

The background of the page is a photograph of York Minster, a large Gothic cathedral, with a red semi-transparent overlay. The text is centered over this image.

Chair Recruitment Pack for the position of Non-executive Chair of the Board of Trustees

**York Archaeology
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Welcome to York Archaeology

Thank you for your interest in York Archaeology and the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees

Since its foundation in 1973 we have been at the heart of York's cultural life and helped to shape the city's sense of itself and its immensely rich heritage. While we are most famous for the JORVIK Viking Centre, this is only one part of an extraordinarily diverse and rich organization that operates in multiple aspects of the archaeological world.

With other offices in Nottingham and Sheffield our work spans the North, East Midlands and increasingly extends to a national scale.

In the 11 years since I became CEO we have faced significant challenges, the flooding of JORVIK in 2015 and COVID, but these have only served to forge a stronger team and for me it is truly a huge honour to lead such inspiring, capable and committed people.

Our current Chair, Professor Anthony Robards, has led the Board most skillfully through considerable development and working closely with him, York Archaeology now has a strong strategic focus, ambitious goals, and a number of major multi-annual initiatives that are underway.

As we now look forwards to the next chapter of our story, I very much look forward to hearing from candidates that share our values and passion for archaeology and who I can work alongside to achieve our vision and mission.

David Jennings

Chief Executive



Who we are

York Archaeology (the trading name of York Archaeological Trust for Excavation and Research) is a self-funded educational charity, and one of the leading professional archaeological organisations in the UK and abroad. Founded in 1972, we have a reputation for delivering high quality investigation, research and public engagement from our offices in York, Nottingham, Sheffield and Glasgow. We provide exceptional fieldwork and conservation services and curate one of the largest archaeological collections outside of London. We also run four successful visitor attractions in York including the world famous JORVIK Viking Centre, along with touring exhibitions to partner venues and one of the biggest Viking Festivals in Europe. We have three accredited museums: the JORVIK Centre, Barley Hall, a restored mediaeval townhouse and DIG, an interactive archaeology attraction. Our charitable objectives are thus supported by commercial strands of work, which enable substantial public engagement. Turnover in 2022-3 was £11 million, and the current headcount is 230.

The current Chair, Professor Tony Robards will be stepping down in Autumn 2024, at the end of a seven-year term, and we are now seeking his successor.





Our Vision, Mission, Strategy and Values

Our **Vision**, reviewed and refreshed in 2022, is to **pioneer new ways for people to enjoy and benefit from archaeology**. This is reflected in our commitment to community involvement, education and training, and to presenting archaeological discoveries to the public in innovative, accessible and dynamic ways including visitor attractions, lectures, publications, digs and events. This commitment is also reflected in our **Mission: Your Archaeology – Discover, Explore, Experience**.

Our Strategy for **2022–27** is as follows:

Aims

1. To discover archaeology from dig to display and beyond
2. To work as one cohesive organisation
3. To become economically, environmentally and socially sustainable and grow.

Strategic objectives

1. Financial sustainability
2. Public benefit and archaeology
3. Using core values to build the charity
4. Future proofing
5. Being clear and effective
6. Working with others
7. A good employer doing social good.

Our Core values

1. Making a difference in people's lives through open access to the past.
2. Working seamlessly from archaeological investigation through to compelling public attractions and events, creating authentic, interactive, exciting opportunities for engagement as well as enjoyment.
3. Being an open, collaborative, educational charity.
4. Illuminating the past's importance, advancing knowledge while also protecting archaeology and heritage.
5. Delivering excellence and value to our clients, visitors and colleagues.
6. Being an exemplary employer.
7. Working sustainably and reducing our environmental impact.

Our Impact

- **£500 million to York's economy.** In economic terms, JORVIK Viking centre has contributed more than half-a-billion pounds to York's economy since it opened its doors in 1984. The Coppergate excavations on which JORVIK is based remain one of the greatest archaeological success stories in the UK.
- **300 volunteers.** We provide a hub for volunteers, with 300 people contributing approximately 6,000 hours each year. This helps us to achieve our goals, while providing an opportunity to deliver the increasingly recognised benefits volunteering provides.
- **58, 636 school visits.** Each year nearly 60,000 school children come to our attractions, events and activities, extending our impact to the next generation. We also provide in-school learning through face-to-face and virtual outreach sessions
- **70,000 downloads** for our 'That Jorvik Viking Thing' podcast – a digital channel created during Covid lockdown which is reaching new online audiences.

Learn more about the impact we have made in our latest [Impact Brochure](#)





Our current context

We have recently carried out a major strategic review, resulting in a refreshed strategy for 2022-27. Public benefit and the achievement of our charitable objectives are at the heart of this strategy, through our archaeology, our visitor attractions and our commitment to finding innovative ways to engage communities. One recent example of our commitment to public benefit has been our pioneering 'Archaeology on Prescription' initiative, which was launched in 2021 and has received a number of accolades. Other examples include an extensive Education and Outreach programme and our use of digital communication to reach wider audiences. Our plans also include deepening and extending our work with strategic partners and refreshing some of our key visitor attractions.

This outward-facing work is coupled with some important internal strands of work, designed to maximise our capacity to achieve our charitable objectives. These include building a more cohesive organisation, by integrating more closely our Attractions and Archaeology functions; introducing more effective internal systems, including a new digital archaeological recording system; embedding our commitment to equality and diversity in all our work; enhancing our environmental sustainability; and managing some forthcoming changes in physical premises. We are also seeking to enhance our capacity for fund-raising, and to put in place systems and structures to support this important strand of work.

Financial sustainability is also crucially important. We came through Covid successfully, despite the challenges posed for public attractions and for the charitable sector, and have rebuilt our reserves to provide a secure foundation for the future. Maintaining and further consolidating our financial profile in order to achieve our charitable objectives will continue to be a key objective.

The next few years will therefore be an exciting period for York Archaeology, as we seek to capitalise further on our strengths, and realise our ambitious charitable objectives.

Our Governance and Structure

York Archaeology is overseen by [a Board of Trustees](#) which is responsible for overall governance, and for setting the organisation's strategy and ensuring that it is delivered. York Archaeology is a membership organisation; there are currently 62 members, including ten Trustees. The admission of new Members is overseen by a Membership Committee and is via approval at a General Meeting.

Day to day management of the organisation is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, David Jennings, supported by a Senior Leadership Team. The Trust has three main functional teams:



- Archaeology, which undertakes archaeological projects including excavation, geoarchaeology conservation and research. It is based in three geographical centres: York (Fieldwork and Conservation); Nottingham (Fieldwork and Geoarchaeology) and Sheffield
- Attractions, which operates four visitor attractions in York (the JORVIK Centre, Barley Hall, DIG and the City Walls experience); the annual Jorvik Viking Festival in York, an online digital programme and a touring exhibitions programme. The management of and access to the Collections and Archives across the organisation also sits within this team
- Engagement ('Your Archaeology') which comprises the Community team, delivering training excavation programmes, Education and Outreach and the Archaeology on Prescription programme. It also includes INHERIT, the Glasgow-based team delivering social impact programmes and research, and Volunteering, which manages an extensive programme of volunteers, interns and work experience across all of the organisation's public activities

These three areas are supported by a central Business Support team.

Further details of York Archaeology's work [can be seen here](#).

About the role

The role of the Chair is to:

- Ensure that the organisation is well governed, that it pursues its charitable objectives as defined in its governing document, and that it fulfils the expectations and requirements of a charity, and of a limited company
- Work with the Chief Executive to move the organisation forward. In particular, to oversee the development and realisation of YA's Strategy for 2022-27, working in partnership with the Chief Executive
- Hold the Chief Executive to account for the delivery of the strategic vision and for organisational effectiveness
- Chair the Board effectively, ensure that all voices are heard and oversee the recruitment and development of trustees
- Ensure and oversee the organisation's financial security
- Maintain careful oversight of any risk to the reputation of the organisation
- Act as the public face of the organisation as appropriate, including explaining and promoting the organisation's role and remit to key stakeholders and the wider public, and fostering relations with potential clients, funders and donors
- Have appropriate regular contact with the Chief Executive.



About you – Key competencies and experience

This appointment comes at an exciting and significant time for York Archaeology. As noted above, we have recently launched a new strategy, including some important ambitions and objectives that will move the organisation forward significantly in its capacity to deliver meaningful public benefit through archaeology and heritage. We are also seeking to become a more inclusive organisation, and to further build the sustainability of the organisation, both financially and environmentally. This is a challenging agenda, and one which will require a Chair who is able to work sensitively and collaboratively with the Chief Executive and the organisation as a whole, while providing rigorous challenge and maintaining a clear sense of direction. Key attributes will be the ability to establish trusted relationships, to communicate well and to oversee a complex organisation which is in the middle of a period of significant evolution and transition.

You will have:

- experience of being a charity trustee
- experience of chairing in a non-executive capacity
- an understanding of governance, especially in the charitable sector
- strong interpersonal and communication skills, including the capacity to foster an effective relationship with the Chief Executive and his team, and the emotional maturity and resilience to provide an appropriate balance between support, and constructive scrutiny and challenge.
- an orientation towards a collaborative leadership style, and an appreciation of the importance of fostering conditions in which staff at all levels can flourish
- an empathy with and an interest in archaeology and heritage; specialist knowledge in this sector is not necessary
- an appreciation of the financial context within which a charity such as York Archaeology operates, including an awareness of the importance of fundraising
- some business acumen, with some exposure to senior-level financial leadership
- A commitment to the values associated with effective public engagement in the charitable sector, and to diversity, equality and sustainability

It is anticipated that the duties of the Chair are likely to take around four days per month, in normal circumstances. The usual appointment period is for up to two terms, each of three years.

The role is unpaid, save for expenses. The Board meets at least 5 times annually. The Chair will need ready access to York, as the headquarters of the organisation.

How to apply

The application process is being overseen by a Nominations Advisory Panel made up of selected trustees, and chaired by the Vice Chair, Professor Ellen Roberts.

If you would like to arrange an informal discussion about the role with the Chief Executive, David Jennings, please write to djennings@yorkat.co.uk

To apply, please submit a CV and covering letter to ggimes@yorkat.co.uk **by no later than 10.00 am on Friday 8th March.**

We expect to hold interviews for shortlisted candidates on **Tuesday 9th April.**

Induction and orientation will then be arranged for the successful candidate, and they will formally take on their role on 27th September, when they will be introduced to Members at the 2024 AGM.

If you require any special provision, should you be called to interview, please do let us know.

York Archaeology is dedicated to promoting equality, integrity, mutual respect, creativity, innovation, as well as entrepreneurship in the workplace.

You can find out details of how we collect and use your personal data in our [Privacy Policy](#).

