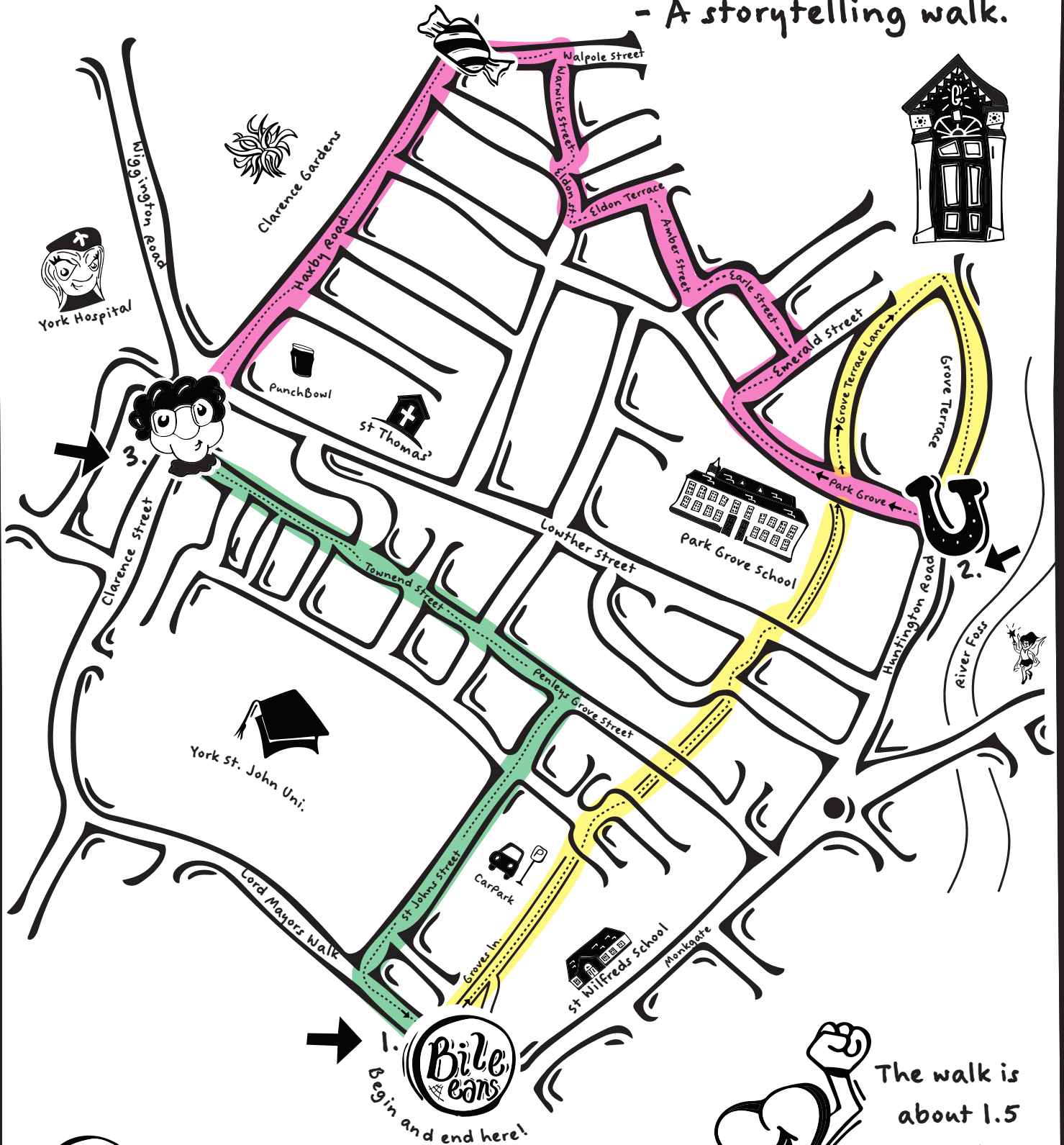


We Are The Groves

- A storytelling walk.



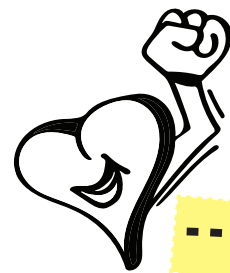
1 - Bile Beans to the Terrace,



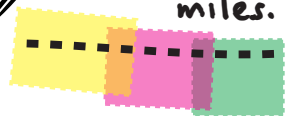
2 - The Begging Man safely Enrobed, &



3 - Granny Walker's Ox, and other Animals.



The walk is about 1.5 miles.



When the  **Magpie**  arrives



  **good**  **fortune**

 **will**  **follow** 

We Are The Groves

- A storytelling walk.



This is a walk with some stories from The Groves. It is a collection of everyday voices, sharing in no particular order some things that have happened around here. This includes some experiences, some histories and some questions. These are partial, unverifiable, subjective, and fun.

They are individual and collective, and are human things both told and heard, and then retold with added extras about how life has been for some. These have no particular connection other than they come from the same place, space and, maybe dare we say community. You are welcome to enjoy this walk, or not, to hear these stories, thinking about what it means to you. Then if you feel able to do so please share back your thoughts on this wonderful diverse place of York that is, The Groves. We are listening.

The walk has three parts and is approximately 1.5 miles, and depending how fast you walk and how much you stop might take you an hour.



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1- Bile Beans to the Terrace



Bile Beans - First sold in the 1890s, Bile Beans were lucrative, laxative 'cure all' pills which claimed to include a secret ingredient known only to Aboriginal Australians, but in reality, were made with rhubarb and liquorice and relied on creative consumer testimonies published in newspapers reporting life-changing results.

'...In the 1940s, before the NHS Dr P and Dr G had a surgery on Lord Mayors walk. Dr P was not as popular as Dr G. Dr G, was younger and waited longer for his money and didn't refuse to come out if you'd not been able to pay your bill. He would give Mam double medicine rations so when my brother and I swapped illnesses, we could also swap medicines, all for the same price...'

Bile Beans and Dr G remind us of the importance of care and wellbeing, but also how illness and pain are inevitable aspects of living in the world. Indeed could we honestly live an ailment free life, and therefore its surely right that all healthcare is free?



Walk by the Bile Beans ghost sign, briefly along Lord Mayor's Walk, turning right down the narrow 'Groves Lane', continue to the Monk Bar Car Park.

1- Bile Beans to the Terrace

Groves Lane - A Roman road and ancient right of way to and from the City, Groves Lane has been walked upon for more than 2000 years. Apparently, ghostly Roman legionaries stomp along it still. Here now where the cars do park, beside St Wilfred's School once stood rows of terraced houses, demolished in the 1960's as part of a larger, nationwide 'slum' clearance.

Imagine the rows and rows of front door steps, scrubbed to within an inch of their life, washing lines filled with brilliant white bleached terry cloth nappies, proudly scrubbed clean, flapping in the wind. The air would have been filled with the sounds of chattering, as housewives stopped to gossip between their daily jobs. Life was hard for many of these women and their families so a little gossip may have brought some light relief. What might they have been gossiping about? What has changed/what has stayed the same?

'...On my first day at St Wilfred's, I was fine until I realised my Mother had to go. I remember my mum saying to me keep looking at that window and you'll see me. I kept looking at the window and I could see her head because it was a really high wall and she was jumping up...'

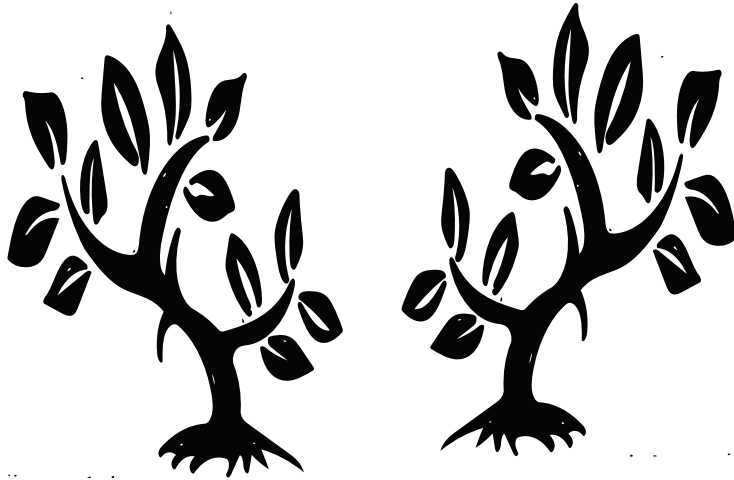
While the housing that replaced it had heating and hot water, many say this changed neighbourly and community relations. The ability to chat over the yard wall gone and so the sense of being part of something local. As the demolition began, in places like Newbiggin Street, many children from this time talk about playing in the empty now derelict homes, hunting for once prized family possessions, left in the broken, abandon sideboards and other forms of furniture.

From ancient walkways to compulsory purchase orders, Groves Lane makes us think about the ownership of place and home. What makes for a really good 'neighbourly' place to live? How can this be best designed? Does anyone truly own their home and the place in which it is?



Continue alongside the car park to the alley at the end, past Waverly Street and Lockwood street. Go through the next alley way onto Penleys Grove Street.

1- Bile Beans to the Terrace



12 Penleys Grove Street - On Penleys Grove Street you will find no number 12. Why? What happened to it? Was it moved? Was it ever there? Back in the 1800's when much of housing of The Groves was built its possible that 12 was some sort of work yard at the back of number 10. But that's our best guess yet. Any ideas?

Opposite where there isn't a number 12 Penleys Grove Street there used to be The Groves Club, that moved into Settrington House in 1919. Demolished in the 1990's The Groves Club had a massive driveway that attracted lots of visitors in 'charabancs' an early form of bus, typically used for pleasure trips to the Yorkshire coast.

Outside the club, remaining to this day, stand tall two enormous trees that were going to be chopped down when the new houses were built. But much thanks to a neighbour, who loved them so much, placed a tree preservation order, and saved them from the axe for us to enjoy today.

Why do building developments take precedent over trees? Should all trees have preservation orders?



Continue through the alley opposite, walk along Jackson Street, past Park Crescent on the right, across Lowther Street, continuing through another alleyway, cross over Park Grove, into Groves Terrace Lane. Follow Groves Terrace Lane to the end, turn right, walk along, Groves Terrace will be on your right.

1- Bile Beans to the Terrace



Groves Terrace - When Grove Terrace was built in 1824 it was a strangely isolated urban development in a rural setting overlooking the River Foss. It was 50 years before the rest of the Groves grew out to meet it. Developed by Robert Cattle a York Silversmith and horse coachman who. paid £10,500 for sixty acres of land in The Groves in the early 1800's. Mr Cattle began selling off the land in the 1820's to others to build many of the terrace houses we see here today.

'... Forgive us if we seem to turn our backs on you. It's just that we were up here long before, alone in a meadow gazing over the river. As we grew old, and maybe a little deaf, you came up behind us and tapped us on the shoulder ...'

The houses on Groves Terrace had servant quarters which makes us think about who gets written about in history? Why is it we know much about Robert Cattle, and not those that cleaned his house? What voices, what stories would they tell?

For more on the history of Grove Terrace and the people that have lived here, see Ros Batchelor's 'Tale of the Terrace' on wearethegroves.org/tales-from-the-terrace



Carry on past Grove Terrace, turning right up Park Grove, continuing on to the corner of Emerald Street.

2 - The Begging Man Safely Enrobed.



The Begging Man - Off track gambling was not permitted in the UK until 1960 in the UK. But this never stopped anyone find a way to game

'...There was a man who always stood on the corner of Park Grove. We went to see me Mam's friend, who was posh, she had her own front door with another glass door with coloured glass inside and every time Aunty Olive would give Mam money to give the man. One day he'd gone and when I asked where the blind man who begged had gone she laughed and said he hadn't gone quick enough when the police came as he was a bookies runner. She tried to explain what it was - anyway another man came after a few weeks and Aunty gave us the money for him again, and bet she did...'

Was this all about fun? Or the slim chance of fortune in the face of financial adversity?

Park Grove School - The school is the oldest of five similar schools in York designed by celebrated local architect Walter Brierley and opened in August 1895. A newspaper report of the time described the school as having facilities to 'rival that of Eton or Harrow'. In 1897 the average attendance was 1,115, with class sizes of 55+. Until the 1960's terraced houses filled half the playing field. In 1997 a fire devastated the school, but the rebuild created a modern learning space.

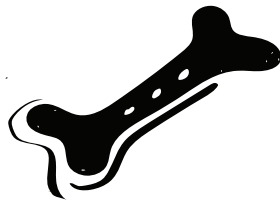
'... What I love about Park Grove School is its openness and community feel, as well as the considerable amount of brick graffiti that covers most of the external walls at child height capturing 100s' of carved initials and the expressions of kids that have learnt there ...'

What is a school for? What should be taught? What should not? Why?



Opposite Park Grove school, turn right into Emerald Street, walk past the alley way on the left, turn next left into Earle Street, bearing left at the end onto Amber Street, continue to the end then left onto Eldon Terrace, continue to the end then right onto Eldon Street.

2 - The Begging Man safely Enrobed.



Dog Biscuits - There were a lot of corner shops in the Groves, no supermarkets back then, and they all somehow made a living. On Eldon Street, at the top was a sweet shop, useful on the way to and from school, two milk yards nearby, and a bakery half way down.

'... I grew up off Haxby Road, and back then, it seemed more like a mini high street with the butchers, green grocers, newsagents. There was everything there if you needed to nip out and get something. I used to do ballroom and disco dancing above the Spar on a Saturday. My world really was round the Groves...'

On the corner of Eldon and Neville Street was a butchers, the opposite corner was a post office, a post box still there. On Eldon terrace there was a general store.

'...Buying sanitary products in the 1950s was a very complicated affair. You had to ask for a bag of dog biscuits. The shop keeper went to the back of the shop, and brought out a closed brown paper bag and passed it over quietly...'

Why were such products hidden and traded in secret code? Have things changed? Are we still in denial about the things our bodies do?



From Eldon Street, cross to Warwick Street, turning left into Walpole Street, continuing to the end on Haxby road, outside the sandwich shop 'Goodfillas'.

2 - The Begging Man Safely Enrobed.



Safely Enrobed - Looking up Haxby road you see the old Rowntree's chocolate and sweet factory, many workers of which lived in The Groves, and many of which the houses were built for. One of the jobs at the factory was 'The Enrober' who encased the sweet centres with chocolate.

This was within a huge iron pillared room with a series of areas sectioned off from each other, where different the centres were produced before they were all bought together in the Enrobing and Cream Packaging department, where the boxes were filled, wrapped and despatched.

'... There was also that police box on Haxby Road. The officer would sit in there all night. Every night, we'd be playing in the street playing ball, but you wouldn't get in trouble because you'd get a clapper. On a night, the officer would come and try your front doors to make sure you were all locked in safely. One day, my mother hadn't locked the door, so he came right into the bottom of the stairs. He shouted "lady, are you in? You got your door open". And with that, you always felt safe cos there was always someone looking out for you ...'

Looking down Walpole Street, over the wall, the once Union Workhouse that is noted on an 1852 map with separate yards marked out for 'male idiots (a label previously given to people with learning difficulties) female lunatics and unmarried women'. Looking in the other direction, behind Clarence Gardens and the park was once a working farm.

From one spot, so much history can be told if only we can key into it, and those that follow it take steps somehow to keep it alive. With all of us having stories to tell, how do we make sure we keep them alive for others to both tell and listen and share?

2 - The Begging Man Safely Enrobed.



Wally the Tattooist- Easily identified as he had black dye all the way up his arms from the constant testing of ink on himself. He lived with his wife and kids Union Terrace at the top of Clarence Street. Many service men based in York at various barracks stationed nearby were Wally's customers and his reputation travelled far and wide through two world wars and more.

'... Wally was wise and tattooed each of us kids with the simple word "MUM". There was always a queue of folk in the front parlour when we got home from school, they came from all over for his famous tattoos ...'

Where we live, and the places that we go can leave marks as permanent as ink. Are these marks the same? What mark has The Groves left on you?



Walk along Haxby Road, past the play park and Clarence Gardens on the right, pass the PunchBowl Pub, crossing over Lowther Street, onto Clarence Street, then turning left, beside LSE hire into Townend Street. Stop outside the now closed Castle Howard Ox pub. Note the Ox artwork on the building opposite.

3 - Granny Walker's Ox, and other Animals.



The Mole - Pets are part of the family, and we often grieve for them as much as relatives.

'...Grandad gave me a Mole as a pet. All black and velvety. I took it with me to the fish and chip shop in Townend Street. I tapped a young boy on the shoulder to show it him. So startled he was that he grabbed the mole from my hands and threw it onto the roof of a terraced house. The mole was gone forever. I hit the kid that did it but he only hit me back and hit my brother and as they were bigger than us we went home crying...'

Why are we so close to the creatures we keep in our homes?
What does it say about who we are in our choices of pet?

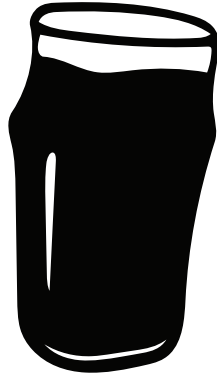
The Castle Howard Ox - Part of The Groves since 1836 when William Lund, a cattle dealer opened it. Run by 'Big Bill' in the 1930' who could hit a spittoon from across the room and fit pint glasses in his waist coat pockets. There were horse stables beside the pub once, as well as a blacksmith's forge.

'... My Granny Walker would go in the Ox for a milk stout. Everybody went to Granny Walker in those days...if your children were ill, she'd know what to do; if kids were born at home, she'd go and help. Everybody adored her, she was always in the Castle Howard Ox ...'



Continue down Townend Street, until the corner of Del Pyke. Note the Magpie artwork on Thornaby House.

3 - Granny Walker's Ox, and other Animals.



The Magpie - The pub formerly known as the Magpie and Stump, since 1838 once stood on the corner of 'Del Pyke' and Townend Street. Mary and Frank Clayton ran the pub in the 1980's.

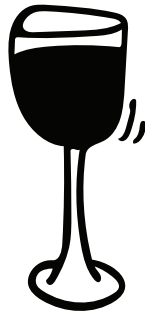
During a night in the late 1990s, the pub provided overnight shelter and refuge for sixteen local residents who had to be evacuated from their homes as police negotiated a siege situation nearby.

'... If you asked for the pool balls to be cleaned, the landlord would take out his false teeth and give them a rub ...'



Continue a little further to the mini supermarket Londis. Note the Reindeer artwork up high on the building behind the shop.

3 - Granny Walker's Ox, and other Animals.



The Reindeer Inn - Previously The Highland Red Deer, also the Highland Deer first mentioned in 1872. Rebuilt in the 1960's and closed as a pub in 2009 today it stands as a mini supermarket. Many of the terrace houses near to The Reindeer would share water pumps and outside toilets. One night, in the 1950's revellers leaving the pub were asked to quieten down, then drenched with the contents of chamber pots by a resident fed up with all the noise.

'... In the 1980's I played for the 'Reindeer' rugby team. And at this time there were over 20 amateur teams in York, each based out of local pubs playing rugby league each Sunday over the Knavesmire. I also played for the Reindeer in the York evening cricket league ...'

Pubs are thought of as great community spaces, yet the way we use them has changed, so our final question to you on this walk is, what makes for a great community space that welcomes all?



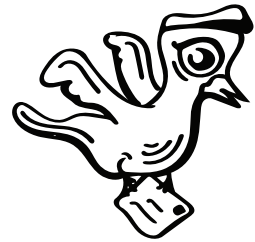
Continue along, down Penleys Grove Street, past Ann Harrison alms house, previously a hospital and known as the 'Old Maids Home', turn left into St John's Crescent, carry on into St John's Street, then right onto Lord Mayors Walk, continuing back to the Bile Beans sign.

We Are The Groves

- A storytelling walk.

Thank you for walking around The Groves, for listening to these stories. We would love to know what you think, so if you can please share with us your story.

Tell us something about you and the Groves, like;



Who are you? How are you?



What does the Groves mean to you? What stories have others told you ?



What makes you smile? What makes you cry?



What do you remember of the past? What do you hope for the future?



Or something else.

Share your story here;



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Thank you to all those that shared with us stories so we could make this walk, and to the City of York Council for supporting us.

We Are The Groves - July 2021.

What's your story?

