

York's Gardens and Green Spaces

Every city needs its green spaces. Somewhere to walk in peace, take stock, reflect on the day, escape the office, enjoy the sunshine, eat a sandwich, jog round. The parks, gardens and green spaces of York come in all shapes, sizes and styles, and form an integral part of the city's heritage and magnificent architectural landscapes.

Museum Gardens

With the city walls forming one border, the River Ouse and the Abbey ruins forming two others, this city garden occupies an idyllic location. The land was originally granted to the Benedictine monks in 1088 on which to build the Abbey of St Mary, and its Early English and Romanesque ruins still dominate the garden. Other architectural features around the garden include the 12th century Gatehall, once the main entrance to the Abbey grounds, and the medieval half-timbered Hospitium alongside the river, once a guesthouse for visitors to the Abbey.

In 1827 the land was given to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, on which to build a museum and create a botanical garden. The grand Yorkshire Museum building now overlooks the gardens and holds much of York's Roman findings. The octagonal observatory was built in 1832, its revolving pyramidal roof is thought to have been designed by J Smeaton of Eddystone lighthouse fame.

New Walk

One of Britain's first riverside walks, the New Walk was originally created when walking for pleasure was a completely new idea. Now it has been restored. The tree-lined avenue follows the River Ouse for about a mile and, using the new Millennium Bridge, pedestrians can cross the river and return on the opposite bank, making a walking route of around an hour – perfect for a city stroll!

The Millennium Bridge, a footbridge and cycle path, which opened in 2001, joins New Walk on the north bank of the Ouse with Terry Avenue on the south bank. Its opening provided the vital link in the White Rose Cycle Route, a National Cycle Network route between Hull and Middlesbrough. It has also created a pleasant, traffic-free shortcut from the city centre to Rowntree Park and the Racecourse.

Rowntree Park

Terry Avenue

Frederick Rowntree designed Rowntree Park in the same area as a memorial to the workers of the Rowntree factory who fought in the First World War. It occupies 30 acres on the south bank of the River Ouse, designed around a large lake, with grassland, trees and colourful flowerbeds. The park also offers children's play areas and sporting facilities such as bowling, tennis courts and a basketball court.

Dean's Park and Treasurer's House

In the shadow of the great Minster, Dean's Park is a handsome, open lawn with walkways leading to Minster Yard, where the delightfully secret little garden of 17th century Treasurer's House (owned by the National Trust) is tucked away.

Clifford's Tower and Castle Green

One of the most familiar landmarks of York, Clifford's Tower sits on top of a steep, grassy mound in front of York Castle Museum. This green space provides an excellent site for a variety of events and historical re-enactments. A climb up the steps to the top is rewarded by panoramic views across the city.

The banks of the River Ouse

Walks and boat rides along the River Ouse offer a wonderful feeling of space and fresh air in the city as well as a different view of the city's historic buildings, such as that of the impressive Guildhall. Pleasure boats cruise along the Ouse to Bishopthorpe Palace just east of the city centre, residence of the Archbishops of York since the 13th century. The river affords superb views of the palace and grounds, which are also open to the public and well worth a visit.

Homestead Park

The Homestead Park is open all year round for people of all ages to enjoy. Known for its glorious floral displays, the park also has a large play area, lawns, walkways, picnic areas and plenty of wildlife to discover.

Children under 12 can enjoy the play area, which has an excellent range of outdoor play equipment. There are several climbing frames, swings and a large helter-skelter slide, as well as special equipment for children with wheelchairs. The equipment in the play area has protective wood-chip flooring, and a section is reserved for under-sevens.

The Homestead Park has been open to the public since 1904, and in 2012 won a gold award from Yorkshire in Bloom. Park facilities include car parking at the Shipton Road entrance, picnic benches and public toilets.

Goddards Garden

This hidden little gem was once the gardens of Noel Goddard Terry, who was part of the famous York chocolate making family. The gardens are designed by George Dillistone, and offer beautiful yew-hedged garden rooms, a bowling green, wilderness gardens and plants for every season. The tranquil gardens are a haven for wildlife and are home to one of the few British colonies of midwife toads.

The Gardens are open from the 1st March- 28th October 2011.

Goddards Garden, 27 Tadcaster Road, York, North Yorkshire YO24 1GG

Tel: 01904 702021, website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-goddardsgarden

York's churches

The churches around the city provide a haven of peace and tranquillity in the midst of the busy city. In particular the lovely Holy Trinity Church on Goodramgate is set in its own, small grounds, hidden away behind buildings and reached through a little gate next to Lady Row, York's oldest row of houses.

Out of Town

Outside York, the countryside is renowned for its grand historic houses and gardens. Further afield there are plenty more gardens to explore throughout North Yorkshire, such as the magnificent Studley Royal Gardens and Fountains Abbey (World Heritage Site) and the terraces, temples and trees of Duncombe Park.

Bishopthorpe Palace Gardens

Home to the Archbishop of York for over 750 years, Bishopthorpe Palace is surrounded by nine acres of beautiful grounds - idyllic location on the river Ouse. The gardens were established as long ago as the 11th century, and were formally laid out around 1700. Historical features include the fishpond, now called Warren pond, which dates back to 1255, on the terrace beside the river, and next to it the remains of a folly. The garden also contains rare trees and spectacular displays of spring flowers and rhododendrons. A more recent addition is the Garden of Remembrance for Diana Princess of Wales.

Bishopthorpe Palace

Tel: 01904 707021

www.bishopthorpepalace.co.uk

Castle Howard

Fountains, follies, lakes, bridges, statuary and temples are all part of the heroic landscape of these gardens, designed by leading early 18th century architects John Vanbrugh and Nicholas Hawksmoor. Study days are held in the gardens, and the Arboretum is linked to Kew Gardens. A Plant Centre opened in Spring 2004, set within the Walled Garden.

Distance From York - 15 minutes by car

York, YO60 7DA

Tel: 01653 648444

www.castlehoward.co.uk

The Yorkshire Lavender Gardens

This spectacular garden is set amongst the Howardian Hills an area of outstanding natural beauty. Walk through the amazing gardens with the vibrant mixture of colours from soft pinks to deep lavender, and indulge in the relaxing scents of lavender. Opening times: For the Farm, Gardens, Nursery, Shop and Visitor Centre: 2nd April to 31st October 2011

Yorkshire Lavender, The Yorkshire Lavender Farm, Terrington, York, YO60 6PB

Distance from York -15 minutes by car

Tel: 01653 648008, website: www.yorkshirrelavender.com

Wolds Way Lavender

Yorkshires largest Lavender & Herb Farm set on the Northern Edge of the Yorkshire Wolds. Lavender fields, Raised lavender & Herb beds, Lavender Fields Nature Walk Maze Steam fired Distillery Unique products made on site. Tearoom Shop

Deer Park Farm, Sandy Lane, Wintringham, North Yorkshire, YO17 8HW

Tel: 01944 758641, website: www.woldswaylavender.co.uk

Harewood House

Harewood is renowned for its magnificent Capability Brown landscaped gardens, which include the Serpentine lake, walled garden, woodland and a fascinating bird garden, a sanctuary for rare and protected species of birds.

Distance From York - 30 minutes by car

Leeds, LS17 9LQ

Tel: 0113 2181010, www.harewood.org.

Beningborough Hall

Beningbrough Hall and Gardens

The Award-winning landscaped gardens contain beautiful flower borders and a revitalised walled garden with one of the largest collections of top fruit in the North of England. There is also an American garden, Victorian laundry and potting shed and a wilderness play area for children.

Distance From York- 15 minutes by car (alternatively hire a bicycle and cycle by the river – approx 10 miles)

Beningbrough, York, YO30 1DD

Tel: 01904 470666, website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-beningbroughhallandgardens

Burnby Hall and Gardens

The delightful gardens are home to the biggest National Collection of Hardy Waterlilies in a natural setting in Europe, there are over 80 varieties in the 2 lakes and over 5,000 lilies flower here each year.

The Balk, Pocklington, York, YO42 2QE

Tel: 01759 302068, website: www.burnbyhallgardens.com

York Maze

Visit the world's largest maze! Meet the farm animals, play a round of crazy mazy golf, fun for all the family.

Elvington Lane, York, YO19 5LT. The York maze opens from Saturday 16th July- Sunday 4th September 2011

Tel: 01904 607341, website: www.yorkmaze.com

Breezy Knees Gardens and Nursery

Enjoy a wonderful array of gardens from the wonderful Fragrant Rose Garden to the Breezy Bench Garden; there is a garden which will appeal to everyone. If it leaves you feeling inspired to create your own paradise then pop into the Nursery to find a great range of plants and seeds. The gardens are open from the 22nd May to 30th September 2011.

Breezy Knees Gardens & Nursery, Common Lane, Warthill, York YO19 5XS

Tel: 01904 488800, website: www.breezyknees.co.uk

Sutton Park

Award-winning gardens featuring herbaceous borders full of rare and interesting plants and, a Georgian icehouse. The woodland walk offers a discovery trail around the grounds of Sutton Park, and gives visitors beautiful bluebell walk in the spring months. The gardens are open to the public daily from April till the end of September

Sutton on the Forest

York, YO61 1DP

Tel: 01347 810249, www.statelyhome.co.uk.

Rievaulx Terrace and Temples

View the wonderful landscape of Rievaulx Terrace , an 18thCentury grass-covered terrace, landscaped from wooded hillside with views of Rievaulx Abbey. Wander through the wood, which leads out onto the terrace and offers stunning views, of the surrounding area at any time of year. The National Trust, Rievaulx, North Yorkshire, YO62 5LJ

Tel: 01723 870423

Newby Hall and Gardens

One of Britain's finest Adam houses with Chippendale furniture, Gobelin tapestries and classical statuary. With 25 acres of garden including one of Europe's largest double herbaceous borders, a woodland walk & contemporary sculpture park. Open Friday 1st April to Sunday 25th September 2011 Newby Hall & Gardens, Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 5AE

Tel: 01423 322583, website: www.newbyhallandgardens.com

RHS Garden Harlow Carr

Enter a world of landscaped beauty, set in a shallow valley, divided by Harlow Beck. The gardens are open all year round and stand on what was once part of the Forest of Knaresborough, an ancient royal hunting ground.

Crag Lane, Harrogate , HG3 1QB

Tel: 01423 565418, website: www.rhs.org.uk/Gardens/Harlow-Carr

Stillingfleet Lodge Gardens

The eighteenth century Stillingfleet Lodge farm house is surrounded by a wonderful array of gardens. Each garden provides a delightful mixture of plants, which are planted using traditional cottage garden principles.

Stillingfleet is offering a range of day courses from April to September which cost between £12- £35. These course included: A Poultry Keepers Course: A real hands on course that teaches you everything about keeping poultry from house maintenance to health care; Sustainability in the Garden: Learn all about organic gardening and how to attract fantastic wildlife to your garden; or Watercolour Painting with Helen Wright: Enjoy the magnificent surroundings and learn how to produce wonderful paintings of spring flowers.

The gardens are open from 2nd April through to 28th September every Wednesday and Friday and the first and third Saturday and Sunday of every month from 1pm - 5pm.

Stillingfleet Lodge Gardens, Stewart Lane, Stillingfleet, York YO19 6HP

Tel: 01904 728506, website: www.stillingfleetlodgenurseries.co.uk

For any further information and your free guide to York, please contact: York Visitor Information Centre, Tel: 01904 550099, email: info@visityork.org or visit the website at www.visityork.org.

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