



BATH PRESERVATION TRUST

Planning Update

March 2022

News this Month

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- Historic England Launches ‘**Everyday Heritage**’ Grants - see 3.4

1. B&NES Consultations and Projects

1.1 Local Plan Partial Update: The Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) is reportedly on target for its scheduled submission for public examination by Winter 2021, with [examination hearings](#) scheduled for Spring 2022. [The proposed timeline for the adoption of the Local Plan Partial Update is available on the council website.](#)

1.2 Council to Invest Millions to Reach Net Zero: B&NES Council has allocated more than £38m over the next five years to projects designed to reduce carbon emissions across the district. This is in addition to the £11m previously allocated in the 5-year capital programme, and includes new funding of £27.4m agreed at its Budget and Council Tax meeting:

- An additional £9.2m investment in the new state-of-the-art Keynsham Recycling Hub, including on-site renewable energy generation from a 3800m2 solar panel array.
- £14.2m to modernise waste services to further improve recycling rates.
- £754k to expand the council’s green vehicle fleet.
- £2.3m to refurbish the council’s Commercial Estate, addressing the repair backlog and planning energy efficiency.

- £150k investment in green infrastructure to include the development of a Nature Recovery and Delivery Plan.
- £800k matching contribution towards the new City Region Sustainable Transport Infrastructure projects.

[You can read the council's press release here.](#)

1.3 First Year Anniversary of the Bath Clean Air Zone: Leaders at B&NES Council are thanking residents and businesses for supporting Bath's Clean Air Zone on the anniversary of its launch on 15th March 2021. One year on, more than 90% of HGVs, coaches, buses and taxis entering the zone are now compliant with the city's minimum emission standards. Numbers of non-emissions compliant vehicles travelling in the zone and therefore expected to pay have dropped from 4.5% to 1.5% (just over 600 vehicles) by February 2022. From the initial data, it is indicated that NO2 pollution across Bath fell by 14% compared with the same period in 2019, despite a return to, and above, normal traffic levels following lockdown. Since launch, the zone has generated £5.3 million in revenue.

The annual report on the Bath Clean Air Zone is due to be published July 2022.

1.4 Roman Baths & Pump Room to be Heated by Spa Water: [A scheme to use the naturally hot spa water at the Roman Baths and use it to heat surrounding buildings is entering its final phase.](#) Heat from the King's Spring will be used to heat the Roman Baths and Pump Room, as well as the soon-to-open Bath World Heritage Centre and Roman Baths Clore Learning Centre. Sixteen three-metre-long energy exchange blades will be inserted into the King's Bath between 28th February and 9th March, and a new plant room is being created beneath Stall Street.

1.5 Feasibility Study by University of Bath for Solar Panels on Bath Abbey Roof: New study by the CDT in New and Sustainable Photovoltaics, carried out as part of the Footprint project, shows that installing solar panels on Bath Abbey could save 10 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually and produce enough electricity to cover 35% of the Abbey's usage every year.

[The details of the project are available on the University of Bath website.](#)

1.6 Liveable Neighbourhoods: [B&NES Council has collected more than 1,600 responses to the first stage of public engagement on 15 priority Liveable Neighbourhoods in Bath.](#)

The response was generally positive, with 51% supporting Liveable Neighbourhoods schemes, 36% expressing neutral views, and 13% against their implementation. The next stage of consultation will see Liveable Neighbourhood Schemes either being trialled, following consultation, or going forward for co-design with communities. There will also be consultation on six residents' parking zones, to restrict out-of-area parking. £2.2m has already been allocated to the scheme.

[You can read the full update on the areas proposed for co-design with local communities on the B&NES website.](#)

1.7 Englishcombe Lane Update: B&NES Council have met Englishcombe Lane residents to discuss ideas for a small scheme on an ecologically sensitive site in Bath. The site, which features a rare example of tufa springs, [was previously granted planning permission for](#)

[37 new homes at Planning Committee in 2020.](#) The council has now ditched these plans and is looking for a scheme of a reduced size to balance the need for community housing with protecting the ecology of the site.

The meeting with residents heard the following development aims for the site:

- Small scheme that works with the ecological sensitivity of the site, possibly to provide “peaceful” housing for those with specialist housing needs.
- Address water run-off by reduction of impermeable hardstanding and other drainage measures.
- Use of buffer zone to protect ecologically significant tufa with an on-site biodiversity gain of at least 10%.
- Measures to prevent light spill to maintain bat corridors.
- Opportunity for “extremely energy efficient” homes.

Over the next few months the council will assess the possible options, before consulting with residents and partners once a proposal has been reached.

[You can read the council’s press release here.](#)

1.8 Consultation on Plans for Bath Bike Park: An updated design for the new mountain bike and activity park to be run by Pedal Progression at the former Entry Hill Golf Course site in Bath has been published. Residents are invited to view the proposals and comment on their future use of the new facilities. [This follows on from an initial consultation last year.](#) Through this next phase of community engagement, the council wants to get a good understanding of how people will access and use the park and new facilities on site before the final design is submitted for planning.

[You can respond to the consultation here until 28th March.](#)

1.9 York Street Public Inquiry: A public inquiry into a Traffic Regulation Order for anti-terrorism purposes to close York Street, as part of Bath’s city centre security scheme, will be held on Tuesday 26th April. The Inspector will consider the order which relates to the closure of York Street, Bath between 10am-6pm for the purpose of anti-terrorism and between 6pm and 10pm for the purpose of preventing danger and avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or damage to the road.

Anyone wishing to appear at or attend the inquiry should make their interest known to the Planning Inspectorate as soon as possible by contacting ETC@planninginspectorate.gov.uk quoting the DPI reference number (DPI/F0114/22/2) and giving their contact details.

1.10 Works Advance on First New B&NES Social Rent Properties for Nearly 30 Years: The Victorian building at 117 Newbridge Hill, formerly used as council offices, is being converted into seven 1 and 2-bed apartments as one of the first steps in the authority’s new Council House Building Programme. The apartments are being developed by the council’s housing company Aequus Construction Ltd. They will be allocated through Homesearch, the council’s single access point for social housing in the district. This development forms part of the first phase of the Council House Building Programme for B&NES, which is expected to provide 58 new council-owned houses for social rent to help meet the demand for affordable homes in the area.

1.11 Cleveland Bridge: [Ongoing repair works to the Grade II* bridge have revealed previously hidden areas of significant damage to a critical element of the structure.](#)

Further analysis will be carried out to consider options for repair and updates on the next steps are anticipated by April. Repairs must be completed before the bridge can safely reopen to all traffic without risk of structural failure.

1.12 Bath Area Forum: The next meeting is on 16th May; [you can register in advance here.](#)

2. Bath Matters, Planning Applications and Developments

2.1 Sulis Down: BPT has responded to the public consultation for Phases 3 & 4 of the development at Sulis Down, proposing up to an additional 300 homes. Phase 1 has already been permitted for 171 homes, which are currently in delivery. We maintain concerns regarding the continued development ‘creep’ of this site without a comprehensive, site-wide masterplan, and the impact on the landscape setting of the World Heritage Site and adjoining Green Belt land. Further details are required regarding landscape impact, the proposed appearance and scale of development, and further assessment of impact on heritage assets such as the Non-Designated Heritage Asset Sulis Manor.

[You can see the consultation proposals here \(public consultation now CLOSED\).](#)

[You can read BPT’s comments in full on our website.](#)

2.2 Western Riverside: The first of two public consultations for the next phase of development at the Bath Gasworks has been launched online. The next phase proposes around 625-675 new homes with some limited provision of commercial/‘early years’ units within focal areas of the development site. The scheme will take a “landscape led” approach, with the creation of green open space along the river edge to reconnect the wildlife corridor, provide outdoor amenity space, and serve flood mitigation purposes by acting as a ‘conduit’ for water flow. The development will be approximately 6-10 storeys in height, with areas of increased height concentrated along the riverside to create visual variety and act as a defining ‘landmark’ point. A cohesive approach with B&NES and the B&NES-owned site is intended.

[You can respond to the current consultation here.](#)

A second public consultation is anticipated in Spring 2022, and a planning application is due by Summer 2022.

2.3 Deadmill Lane: Application [21/04746/OUT](#) for 15 ‘affordable’ dwellings on undeveloped Green Belt site in Larkhall. **UPDATE** - The application has been refused on grounds of the “totality of harm” to multiple heritage assets, including the conservation area, World Heritage Site, and setting of a NDHA. Previous application [20/00491/OUT](#) for 18 affordable dwellings was dismissed at appeal, where the inspector concluded that the public benefit would not outweigh the total harm to heritage assets, but the scheme was considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the case officer has now agreed that the development no longer constitutes inappropriate development.

2.4 St Martin's Hospital, Clara Cross Lane, Odd Down: Application [20/04546/OUT](#) for development of 8 apartments in the setting of the Grade II St Martin's Chapel. UPDATE - Following the refusal of planning permission, the appeal of the planning decision has now been dismissed. The scheme was concluded to make a positive contribution to the Council's housing strategy which was attributed significant weight. However, the weight granted to this public benefit was limited by the great weight attributed to the proposed harm to the setting of heritage assets. It was concluded that "the benefits would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the significance of the heritage assets by the intrusive development in their settings."

[BPT submitted written representation against the appeal which can be read here.](#)

2.5 5G mast at Wellsway: Application [21/03944/TEL](#) for a 5G telecommunications mast in the residential area of Wellsway. UPDATE - Following the refusal of planning permission, the appeal of the planning decision has now been dismissed. The Inspector concluded that despite the significant benefits of the scheme, installation would result in "moderate harm" to the character and appearance of the area and the mast would be unnecessarily tall where it has been indicated that a shorter mast would be just as effective.

[You can read BPT's original comments on the scheme in full here.](#)

3. National News

3.1 Consultation on Biodiversity Net Gain Regulations and Implementation: The Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have launched a public consultation for views on defining Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and how this could be applied in policy and future development schemes. The consultation sets out our proposals of how BNG will be applied to development and national infrastructure projects. A mandatory requirement for BNG would BNG delivers positive outcomes for biodiversity, improves the process for developers, and creates better places for local communities.

[You can respond to the consultation here until the deadline of 5th April.](#)

3.2 Consultation on Government Response to the Landscapes Review: An open consultation has been launched to gather feedback on the [government response to the landscapes review](#) (Glover Review) and the potential legislative changes the government are planning.

[You can respond to the consultation here before the deadline of 9th April.](#)

3.3 Launch of Government Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England: The government has released its Code of practice for wireless network development, including mobile masts and cabinets. The guidance is intended for use by mobile network providers and infrastructure providers as well as local planning authorities and other stakeholders to support the government's objective of delivering high quality wireless infrastructure whilst balancing these needs with environmental considerations. This includes consideration of infrastructure in sensitive areas such as conservation areas

or close proximity to listed buildings, as well as protected landscapes such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

[The Code is available to read in full on the government website.](#)

3.4 Historic England Announces Grants Opportunities to Uncover the Nation's Hidden Working Class Heritage: From 21st February, Historic England has announced its *Everyday Heritage Grants: Celebrating Working Class Histories* which will fund community-led and people-focused projects that aim to further the nation's collective understanding of the past. These grants will focus on heritage that links people to overlooked historic places, with a particular interest in recognising and celebrating working class histories. Historic England is inviting applications from community or heritage organisations to apply for grants up to £25,000 to fund projects that will celebrate the built or historic environment near them. It is particularly interested in funding smaller grass roots projects of less than £10,000.

[You can apply for the grant here ahead of the deadline of 23rd May.](#)

3.5 2022 World Monuments Watch: Launched on 1st March, the 2022 Watch spotlights 25 heritage sites of extraordinary significance that are facing pressing challenges. The Watch also seeks to identify where the World Monuments Fund's partnership with local communities has the potential to make a meaningful difference. Representing 24 countries and spanning nearly 12,000 years of history, the 2022 Watch encompasses a broad range of examples of how global challenges such as climate change, underrepresentation, imbalanced tourism, and crisis recovery manifest at heritage sites, providing opportunities to improve the lives of communities as they adapt for the future.

[You can find out more about the spotlighted heritage sites here.](#)

3.6 Deadline Lifted for Registering England's Footpaths: The original deadline to register England's footpaths by 1st January 2026 has now been cancelled after a public access campaign which called for the Government to prioritise people's access to nature and improvements to health and wellbeing. A clause in the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 stated that any pre-1949 paths must be recorded by 2026 to continue to carry public right. These rights would be removed if the paths had not been recorded by this time. A spokesperson from DEFRA has confirmed that the Government has decided to forward a streamlined package of measures to help enhance the way rights are recorded and managed.