

Thornton-le-Street History Group - Report of year's activities, April 2023 to March 2024

For Annual Parish Meeting

Overview – we run activities relating to history and heritage for the enjoyment of those involved, encouraging collaboration with other groups, and disseminating findings to the wider community.

Steering Group – the history group is led by a Steering Group of 6 people who have met 7 times this year to plan and review activities. This included 3 meetings with the National Trust about working with them at Beningbrough Hall and Nunnington Hall.

Funding – We are a self-funding group with events run at cost, and donations are welcomed, for example to pay for webinar speaker costs.

Supporters - Our email contact list has continued to increase this year - we now have over 400 supporters.

Publications - Our first book - *Thornton-le-Street – The Archaeology and History in its Landscape* has continued to be popular with further copies being sold after webinars attracted new supporters to our group.

Key dates and activities

2 Webinars were shown this year – 1 was recorded for showing on our YouTube channel to give access to a wider audience. 157 people watched these webinars.

Nov 2023 – Prof Richard Hingley (Emeritus Prof, Univ of Durham) - **Rivers and ritual in Roman central Britain**

Dec 2023 – Mark Newman (National Trust Consultant Archaeologist) – **Beningbrough Hall**

Visits

- Guided Tour of Roman fort at Malton and recent discoveries with Al Oswald.
- Visit to Auckland excavations with Prof Chris Gerrard.

Research

- Tees Valley Ware Research Group - Visits to Reeth and Richmondshire Museum
- Hornby and Low Swainby finds identification, with Erik Matthews

Presentations – we hosted a stand at CBA Yorkshire's Autumn Showcase in Northallerton, showing our archaeological work at Beningbrough Hall for the National Trust.

We ended the year with an Open Afternoon and Finds Processing in the village hall.

Fieldwork - Archaeological dig at Beningbrough Hall

We are currently completing our work with the National Trust following a total of 468 volunteer days over 2 years on-site undertaking archaeological investigations before the construction of their new Mediterranean Garden, which is now well underway.

Profiling of our work to National Trust visitors included several days at the CBA's National Festival of Archaeology.

A further small project with the National Trust at Nunnington Hall is being planned for this summer.

Publicity/Comms

- **X formerly Twitter** – 203 followers
- **Website** – includes a wide range of resources.
- **Eventbrite** advertises our events, gathers delegates' feedback and collects donations for us.
- **YouTube** – our channel hosts our 3 videos and our 15 recorded webinars.
- **Zoom Webinar platform** is used to host our webinar presentations.
- **Contact Lists** – over 400 email addresses on our supporter contact list. Additionally, 18 professional partners and 18 village/general email contacts. Webinars led to 7 additional contacts.
- **CBA Yorkshire** advertises our events on its website and has offered to host our recorded webinars and videos on its Video Archive.
- **Durham Univ. Archaeology Dept** – we have a reciprocal arrangement to circulate eachother's events.
- **Darlington & Stockton Times** newspaper is used to advertise our events in their Villages and Towns section

We continue to welcome both local people and those from further afield to participate and enjoy the events that we are providing.