

# BATH MATTERS

THE BATH PRESERVATION TRUST NEWSLETTER

94



BATH  
PRESERVATION  
TRUST





# Bath is beautiful...

... and our charitable trust has been campaigning to keep it that way since 1934.

With the support of over 1,000 members, our team of expert volunteers, Trustees and staff examine hundreds of planning applications each year, challenging inappropriate development and engaging with B&NES Council and developers to influence better outcomes and positive change. We are active in advocating for:

- Sustainable development for Bath and the value of heritage in a changing world
- The enhancement of the public realm, a healthy environment and a thriving living city
- Design excellence and appropriate, sustainable architecture worthy of Bath's world-class heritage
- Opportunities for learning for people of all ages, supporting wellbeing and social inclusion

Not a member yet?

Join us and you'll join a community of like-minded people with a passion for conservation and sustainability. You'll also enjoy free entry to all our museums, access to advice and support, and much more!

Visit our website to find out more:  
[www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk](http://www.bath-preservation-trust.org.uk)

## Upcoming member events

Member trips, visits and tours are back, and since our highly-anticipated outing to The Newt recently (pictured) we've been busy researching ideas for events next year.

### Coming soon...

- Thursday 26 January 2023: Chairman's drinks at the Museum of Bath Architecture
- Spring 2023: Members Walk
- Summer 2023: Bath Preservation Trust AGM
- Autumn 2023: Wells Day Trip
- ... and other events to be confirmed!

You can register your interest now by emailing [events@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:events@bptrust.org.uk).

To hear about upcoming member events, make sure you are subscribed to our monthly newsletter, and check our website regularly!



Welcome to our autumn/winter 2022 issue of *Bath Matters* – and what a year it has been. In our spring issue we stated that we were able to “look ahead to recovery and growth” after two very challenging years, and it has indeed been wonderful to see most of our museums back open and membership levels sustained – plus some promising signs of recovery, such as ongoing recruitment and healthy admissions figures.

Following intensive fundraising earlier in the year, and with the support of our members and those of the Beckford Society, we successfully petitioned the National Lottery Heritage Fund for £3,087,000 to repair Beckford's Tower and open up the landscape – more on this below.

Working in partnership with the Royal Astronomical Society, the Herschel family, Bath Astronomers, the University of Bath, the Herschel Society and Slough Museum, we launched a brand-new exhibition to celebrate the 200th anniversary of William Herschel's death. More on this on page 16-17.

The refurbished shop at No.1 Royal Crescent had a very successful year, and the Museum itself had some of its highest visitor numbers since 2019; the interactive experience continues to elicit positive feedback, as do our “quiet tours” and sensory resources for neurodiverse visitors.

And finally: Bath Preservation Trust has continued to advise, question, lobby and appeal in its capacity as guardian of and advocate for the City of Bath. We have proactively campaigned for a city-wide approach to building design and development,

and raised awareness of energy-saving measures that households and businesses can take during the cost of living crisis. And we have reinstated a full programme of member events, including several fascinating talks and a much-anticipated visit to The Newt.

We would like to thank you all for your unwavering support as we have striven to rebuild stronger and put the challenges of 2020-2021 behind us. As we look ahead to 2023, it is with renewed hope, confidence – and a great deal of excitement.

## Let's fix the tower!



We are delighted to confirm that, thanks to the generous support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, many Trusts and Foundations, the Beckford Society, the general public and our members, we have secured the £3.4m required to complete the Beckford Tower project. This includes more than £310,000 from donations, partners and charitable trusts.

Thank you to everyone who has donated, followed our progress and visited Beckford's Tower and Museum this year. The Museum will be closed throughout 2023 whilst we repair the building, transform the Museum, open up the landscape and work with volunteers, community groups and partners to create a brand-new experience for all to enjoy.

If you are interested in this work and how to get involved, please sign up for the Tower Project Newsletter via our website or email the team at [tower@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:tower@bptrust.org.uk)

Look out for opportunities to join tours of the landscape and find out about the conservation work as we complete our project to restore the building and ensure long term public access.



# Welcome



## Comment from the Chair

**BPT Chair Thomas Sheppard**

Bath Preservation Trust was formed when our Georgian city was under urgent threat by the destruction of the buildings and terraces which gave the backdrop to our spectacular Grade I listed buildings. Our built heritage is now rarely facing the destruction of individual buildings but the City setting remains as important as ever. We remain vigilant against new developments which use ever taller buildings or generic or uninformed choices of materials.

In these challenging economic times, we may have become resigned to seeing empty shops and a tired public realm in our City streets. As a World Heritage site, I suggest we should all be taking a bit more pride in our streets to make our City look its very best, both for our visitors and also for all of us who live and work here.

Part of our response to these challenges is the work of our Architecture, Planning & Place

Committee as they engage and consult with developers and local planners to offer detailed observations and positive suggestions to enhance proposals. BPT is indebted to the work of this committee but I would like to applaud the work of our long-serving volunteer, Ann Godfrey, who each week engages with enthusiasm and common sense to whatever the Planning List may contain – thank you Ann.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund have given their full support to the “Our Tower” project which means, with the generosity of our other partners and donors, we can now start work on site. This project is so much more than repairing the Tower building and, when complete, the site will be a significant new amenity in this part of Bath for all to share and enjoy. Visit the Tower’s website to learn more.

As we approach the end of 2022, we have sadly said goodbye to a number of our

longstanding supporters and friends and I thank them for all they have done to help the work of our organisation. We have received a remarkable legacy from Dr Derek Gibson; he was a great collector and he has given us his “Bath Collection,” made up of many rare books and images of Bath. We are very grateful to Derek and his sister Kate for this gift and we will make this collection available to view in future exhibitions and displays.

If you are a member of BPT thank you for your support; if you are not, please consider becoming a member to help support our work. If you are wondering about that perfect Christmas gift, what better than the gift of membership to a loved one?

Thank you for all the support and encouragement you give BPT.

**Thomas Sheppard DL, Chair**

## Welcoming new faces

This year we welcomed several new faces to our team: Isabel Gibbons, Charlotte Parker, James Petrucco, Jasmine Pike, Jordan-Laurel Snow, Laura Bailey, Megan Lund, Suzanne Davis, Luke Uren, Mary Stringer and Jo Cunningham.

We also said goodbye to Georgina Hayes, Olivia Langley-Willis, Phoebe Shanley and Ruth Yoxon.

Julie Finch and David Hall stepped down as Trustees, and we welcomed Colin Johnston as the new Chair of the Museums and Education Committee.

Pictured: Some of our current team members and Trustees.





## Comment from the CEO

CEO Alex Sherman

With winter on our doorstep, and in the light of rising energy costs for all households, BPT is again turning its attention to how homeowners can reduce their reliance upon fossil fuels and use their central heating less. Older homes don't have to be chilly and can be sensitively improved to reduce draughts, increase insulation and be made warmer and cheaper to heat. If you would like to find out more, we provide plenty of resources on our website, including a downloadable copy of [Warmer Bath](#) and [A Quick Guide to Low Carbon Living in Older Homes](#). All BPT Members can also benefit from free advice from our experts, by calling 01225 338727.

Our Advocacy and Campaigns team are gearing up as 2023 will see consultations and workshops about the new Local Plan. This is an important process as the new plan will be in place until 2042 to guide development, transport, and placemaking, amongst other things. BPT will be a critical friend to the

Council, supporting those policies and approaches in the plan which make sense and challenging those which don't. What we want is a Local Plan which enables Design Excellence for new housing and developments, support for all people wanting to make older homes more sustainable and the enhancement of the World Heritage Site.

It was always going to be difficult to know what the summer of 2022 would hold in store for our museums. What we experienced far exceeded our expectations and re-emphasised just how important heritage is to people. Visitors returned to the City and to our museums in their droves and Bath again felt busy, vibrant and alive. With so many options of where to go, it is always gratifying when visitors choose our Museums.

Amongst many high points, the 200th anniversary of the death of William Herschel was very significant and saw the installation of a new commemorative stone in the garden at

19 New King Street. The remarkable story of William and Caroline Herschel attracts people from around the world and links us to an immense story through partnerships and the reverence the Herschels inspire.

Our front cover for this edition of Bath Matters is of Beckford's Tower, for very good reason. With the generous support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and many other funders and donors, the £3.4 million project will be starting within weeks. This is a tremendous outcome which will reverse many decades of neglect and decline whilst re-visiting the story of William Beckford, his ignominious wealth derived from the transatlantic slave trade, and his complex personal story. This success belongs to the many hundreds of people who gave their time, thoughts, views and support to the project.

Alex Sherman, CEO

## Architect's insight...

Jonathan Hetreed, Hetreed Ross Architects

### A listed building's eco-refurbishment in 2022

Living or working in historic buildings like this Listed terraced house in Larkhall may seem to rule out eco-refurbishment but there are still many changes that can be acceptable for listed buildings.

Some fall into the 'de minimis' category, requiring no listed building consent; but be warned, altering a listed building without consent can be a criminal offence, so never assume – ask!

In order of eco-cost-effectiveness:

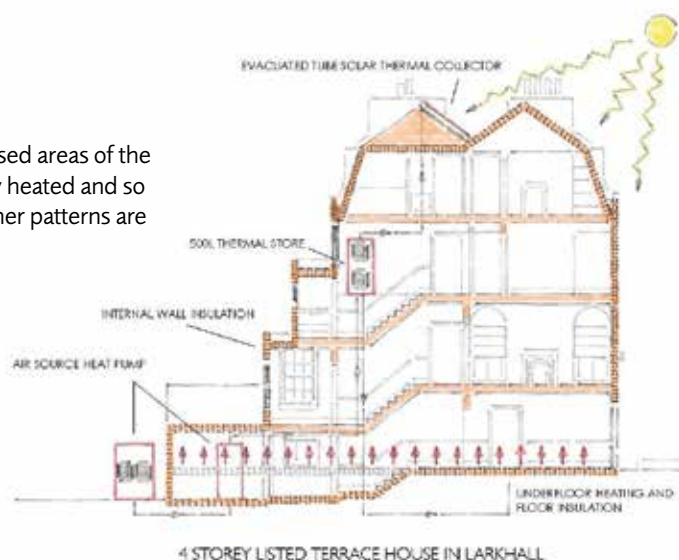
- Draught-strip windows, doors, loft hatches and service entries;
- Insulate roofs, floors and walls in that order;
- Upgrade windows with secondary glazing, clear roller blinds, shutters or thermal curtains.
- For new windows, you may be allowed double glazing – but don't assume so;
- Upgrade your heating controls with thermostatic radiator valves at least and then with zone controls and weather

compensation so that unused areas of the building are not wastefully heated and so that our changeable weather patterns are accounted for.

As far as ventilation is concerned, once buildings are thoroughly draught-stripped, adequate venting becomes more critical and with multiple bathrooms, kitchens and utilities, heat reclaim systems are increasingly viable (but retain some complexities regarding ductwork installation).

If boilers need replacement, consider heat pumps – ground or water source ideally, or air source (however, all need to work with underfloor heating or very large radiators to be efficient); or clean burn biomass – logs, wood pellets, straw, etc which have a lower cost but

higher workload; or solar thermal or solar PVs which can be acceptable for a 'discreet roof slope' or at ground level. Solar thermal generates twice as much energy per sqm as PVs so can make sense for small areas.





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# Advocacy and Campaigns

Bath's precious Green Belt must be protected. Credit: @Bathscape

## Policy shift

While nationally we are braced for planning reform in the form of a new Levelling Up or Planning and Infrastructure Bill, which could see a suite of national development management policies trump local planning policies, B&NES Council is gearing up to begin work on a new 20-year 'Local Plan' – a planning framework for land use policy for change, growth, homes, employment and infrastructure to be published in 2024.

# Advocacy and Campaigns

More recently, the current B&NES Local Plan required a partial update to reflect B&NES Council's Declaration of Climate and Ecological Emergencies and the commitment to securing net zero by 2030. BPT supported this positive shift towards greener policies and a replenished housing land supply. However, we challenged the effectiveness of a number of policies in four key areas; the Sion Hill site housing allocation, campus first purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), higher standards for lowering carbon in the construction of new homes, and the retention of Green Belt designation on Park and Ride sites.

Following the submission of the draft Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) in December 2021 to the Secretary of State for examination, hearings took place before an independent inspector in June/July this year. The inspector has since confirmed that the updated LPPU is capable of being adopted subject to the incorporation of some 'main modifications' which have addressed our suggested tightening of PBSA policy which will continue to prioritise PBSA on campus and limit off-campus PBSA. The inspector indicated that in development proposals there should be clear evidence of the need for and type of additional student accommodation in the location proposed, and that such evidence may include a formal agreement between the developer and a relevant education provider. The campus-first approach is justified to avoid the unnecessary loss of housing development sites which are necessary to boost the supply of housing in the plan area.

At Sion Hill changes to the area-specific

policy aim to ensure north-south walking and cycling routes to complement the Liveable Neighbourhood scheme for the Lansdown area as it is progressed, but do not seek to lower the quantum of development which BPT suggested may reduce heritage harm.

Regrettably, removing land from the Green Belt at Park and Ride sites has been retained as a Council priority. While land designated as Green Belt in England rose by 1.5 per cent last year, according to the latest government statistics released by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), here in Bath we will see our urban Green Belt diminishing under 'exceptional circumstances' by the end of this year. The Council's policy for Park and Ride sites will see land removed from the Green Belt to make planning processes smoother for new infrastructure to support transport interchanges and green energy. These exceptional uses are justified in this location and substantially reversible in time, so in our view they are not entirely incompatible with the purposes of Green Belt. This being so, there is no reason to remove the Green Belt designation to accommodate them.

The danger is that removal of land from the Green Belt is permanent. These rural fringe sites will lose national protection forever and if the Park and Rides become unviable at any point, the risk of a more profitable development free-for-all becomes a reality.

The development sector is increasing calls for reform of Green Belt policy under claims that outdated policy is strangling planning potential for housing. This could see further unnecessary

releases nibbling away at the City periphery. However, in the Core Strategy plan period to date, there has been an oversupply of dwellings above the housing requirement. Given the extent of the housing land supply in B&NES as a whole, the good news is that there would also be adequate provision of specific, developable sites for the remainder of the plan period to 2029.

The Inspector has indicated that there will be some minor positive changes to Green Belt policies for infill sites in villages providing clarity as to what is meant by 'limited infilling' and that decision makers would still have to conclude whether a development proposal constitutes inappropriate development, and if so, should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Towards the end of 2022 B&NES Council will begin to work with communities on the new 2024-2042 Local Plan. BPT will be striving to ensure that any changes to land use allocation protects the Green Belt and that new policies are ratcheted up to tackle the climate and ecological emergency and housing crisis, and do much more to support housing provision, high-quality new build and retrofit, vibrant high streets, heritage conservation, green infrastructure and the future enhancement of Bath and its environment.

Now is the time to engage with local planning process that will shape the sustainable future of Bath. You can join the planning policy mailing list here: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/future-policy-local-plan>

## Intern's voice

### Josephine Adams

I arrived at BPT with very little experience of Architectural or Planning office work and my 10 weeks spent with you were a whirlwind of new insights, opportunities and ways of working. A far fetch from the stereotypical 'tea-maker', my role was varied and stimulating. It was brilliant to be contributing in various small ways not only to BPT's work but ultimately the wider discussion of conservation in Bath. From shadowing meetings to sitting in on AGMs and absorbing office discussions, I found the most useful personal experience came from listening to all the voices involved with planning in Bath and starting to grasp the types of work, people and ultimately community that come together in planning. This fascinating and unique City faces some big challenges and I found it hugely inspiring to be involved with discussions, both small and largescale. Wishing BPT all the best with the great work you're doing and I look forward to watching developments from next door Bristol!





## Planning applications at a glance

*Full and detailed responses to planning applications and consultations are available online*

### The Gasworks, Western Riverside

The next phase of Western Riverside proposes 616 apartments on the former Gasworks site. BPT has engaged in ongoing pre-application consultation with the development team and we are supportive of the residential regeneration of a major brownfield site within the City. However, we are seriously concerned by the piecemeal design approach across the site, and the lack of detail about how the proposed design, public realm, and infrastructure would connect with other areas of development. As currently proposed, we consider that the height, massing, and scale of development, and dominant use of buff brick would fail to reinforce local townscape character and harm the setting of the World Heritage Site.

### Further 300 homes at Sulis Down

BPT has responded to an outline planning application for the Phases 3 and 4 of the Sulis Down development, proposing up to an additional 300 homes on land previously released from the Green Belt. Phase 1 has already been permitted for 171 homes. We have expressed concerns regarding the continued development 'creep' on 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. We have called for further details of design and appearance to be included to assess potential landscape and heritage impact.

### Further refusal for housing on Deadmill Lane site

Proposals for the development of two 5 bed dwellings on an undeveloped Green Belt site in Larkhall have been refused. This application is the latest in a series of attempts to develop this rural site with up to 18 "affordable" dwellings, facing significant local backlash on grounds of inappropriate Green Belt development and harm to local character. Current local housing need is predicted to be met by development of brownfield sites in Bath.

### Affordable housing on Lower Bristol Road

BPT welcomed plans for the development of eight affordable flats on a former storage yard on Lower Bristol Road. The proposed development would deliver much-needed social housing to be retained and managed by B&NES Council as part of its new council housing programme. Whilst we had some concerns about the balance of outdoor space and on-site parking, we are strongly in favour of the provision of affordable housing on brownfield land to address the housing crisis.



Storage Yard adjacent to Argyle Works, Lower Bristol Road

### Old Windsor Bridge, Lower Bristol Road

BPT has highlighted the significance of rare, surviving features of Bath's industrial heritage in response to proposals for the demolition of the redundant gas pipeline bridge that runs alongside the new Windsor Bridge. The demolition of the late 19th-century bridge is intended to improve access onto the towpath, with increased biodiversity planting. Whilst the existing bridge is in very poor condition, BPT is concerned about the proposed loss of this Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA), where it could instead be retained and restored to showcase part of Bath's industrial past.



Old Windsor Bridge and Gas Pipe

### Frome House, Lower Bristol Road

BPT has strengthened its resistance to further speculative student accommodation at Frome House, in response to a planning application for the conversion of the building's upper floors to provide 25 student bed spaces. This follows a refused scheme for 66 student bed spaces, including a two-storey roof extension. We continue to oppose student accommodation development in Bath where this would unbalance the housing mix of local communities and remove possible development sites for affordable local housing.

### Retention of "Landmark" chimney at Bath Press

Earlier this year, BPT reported on proposals for the redevelopment of the Bath Press site on Lower Bristol Road to provide over 280 new homes. Proposals included the demolition of the chimney from the locally recognisable Bath Press façade, recognised as a NDHA and the only surviving remnant of the original printworks. Whilst supportive of the redevelopment of this major brownfield site, we campaigned to retain the chimney. Following refusal, we were therefore pleased that a new, revised planning application included the retention of the historic chimney, although we maintain ongoing concerns about the proposed scale of development and the absence of affordable housing.

### Kilowatt House, North Road

BPT supported proposals for a PV solar array on the roof of Kilowatt House, a Grade II listed building and an unusual example of 1930s Art Moderne architecture in Bath, originally designed by Mollie Taylor to combine residential space with on-site recording studios. The installation of 'slimlite' double glazing to improve thermal efficiency and address condensation and damp issues, was granted listed building consent in 2021. Considering the ongoing challenges of making this building liveable, we welcomed opportunities for the on-site generation of 'green' energy which would secure the sustainable future of a unique heritage asset in Bath.



# Architecture, Planning and Place

Units 1-4, Wells Road"



## Proposed 'co-living' block, Units 1-4, Wells Road

Proposals came forward this year for the development of a 5-storey 'co-living' block on the site of a vacant commercial unit. The site is particularly sensitive due to its raised position on Wells Road overlooking the City and the Grade II\* St James' Viaduct. Despite its sustainable location, BPT raised strong concerns about potential harm to townscape character due to the development's excessive height, scale, and massing. The building would feature prominently in the southern hillside and could therefore adversely affect the landscape setting of the World Heritage Site, conservation area, and a Grade II\* structure.

## Your voice



### Dear BPT,

I live in a listed building, and would be interested to know where to find advice and support in making listed buildings resilient to a changing climate, e.g. insulating against heat and cold, preparing against extreme weather, etc. I am also concerned – more so – about keeping my apartment cool during hot summers. One measure, for example, might be to protect the outside of the windows from the sun with shutters/blinds, but this would pose issues with regard to listed building consent.

Another issue is what might need to be done to the exterior of Georgian buildings to protect them from what are likely to be more extreme weather events.

**Resident, Marlborough Buildings**

We'd love to hear your views and queries on heritage and planning issues that matter most to you.

Please write to us at

**conservation@bptrust.org.uk**  
or call 01225 338727



## Demolition of Waterworks Cottage allowed after two-year battle

BPT has fought to save Waterworks Cottage (so named due to its historic associations with the 19th-century Charlcombe Water Works) from demolition since initial proposals were made to replace the cottage with three new build dwellings in 2020. Whilst plans were revised to keep and refurbish the cottage alongside two new dwellings in response to pressures from local residents and amenity groups, the scheme was refused by the Planning Committee as an "overdevelopment of the site." A series of Demolition Notices have subsequently come forward for the cottage's removal, two of which were refused due to "insufficient detail." Despite continued opposition from BPT and local objectors, in September it was concluded that "prior approval was NOT required" for the cottage's demolition. As the building is unlisted and outside the conservation area, planning permission is not required.

## Our response

Overheating is becoming more of a problem as a result of climate change and more extreme weather events, including heatwaves, heavier rainfalls, and wetter winters. The most effective way to protect buildings from extreme weather is regular maintenance to ensure stonework, rainwater goods and hoppers are in a good state of repair.

Measures to maximise shade and passive ventilation to keep the building cool should be considered. At Marlborough Buildings, the addition of external shutters or awnings, if they never previously existed, may be challenging and new additions would require listed building consent. A planning application would need to provide sufficient justification and careful consideration about impact on historic and architectural significance, as well as the appearance and character of the wider terrace.

On some historic homes a veranda with a canopy is another historic way to help create shading and address rainfall. There is historic evidence of external shutters at Marlborough Buildings as well as Cavendish Place. The extensive use of external shutters was considered fashionable in the late 1800s. However, given that external timber shutters are exposed to the elements they are probably not the most cost-effective solution and would require high maintenance.

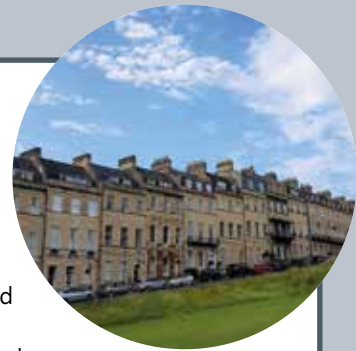
Today, the use of internal shutters is more common in Georgian homes, but these are most effective against overheating when coupled with behaviour changes such as keeping shutters or curtains closed during the day to keep out sunlight. Tinted coatings/films can sometimes be applied to glass to limit UV light and associated heating.

Where you have access to the windows on the east and west elevations, these can be opened as well as any internal doors to allow for through-ventilation. This can also be achieved by opening both sashes (upper and lower) on a double-hung sash window.

Associated behaviour changes include tailoring the use of the space depending on time of day and where the sun is, to make the most use of naturally shaded rooms. Internal rooms with no windows also tend to stay cooler for longer. This is traditionally how Bath's historic buildings would have been used through the 18th and 19th centuries, i.e. closing up certain rooms in the winter to stay warm and limit the use of heating, and vice versa.

External insulation, when carefully considered as part of a full 'retrofit', can help with both heating and cooling buildings. However, cladding is less likely to be acceptable on the historic Bath stone buildings which characterise the World Heritage Site, except in certain instances where the rear of a standalone building may have previously been rendered or substantially altered.

Bath stone has a high thermal mass which means it has a high capacity to store heat, but also takes a long time to heat up. The natural function of historic fabric can be enhanced by ensuring it is in good condition and replacing any inappropriate cement mortars/repairs and replacing with natural lime. The same applies for cold and wet weather, where the use of good drainage systems, string courses and 'drips' allow water to flow away from the stone and minimise risk of cracking or frost damage.



# Learning and Engagement

## Out of this world: planetarium on tour!

During the summer holidays we held a series of planetarium events for families around Bath.



Developed as part of the Herschel 200 project, our specially made planetarium film takes families on a journey through the solar system, telling the story of the Herschels and how their discoveries still influence our knowledge of space today. We spent two days at the Percy Community Centre, supported by the Bath Astronomers and Jo from Space Detectives, where families were able to enjoy the show and then take part in craft activities mapping the solar system and exploring constellations.

We were also able to take the planetarium to three local libraries to host story-telling sessions under the stars as part of the national Summer Reading Challenge. This was the perfect opportunity to introduce more families to the story of William and Caroline Herschel.

All our planetarium sessions were a sell-out success and we are delighted that the University of Bath has agreed to lend us the planetarium for another year meaning we can hold more of these popular events and even start taking the dome into schools.

The custom-made planetarium show





# Learning and Engagement

## School workshops and outreach

As the new school year progresses we continue to enjoy welcoming groups to No.1 Royal Crescent and the Herschel Museum of Astronomy, and have already seen an increase in bookings compared to last year.

With our new learning team in place, we are thrilled to be able to deliver a full program of workshops across more of our sites – supporting different areas of the curriculum.

We are also in the process of further developing our outreach programme, as we anticipate these becoming more popular with transport costs still rising and the continued squeeze on school budgets.

Our loan boxes, which were developed during the pandemic, have been well-received by schools. We will continue to offer these to schools to support classroom learning, whether in conjunction with a trip to the Museum or as a standalone experience. We have loved hearing from schools about the range of ways they have used these resources in the classroom.



A child tries on a costume during a school visit



## Bath Museums Week 2022

Bath Museums Week fell in October half term and we arranged a full programme of family activities in our Museums:

- The planetarium toured again, with two free sessions at Bath Central Library, and constellation crafts running alongside the shows;
- At the Museum of Bath Architecture, families used printing and modelling materials to create their own decorative wallpaper designs. This drop-in activity was free for Discovery Card holders;
- At No.1 Royal Crescent, families had the opportunity to design a plate, drawing inspiration from the beautiful porcelain on display in the Museum. This activity was free to Discovery Card holders and held in the Museum gallery;
- We staged an exciting mystery at Beckford's Tower, with Detective Holly Dabbs leading a mission to find out the truth behind the puzzling events. Precious objects went missing, and strange noises were heard, so families were tasked with following the clues to work out what was going on!

As well as these exciting workshops, we made activities and trails available to visitors all week in the Museums, such as pinhole camera making to view the partial solar eclipse at the Herschel Museum, and dressing up at No.1 Royal Crescent.



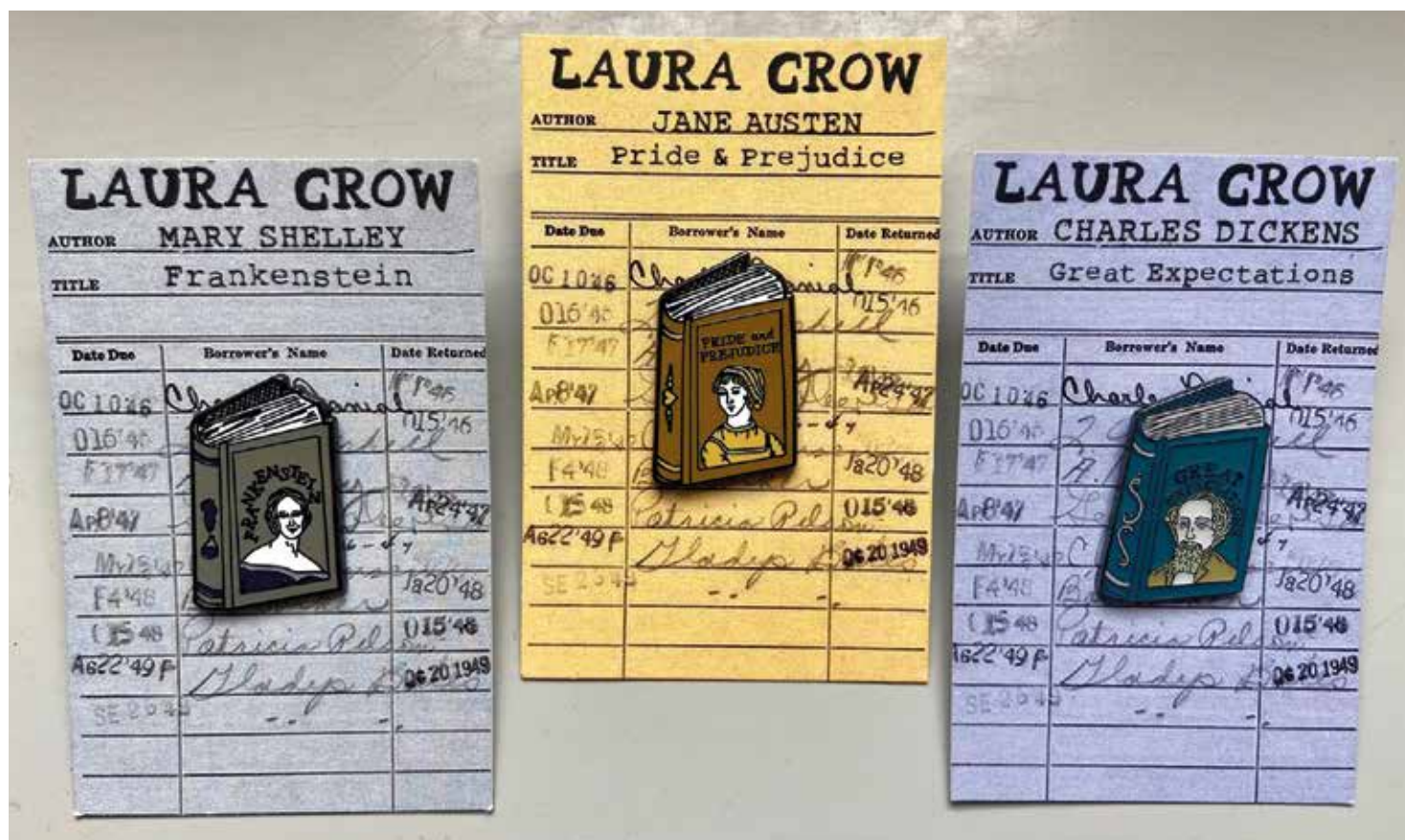
## A very 'mice' Christmas!

Throughout the Christmas holidays we have a special trail around **No.1 Royal Crescent** for visiting families. Look out for our little country mice visiting the house for Christmas and see what they are getting up to in each room. And why not visit the gallery to create a paper bauble to take home?

These activities will run from Tuesday 29 November to Saturday 31 December.

At the **Herschel Museum of Astronomy** come and make a beautiful constellation luminary to light up your room. This drop-in activity takes place in the Museum gallery and is free with a Museum ticket from Saturday 17 December to Saturday 31 December.

# No. 1 Royal Crescent



The gift shop has plenty of new stock to peruse

## Brand new shop merchandise!

Our Museum might be immersed in the past, but our gift shop is very much rooted in the present, with a continuous stream of new stock flowing in to excite both new and returning visitors!

We work with local suppliers to promote some great products designed and produced in Bath and the surrounding area, such as collectible Moorcroft pottery, delicious Bumblee jams and preserves, a range of teas, Bath Gin and beautiful scented candles and hand and body lotions from Ubiety.

We have grown our range for children with new gift ideas and lots more books on famous faces from the Georgian era, gruesome historical facts and stories of fabulous queens. We also have a new range of books to help

young people access themes such as the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Black History. Keep your eyes peeled for new additions coming very soon including a fantastic papercraft stately home. Our Jane Austen range has also grown, with new pin badges, greetings cards and a keyring produced by the talented artist, Laura Crow. We have also worked with another talented artist, Amber Joy, to produce bespoke acrylic and wooden magnets featuring No.1, a regency couple and Jane Austen herself. In addition, we have introduced

popular Bridgerton gifts and books and are celebrating the life and reign of HRH Queen Elizabeth with a small memorial range.

With Christmas fast approaching we are now stocking a wealth of Christmas gifts for all ages, with cards and advent calendars also available. Our main Christmas shop is open until 31st December, selling beautiful sustainable decorations, delicious Christmas drinks and preserves, and lots of great gift ideas. Make sure you pay us a call!

### New for 2023

We have some exciting new elements including translations of the tour content into the most frequently requested languages to help enrich the experience for those whose first language is not English. We will also have a new accessible tour for those who cannot access the whole building. Our commitment to providing access for all remains a priority and we look forward to connecting with new audiences in 2023.





## Christmas events

We have some exciting festive events planned at No.1.

The house will be decked out in all sorts of Christmas finery, including a resplendent tree outside the front of No.1, kindly sponsored by our friends at Hawker Joinery. We'll be running our "Georgian Christmas" audio-visual tour throughout December, to immerse our visitors in all things Christmas.

We'll be welcoming back Father Christmas at weekends throughout December to delight kids and adults alike in his grotto. In addition to this, our shop will be opening until 8:00pm on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays during the first three weeks of December, to allow you to pop in for all your Christmas gift needs and perhaps a present or two for yourself.

We will also be hosting Christmas parties in our Servants Hall, so if you or our business are searching for a party venue, then look no further and drop our events team an email at [events@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:events@bptrust.org.uk). We look forward to hosting you!



Visitors have continued to enjoy the interactive *Georgians at Home* exhibition this year



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# Beckford's Tower and Museum



## The future's looking golden

Beckford Tower Trust is thrilled to have secured the £3.4m required to complete the conservation and repair work required to remove the Tower from the National At Risk Register.

Thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, Garfield Weston Foundation, The Medlock Charitable Trust, Historic Houses Foundation, Pilgrim Trust, the Beckford Society and many other Trusts and Foundations as well as individual donors, we will begin work in Spring 2023.

This project will improve the visitor experience, diversify our audiences, and extend access to all by:

- Reconnecting the Tower to its lost Landscape;
- Creating new interpretation to share compelling stories of identity, sexuality, exile, the transatlantic slave trade, and nature and wellbeing;

- Comprehensively conserving the Tower, and installing environmentally sustainable energy systems;
- Restoring and interpreting the Grotto Tunnel;
- Opening free-to-access space in the Paddocks for community and commercial benefit, wellbeing, and biodiversity gain.

This project is urgent and important because it will:

- Address the Tower's National 'At Risk' status;
- Build on the enthusiasm of local residents and community partners;
- Help address the issues of climate change and biodiversity loss;

- Provide new insights into the transatlantic slave trade and Queer History;
- Enable audience and income growth.

The project will be informed through continued consultation and will establish a sense that this unique legacy is for all to share and enjoy. It's not just Beckford's Tower, it's Our Tower.



# Beckford's Tower and Museum

## Community projects

With "Our Tower" in mind we will be working with local communities to gain their perspectives. One of the project aims is to create new, engaging and immersive experiences for visitors and we have been testing some ideas. One such example is a community project held with Bath's Black Families Education Support Group (BFESG).

From May until July 2022 Dr Amy Frost, Senior Curator and Marie Brewer, Activities Officer worked with young people from the Supplementary School programme of BFESG alongside Beckford's Tower interpretation consultant, Iona Keen and artist Jacqueline Braithwaite to create artistic responses to the Tower and story of William Beckford. Overall, 19 young people contributed to the artwork and audio. The young people created their own responses on pieces of fabric and chose to unite their individual artworks together into the single banner that hangs in the staircase in the Tower.

A strong theme expressed throughout their artworks, and the discussions that led to them, is the inequality of the privileged life that Beckford led in contrast to the lives of the enslaved Africans that he held in ownership. Everyone involved in creating this banner hopes that visitors will look beyond the façade of this building, and below the surface of the objects Beckford collected, to see the source of the wealth that paid for them.

Visitors to the Tower during the summer have been engaging with the banner and have found it to be informative, interesting and powerful. One visitor has commented that they saw the Tower differently from having seen it through someone else's eyes.

Since the Tower reopened in March, new and different ways to convey the story of William Beckford have been on display and tested with audiences through surveys and interviews. This is giving us an insight into the future ways we might tell the stories. Visitors have commented on how clear the explanations are, and how they are finding the information balanced and informed. They recognise that we are acknowledging aspects of the past which are important. Beckford's Tower is now closed, but do visit our website to see images of these new interpretations.



The community banner  
at Beckford's Tower

# Herschel Museum of Astronomy



The Herschel 200 stonework by artist Iain Cotton

## The legacy of Herschel 200

As we near the end of 2022, we reflect upon what the long-term legacy will be for this 200th anniversary year that has been a commemoration of the death of William Herschel.

Thanks to the generous support and time given by Bath Astronomers, many people are engaging with astronomy for the first time. Our new stonework commission created by local Artist Maker Iain Cotton will provide a permanent reminder of this anniversary. Situated in the garden, the stonework also provides a platform for telescopes. The garden itself has been opened up and we can now welcome more people to our astronomy events, which continue this winter and into the spring.

A new project with the University of Bath and Percy Community Centre as well as several local libraries has engaged new audiences with our custom-made planetarium show. We are thrilled that the University is lending us the planetarium for another year so that we can continue and expand this programme into local

schools for 2023.

New Museum trails will continue to be available for audiences to use and enjoy, alongside a downloadable map that features UK locations relevant to William Herschel, with recommendations of places to visit, to follow in his footsteps and discover more of his story.

We will continue to work alongside new partners including Slough Museum, also exploring options to retain the art installation by Lynda Laird, to feature in the Star Vault during 2023 and further our exploration of the Dark Skies theme.

Longer-term plans for the Museum will also be a priority as we look to deliver a feasibility study to help us better understand the potential of the Museum and how to maximise the narrative of the Herschel family.

Our commitment to museum acquisitions



A child enjoys the new museum trail



# Herschel Museum of Astronomy



The lightbox installation by Lynda Laird

that strengthen our collection and enrich the narrative is also important and we are in the process of acquiring a handwritten draft of Caroline Herschel's memoirs, that will greatly improve our ability to bring Caroline's story to the forefront of the Museum experience. If successful, this will go on display during 2023. We would like to thank everybody who has donated to this cause so far.

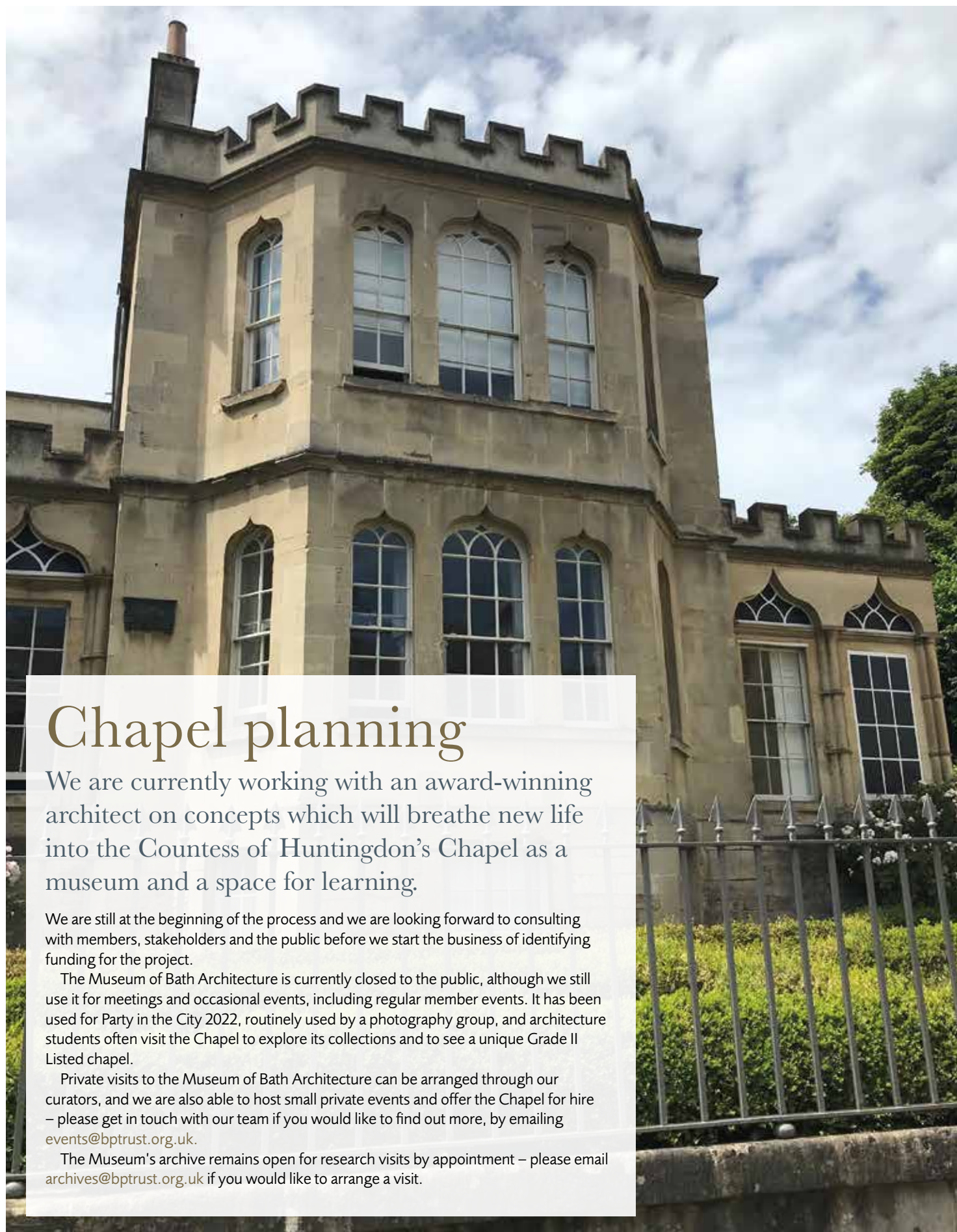
We also have new Christmas family and astronomy events coming up that are available to book coming soon on our website, including an evening astronomy session with the Bath Astronomers on 8th December for the 'Mars Opposition'. We will also have a full programme of astronomy events for 2023.

We have welcomed new and larger audiences to the Museum this year, exceeding pre-pandemic visitor numbers during some months, which is a staggering achievement given that Bath as a whole has not seen visitors return to the City at pre-pandemic levels at all this year. We hope to continue welcoming these new visitors in 2023, when we will explore the theme of Dark Skies and consider the impact of our environment on astronomy, the natural environment and our own wellbeing. Watch this "Space"!

The new Herschel 200 exhibition



# Museum of Bath Architecture



## Chapel planning

We are currently working with an award-winning architect on concepts which will breathe new life into the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel as a museum and a space for learning.

We are still at the beginning of the process and we are looking forward to consulting with members, stakeholders and the public before we start the business of identifying funding for the project.

The Museum of Bath Architecture is currently closed to the public, although we still use it for meetings and occasional events, including regular member events. It has been used for Party in the City 2022, routinely used by a photography group, and architecture students often visit the Chapel to explore its collections and to see a unique Grade II Listed chapel.

Private visits to the Museum of Bath Architecture can be arranged through our curators, and we are also able to host small private events and offer the Chapel for hire – please get in touch with our team if you would like to find out more, by emailing [events@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:events@bptrust.org.uk).

The Museum's archive remains open for research visits by appointment – please email [archives@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:archives@bptrust.org.uk) if you would like to arrange a visit.



## Recent projects



The cascade at Prior Park

### Prior Park's cascade restoration

The National Trust has recently completed a long-running project to restore the sequence of lakes and dams below the Grade I listed Palladian Bridge at Prior Park. The approx. £4.2m cost of the project has been largely funded by the National Trust, with a World Heritage Site Enhancement Fund (WHSEF) contribution of £7,500 towards the cost of restoring the ornamental cascade. Over the years, the dams and banks of the lakes had been seriously damaged by the burrowing action of signal crayfish, and also by unsuccessful previous repairs. In addition, the cascade of vermiculated stone boulders, which originally formed the centrepiece of the dam, had fallen into disrepair.

The restoration project began in 2018. Despite delays caused by Covid-19 and severe weather conditions, the lakes have finally been refilled, and the original lovely vista of the valley is being restored. The civil engineering contractors Alun Griffiths Ltd, and the National Trust, particularly their gardening team, are to be congratulated on the successful restoration of the original historic vision of this important picturesque landscape.

### Watchman's Box

One of the first projects undertaken by the WHSEF was the restoration of the rare Grade II\* Watchman's Box, c. 1810, in Norfolk Crescent. In 2010, the stonework was repaired and conserved, and a new oak door installed, using the original wrought iron studs and hinges. Whilst the stonework has remained robust, the door has since suffered from natural weathering. Recent maintenance works include the restoration of ironwork by Ironart and the cleaning and oiling of the oak timbers for protection by Alex Roberts.

More recently Melanie Gilbert-Smith, with Professor Barry Gilbertson, has written a carefully researched and most interesting paper on Watchmen's Boxes for the WHSEF, which is available on the WHSEF and BPT websites.



Alex Roberts maintaining the Watchman's Box



### Signs and markers

The WHSEF continues its award-winning programme of historic street sign conservation, with 61 signs completed so far. Upcoming signs, for which Listed Building Consent is being sought, include a street name and a parish boundary marker on the junction between Trim Street and Upper Borough Walls, originally the north-west limit of the medieval city and part of the boundary between the parishes of St Peter and St Paul (Bath Abbey), and St Michael's. Surviving parish signs, indicated by the initials SPPP and SMP, are important features of Bath's history where parishes were part of the administrative and social services of the City including street lighting, rate collection, poor relief, and byelaw enforcement. Trim Street remains significant as part of the first 18th-century development outside the City's medieval wall, developed by City Councillor George Trim in 1707.

Parish sign  
at Trim Bridge

The WHSEF is a partnership between B&NES Council and BPT. For more information, or to suggest a project, please contact the Fund Administrator, Ainslie Ensom, at [whsef@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:whsef@bptrust.org.uk)



## *Four historic museum venues in beautiful Bath*

The first house in the country's finest Georgian Crescent, No.1 Royal Crescent Museum offers heritage, history, talking points – and endless photo opportunities!

A venue of historical, literary and architectural interest, Beckford's Tower offers excitement, glamour and intrigue. Before you even arrive, the gold-tipped Tower will beckon you from afar...

Once home to the astronomers and musicians William and Caroline Herschel, the Herschel Museum is a wonderful example of an authentic middle-class Georgian House, packed with character, authentic scientific artefacts, and with multiple spaces to explore!

Spacious and characterful, the Museum of Bath Architecture is a former Georgian chapel offering plenty of atmosphere plus the modern technology necessary for business events.

**All of these unique spaces are available to hire for private events.**

Special members' rates available – email [events@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:events@bptrust.org.uk) to enquire



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We are a membership organisation and a registered charity.

Registered office: The Bath Preservation Trust Limited,  
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Registered in England no. 294789, Charity no. 203048

Design: [www.ninepoint.co.uk](http://www.ninepoint.co.uk), Print: [www.kolorco.com](http://www.kolorco.com)



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