Saints North Street

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 Princeton University Press
 Professor Phil Harris and Mrs Irene Harris
 Queer Arts
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 Reel Art Press
 Riding Lights Theatre Company
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 St Helen Stonegate
 St Nicks
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 Skald Theatre Group
 Soapbox Science
 Sociologically Imagining York
 Stockholm Environment Institute

StreetLife
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 The Black Swan Inn
 The Borthwick Institute for Archives
 The Burgess Family
 The Company of Merchant Adventurers of the City of York
 The Company of Merchant Taylors of the City of York
 The Foss Fairy Trail
 The Institution of Engineering and Technology
 The National Centre for Early Music
 The Place
 Thin Ice Press: the York Centre for Print
 Three Minute Thesis
 Uncomfortable York

University of York
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 XR Stories
 York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority
 York Archaeology
 York Army Museum
 York Cares
 York Central
 York CliConnect
 York Community Energy
 York Concerts
 York Consortium for Craft and Conservation
 York Crime Walk
 York Death & Culture Walk
 York Design Awards
 York Environmental Sustainability Institute

York Lindy
 York-Maastricht Partnership
 York Medical Society
 York Minster
 York Museums Trust
 York Musical Society
 York Pride
 York Rhythm and Tap
 York Rivers Trail
 York St John University
 York's Hidden History
 Yorkshire Bach Choir
 Yorkshire Philosophical Society
 Yorkshire Water
 Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
 YorkTalks
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We express our deepest gratitude to all the individuals and organisations that so generously support York Festival of Ideas.

C and JB Morrell Trust and the Morrell Centre for Legal and Political Philosophy

The C and JB Morrell Trust is a core funder of the Festival. The Morrell Centre for Legal and Political Philosophy, which is generously supported by the Trust, is proud to sponsor a series of themed events on *Democracy on Trial* (page 72). The Centre is dedicated to legal and political philosophy with a particular focus on toleration as an idea and as a practice.

York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority has been created by the City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council and is a legally recognised, single body. Our role is to use some of the money and powers, that up to now have been held by central government, and work with local leaders and communities to invest in ways that will help to make York and North Yorkshire a better place for you to live, work and do business. We are very pleased to support *Change is Coming: A new vision for York* (page 46).

French Embassy in the UK

The Higher Education, Research and Innovation (ESRI) Department of the French Embassy in the United Kingdom is recognised as a partner for British Institutions and their French counterparts. The ESRI is very happy to work with York Festival of Ideas to present *From Space Exploration to Understanding Earth* (page 91), bringing together experts from France and the UK.



Liberté
Égalité
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Higher Education,
Research and Innovation
Department



The Institution of Engineering and Technology

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) is the largest multidisciplinary professional engineering institution in the world. The North Yorkshire Network of the IET is a proud sponsor and collaborator of York Festival of Ideas. This year we will be supporting *Installing Charge Points: From planning to operation* (page 55).

Jane Moody Fund

With thanks to the Jane Moody Fund for supporting *Riot Women with Sally Wainwright* (page 30). Professor Jane Moody, who died in 2011, was founding Director of the University of York's Humanities Research Centre and co-founder of York Festival of Ideas.

The Burgess Family

Ashley Burgess OBE and Gill Burgess are delighted to support *How Much Vision Can We Save in the Future?* (page 88).

Professor Phil Harris and Mrs Irene Harris

Professor Phil Harris and Mrs Irene Harris are very pleased to support an artefact-handling session for blind and partially sighted people, hosted by archaeologist Julian Richards.

Athena Swan

The Athena Swan Charter recognises the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all. The University of York achieved a silver award in March 2026. The University's Athena Swan Steering Group is delighted to support York Festival of Ideas.

Our thanks to those donors and supporters who wish to remain anonymous. If you would like to discuss sponsorship opportunities, please email the Festival team at yorkfestivalofideas@york.ac.uk.

⌘ YorkIdeas

Featuring talks by global speakers, new learning experiences and activities for the whole family to enjoy, York Ideas is a year-round series of events led by the University of York.

Culminating in York Festival of Ideas in May/June each year, York Ideas offers an incredible range of mostly free events for all interests and ages. Many talks are also recorded and made available to watch again on our York Ideas YouTube channel.



Jan Martindale

For a large print or braille copy of the brochure, please contact MySight York at hello@mysightyork.org

MySight York

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