

2026

The York Design Awards now enter their 18th year and the search for York's best designed new buildings, spaces and conservation projects is on again.

The aim of the Awards is to encourage and promote excellence in design and conservation, striving for the highest standards which will delight present and future generations.

These prestigious Awards are open to all developments within the City of York Council boundary, completed within the last three years (2023 onwards).

NOTE: Schemes previously submitted cannot be re-entered.



"Fine design is when the hand, the head and the heart of man work together"
Julian Bicknell, after John Ruskin

The Judges are independent & eminent in their chosen fields of architecture, planning, development and conservation. Chair of judges is Nicky Watson, director of award-winning JDDK Architects. Fellow judges are conservation architect Janine Riley; and José Esteves De Matos, director of award-winning architectural practice De Matos Ryan.

The Awards are supported each year by The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor of York.

A steering committee runs the awards but is completely independent of the judging process.

The Awards receive sponsorship from organisations including:

York Civic Trust
www.yorkcivictrust.co.uk

York Architectural Association
www.facebook.com/yorkarchitecturalassociation

York Conservation Trust
www.yorkconservationtrust.org

Simpson & Brown Architects
www.simpsonandbrown.co.uk

And with support from:

City of York Council
www.york.gov.uk

The Churchill Hotel
www.churchillhotel.com

Fulprint
www.fulprint.com

United by Design
www.unitedbydesign.co

O'Neill's
www.oneill-associates.co.uk

York Explore Libraries
www.exploreyork.org.uk

York Racecourse
www.yorkracecourse.co.uk

York Mix
www.yorkmix.com

Royal Pilgrim Communications
www.royalpilgrim.com

York St John University
www.yorksja.ac.uk

St Peter's School
www.stpetersyork.org.uk

York Festival of Ideas
www.yorkfestivalofideas.com

Categories

There are no specific categories to enter under.

Entries will be judged against a set of criteria and awards will be given at the discretion of the judges.

Judging Criteria

The following criteria are used when assessing schemes: Quality of Design, Context, Materials & Workmanship, Sustainability, Ability to Delight.

How to apply

As part of the application submission, a statement is required of no more than 500 words in both Word and PDF format describing how this scheme achieves the required standard against each criteria. A 100 word summary is also required, which will feature on the display boards at the awards evening.

Key dates

Closing date for applications

20th March, 2026

Site Visits

11th & 12th May, 2026

Please make a note of these dates. Your development needs to be completed before the site visits by the judges.

Awards Evening

Monday 6th July, 2026

York Racecourse

Every entry will receive invitations for those involved in the scheme (architect, developer, owner etc.) so please make a note of the date and list their details on the application form.

Application enquiries

Guy Hanson; guy.hanson@york.gov.uk

Postal entries

York Design Awards 2026
c/o Guy Hanson
City of York Council
Design & Conservation
West Offices, Station Rise
York, YO1 6GA

2026 York Design Awards

Applicant details

(Company name and email)

Scheme name and address

Scheme contact details for site visits on the 12th and 13th May 2025

(name/tel/email)

Contact details for those involved in the scheme you wish to receive invitations to the Awards Evening

(name/tel/email)

Project client

(name/address/tel/email)

Builder

(name/tel/email)

Architect or designer

(name/tel/email)

Other design team consultants

(name/tel/email) – this is optional

Anyone can put forward a scheme for an Award, but they must have the owner & occupier's permission. Please confirm that this has been obtained by ticking this box ☐

Please confirm that you have necessary planning permissions and building regulations approvals by ticking this box ☐

If applying by post

Please enclose a memory stick which includes all of the following:

- This completed application form, preferably as a PDF (scanned).
- One set of drawings such as plans and elevations in PDF format (no more than 10 drawings).
- High quality resolution images up to 15MB in total that illustrate the scheme. Supply in JPEG format.
- A statement of no more than 500 words in both Word and PDF format describing how this scheme meets the judging criteria: Quality of Design, Context, Materials & Workmanship, Sustainability and the Ability to Delight.
- A 100 words summary of the scheme for use in display and marketing materials.

Please note

Information (excluding personally identifiable information) contained in this application will be used in publicity material for the Awards and may be on public display before or after the event. Please do not submit standard scheme brochures or press releases that would require editing to comply with the above criteria. Please contact us if you wish to discuss.

Please let us know if you would NOT like to be considered for the Peoples' Choice Award by ticking this box ☐

Data

Your contact details will only be used to keep you informed of the York Design Awards application and process. You can opt out at any time at inspire@yorkdesignawards.org