Newsletter

November 2026

A Few Words from the Chair

"It's been another busy year for the Association as we continue working to make The Groves an even better place to live. We have been successful in securing funding from a variety of sources and have strengthened our relationships with City of York Councillors, the City of York Council, and other local organisations.

Our bi-monthly community meetings continue to provide residents with an opportunity to share their views, raise concerns, and help shape future improvements within our neighbourhood. Thank you to everyone who has attended and contributed.

We are also pleased to see our Facebook group continue to grow. It is a great way to stay informed about local news, community events, and opportunities to get involved. Join us at The Groves Association Facebook Group.

In addition, we send regular email updates to residents who wish to keep up to date with Association news and activities. If you would like to receive these updates, please contact us at grovesassociation@gmail.com.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can make a real difference to our community."



grovesassociation@gmail.com
https://grovesassociation.org/
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Events

- The Groves Association Annual General Meeting Tuesday 24th November from 7.30pm – 8.45pm at Theatre@41 Monkgate.
- Local History Group at St Thomas' Church Hall, Wednesdays 5.30pm – 7pm.
- Repair Cafe - Last Saturday of the month from 9:30am – 12 noon at St Thomas' Church Hall.
- Monkgate Well-being Choir Wednesdays 2:45pm – 4:15pm at St Thomas' Church Hall.
- Groves Spring Festival 30th April – 3rd May 2027.
- Clean up on Saturday 1st December, 10am – 11am at the garages on March Street next to Helmsley House!



Annual General Meeting

The Groves Association Annual General Meeting will take place at Theatre@41 Monkgate on Tuesday 24th November from 7.30pm to 8.45pm.

This is an opportunity to hear about the Association's plans and priorities for the coming year, ask questions, and find out how you can become more involved in your community.

Committee members will also be elected at the meeting. Whether you would like to cast your vote or are interested in standing for election yourself, your participation is important and valued.

Free food will be available, and the bar will be open.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Discover the Story of the Groves

How well do you know the streets you live on? What did the Groves look like when the area was home to fields and gardens? The newly formed Groves Local History Group is bringing local residents together to uncover and share the history of our neighbourhood and everyone is welcome to get involved.

Step into the story of the Groves through the lives of the people who have called it home and the streets that have shaped the neighbourhood. At our first session, memories brought the past to life: residents recalled much-loved shops, bustling pubs and local businesses, explored streets and landmarks that have disappeared and began uncovering clues about the local area.

But this isn't just about dates and buildings. We want to capture the everyday stories that make a place special: the shops people visited, places where neighbours met, what people did for work and leisure, what they ate and the characters who were part of life in the Groves.

Over the coming months, we'll journey through old maps, rediscover vanished streets and buildings, uncover the stories behind local shops and workplaces, and share treasured memories of the Groves. We're also collecting photographs, documents, memorabilia and personal stories to help create a community archive for the future.

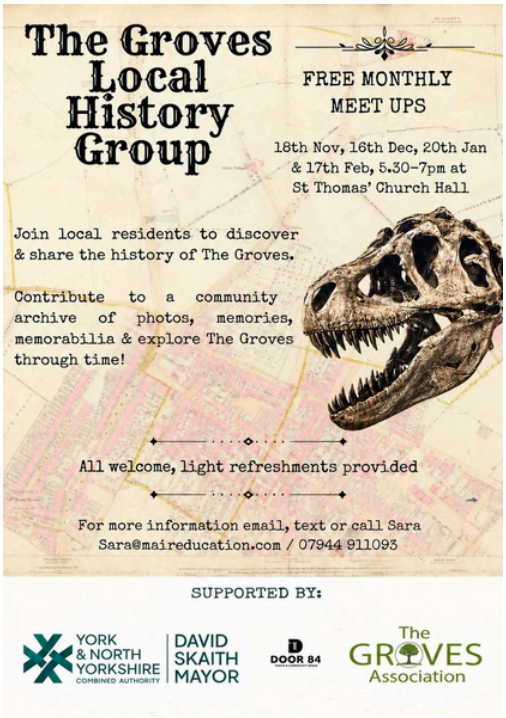






You don't need to be a historian to join in. Perhaps you have an old photograph tucked away, remember a long-gone shop or pub, or simply want to know more about where you live. As our first meeting showed, everyone knows something – and every memory can add another piece to the story of the Groves.

The group meets monthly at St Thomas' Church Hall, Wednesdays 5.30–7pm. So come along, bring your memories, photographs or questions – and help us piece together the story of the Groves.



Johnson's Free-Range Eggs – Fresh from the Howardian Hills

Delicious free-range eggs, straight from a farm in the Howardian Hills.

Every Thursday at 9.30am on Garden Street, near the trade entrance to York St John University.

Be quick! The van is usually only there for about five minutes, so don't miss out!



Image courtesy of The Yorkshire Post

Greening Up the Groves

Work has continued to make the Groves greener, brighter, and more welcoming for everyone. This has included installing hanging baskets along private roads and carrying out additional planting in council-owned communal areas.

We were delighted when the City of York Council planted seven new trees across the estate, each costing approximately £300. The Association is extremely grateful for this investment and would like to give a special thank you to the residents who volunteered to adopt and water the trees throughout the exceptionally hot summer months. Without their dedication and support, many of the trees may not have survived.

We have also been fortunate to receive support from York Cares, working alongside volunteers from Aviva. Teams have spent full days helping to clear communal areas that had unfortunately become overgrown and uninviting. Their hard work has already resulted in more than 100 tonne bags of vegetation being removed, transforming several shared spaces. Further volunteer days are planned for the future.

In addition, GoodGym has been supporting the community through its unique approach to volunteering. Groups of up to 20 runners, cyclists, and walkers travel to locations across the area, complete practical community tasks, and then continue their journey. We are incredibly grateful for their help, including distributing the majority of these newsletters.

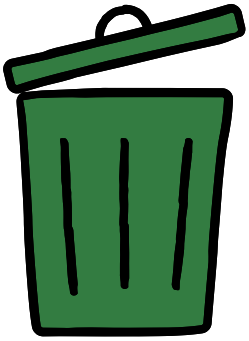
A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, energy, and enthusiasm to helping make the Groves a greener and more welcoming place to live.







Working Together for Cleaner Streets



Since January, the Groves Association has reported over 170 fly-tipping incidents to keep our neighbourhood looking its best.

Thanks to everyone who turns out for our monthly street cleans on the first Saturday of every month, we are seeing real results—litter is significantly down, and our kerbs are much clearer of built-up mud!

Working with the Council

While our volunteer efforts are making a huge impact, we also need to coordinate more effectively with council services on key maintenance issues:

- Weed Clearance: Weed spraying was brought back in-house by the council this year, which caused operational delays and led to several roads and pathways being missed entirely during the May cycle. We are pressing for a clear schedule for upcoming treatments.

- Street Sweeping: It remains challenging to get exact street-sweeping schedules from the highways team. We are continuing our outreach so we can align our volunteer efforts with their regular routes.

When community action and council services work hand in hand, we can make a massive difference to our local streets. Thank you for your continued support—see you at the next clean up 1st Saturday in December, 10am for an hour, meet at the garages on March Street next to Helmsley House!

Calling All Local Artists—Young and Old!

We're inviting artists of all ages to help transform part of our community art wall into a colourful celebration of The Groves—its history, nature and people.

We would love to fill the walls with paintings inspired by our local area, creating vibrant galleries for everyone to enjoy.
You do not need to be a professional artist to take part. We welcome artwork from local residents of every age and ability who want to celebrate their creativity and community.
Interested?

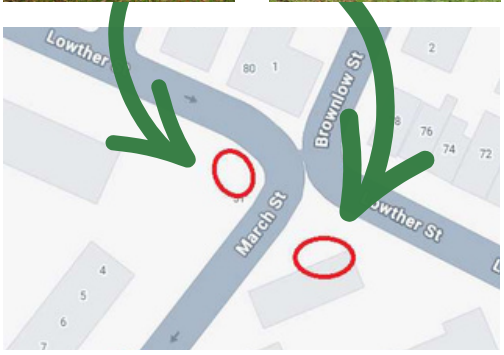
To have your artwork—or your child's artwork—considered for the wall gallery, email grovesassociation@gmail.com.











The map below shows the 2 gallery walls





Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets

The Groves is seeing real, visible change thanks to a community-led partnership bringing residents, businesses and local organisations together behind a shared vision for the neighbourhood. Working alongside the Groves Association and other local stakeholders, Door 84 has helped deliver a series of projects designed to celebrate the area's identity, strengthen community pride and create a more welcoming environment.

A standout achievement has been the striking new mural on Lowther Street by York artist Tom Sledmore (SledOne). Shaped by conversations with local residents, the artwork celebrates the history, nature and people of The Groves, transforming a previously neglected wall into a vibrant landmark that has attracted attention from both YorkMix and the BBC.

The project has also supported practical improvements to the high street, including new planters, with decorative lighting and bunting to be added in the coming months, helping to create a greener and more welcoming public space.

Local volunteers have played an important role in making these improvements happen. A recent band night at Door 84 was an enormous success, with a ceilidh taking place on Saturday 5th December at St.Thomas' Church.

Together, these achievements show the power of community collaboration and have been made possible through the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund, provided by the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and supported by Mayor David Skaith.



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Repair and Share

We have held monthly Repair and Share sessions over the past year and our volunteer fixers have brought so many items back to new life. From much-loved teddy bears to jewellery with memories attached, to vacuum cleaners, bread makers and radios, and all sorts of clothing and household textiles each represents something not thrown away, money saved, waste avoided and memories preserved.

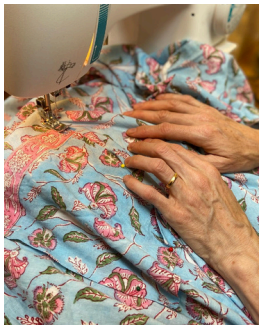
In the summer we advertised garden tool sharpening as a special focus and this was popular and worth repeating next year. Over the winter we plan to offer a workshop on caring for and mending knitwear as a seasonally appropriate focus.

This year we have been collaborating with other repair cafes in York to share our knowledge and experiences and to join together for larger events. A shared Celebration of Repair Cafes is taking place on Saturday 24th October in York Explore Library as part of York Environment Festival. Earlier in the year we were also invited to attend an event in the Houses of Parliament to ask politicians to make repair more accessible to all.

Work is underway towards setting up a Library of Things in the Groves, where you will be able to borrow household tools and other items that you might only need occasionally. Watch this space!

We are immensely grateful to our volunteers who make these things possible. We would love to recruit more volunteers, both to help out in the kitchen at our friendly Repair and Share sessions, serving drinks and cake, or making cake if you feel able, and as repairers of all sorts. We meet on the last Saturday of the month in St Thomas's Church Hall between 9.30am and 12 noon and would love to see you there.







Foss Fairy Trail

Our little fairy trail continues to bring smiles to visitors of all ages, and we are delighted that so many families still enjoy exploring it throughout the year.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of Community Payback, whose help with maintenance has enabled the trail to continue despite the challenges we have faced this year. We are also working closely with the Council, local Councillors and the Police to help ensure the trail remains a welcoming space for everyone.

Looking ahead, we are hopeful that new housing developments in the area will bring fresh interest, new volunteers and additional support for the project. There are exciting opportunities for community involvement, and every contribution, big or small, can make a real difference.

If you would like to help with maintaining the trail, creating fairy houses, fundraising, sponsoring a display, or volunteering in any way, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact us at thefossfairytrail@gmail.com.



Thank you to everyone who has supported the Foss Fairy Trail. Together, we can keep the magic alive for local children and families for years to come.

FESTIVAL FUN

'We attended the festival in 2025 and, as a result, planned our travels around this year's...' – 'It was brilliant!!!!!!!' – 'We loved everything! We'd been looking forward to it since last year.'

The 2nd Groves Spring Festival was (as before) held over the first bank holiday weekend in May. Again the response from local residents was overwhelmingly positive. Similar to last year, over 90% of attendees said they would definitely come again and provided lovely feedback.

This year there were 14 events (40% increase) that attracted over 700 audience members (44% increase) and more than 90 performers (165% increase).

New events included an art project with The Hut community, a choir concert at York St.John University Chapel and several events at The Punchbowl, Lowther St.

Plans for the 2027 Groves Spring Festival (30th April – 3rd May) are already underway and will be financially supported as part of the ongoing Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund.

As last year, we expect to continue the tradition of all events being free to attend.

Anyone who would like to support the Festival by offering ideas, voluntary time or donations then please contact us at: grovesassociation@gmail.com. You can also donate via the website.

More details will be available via our Facebook page and website in due course.













The Groves Association Needs a New Chair

At this year's Annual General Meeting, the current Chair of The Groves Association will be stepping down after their term in the role. As a result, we are looking for a new Chair to help lead the Association and support its work within our community.

The Chair plays a key role in guiding the Association, providing leadership and direction, and acting as its public face. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who cares about The Groves, enjoys working with people, and wants to make a positive difference in the neighbourhood.

This rewarding voluntary role offers the chance to help shape the future of The Groves and to work alongside a dedicated team committed to improving our area.

If you are interested in finding out more or would like to discuss the role informally, please get in touch with The Groves Association at grovesassociation@gmail.com. We would be delighted to hear from you.

What does the Chair do?

The Chair's responsibilities include:

- Providing leadership and ensuring the Association operates in line with its constitution and values.
- Chairing board, committee and Annual General Meetings, working with the Secretary to set agendas and follow up on actions.
- Representing the Association in meetings with the council, housing providers and partner organisations.
- Working closely with the Treasurer to ensure finances are managed responsibly.
- Supporting and guiding board members and volunteer leads.
- Leading on the recruitment of new board members and volunteers when needed.
- Acting as the public face of the Association and helping to build positive relationships across the community.

Funding Successes Over the Past Year



The past year has been a very positive one for the Groves community, with a number of successful funding applications helping to improve our neighbourhood, support community events and enhance the local environment.

We were delighted to receive **£**350 from Ainsty Rotary Club and **£**250 from the St John's Living Fund to purchase plants, hanging baskets and bird boxes, helping to make our streets greener and more welcoming for both residents and wildlife. Funding from Guildhall Ward (**£**340) enabled the purchase of gardening tools and supported street cleaning activities, helping local volunteers maintain and improve community spaces.

The Groves Spring Festival 2026 attracted increased funding compared to 2025: The Guildhall Ward (**£**1,490), Portakabin (**£**550) and over **£**1,400 in private donations, helping us continue to deliver and expand the programme of activities and events that brings the community together.

One of the largest awards came from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Fund, which provided £9,606 for community murals and projects designed to reduce anti-social behaviour. These improvements will help create a safer and more attractive environment while encouraging community pride.

In addition, an application to the Mayor's Combined Authority High Street Fund, submitted by Door 84 and supported by the Groves Association, secured funding to improve the row of shops on Lowther Street. This investment will help enhance the appearance of the local shopping area and support the vitality of the high street.

In total, the community secured over £12,000 in grant funding during the year, with further investment also being delivered through the High Street Fund project.

THANK YOU

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our funders and supporters for their generosity and belief in our community. Their contributions have helped us improve our local environment, support community events, enhance public spaces, and invest in projects that make the Groves a safer, greener and more welcoming place to live.

We are particularly grateful to Ainsty Rotary Club, Portakabin, Guildhall Ward, the Mayor's Combined Authority High Street Fund, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Fund, and the St John's Living Fund. Their support, alongside the dedication of local volunteers and partner organisations, continues to make a real and lasting difference to our neighbourhood.

Together, we are helping to build a stronger and more vibrant Groves community for everyone.

The GROVES Association

The Groves Association Annual General Meeting

Date: Tuesday 24th November 2026 Time: 7:30pm - 8:45pm Venue: Theatre@41 Monkgate