

Views and Vistas of Bath

March 2026



BATH
PRESERVATION
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Introduction

Baths Views and Vistas are an intrinsic, beautiful and unparalleled part of the character of the double-inscribed World Heritage city. Cherished and valued by residents and visitors alike, they provide exquisite glimpses and expansive panoramas of a city designed by intent to be beautiful, to be inspiring, to be a therapeutic resource, but most of all to be loved by people. The tree-scape is managed, the views are intentional, even some of the buildings have been strategically placed to make the best of views and sightlines across the valley and hillsides, to bring context and to contribute to the collective whole.

The views are a significant contributing factor to both of the World Heritage Site inscriptions.

The City of Bath inscription of 1987 included the *green setting of the city in a hollow in the hills* as one of the Outstanding Universal Values (OUV). This details not only the surrounding hills, skylines and agricultural landscape but it also references the fingers of green countryside which stretch right into the city, the distinct pattern of settlements working with the landscape and the trees, tree belts and woodlands lining the river and canal and within Parkland and gardens.

In 2021 Bath was awarded a second inscription as one of a collective of the 11 *Great Spa Towns of Europe*. This second inscription also values the landscape and particularly the *therapeutic spa landscape*. And therapeutic it is providing comfort, spiritual peace and the opportunity to unwind and relax. The Views & Vistas of Bath are part of its character, part of its fabric.

Providing such an exceptional quality of life, Bath is also highly sought after, often making it expensive to live in and expensive to visit. The Views and Vistas of the city are free however and an already inspiring attraction in their own right, providing an opportunity to walk around the city perimeter looking in but also through its heart looking out onto beautiful countryside. The views provide immense social and community value, being treasured but also influencing the way houses are distributed. A walk along Camden Road will be lifted by glimpses across the valley, picked out through the gaps between the Georgian and Victorian houses. The beauty of the near views of the houses, contrasts with the green leafy beauty in the distance. The same experiences can be found in a multitude of locations: Sydney Buildings; Bathwick Hill; from Claverton Down; from Lansdown Hill, from Larkhall, from Weston. The city provides beauty from every angle.

Views which contribute to the Outstanding Universal Values of the World Heritage Site designation and character of the Conservation Area are protected in Bath. The City of Bath World Heritage Site Setting Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is unique to Bath being a document which enshrines the importance of views as they are a significant indicator in the management of the landscape, land use and the determination of development proposals in the city. Designers of major new developments must evaluate potential impacts upon significant views identified in the SPD and are obliged to provide evidence and strategies about how they will mitigate risk to those views.

Origin of the project

When Bathscape was being planned and researched the Views and Vistas project was conceived. The project itself was intended to be an exploration into understanding of the views and what they told us about the history of the city. It was also a project to understand the impacts of change over time, about how those views might have changed because of development or tree planting or other factors. It was also understood as a way to identify what future threats might change the value of those views and what mitigation might therefore be required to enable their retention. The project was also a way to engage volunteers and partners in a discussion about what those views might mean for Bath in the future, as a way for visitors to engage with the history, the heritage and the beauty of the City and so share in its very significant appeal.

The project was conceived and formalised between 2015 and 2019 and a preliminary exploration undertaken. A subsequent project commenced in 2023, working with partners and volunteers to explore some of the specific views which are very close to the heart of people in Bath. During the life of the Bathscape programme, members of the public were invited to nominate and vote for their favourite views and this informed a selection of key views, which should be recorded and evaluated to understand their beauty, their heritage and the history they look out upon but also the risks and management requirements they have for the future.

The project has worked with some key volunteers, who have visited the viewpoints, undertaken research, enhanced understanding and compiled the information you will read in this report. They have contributed a very significant amount of time, thought, care and energy into helping the understanding about the significance of the views and the threats and risks they might face and how those might be mitigated.

We are very grateful to all of them.



Bath & North East Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives



National Trust



BATH PRESERVATION TRUST



BATHSCAPE VIEWS AND VISTAS



This project aims to provide better management, protection, understanding and enjoyment of important views throughout the Bathscape area.

Where's your favourite view?

Please take a couple of minutes to tell us the location of your favourite view by completing a questionnaire. It may be a popular viewpoint or one which is rarely visited. It may be rural, urban or both. The only restrictions are that it is within the Bathscape area, and publicly accessible. Please tell us:

- 1) Where's your favourite view?
- 2) Why do you like it?
- 3) Do you have any concerns about it?

What happens next

We will record your favourite views on a map, together with views identified through other projects. Eight of these views will be chosen for detailed analysis and management recommendations.

How else you can help

Over the next few months we will be looking for volunteers to undertake analysis of additional viewpoints in and around the city. This is likely to include photography, fieldwork and archive research. In the longer term we will be looking for people to help monitor the views to see how they are changing and how effective the management policies are. If you are interested in finding out more about the project, or would like to volunteer, please provide your email address on the questionnaire



How to use this document

Several significant views are recorded in this document, which have been selected following a public engagement process.

The views are listed in the first section and the full list of all views under consideration is included.

All volunteers in recording the views use the same template format which in broad terms is set out in each of the sections. In compiling the document, it became evident that many of the issues affecting views including risks and management requirements were aligned. The risks and management suggestions have therefore been grouped together and are featured at the end of the document.

The methodology for recording the views was set out in an original report by Fiona Fyfe in 2017. When the original report was created, 8 views were recorded. These were used as reference guides and the views were reappraised in 2024 and 2025. In some cases, there was no noticeable change to report in which case this was referenced in the document. The Fiona Fyfe report is provided below as an embedded document.

The main body of information recorded for each of the views has been kept coherent for each of the views listed. Volunteers visited each site and took a photographic record using recommended camera settings and directions. The exact location of photography was recorded using what.three.words and 6 figure grid references. A narrative description of the location of the view is provided.

Recorders were invited to provide their observation of the significance of each view followed by a narrative and photographic description of the near ground, the middle ground and the distance views. Referencing research and personal knowledge, volunteers also provided a history of each of the views to supplement and enrich the introductory statements of significance.

In some cases, historic images have been used to reflect significance and historic associations with views, along with maps.

The cumulative outcome is a reference document which is very much of the time in which it was created, between 2024 and 2025, appraising the Views and Vistas of Bath, which are a protected characteristic of the double inscribed World Heritage site. Accounts provided are both observations by individuals who have a connection with the landscape as well as accurate and technical records providing an account of heritage and changing land uses.

The final sections include risks and management considerations and these equally reflect a perspective of the city's past, present and future.

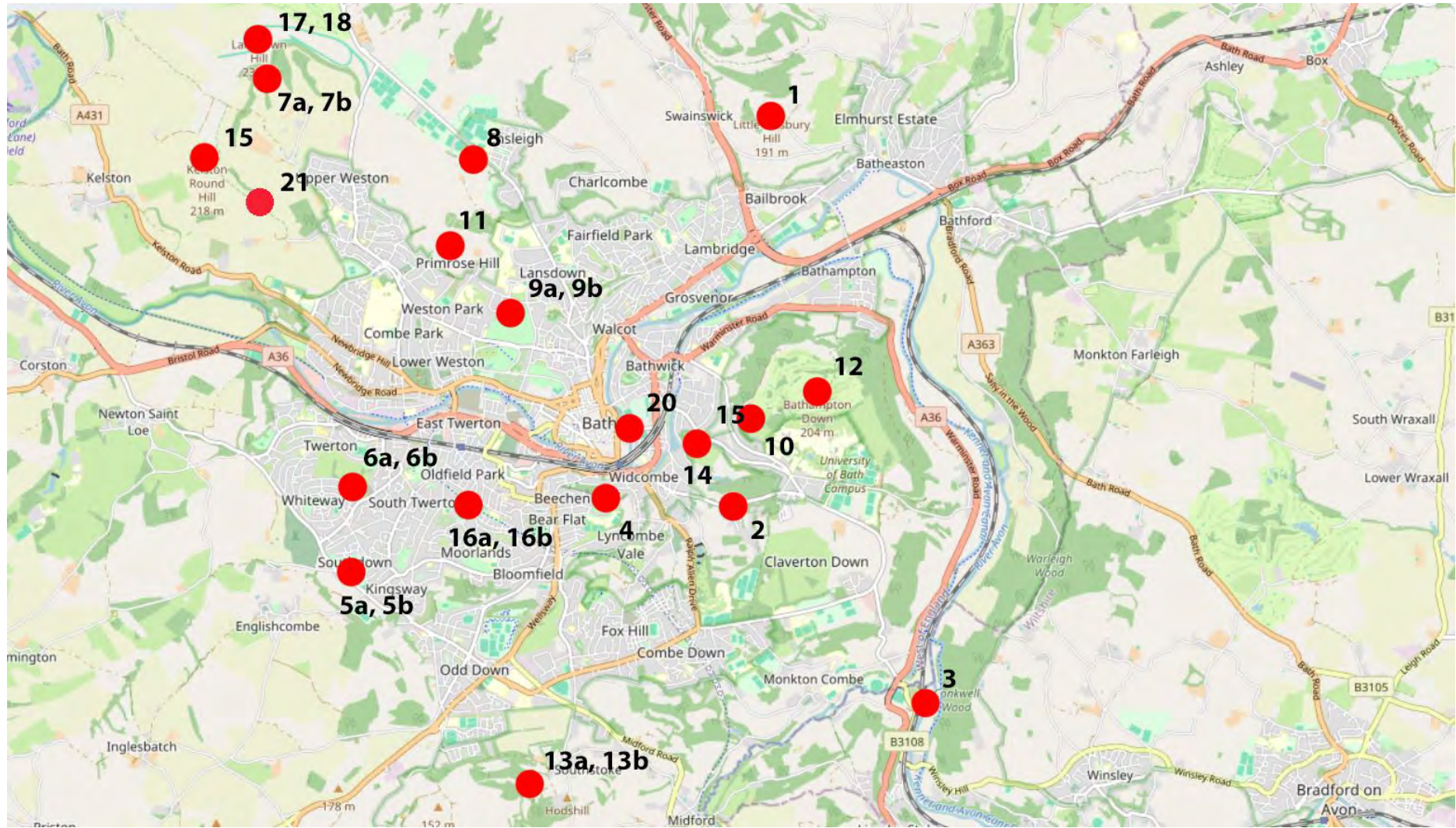
Location of Views

Bathscape Views and Vistas – long list

No.	Name	WHS SPG Map 7	What's fav. view?	Public consultation	No.	Name	WHS SPG Map 7	What's fav. view?	Public consultation	No.	Name	WHS SPG Map 7	What's fav. view?	Public consultation
1	Prospect Stile	✓			16	Widcombe Hill	✓		✓	31	Next to Woolley Lane			✓
2	Beckford's Twr/Lansdown Cemy	✓	✓		17	Prior Park Mansion	✓			32	NT fields by Smallcombe cemy			✓
3	Lansdown Cres.	✓			18	Great Pulteney St	✓			33	Carr's Wood by railway tunnel entrance			✓
4	Approach Golf Course	✓			19	Kelston View (Bath City Farm)	✓	✓	✓	34	Skyline Walk, Prior Park			✓
5	Royal Cres	✓		✓	20	Primrose Hill	✓			35	Perfect View off Camden Road			✓
6	The Circus	✓		✓	21	Ralph Allen's Carriage Drive (Meare Rd)	✓			36	Fairfield Park			✓
7	Terrace Walk / (Parade Gardens)	✓	✓		22	Ralph Allen's Carriage Drive (Bathampton Down)	✓			37	Lansdown Near Racecourse			✓
8	North Parade Bridge	✓			23	Ralph Allen's Carriage Drive (Limekiln Lane)	✓			38	Near St Stephen's Church			✓
9	Old Newbridge Hill	✓			24	South of South Stoke		✓		39	Lansdown Road			✓
10	Little Solsbury Hill	✓	✓		25	South of Rush Hill		✓		40	Kelston Roundhill			✓
11	Camden Cres	✓			26	Twerton Sladebrook Rd		✓		41	Two Tunnels Linear Park			✓
12	Alexandra Park (Beechen Cliff)	✓	✓	✓	27	Dean Hill		✓		42	Primrose Hill Woods			✓
13	Twerton Roundhill	✓		✓	28	Browns Folly		✓		43	Charlcombe Valley			✓
14	Bloomfield Road (Odd Down)	✓		✓	29	Pulteney Weir		✓		44	Canal (nr Dundas Aquaduct)			✓
15	Sham Castle	✓	✓	✓	30	Bathwick Fields/ Meadows		✓	✓	45	A46 heading out of Bath			✓

Location of Views

Views represented in this report



The Views and Vistas in this report

Little Solsbury Hill

Widcombe Hill

Dundas Aqueduct

Primrose Hill

Beechen Cliff

Twerton Roundhill

Bath City Farm (from sundial)

Prospect Stile

Beckford's Tower

Approach Golf Course

Sham Castle

Bathampton Down / Ralph Allen's Carriage Drive

South of Southstoke (Millennium viewpoint)

Bathwick Fields

Kelston Roundhill

Two Tunnels Linear Park (Monksdale Road)

Lansdown Hanging Hill looking north

Lansdown Hanging Hill looking south west

North Stoke

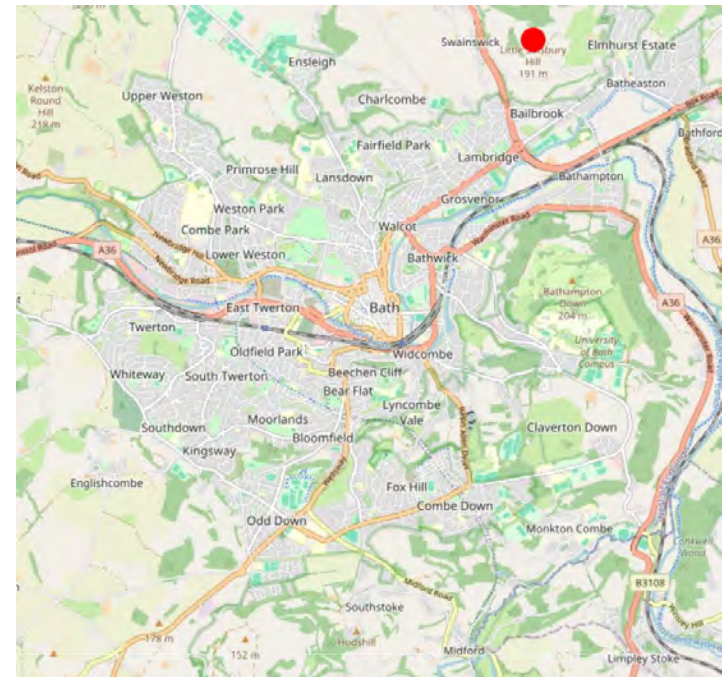
North Parade Bridge

Dean Hill

1. Little Solsbury Hill

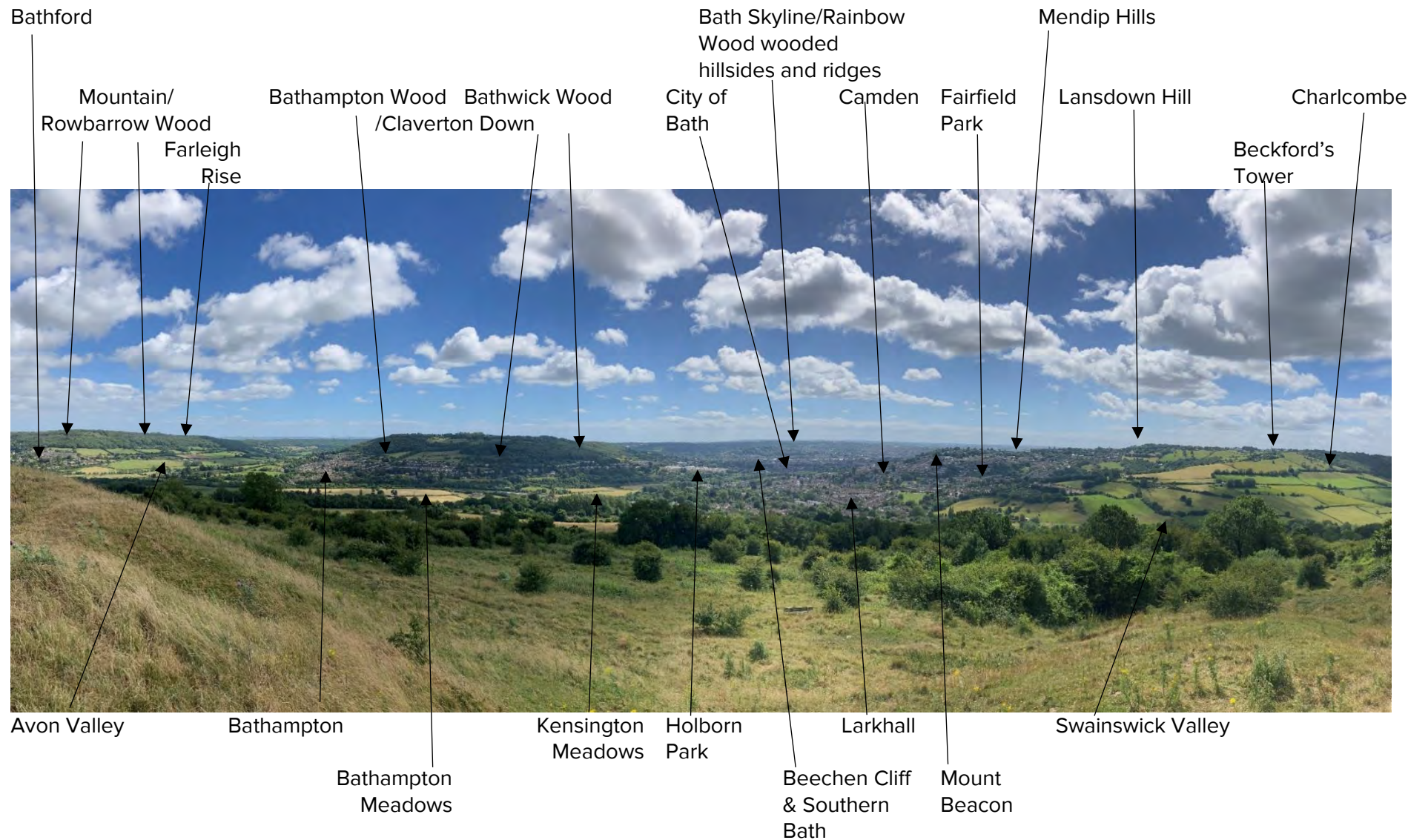
Location description Traversing the hillfort plateau to the SE and NW to capture a panoramic view due south, that includes the Avon Valley Dundas Aquaduct, Bathampton Down and the University, Bath City Centre, Primrose Hill going up to Lansdown including Beckford Tower and to the North the line of trees on Freezing Hill.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
latest.vital.stray	ST 767677	Outside Conservation Area. View takes in the Bath City Wide Conservation Area, Batheaston, Bathford, Bathampton and Upper Swainswick Conservation Areas.

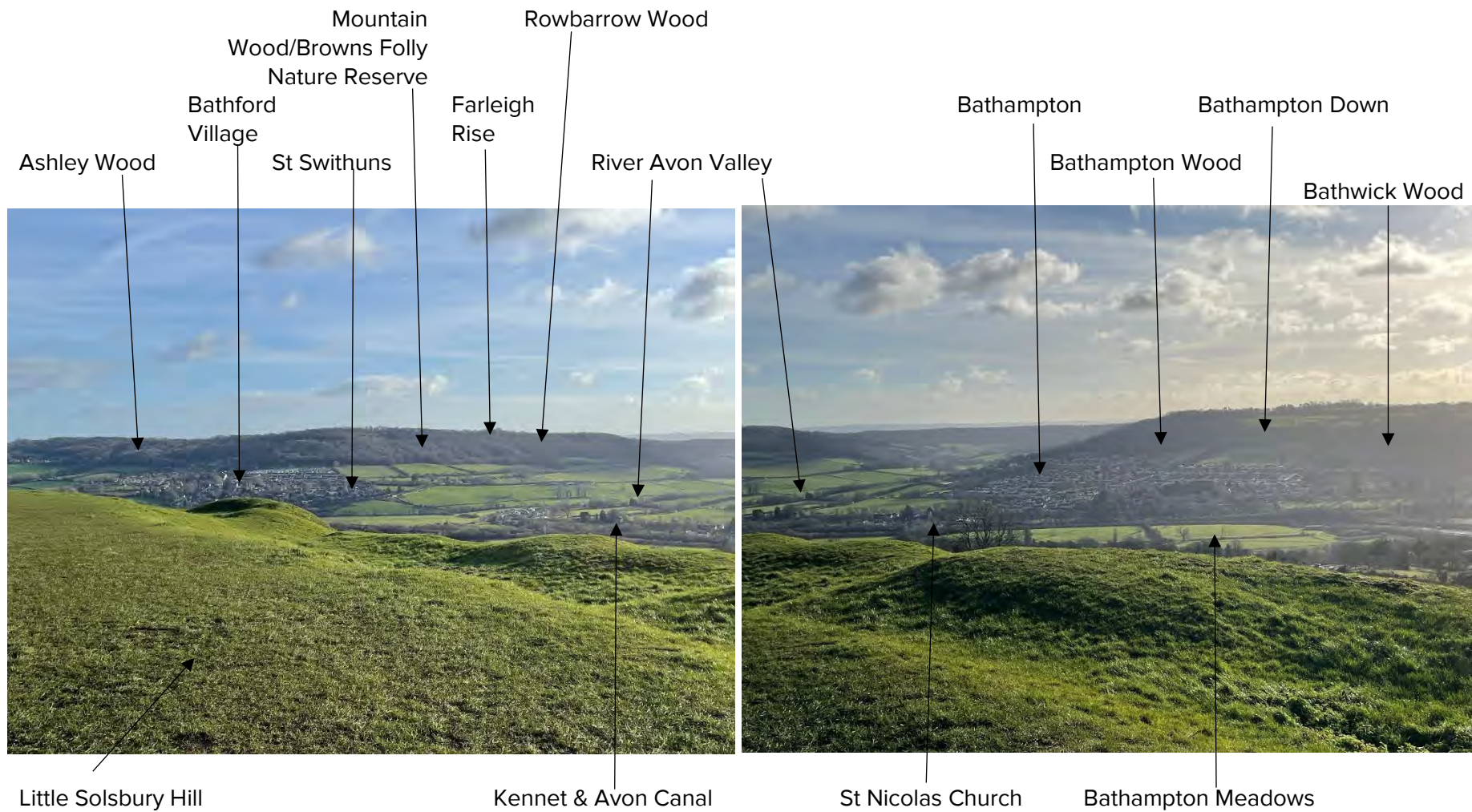


Significance of the View

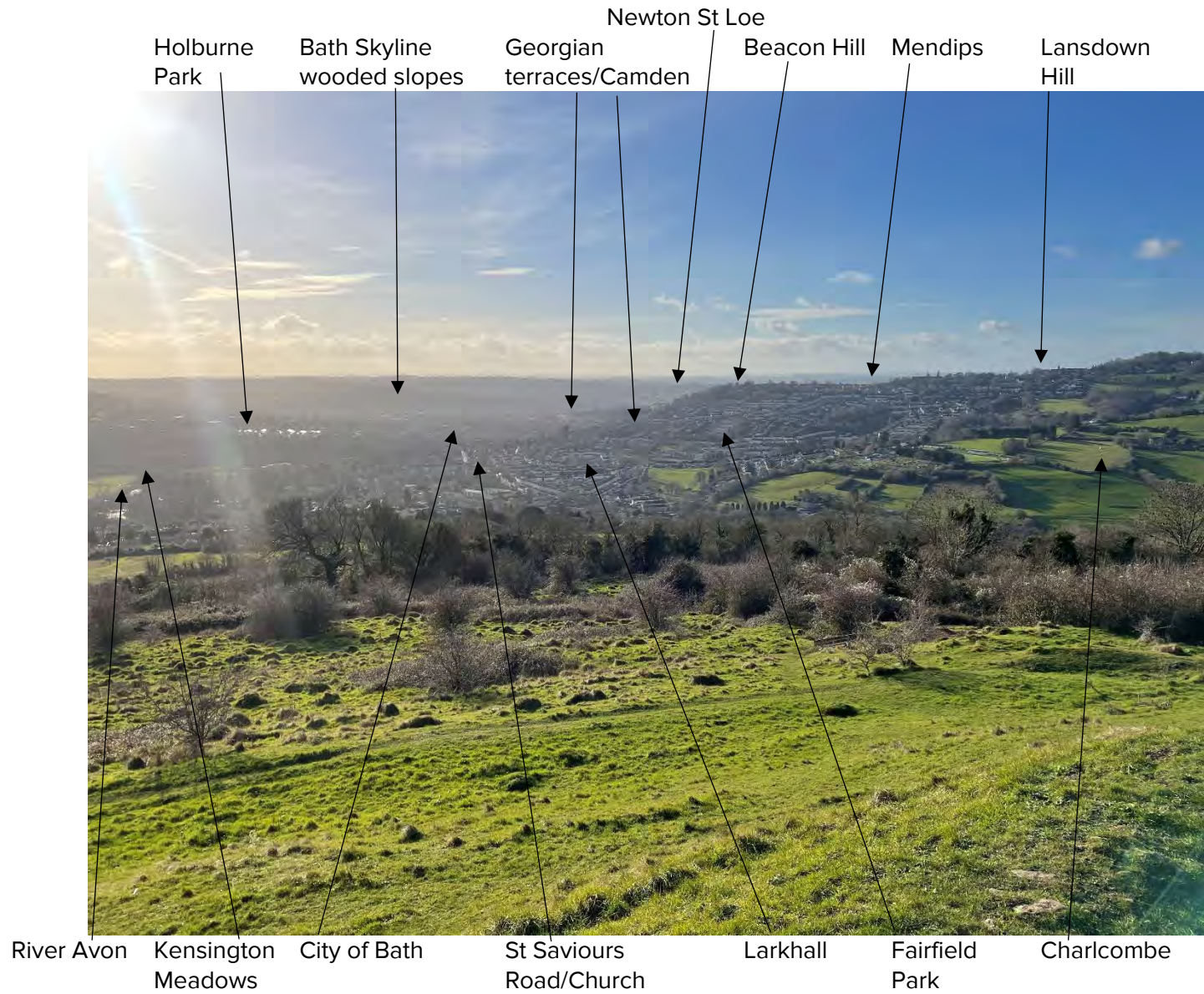
Little Solsbury Hill is site of strategic and spiritual importance. The Hill holds significance as a historic Iron Age hillfort. It is famously associated with the legendary Battle of Badon, linked to King Arthur, and thought to be the site of King Bladud’s cave. It famously inspired Peter Gabriel’s 1977 song. The view of Bath from Little Solsbury Hill captures why the Romans settled here and resembles the countryside, and hills that surrounds Rome. The summit offers a 360-degree views of the whole city of Bath, the village of Bathford, the Avon Valley, the countryside of Wiltshire, Somerset, and South Gloucestershire, the Swainswick Valley and the Cotswolds. On a clear day from the Trig Point (188m, 617ft) it is possible to see the By Brook Valley and the North Wessex Downs out to the horizon. It is a panoramic view that takes in a lot of history. In the mid-1990s, the hill became a symbol of environmental activism during protests the A46 bypass construction which threatened the surrounding environment.



The panoramic view from Little Solsbury Hill viewpoint Summer 2024



The panoramic view East, South-East from Little Solsbury Hill viewpoint Winter 2026



The view South, South-West from Little Solsbury Hill viewpoint Winter 2026

Foreground

Little Solsbury Hill, Trig Point and Hill Fort.
Batheaston. A36. Swainswick Valley.



Trig point, with Lansdown, Beckford's Tower, Woolley and Freezing Hill in distance.

Middle ground

River Avon Valley. Bathford on the A363 which follows the River Avon to Bradford on Avon. East of Bath, Bathford. Bathwick, St Johns Church. St Swithun's Church. The Kennet & Avon Canal and a railway running parallel to the river. Bathampton, St Nicholas Church, The George Inn and its car park and Bathampton Church. Bathampton Meadows. Woolley in the valley between Lansdown and Little Solsbury Hill. Kensington Meadows and the London Road.

Bath City Centre. St Johns Church, Bath Abbey, Holbourn Park new housing catches the light. Mount Beacon. Residential areas of Larkhall, Camden and Fairfield Park.

Background

Farliegh Rise to the east, Mountain Wood and Rowbarrow Wood. Browne's Folly and Nature Reserve. Bathampton Wood, Bathwick Wood and Claverton Down. The Bath Skyline, Rainbow Wood southern Bath slopes – Lyncombe, Beechen Cliff, Smallcombe Wood, Rainbow Wood. New housing estate on the former MOD Ensleigh site. Lansdown Hill, Beckford Tower, Tree line on the horizon of Freezing Hill. Countryside of Wiltshire, Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Distant Mendip Hills and Wessex Downs.

Heritage and historical references

Little Solsbury Hill, Swainswick is a flat hilltop (188m) with a fine iron-age hillfort, its ramparts faced with dry-stone walling. Solsbury Hill was occupied as a hill fort during the early Iron Age, between 300BC and 100BC, one of the southernmost of fortifications across the Cotswolds. During this time huts were built from timber and wattle and daub. A 20-foot-wide rampart was constructed around the settlement, flanked on both sides by dry stone walls.

In previous times there were tales of a temple on the top to Bladud, the legendary king of the Britons and that the visible remains were of a Saxon fort used in the siege of Bath in 577 AD.

However, archaeological excavations suggest that the site was occupied from about 500 to 100 BC with up to 30 huts in occupation at any one time. Possibly the huts were then burnt down, and the rest of the settlement destroyed and abandoned.

In later history, Little Solsbury Hill is a possible site of the Battle of Badon, fought in around 496AD between the Saxons and the British. There is also evidence of medieval field systems on the hilltop.

The site has a history of agricultural use. Barley was grown on the summit at the end of the eighteenth century and the hill was still under cultivation well into the nineteenth century.

The hill was the inspiration for Peter Gabriel's song "Solsbury Hill". "*Climbing up on Solsbury Hill, I could see the city light. Wind was blowing, time stood still, eagle flew out of the night*" - Peter Gabriel, Solsbury Hill

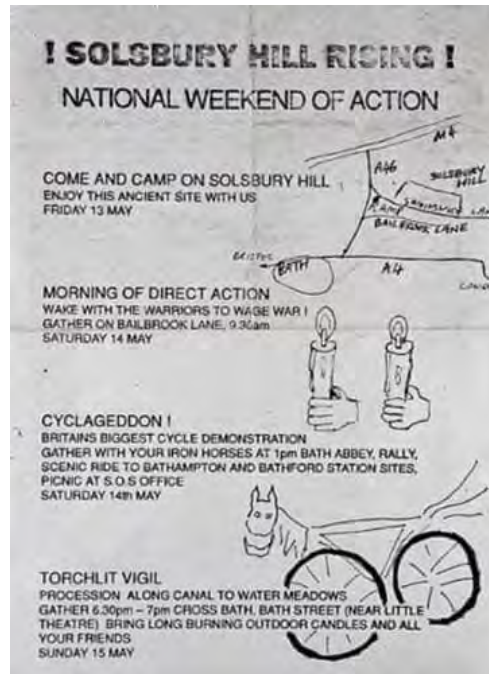
Given in 1930 by Mrs W.A. Hick through the Somerset Rural Community Council. There is a headstone on the hilltop to mark the presentation of the hilltop to the National Trust in memory of her husband William A Hick.

The National Trust owns the top plateau, following a generous donation from the Hicks family in 1930. (National Trust).

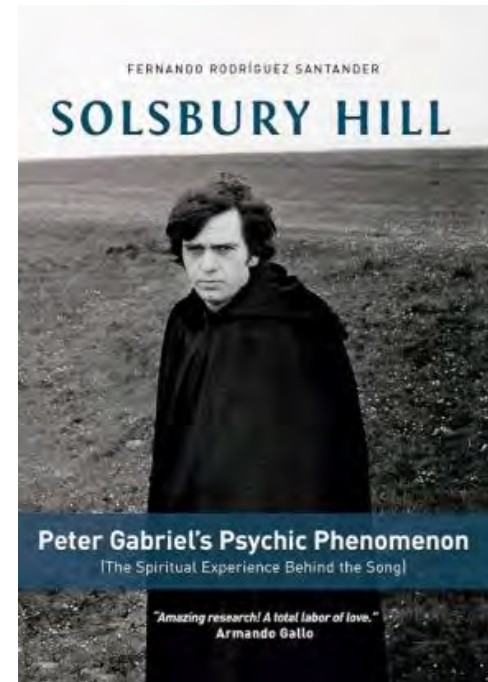
In the early 1990s, the hill became a symbol of environmental activism during protests against the A46 bypass construction. Protesters cut a turf labyrinth into the hill, which remains visible today as a reminder of the battle to protect the local landscape.

SAVE

OUR
HILL



Early 1990s protest posters. Save our Hill. The battle against the Batheaston bypass in 1994 was a turning point in the fight against the governments road building programme. Photograph: Adrian Arbib in the Guardian.



Peter Gabriel's song "Solsbury Hill" was inspired by a profound personal, spiritual experience atop Little Solsbury Hill, it symbolizes letting go of the familiar, overcoming the fear of failure, and embracing a new, uncertain creative path.

Historic Landmarks

St Swithun's Church. In Bathford you can see St Swithun's Church. Who was Saint Swithun: As with many people living in Anglo-Saxon times there are few direct documents, but there are charters signed by him and the Saxon king of the time. His exact date of birth is not known but records indicate he was born c. 800 AD. He was an advisor to Kings Egbert & Aethelwulf, and taught Alfred (King Alfred the Great) when a boy. Grave of Admiral Horatio Nelson's sister Ann is buried in the churchyard at St Swithuns. She died in Bath in 1783. At the time of Ann's death, her brother Horatio was at St. Omer in France, attempting to learn the French language, something he never successfully accomplished.

<http://www.stswithunsbathford.co.uk/history>

Just above Bathford on the skyline you will be able to see Browne's Folly which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Nature Reserve. Browne's Folly is a folly tower on the Farleigh Rise. The Folly was designated a Grade II listed building in 1988. It gave its name to Brown's Folly, a 100-acre Site of Special Scientific Interest, notified in 1974. The tower was built in 1845 by Colonel Wade Browne, the squire of Monkton Farleigh Manor, to provide employment during an agricultural recession. It replaced a semaphore tower, which had previously stood on the site. In 1907 the owner of the estate, Charles Hobhouse, who had his shooting parties meet at the tower, renovated the tower. Demolition was suggested in 1938 but did not take place. The Folly is structurally sound but is not currently open to the public. Since 1998 the Folly Fellowship who replaced the roof has maintained it.

The Kennet and Avon Canal with an overall length of 87 miles (140 km), made up of two lengths of navigable river linked by a canal. The name is used to refer to the entire length of the navigation rather than solely to the central canal section. From Bristol to Bath the waterway follows the natural course of the River Avon before the canal links it to the River Kennet at Newbury, and from there to Reading on the River Thames. In all, the waterway incorporates 105 locks. The two river stretches were made navigable in the early 18th century, and the 57-mile (92 km) canal section was constructed between 1794 and 1810.

Bathampton Church, dedicated to St Nicholas, is of Norman foundation. However, when Ralph Allen acquired Bathampton Manor in 1731, he had the church largely rebuilt. The church is a place of pilgrimage for many Australians, whose country furnished the chapel dedicated to the memory of Admiral Arthur Phillip, the founder of Sydney and the first Governor of New South Wales who was buried there in 1814, while the churchyard contains several other significant tombs. Buried in the churchyard is the Viscomte Du Barr, killed in a duel with the Irishman Count Rice over a gambling debt. The dying Viscomte was brought to the 17th-century George Inn, still Bathampton's local. (Wikipedia)

Beckford's Tower, originally known as Lansdown Tower, is an architectural folly built in neo-classical style on Lansdown Hill. The tower was built for William Thomas Beckford, a rich novelist, art collector and critic, to designs by Henry Goodridge, and was completed in 1827. Beckford used it as a library and a retreat, with the cupola at the top providing views over the surrounding countryside. Extensive grounds between Beckford's house in Lansdown Crescent and the tower were landscaped and planted to create Beckford's Ride. William Beckford's ability to build, and to

collect, was made possible by the wealth he inherited and continued to accumulate as an owner of plantations and enslaved people, and through the compensation he received from the government following the abolition of slavery.

Woolley Church is of a 18th Century Georgian design. It has a plaque to give thanks for the safe return of the men from the parish that served in WWI and WWII. Remarkably they all survived. Thankful Villages (also known as Blessed Villages; Welsh) are settlements in England and Wales from which all their members of the armed forces survived World War I. The brass plaque in the Church records the gratitude of the village for their good fortune:

To the glory of God and in thankful remembrance of the safe return of all the men

Connected with this Parish who by land and sea served their King and Country

In the Great War

The tree line on Freezing Hill but out of sight of the lens is the site of the First English Civil War Battle of Lansdowne, or Lansdown, that was fought on 5 July 1643, at Lansdowne Hill.

Although the Royalists under Lord Hopton forced the Parliamentarians under Sir William Waller to retreat from their hilltop position, they suffered so many casualties themselves and were left so disordered and short of ammunition that an injured Hopton was forced to retire. On the battle site is the Sir Bevil Grenville's Monument erected in 1720 on Lansdown Hill. It was designated a Grade II* listed structure in 1956, and a scheduled monument in 1950. The monument commemorates the heroism of the Civil War Royalist Commander Sir Bevil Grenville (1596–1643) of Stowe, Kilkhampton in Cornwall and Bideford in Devon, who on 5 July 1643 fell mortally wounded at the Battle of Lansdowne, leading his regiment of Cornish pikemen. It was erected by Grenville's grandson and has been maintained by his descendants. This has included the repair of inscriptions carved on the base of the monument, praising Grenville and his forces. (Wikipedia)

The tree line on the horizon of Freezing Hill. Lansdown Hill, Tog Hill and Freezing Hill were the site of the English Civil War Battle of Lansdowne (Lansdown), which was fought on 5 July 1643. The Parliamentary force under Sir William Waller was forced to retreat by the Royalist troops led by Lord Ralph Hopton, 1st Baron Hopton. Waller retreated to Bath, but Hopton could not press the attack as on the day after the battle one of his ammunition carts exploded and temporarily blinded him.

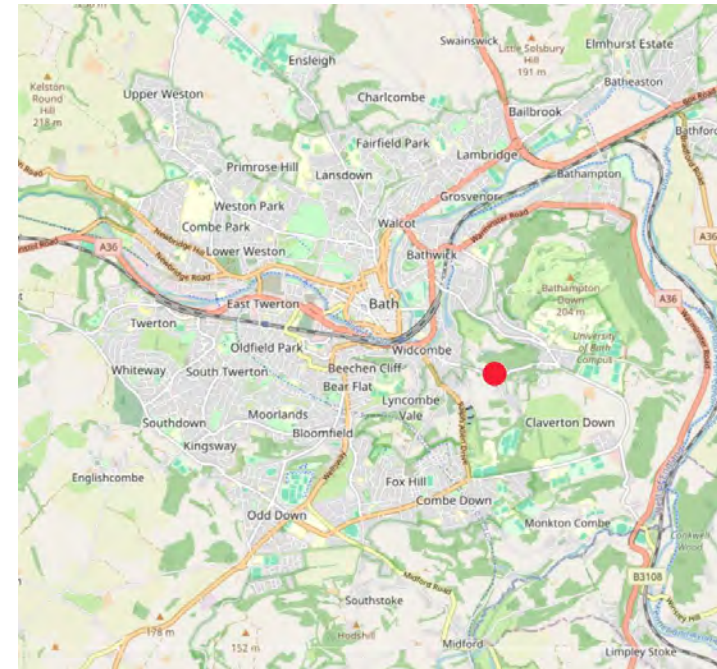
There is a linear earthwork known as Royal Camp, or Old Dyke on Freezing Hill which possibly dates from the Iron Age. It has been suggested that apparitions of 17th century figures have been seen on Freezing Hill. (<https://www.mysteriousbritain.co.uk/ancient-sites/freezing-hill-bath/>)

2. Widcombe Hill

Location description The viewpoint is located on Widcombe Hill, next to the letter box opposite Macaulay Buildings. It looks north-west towards the city centre.

Similar views can be experienced from nearby footpaths (including the Skyline Walk), National Trust access land and Smallcombe cemetery.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
spins.alien.woes	ST 764638	Perrymead and Widcombe

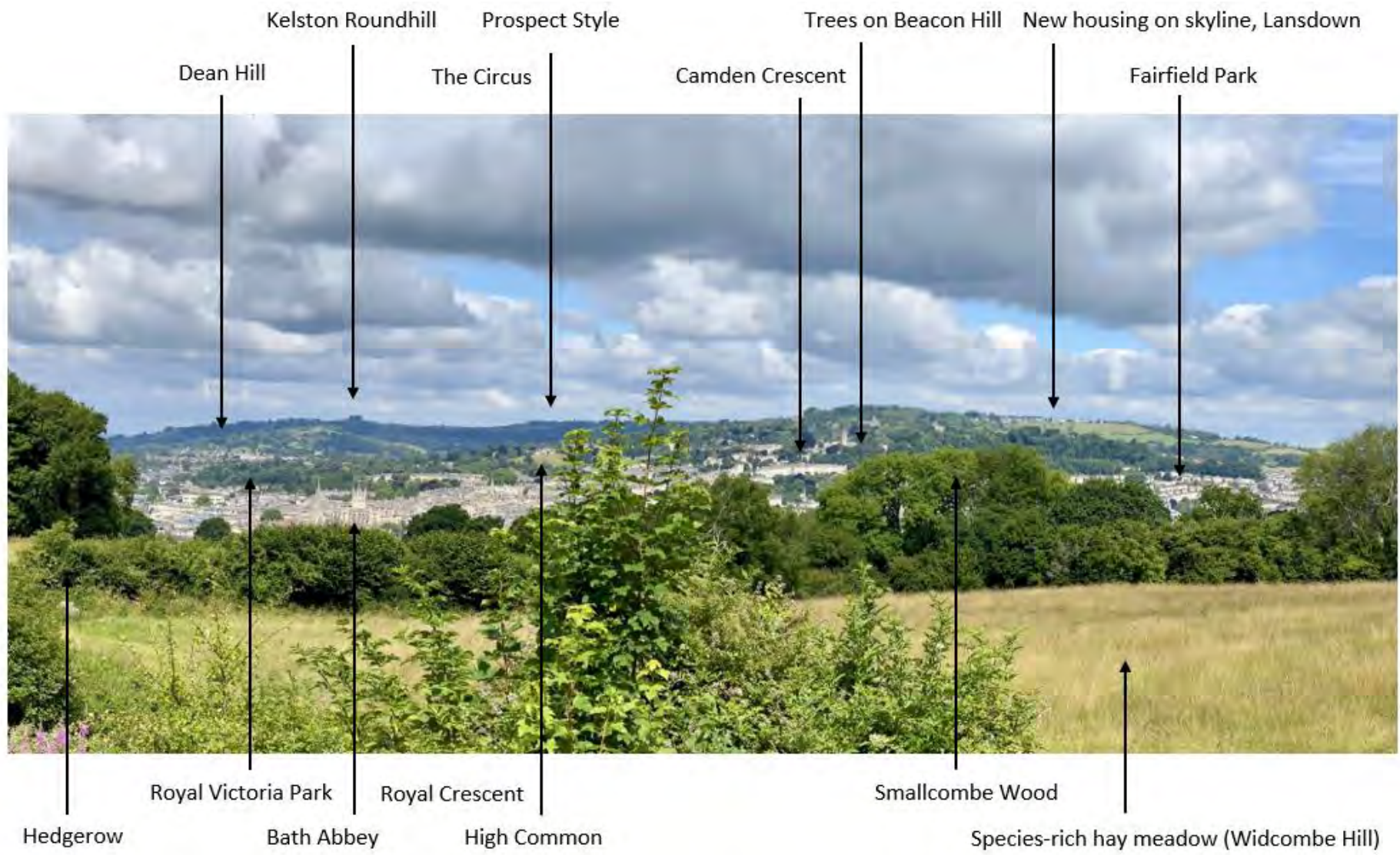


Significance of the View

This viewpoint represents a key view from a main road into Bath, but a very similar view can also be appreciated from footpaths and open access land on Widcombe Hill. The foreground is owned by the National Trust and was purchased in 1984 to help preserve Bath's setting.

The landscape here is a good example of a steep and relatively enclosed valley formed by a short spring-fed tributary of the River Avon. It is within the Enclosed Landscape Valley Landscape Character Type.

This view is one of the famous Georgian Views of Bath and amongst the best viewpoints on the eastern side of the city, showing many of the Georgian buildings in their landscape setting. This view was the subject of a number of paintings, and is very close to Ralph Allen's carriage drive which showed various prospects over the city and surrounding countryside. It is still enjoyed as part of a longer recreational route today, being part of the National Trust's 'Skyline Walk'. The location is within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ANOB), and the field in the foreground is designated SSSI for its ecological value.



The view looking north-west from the Widcombe Hill viewpoint July 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view comprises the lower slopes of Widcombe Hill, formed of grassland meadows divided by hedgerows. The meadows are used for seed-harvesting before being cut for hay. This land is owned and managed by the National Trust, and as well as its ecological value it plays an important role in providing an open (rather than treed) setting to Bath. A copse of trees alongside the road on the left of the view, together with a line of trees extending from Smallcombe Wood close the view, and limit views of the Avon Valley and the eastern part of the city. The open hillside forms the foreground to the view and plays an important role in the backdrop to Bath views from within the city, and from the Western Hillside.



Grassland meadows at Widcombe Hill

Middle ground

The middle ground of this view comprises the historic city of Bath, seen within the hollow of the surrounding hills. Built landmarks include The Circus, the Royal Crescent, Lansdown Crescent, Camden Crescent, Bath Abbey and the spires and towers of several churches. The High Common (formerly an Approach Golf Course) forms a parkland setting to the Royal Crescent. Mature trees within the city also contribute to its character in this view, and provide a leafy setting to the historic buildings, such as the trees associated with the Royal Crescent, The Circus, Victoria Park and Camden Crescent. Mature street and garden trees on Beacon Hill give it a wooded appearance. In the right of the view, the 20th Century suburbs of Walcot and Fairfield Park can be seen in the middle ground, between the foreground trees.

Background

The background of this view is formed by the surrounding hills, which form a backdrop to the city. Kelston Roundhill, with its circular shape and hill-top beech trees is particularly noticeable directly above Bath Abbey. The background hills contain roughly equal coverage of grassland and woodland but historically the hillsides were much more open. New housing at Lansdown is visible on the skyline, and 20th Century suburbs such as Weston and Newbridge can be seen on the lower slopes of Dean Hill.



City centre, showing Bath Abbey, the city centre and the Royal Crescent in their landscape setting. Kelston Roundhill is a prominent skyline feature above the Abbey Tower



The view looking north-west from the Widcombe Hill viewpoint January 2025

Heritage and historical references

By Saxon times the long ridge separating the valleys of Smallcombe and Widcombe (known later as Widcombe Hill) was a main route over Claverton Down from Bath to Bradford on Avon. It also provided a natural boundary between the manors of Wick (later parish of Bathwick) and Clifton (later parish of Lyncombe & Widcombe). In a Saxon boundary charter the road is called 'Aethelburgh's Way' possibly named for Queen Aethelburgh, wife of King Ine who ruled the West Saxons from 689-726 AD. Although the route appears to have originally continued in a more direct line across the Down via the present footpath above Macaulay Buildings, this would have been obstructed by the enclosure of the deerhunting park across the summit by the Norman Bishops of Bath.

At a point near Macaulay Buildings the main road entered part of the open Down known as Bathwick Common and remained unenclosed until the 18th century when the Common became filled with tree plantations. This does not seem to have interfered with the views from the top of the hill which were already being advertised in Bath guidebooks by the 1750s. Running along the upper edge from Rainbow Wood was one of Ralph Allen's extensive carriage drives leading from his mansion in Prior Park which were designed to take in the views all around the crest of the Downs on the south side of Bath. Illustrated views of the city from sites on Widcombe Hill also began to appear during this time, although these are now difficult to identify because of later quarrying and tree clearance, as well as artistic convention.

In 1819 Thomas Macaulay Crutwell, a solicitor of Bath, acquired land on the south side of Widcombe Road. He allocated individual plots around a former cherry orchard to local builders for the erection of Macaulay Buildings (now Grade II listed), completed in phases between 1820 and 1830. Thomas Crutwell was involved in many local industrial innovations, and also invested in residential building projects when Bath was beginning to change from a fashionable resort to a respectable place of residence. At this stage the trend was more towards rows of individual houses and villas with picturesque views, rather than formal squares and crescents.



View of the city of Bath from the South-East, WH. Bartlett 1829 [Victoria Art Gallery, Bath]. Macaulay Buildings are on the right of the picture, with Bath in the centre. Macaulay Buildings occupied a prime site with views to the north-west across the city, and to the south over the Prior Park Estate



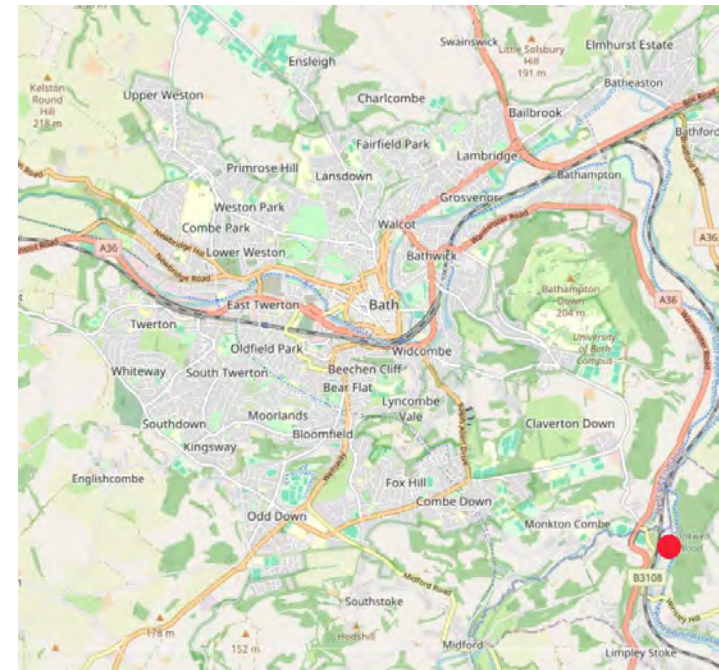
Morning Cloud Shadows on Bath from Widcombe Hill, Peter Brown [Victoria Art Gallery, Bath]

3. Dundas Aquaduct

Location description

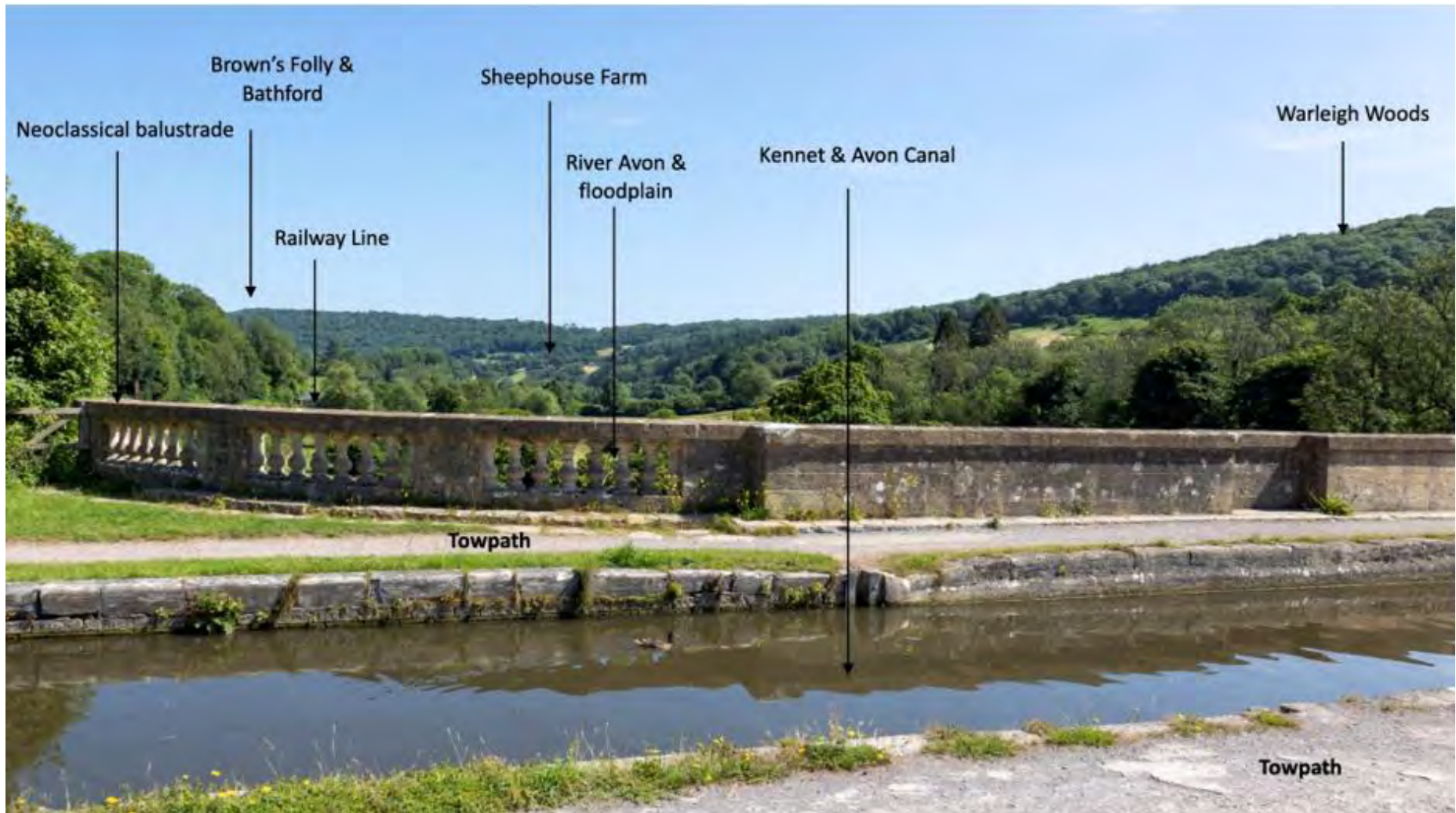
Dundas Aqueduct is located to the south-south east of Bath and approximately half a mile east of the village of Monkton Combe. A footpath runs east to west between Brassknocker Hill and Conkwell Farm and there are many criss-crossing footpaths by which to access the aqueduct. The aqueduct itself was built to allow the Kennet and Avon canal to cross the river Avon.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
total.blind.logo & slice.roofs.calls	ST 784625	NA

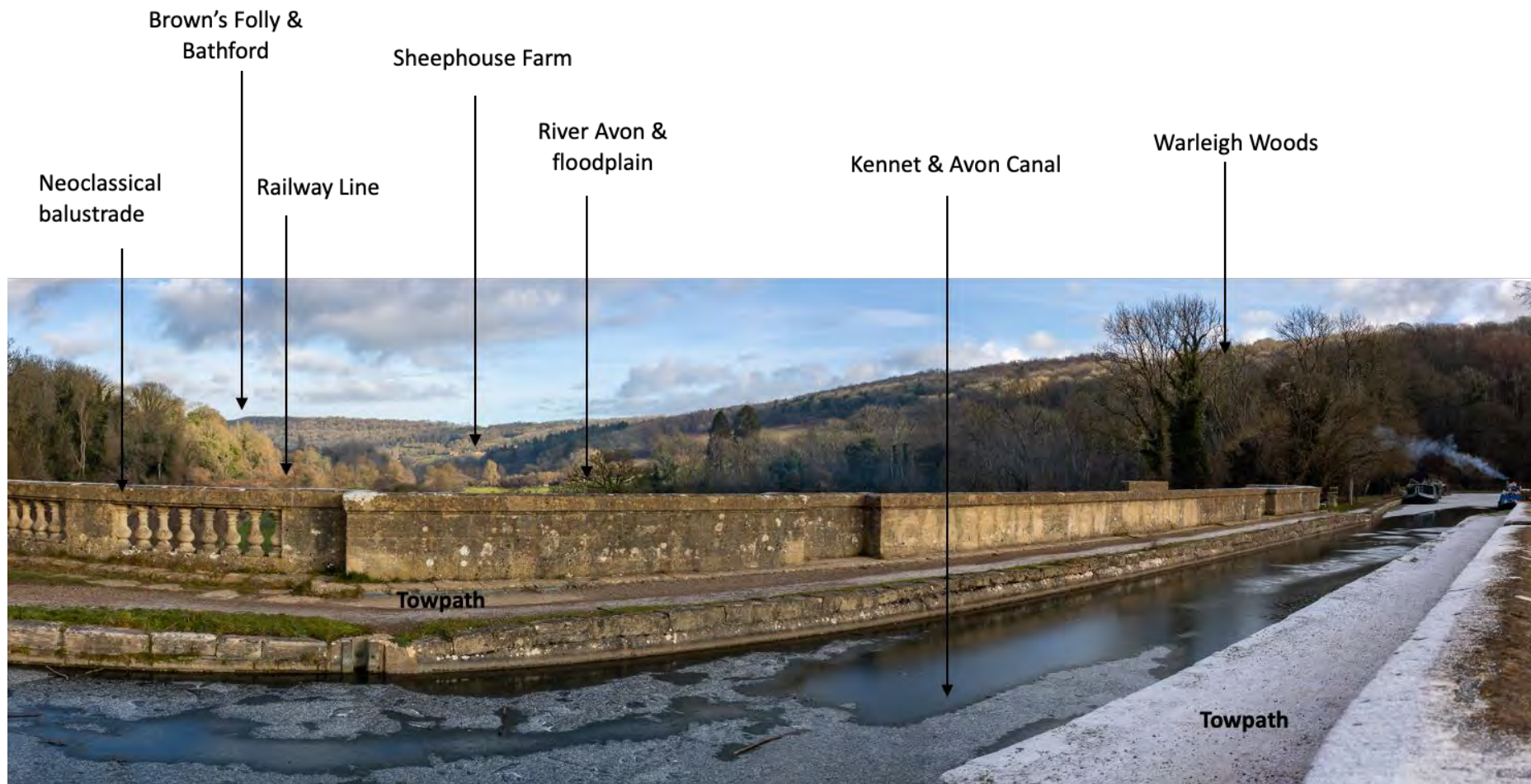


Significance of the View

Dundas Aqueduct on the Kennet and Avon Canal is a spectacular and architecturally noteworthy Grade I structure and scheduled monument that was constructed in c.1805 to carry the canal across the River Avon. It is a major Georgian engineering landmark, featuring a shared cycle/footpath. The view north from the aqueduct reveals some of the key attributes of the enclosed limestone valley landscape type, as per the Bathscape Landscape Character Assessment 2017. The landscape is predominantly wooded up to the skyline, with patches of agricultural land interspersed. Whilst now picturesque, the canal is a remnant of industry and commerce.



The view of Dundas Aqueduct July 2024



The view of Dundas Aqueduct January 2026

Foreground

The foreground comprises the upper structures of the Bath Stone aqueduct, with an architecturally polite balustrade and parapet. Towpaths flank the course of the canal.
The River Avon and the buildings of the rowing club.

Middle ground

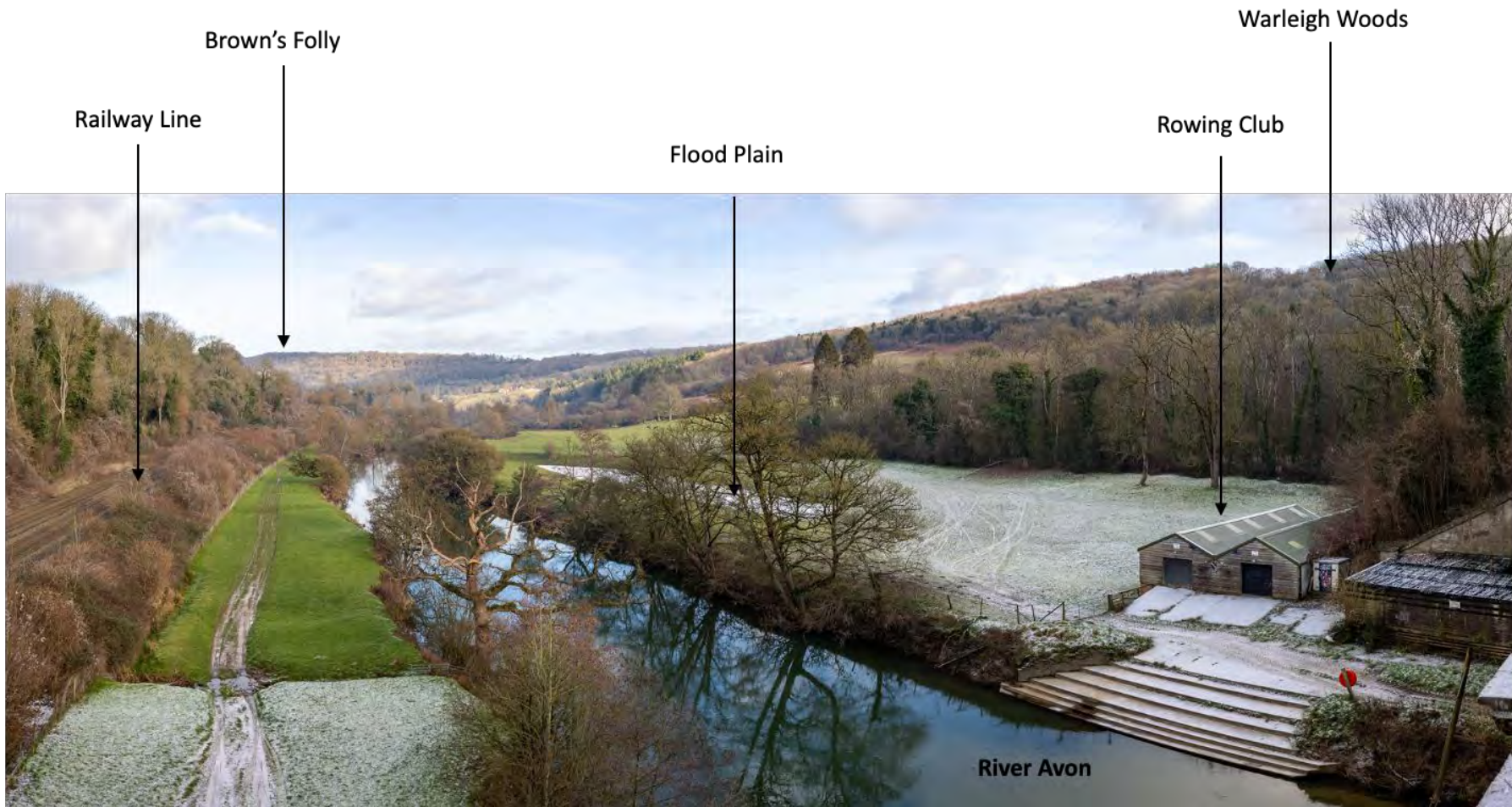
The middle ground contains the canopies of established and mainly deciduous trees, respectively delineating the edge of Conkwell Wood (right and east) and a railway embankment (left and west).
More of the river, the fields of the floodplain, and the railway line.

Background

The background of the view includes the gently undulating wooded skyline. The dark green of the trees dominates this aspect, with a few fields here and there. Warleigh Woods climbs to the right and east, and to the centre-left, north of the aqueduct and just discernible, the Grade II listed Sheephouse Farmhouse and associated buildings.



The view of the Avon Valley from Dundas Aqueduct The view of Dundas Aqueduct July 2024



The view of the Avon Valley from Dundas Aqueduct The view of Dundas Aqueduct January 2026

Heritage and historical references

The views have only been achievable since the construction of the aqueduct in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century, after the likely building of Sheephouse Farmhouse in the seventeenth century.

Named after Charles Dundas, the first chairman of the Kennet and Avon Canal Company, the aqueduct, a 137-meter (450 ft) long stone structure featuring classical Doric pilasters and balustrades was designed by John Rennie (1761-1821). The constructed elements of Kennet and Avon Canal navigation were begun in 1718 and completed in 1810. The opening of the Great Western Railway in 1841 reduced much of the canal's traffic and by the 1950s large sections of the canal had been closed. From the second half of the twentieth century restoration projects were started and the section at this location is much visited and used. It forms the junction with the Somersetshire Coal Canal (Brassknocker Basin).

It was the first canal structure to be designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1951. It is Grade I listed, entry: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1215193>

It seems that after the aqueduct was completed in the early nineteenth century, trees became more dominant in the view. This may have been a result of changes in agricultural practices due to the Enclosure Act of 1773 and the numerous subsequent Enclosure Acts of the nineteenth century. For instance, it appears that parts of the open space of Warley Common to the east of Sheephouse Farmhouse was wooded by the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1844-1888. The loss of common land often used for the communal grazing of livestock, likely sheep in this area, allowed landowners to alter the land use as they saw fit.



Images Historic England



1805. Print, hand-coloured aquatint etching, Dundas Aqueduct, Claverton, Bath (after John Claude Nattes) by John Hill (London 1770 - Clarksville, USA 1850). A self-acting railway incline used for bringing down building stone from the crest of the hill can be made out, just above the sail of the barge. *Clevedon Court* © National Trust / Seamus McKenna / David Cousins.

<http://www.rareoldprints.com/bridge/Dundas%20aqueduct>

4. Beechen Cliff

Location description

No change from 2017 report

What 3 Words

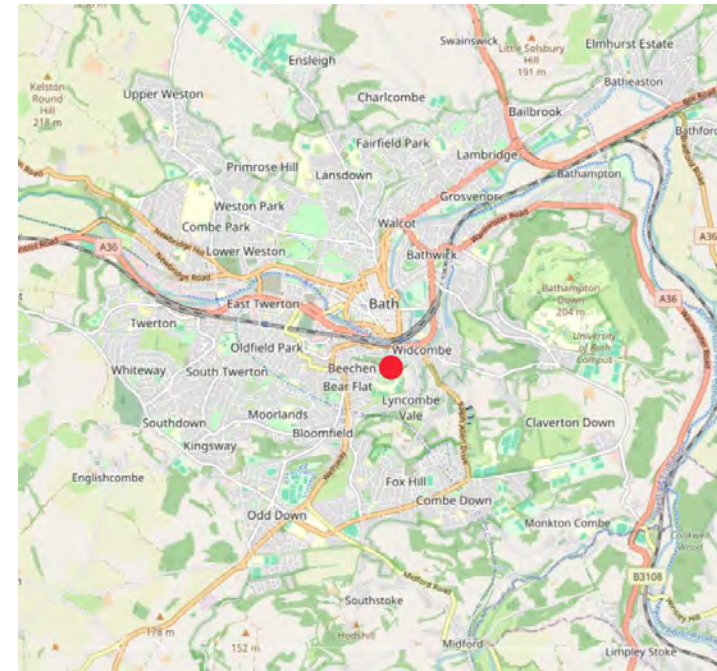
entire.verge.lodge

Grid reference

ST 751639

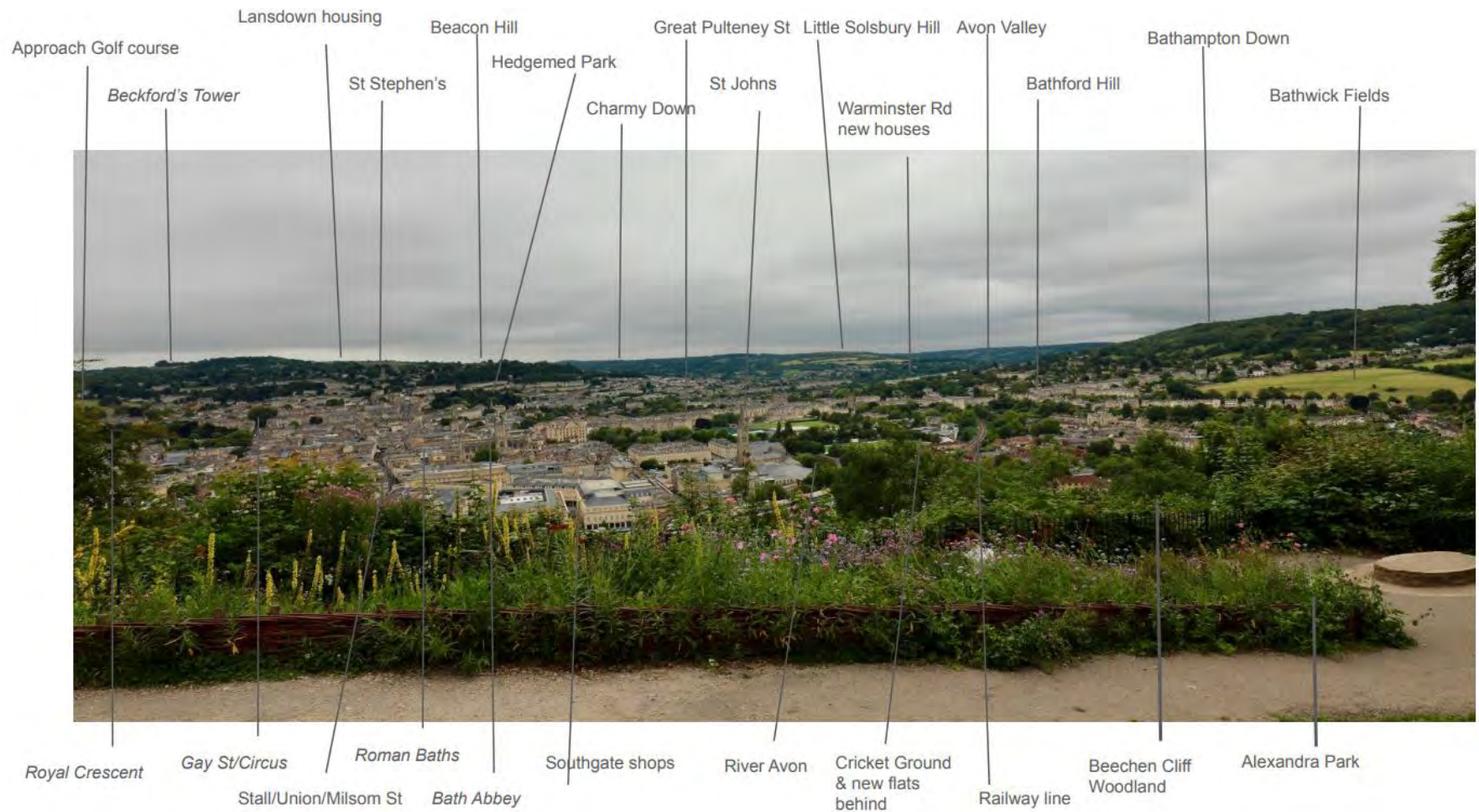
Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

Beechen Cliff and Alexandra Park



Significance of the View

No change to the 2017 commentary



View looking north from Beechen Cliff viewpoint September 2024

Foreground

Landscaping works to the area around the viewpoint was undertaken since the Fyfe Associates 2017 report and prior to 2020 by BANES (date tbc). The works include adjusting ground levels to incorporate level access, provision of seating at several levels and locations, planting to encourage biodiversity, interpretation boards, litter bins and a power supply for a trailer that sells refreshments.

The hedge behind the railings and saplings beyond have been cut back to improve visibility.

No change generally to buildings and structures in the foreground.



Seating area overlooking view across city.

Middle ground

Brick built Dolemeads Estate 1901, is a material departure from stone elsewhere.

Residential development of the MOD site in Bathwick is ongoing.

St John's 1861-3, St Michael with St Paul 1834-7 pierce this view.

There have been few changes since the 2017 report. However there are notable new flats visible behind the cricket club as well as the new housing development at Warminster Road.

Background

Green copper roofs of Snow Hill 1954-61.

Beckford's Tower renovation completed June 2024.

No other additions or changes since 2017 report



Middle ground view of Southgate shopping centre and beyond

Heritage and historical references

Beechen Cliff became a celebrated viewpoint during the 18th century, when Bath's Georgian elite embraced the picturesque movement. Artists, writers, and visitors climbed the slope to admire the city's harmonious limestone architecture set within a dramatic natural amphitheatre. The cliff helped frame Bath as a place where urban design and landscape were in deliberate aesthetic dialogue.

Literary Significance: Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*. Beechen Cliff is immortalised in Jane Austen's 1817 novel, where Catherine Morland and Henry Tilney walk to the summit. Their conversation—part flirtation, part satire of landscape appreciation—cements the cliff as a site of cultural imagination. Austen uses the view to comment on taste, perception, and the fashionable sensibilities of Bath society. Thomas Hardy wrote a poem called 'On Beechen Cliff'.

The cliff is part of the southern edge of the Bath limestone plateau, a natural feature that shaped the city's development. Its steep face and elevated crest have long served as a navigational landmark, visible from multiple approaches and forming a defining element of Bath's bowl-like topography.

Industrial and Transport History – at the foot of Beechen Cliff lies the corridor of the River Avon and later the Great Western Railway. The juxtaposition of the wooded cliff with Brunel's 19th-century engineering interventions highlights Bath's transition into the industrial age while retaining its pastoral setting.

By the late 19th century, Beechen Cliff was a popular recreational ascent for residents and visitors. Paths, viewpoints, and tree planting schemes reflect civic efforts to shape the landscape for public enjoyment, aligning with broader Victorian ideals of health, nature, and moral improvement.

5a. Twerton Roundhill 1

Location description The summit of Twerton Roundhill has 360-degree views across the city and countryside.

Located just below the summit, the viewpoint is at a bench on the south-western side of the hill, looking away from Bath across countryside to the south-west.

What 3 Words

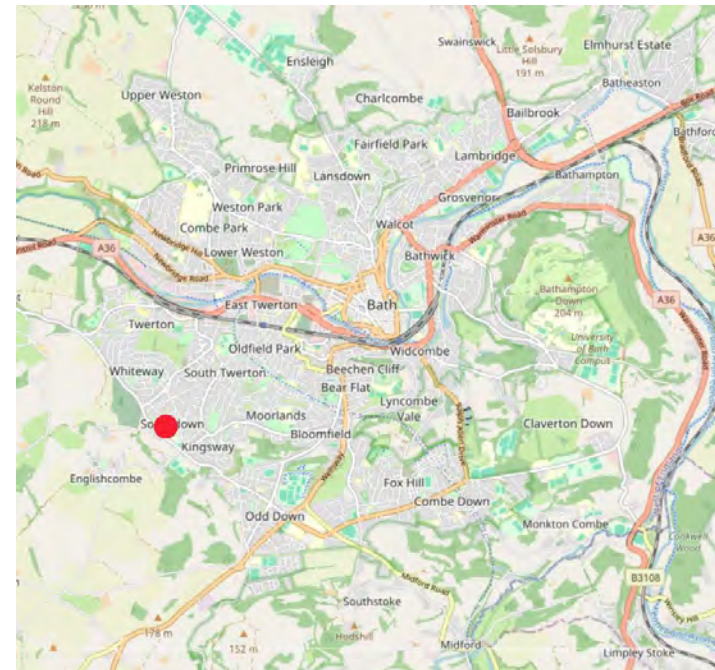
gloves.verge.faster

Grid reference

ST 724633

Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

Corston and Newton Brook Valleys



Significance of the View

Twerton Roundhill is one of a series of round hills, formed of rocks which are more resistant to erosion than the surrounding rocks. Similar round hills include Duncorn Hill (visible to the south), Kelston Roundhill (behind the viewer to the north) and Stantonbury Hill (to the west).

The landscape seen to the south-west contains a number of small, fairly straight valleys, with ridges and plateaux between them. It is an example of the 'Eroded Plateau and Valleys' Landscape Character Type. Today it is used for agriculture, both arable and pasture, but also has extensive areas of woodland. It is part of the Duchy of Cornwall estate.

It has a rich early medieval history, with several features still visible in today's landscape, including the West Wansdyke linear earthwork; the site of the 'lost' medieval village of Barrow; Culverhay Norman Castle, and the village of Englishcombe (which is mentioned in the Domesday Book and has a church building dating from the 11th Century onwards). Twerton Roundhill itself has a long history as a meeting and ceremonial site, having been used in Saxon times as a gathering place for Hundred Meetings, where matters of administration and justice were decided.



The view looking south-west from Twerton Roundhill viewpoint, June 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view comprises the steep slope of Twerton Roundhill.

The site is a Local Nature Reserve and Site of Nature Conservation Importance. Most of the hillside is open and covered with unimproved limestone grassland.

Although they are not visible in the photograph, the management plan refers to locally rare wildflowers growing in this area, including common centaury, cowslips and bee orchids. There are also patches of scrub (mostly hawthorn and blackthorn) and some individual small trees (mostly hawthorn). At the base of the slope is mown amenity grass adjacent to the road



The viewpoint as seen from the summit of Twerton Roundhill.

Middle ground

The middle ground of this view comprises houses along Whiteway Road, between Rush Hill and Newton St Loe, which effectively forms the south-west edge of Bath's urban area.

Most of the houses visible are modern, constructed in a townhouse style which stands out in the rural surroundings.

Beyond the houses, the land slopes down towards a tributary of the Newton Brook, and contains a number of paddocks and small fields.

Background

The background of this view comprises an expansive panorama over the surrounding countryside. Its mosaic of fields and woodland draws the eye and encourages the viewer to stop and look.

The landform of plateau dissected by straight-sided valleys is clearly apparent from this viewpoint. It is also possible to see a number of historical landscape features, including Englishcombe village, West Wansdyke earthwork, Culverhay Castle and the site of Barrow village.

The pattern of woodland blocks and hedged fields continues to the horizon, giving the impression that the landscape continues beyond what is visible. Duncorn Hill can be clearly seen on the horizon.

Heritage and historical references

Traditionally known as High Barrow Hill, by the late 18th century it consisted of two arable fields, both called 'Round Hill', formerly part of the West Field of Twerton. Remnants of the old hedge boundaries still remain. It is said that teasels were grown here for the Twerton Cloth Mills until the early 20th century.

Being a prominent landmark near the Fosseway and Wansdyke, on the boundary between the Hundreds of Bath and Wellow, it was an ideal meeting place for the Sherrif's Tourn or Hundred courts, and a number of ancient routes converge here. The so-called 'Jurassic Way', a prehistoric route which ran along the edge of the Cotswolds, is thought to have crossed the River Avon at Twerton, passing the Round Hill via the Hollow and Washpool Lane towards Englishcombe and the South. Two Saxon 'herepaths' from the Mendips, via Haycombe Lane and Patley Bottom, joined at this point, continuing past the hill into Englishcombe Lane towards Bath. More importantly perhaps, Whiteway Road which passes along the south side of the hill was formerly a principal route between Bristol and Salisbury, the one taken for example by the Duke of Monmouth and his rebel army on their retreat from Keynsham to Norton St Philip.

In 1906-9 the two Roundhill fields, then used for market gardening and pasture, were purchased from their owners by Twerton Parish Council (later incorporated into Bath City Council) for use as a recreation ground. A viewing shelter was built on the summit and was taken over for 'civil defence purposes' (presumably observation) in WW2. It burnt down in 1947 and was not replaced.

Great Pulteney Street lines up on Twerton Roundhill, seen in the distance when looking along Great Pulteney Street from the Holburne Museum.



1882 Ordnance Survey Map showing 'High Barrow Hill' surrounded by fields.

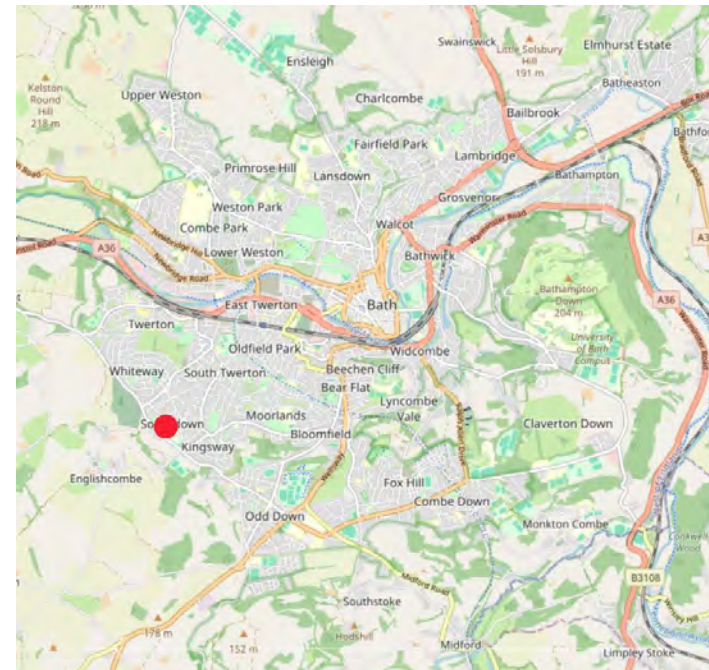


Newspaper reprint of a 1920s photo showing the viewing shelter and a newly-laid path to the summit

5b. Twerton Roundhill 2

Location description Twerton Roundhill offers panoramic views encompassing both the cityscape and the surrounding countryside. The summit provides a stunning 360-degree vista, while a viewpoint situated just below the summit features a bench on the hill's southern side. From this vantage point, visitors can admire the picturesque rural landscape stretching to the south-west, with Bath's urban expanse behind them.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
tinsel.neat.caves	ST 724633	Corston and Newton Brook Valleys



Significance of the View

Twerton Roundhill is one of a series of distinctive round hills that punctuate Bath's landscape setting. These hills, including Duncorn Hill to the south, Kelston Roundhill to the north, and Stantonbury Hill to the west, are formed of rocks more resistant to erosion than the surrounding geology. Twerton Roundhill's prominence affords panoramic views over the city and countryside, showcasing the topography of hills, valleys and plateaus that defines the World Heritage Site.

The view to the south-west exemplifies the Eroded Plateau and Valleys landscape character type. It encompasses a patchwork of fairly straight valleys divided by ridges and plateaus, reflecting the underlying geology. Today, this landscape is characterized by a mix of arable fields, pastures, and extensive woodlands, much of which is part of the Duchy of Cornwall estate. This rural backdrop provides a key element of the city's landscape context.

Twerton Roundhill's commanding position has made it an important gathering place throughout history. In Saxon times, it was used for administrative and judicial assemblies known as Hundred meetings. The hill's strategic location near ancient routes like the Jurassic Way underscores its historical significance as a meeting and ceremonial site.

The view from Twerton Roundhill also showcases Bath's rich medieval history, with several important features still visible in the modern landscape. These include the West Wansdyke linear earthwork, the site of the "lost" medieval village of Barrow, Culverhay Norman Castle, and the historically significant village of Englishcombe, which appears in the Domesday Book and has a church with 11th-century origins.

Twerton Roundhill forms a distinctive landmark in views from the city itself, lining up with Great Pulteney Street. The hill is visible in the distance when looking south-west along this grand Georgian thoroughfare from the Holburne Museum end, creating a visual link between the city and its rural environs.

The view from Twerton Roundhill encapsulates key aspects of Bath's landscape story, from its striking topography and compact urban form to its ancient routes, medieval legacy, and agricultural hinterland. It illustrates the close relationship between the city and its landscape setting - a defining attribute of the World Heritage Site.



The view looking south-west from Twerton Roundhill viewpoint, September 2024

Foreground

The foreground of the view is dominated by the steep, south-facing slope of Twerton Roundhill, a conical hill formed as the soft clays that once surrounded it eroded away, leaving a peak of Great Oolite rock, also known as Bath stone. This geological process is responsible for shaping all of the downs around Bath, such as Odd Down and Combe Down. The hill's distinctive shape and prominence in the landscape have earned it various names over the centuries, including High Barrow Hill.

Designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 1994, Twerton Roundhill boasts some of the best limestone grassland in the city. The hillside is primarily composed of unimproved limestone grassland, home to a diverse array of plant species. Among the grasses, the attractive purple flower called Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*) is a prominent feature. This thistle-like plant provides a valuable source of nectar for insect life, attracting a variety of bees and butterflies.

Another notable wild plant that flourishes on the Roundhill in late summer is Agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*). Growing between 25 and 60cm tall, this plant produces a spike of small yellow flowers.

Middle ground

The middle ground of the view encompasses residential development along Whiteway Road, stretching between Rush Hill and Newton St Loe. This area forms the southwestern edge of Bath's urban periphery, though historically, the entire Southdown area was known as Twerton Hill until the 1950s. This naming convention is a reflection of the old parish boundaries, with Twerton once extending as far as the Rose and Laurel Pub at Rush Hill.

The majority of the visible houses are of modern construction, featuring a townhouse style that contrasts with the surrounding rural landscape. Beyond the housing, the land descends towards a tributary of the Newton Brook, characterized by a series of paddocks and small agricultural fields.



Modern Houses running along road below the viewpoint.

Background

The background of the view presents an extensive panorama of the surrounding countryside, showcasing the unique landscape that forms the setting for the City of Bath World Heritage Site. The landscape is composed of an intricate mosaic of fields and woodland blocks, creating a visually engaging and inviting scene that encourages prolonged observation.

The distinctive landform of the area, consisting of a dissected plateau with straight-sided valleys, is clearly discernible from this vantage point. This topography is a result of the underlying geology, with the valleys cut into the softer clays and the plateaus and ridges formed by more resistant limestone beds.

Several historical landscape features are visible, including the village of Englishcombe, which has origins dating back to the Domesday Book. The linear earthwork known as West Wansdyke, believed to be an early medieval territorial boundary, can also be seen traversing the landscape. Other notable features include the remains of Culverhay Castle, a Norman fortification, and the site of the former medieval village of Barrow, offering a glimpse into the area's rich history.

The pattern of woodland blocks interspersed with hedged fields extends to the horizon, suggesting a continuity of the landscape.

Historically, Agrimony was believed to have significant medicinal properties. Anglo-Saxons, who referred to the plant as Garclive, considered it a cure for wounds and snake bites, while modern herbalists still use it to treat some internal conditions, such as liver disorders.

In addition to the diverse grassland, the hillside features occasional patches of scrub, predominantly hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), as well as scattered individual small hawthorn trees. Although not visible in the photograph, the site's management plan indicates the presence of locally rare wildflower species, including common centaury (*Centaurium erythraea*), cowslips (*Primula veris*), and bee orchids (*Ophrys apifera*). At the base of the slope, adjacent to the road, lies an area of regularly mown amenity grassland.

beyond the visible area. Duncorn Hill forms a prominent feature on the horizon, its distinctive profile clearly recognizable from this viewpoint. Like Twerton Roundhill, Duncorn Hill is another example of the area's unique geology, with its conical shape formed by the differential erosion of the surrounding softer rocks.



Earthworks of Culverhay Castle. The earthworks of Culverhay Castle, a 12th century ringwork and bailey fortress, can be found just east of St Peter's Church in the village of Englishcombe, Somerset. Excavations in 1938 revealed that the castle was fortified with a stone keep, curtain wall, and additional buildings in the early 13th century. Today, the remnants of this once-important defensive site and manor house are protected as a scheduled ancient monument, offering a glimpse into Somerset's medieval past.

Heritage and historical references

Twerton Roundhill, historically known as Barrow Hill or High Barrow Hill (from the Old English 'beorg', meaning 'hill' or 'mound'), has a rich and varied history that spans several centuries. By the late 18th century, the hill comprised two arable fields, both named 'Round Hill', which were originally part of the West Field of Twerton. Remnants of the old hedge boundaries demarcating these fields can still be observed today. Local folklore suggests that teazels, a type of plant used in the textile industry, were cultivated on the hill to supply the Twerton Cloth Mills until the early 20th century.

The hill's prominence in the landscape, situated near the ancient Roman road, the Fosseway, and the early medieval linear earthwork, Wansdyke, made it an important boundary marker between the historic Hundreds of Bath and Wellow. This strategic location also established Twerton Roundhill as an ideal gathering place for the Sheriff's Tourn or Hundred courts, where local administrative and judicial matters were addressed.

Several ancient routes converge at Twerton Roundhill, underscoring its significance as a crossroads and meeting point. The 'Jurassic Way', a prehistoric trackway that followed the edge of the Cotswold Hills, is believed to have crossed the River Avon at Twerton, passing the Roundhill via the Hollow and Washpool Lane, continuing towards Englishcombe and the south. Two Saxon 'herepaths' (military roads) from the Mendip Hills, one via Haycombe Lane and the other through Patley Bottom, joined at this point, before continuing past the hill into Englishcombe Lane towards Bath.

Perhaps most notably, Whiteway Road, which runs along the southern side of Twerton Roundhill, was once a principal route between Bristol and Salisbury. This road was used by the Duke of Monmouth and his rebel army during their retreat from Keynsham to Norton St. Philip in 1685, following the Monmouth Rebellion.

In the early 20th century, between 1906 and 1909, the two Roundhill fields, which were then being used for market gardening and pasture, were purchased from their owners by Twerton Parish Council (later incorporated into Bath City Council) to be repurposed as a recreation ground. A viewing shelter was constructed on the summit of the hill, which was later requisitioned for 'civil defense purposes', likely observation, during World War II. This shelter was destroyed by fire in 1947 and was never replaced.

Today, Twerton Roundhill stands as an example to the area's rich history, with its distinctive landform and strategic location serving as a reminder of its importance throughout the centuries. From its use as a gathering place for ancient courts and a boundary marker between historic hundreds, to its role in the Monmouth Rebellion and its more recent history as a recreational space and wartime observation point, Twerton Roundhill has played a significant part in the story of Bath and its surrounding landscape.



Children carrying a cross up Roundhill, Twerton, Bath on Good Friday, 1983. [Bath Record Office: Credit: Bath & North East Somerset Council. Image Reference: 46762].



Bench looking out from Roundhill, Twerton Roundhill, 2024.

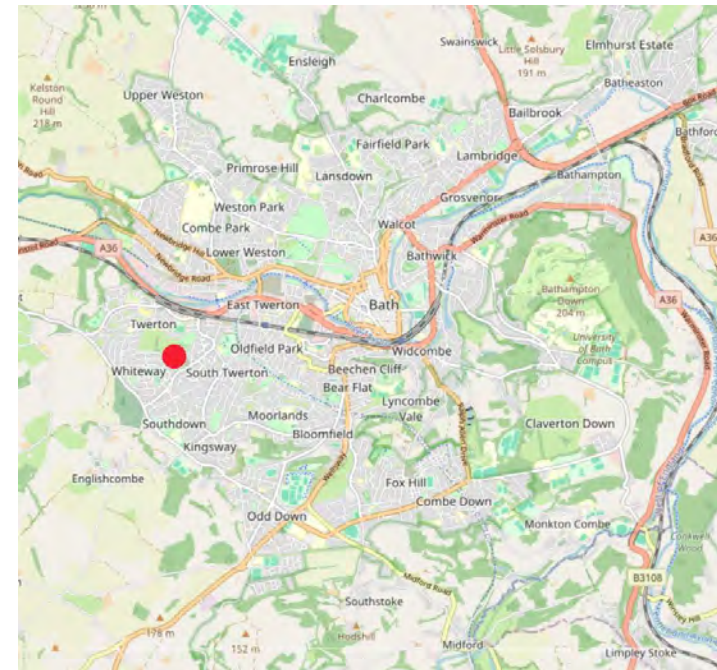


View of Englishcombe Church and Culverhay Castle earthworks, 1930s. Whiteway Road visible as a hedge-lined lane in foreground. Lantern slide by George Love Dafnis. [Dafnis Collection, Private Box 45].

6a. Bath City Farm (from sundial) 1

Location description The viewpoint is located close to the entrance to Bath City Farm, adjacent to the sundial.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
shades.beam.tells	ST 725640	Twerton



Significance of the View

This view is located on rising land on the western side of Bath and provides panoramic views across the city and its landscape setting looking east. The relationship between the Avon Valley, the City of Bath and the surrounding hills can be seen, with the city appearing in a bowl. It is located within Bath City Farm, which is open to the public and is popular with local residents. The site has a long history of farming and has been a City Farm since 1990. The fields retain their historic names which derive from Saxon/Old English terms for farming practices.

This is a particularly good location to appreciate Ralph Allen’s mid-18th Century tree planting on the upper slopes of Bathampton Down and Widcombe Hill, which transformed the skyline. They were known as ‘The Fir Forest’ and described as “the pride and ornament of the surrounding county”. The folly of Sham Castle, on the western side of Bathampton Down, can be seen, most easily when illuminated at night.

Other notable visible historic buildings include Bath Abbey, Prior Park and the Royal Crescent. The Royal Crescent is now seen in the context of the recently constructed Bath Western Riverside development. The 20th Century western expansion of Bath is clearly legible, as well as recent redevelopment at Bath Western Riverside.



The view looking east from Bath City Farm viewpoint June 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view has changed significantly in recent years with the creation of the Bath City Farm's "Café Garden", raised beds for vegetable growing. The main building of the City Farm is visible between trees on the right of the foreground view. The trees just beyond the Café Garden have increased in size and now obstruct the view of the middle ground beyond.

Middle ground

To the right of the picture, Beechen Cliff is visible as a wooded mound, with lines of Victorian terrace houses leading up it. To the left and below Beechen Cliff, the historic centre of the city of Bath is visible and includes several key landmarks, including the Royal Crescent and Bath Abbey. However, at this distance it is not easy to discern individual buildings with the naked eye. Church spires are less prominent from here than from other viewpoints because they don't break the horizon. The area to the left of the city centre is dominated by the modern Bath Western Riverside Development, which stands out due to its large scale, light colour and strongly emphasised roofs. In recent years, the further development of Bath Western Riverside and Lower Bristol Road has been partly obscured by the foreground trees and the increase in height of the silver birch trees on the lower slopes of the City Farm. Weston Lock Retail Park is still visible between the trees.

Background

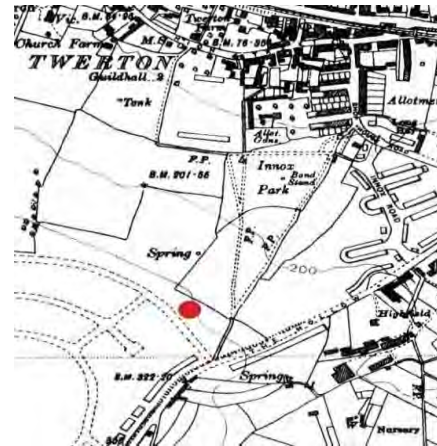
Lansdown can be seen on the left of the view. In the centre, a ridge of far-distant hills can be seen in the gap formed by the Avon Valley, including Little Solsbury Hill. The setting on the right side of the view comprises Bathampton Down, Widcombe Hill and Claverton Down, which were planted to create a treed skyline by Ralph Allen in the 18th Century. These are now interrupted by university buildings and a communications mast. Sham Castle and Prior Park can be seen on the hillside. The lower open land of Bathampton Down, Bathwick Fields, Smallcombe and Widcombe is also important to the setting in this view. The upper slopes of Lansdown, Little Solsbury Hill, Bathampton Down and the University of Bath campus are visible on the skyline.

Heritage and historical references

The viewing point is located just below Kelston View, on the crest of the slope which formerly marked the boundary between the steep grounds above Twerton village (mainly pasture, now all part of Bath City Farm) and the larger common arable fields on the top of the hill formerly known as Black Down. Most of these grounds belonged to the (Lower) Twerton Manor Farm in the village High Street, and until WWII cattle were still driven along the Street from the Farm to these grounds via Shophouse Lane and Innox Park. Field patterns within the farm have survived for centuries, and the field names have their origins in Saxon and Old English names for farming practices. Passing on the east side of this point is the Hollow, thought to be part of a prehistoric route along the edge of the Cotswolds (the so-called 'Jurassic Way') which headed across the River Avon at Twerton towards Twerton Round Hill on its way South. It originally consisted of a deep and narrow lane (hence the name) characteristic of many ancient lanes or 'holloways' around Bath which became progressively cut into the hillside by the erosion of water and the driving of livestock. All this changed in about 1930 when the road was widened in advance of the housing development on the top of the hill, including the Whiteway Council estate, the junction of Kelston View being established at the point of convergence of various ancient footpaths leading up from the village to the Hollow and the top of the Down.



Map of Twerton Parish 1807 showing fields and orchards [Bath Record Office]



Map of Twerton, 1930 with new housing estates [Bath Record Office]

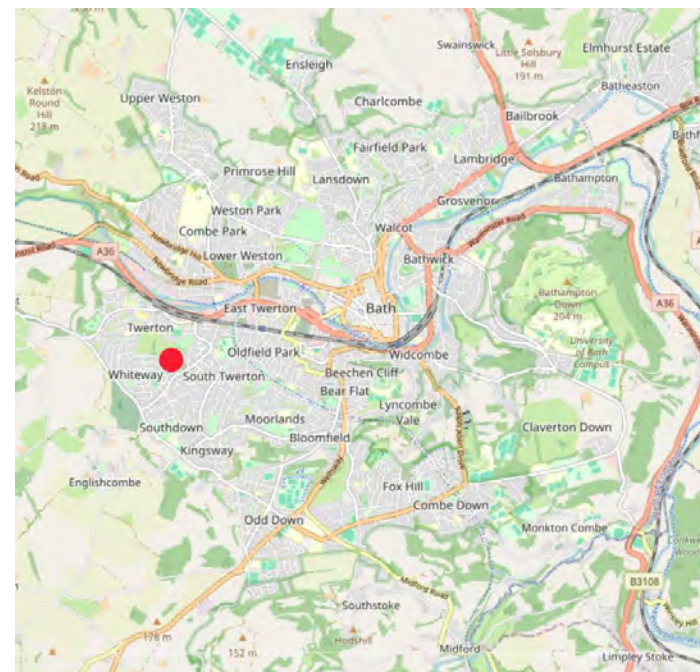


The Hollow, 1930s

6b. Bath City Farm 2

Location description The Bath City Farm viewpoint, located on rising land on the western side of Bath, offers panoramic views across the city and its landscape setting to the east.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
rabble.punch.jolly	ST 725640	Twerton, Whiteway, Southdown and Moorlands



Significance of the View

The viewpoint's location within Bath City Farm, a popular public space with a long history of agricultural use, highlights the close relationship between the city and its rural surroundings. The farm's fields, which have been in continuous use for centuries, retain historic names derived from Saxon and Old English terms for farming practices, revealing the area's rich agricultural heritage.

This vantage point showcases the distinctive topography of the area, with the City of Bath nestled in a bowl formed by the Avon Valley and surrounded by hills - a key characteristic of the World Heritage Site's landscape setting.

From this vantage point, the viewer can appreciate the transformative impact of Ralph Allen's mid-18th century tree planting on the upper slopes of Bathampton Down and Widcombe Hill. Known as "The Fir Forest" and described as "the pride and ornament of the surrounding county," these plantations changed the skyline from bare to wooded, contributing to the iconic green setting of the city. The folly of Sham Castle, situated on the western side of Bathampton Down, is also visible from here, particularly when illuminated at night.

The view shows a range of notable historic buildings and landmarks, including Bath Abbey, Prior Park, and the Royal Crescent, the latter now seen in the context of the recently-constructed Bath Western Riverside development.

The viewpoint also offers insights into the 20th-century westward expansion of Bath and more recent redevelopment projects, allowing the observer to understand the city's growth and evolution over time.



The view looking East from Bath City Farm viewpoint September 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view is comprised of the vibrant community garden, animals, fruit trees, willow sculpture, and well-maintained amenity grass of Bath City Farm. The farm, which has been in operation since 1990, provides a valuable green space for local residents and promotes sustainable urban agriculture.

The foreground elements create an attractive and engaging setting, reflecting the farm's active management and popularity within the community. However, the growth of silver birch trees (*Betula pendula*) within the farm has obscured key aspects of the view, highlighting the need for careful vegetation management to maintain the viewpoint's integrity. For example; the view of Beckfords Tower is now obscured from the viewpoint since the last time it has been surveyed.



The once-clear view of Bath's cityscape and its distinctive landscape setting has been gradually concealed by the maturing vegetation, particularly a line of silver birch trees.

Middle ground

The middle ground of the view is dominated by the western part of Bath, showcasing the city's 20th-century expansion through the suburbs of Oldfield Park, Moorlands, and South Twerton. The different stages of development are clearly visible from this vantage point, illustrating the gradual growth of the city over the past century. To the right, Beechen Cliff rises as a wooded mound, with rows of distinctive Victorian terrace houses lining its slopes. These terraces, built from local Bath stone, exemplify the city's characteristic 19th-century architecture and contribute to its unique sense of place.

The central part of the middle ground is now dominated by the recently completed Bath Western Riverside development. This significant urban regeneration project, which began in 2011, has transformed a former industrial site along the River Avon into a new mixed-use neighbourhood. The development stands out in the view due to its large scale, dense massing, light-coloured materials, and prominent rooflines, creating a striking contrast with the surrounding historic fabric of the city.

The Bath Western Riverside development has been the subject of much debate and controversy since its inception. Proponents argue that it provides much-needed housing,

Background

The background of the view is composed of the historic city of Bath set within its picturesque landscape setting. Several key landmarks are visible, including the iconic Royal Crescent and Bath Abbey, although individual buildings can be difficult to see with the naked eye at this distance. Interestingly, church spires are less prominent from this viewpoint compared to others, as they do not break the horizon line. On the left side of the view, Beckford's Tower and the wooded slopes of Beacon Hill can be seen. Beckford's Tower, a neo-classical folly built in 1827, serves as a prominent landmark and testament to the city's Georgian architectural heritage.

In the center of the background, a ridge of distant hills is visible through the gap formed by the Avon Valley. This view highlights the topographical setting of Bath, with the city nestled in a natural bowl surrounded by higher ground. To the right, the background is defined by Bathampton Down, Widcombe Hill, and Claverton Down. These hillsides were transformed in the 18th century by Ralph Allen's extensive tree planting, which created

employment opportunities, and improved public spaces, while also reconnecting the city with its riverside setting. However, critics have raised concerns about the development's impact on Bath's historic character and skyline, arguing that its scale, design, and materials are not in keeping with the city's Georgian heritage.

Despite this, the Bath Western Riverside development is now an integral part of Bath's urban landscape and represents a significant chapter in the city's ongoing evolution. Its prominence in the view from Bath City Farm serves as a reminder of the complex challenges faced by historic cities in balancing the need for growth and development with the preservation of their unique character and heritage.

a wooded skyline that has become an integral part of Bath's landscape character. However, the presence of modern University buildings and a communications mast now interrupts this historic wooded backdrop.

The folly of Sham Castle and the grounds of Prior Park can also be seen on the hillside. Sham Castle, built in 1762 by Ralph Allen, was designed as an eye-catcher to enhance the view from his townhouse in Bath. The lower, open land of Bathampton Down, Bathwick Fields, Smallcombe, and Widcombe forms an essential part of the view's setting, providing a green buffer between the city and the surrounding hills, and contributing to the overall landscape character of Bath.



The view looking East from Bath City Farm viewpoint January 2025

Foreground

The foreground winter view at Bath City Farm presents a more open aspect, with deciduous trees and vegetation in their dormant state. The silver birch trees (*Betula pendula*), which previously obscured key aspects of the view, now create a more transparent screen with their bare branches, allowing improved visibility of the city beyond. The winter state of the community garden, while less verdant, provides clearer sight lines through the site. The willow sculpture's structure becomes more prominent against the winter sky, and the farm's pathways and infrastructure are more visible without summer foliage.

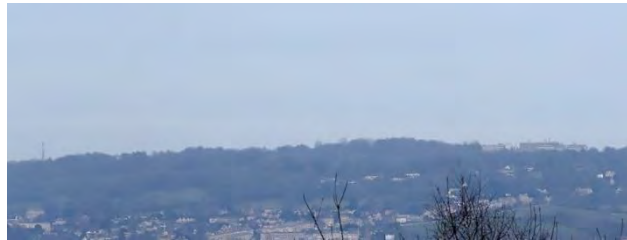


Winter view over Bath's cityscape is revealed in winter due to loss of leaves on silver birch trees.

Middle ground

The winter conditions significantly enhance the visibility of Bath's western districts. The suburbs of Oldfield Park, Moorlands, and South Twerton are more clearly defined without the screening effect of summer foliage. The Bath Western Riverside development appears more prominent in winter, its contemporary architecture standing in starker contrast against the historic fabric of the city when viewed through bare trees.

The Victorian terraces on Beechen Cliff are particularly visible in winter, their Bath stone facades more apparent through the leafless trees that normally soften their appearance in summer. The geometric pattern of streets and building lines becomes more legible in the winter landscape.



University buildings and communications mast on Bathampton Down are visible during winter.

Background

The winter vista offers exceptional clarity of Bath's historic core and surrounding landscape. Key landmarks such as the Royal Crescent, Bath Abbey, and Sham Castle are more distinctly visible without the filtering effect of summer foliage. The wooded slopes of Bathampton Down and Widcombe Hill, while still defining the city's backdrop, reveal more of their underlying topography and built features in winter.

The University buildings and communications mast on Bathampton Down become more prominent in the winter months, their impact on the skyline more pronounced against the bare woodland. Similarly, Prior Park and its grounds show more architectural detail through the winter trees, offering a clearer view of this important historic landscape.

The Avon Valley's topographical formation is more clearly readable in winter, with the city's position within its natural bowl more apparent when vegetation is minimal. The distant hills visible through the Avon Valley gap appear more defined, creating a stronger sense of the city's broader landscape context.

Heritage and historical references

The Bath City Farm viewpoint offers a unique perspective on the historical development of Twerton and its surrounding landscape. The view encompasses land that was once part of the two ancient manors of Twerton, which have their origins in the Saxon period. The Domesday Book of 1086 records Twerton, then known as Tyvertone, as a significant settlement with 32 households, divided into two manors. The boundary between these two manors is thought to be marked by a bank running between two fields on the present-day Bath City Farm site.

The eastern manor was initially held by three thanes in 1066, while the western manor was controlled by Alvred the Steward. Following the Norman Conquest, these lands were granted to Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances, who leased them to Nigel de Gournay (eastern manor) and Geoffrey Malreward (western manor). At this time, Twerton was primarily an agricultural center, with evidence of medieval strip lynchets still visible in some of the farm's fields. The manor was also notable for its wool production, with 400 sheep and 22 acres of meadow recorded in the Domesday Book. This pastoral heritage is reflected in the names of two fields on the farm, Great Lamb Sleight and Lower Lamb Sleight, which have survived to the present day.

The viewpoint is situated just below Kelston View, on the crest of a slope that historically marked the boundary between the steep pasture grounds above Twerton village (now part of Bath City Farm) and the larger common arable fields on the hilltop, formerly known as Black Down. Most of these grounds belonged to the Lower Twerton Manor Farm, located on the village High Street. Until World War II, cattle were driven along the street from the farm to these pastures via Shophouse Lane and Innox Park, highlighting the continuity of agricultural practices in the area.

To the east of the viewpoint runs The Hollow, believed to be part of a prehistoric route known as the 'Jurassic Way,' which followed the edge of the Cotswolds and crossed the River Avon at Twerton, heading towards Twerton Round Hill on its way south. The Hollow was originally a deep, narrow lane, characteristic of the many ancient 'holloways' found around Bath. These holloways were gradually cut into the hillside over centuries by the erosion caused by water and the passage of livestock. The character of The Hollow changed significantly around 1930 when the road was widened to accommodate the development of housing on the hilltop, including the Whiteway Council estate. The junction of Kelston View was established at the point where various ancient footpaths, which once led from the village to The Hollow and the top of the Down, converged.

Throughout the medieval period and into the 18th century, Twerton remained an important center for wool production and cloth-making. By the early 18th century, there were 160 handlooms in the village, and the cloth trade underwent a dramatic expansion with the construction of mechanized cloth mills later in the century. The western manor was acquired by the prominent mill owner Charles Wilkins in 1836, who built housing for his workers and was known for his philanthropic efforts to improve working conditions in his mills.

In 1911, Twerton was formally incorporated into the city of Bath, and the 20th century saw the construction of council housing and the gradual acquisition of land by the local authority. Many of the fields now forming part of Bath City Farm were acquired by the council in the 1950s from

the Carr estate, which had previously taken over the Wilkins holdings. Fortunately, these fields remained as farmland until the council decided not to expand development onto these slopes, paving the way for the establishment of Bath City Farm in 1990.

Today, the view from Bath City Farm offers a connection to the agricultural and industrial heritage of Twerton, with field patterns and names that have endured for centuries, serving as a reminder to the area's long history of human occupation and land use.



The Hollow's origins: Two photographs showing an ancient path evolving into a road, with West Twerton School visible in the background. [Private Collection, Credit: Terry Streicher]



Twerton's transformation: Left - 1807 parish map showing fields and orchards. Right - 1930 map revealing new housing estates. [Bath Record Office]



Bath City Farm in its early days, circa 1995. The charity, which began on October 26, 1995, has now celebrated 25 years of providing education, training, and community support in Bath.

7a. Prospect Stile

Location description On the north-west of Bath and approximately mid-way between the Upper Weston and North Stoke, Prospect Stile is on the Cotswolds Way and can also be accessed by footpath from Bath Racecourse.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
damage.such.prom	ST 713683	NA. Outside Conservation Area Boundary.



Significance of the View

Prospect Stile offers a significant, panoramic, and historic viewpoint*, illustrating the city's unique, contained setting within a natural landscape hollow. Positioned on the edge of Lansdown and along the Cotswold Way, it provides a rare, wide-angle view of Bath's western edge, the Avon Valley, and Kelston Roundhill, highlighting the dramatic contrast between the city and its surrounding green, hilly, and agricultural landscape.

Key heritage features in this view city to its historic, natural setting include the prominent Kelston Roundhill, Beckford's Tower, the Avon Valley, and the rural landscape of the Newton St Loe area, with distant views of the western edge of Bath, the Avon valley and settlements towards Bristol.

Only determined walkers in the 18th century would have ventured to Prospect Stile.

Foreground

The foreground of this view includes the toposcope, viewpoint area and Cotswold Way footpath. Beyond this is a wildflower meadow bounded by a mature hedgerow. The recently-planted woodland of Shiner's Wood can be seen in the foreground on the right of the panoramic photograph, extending into the middle ground towards Kelston Roundhill. Near views include fields, hedges and copses above Weston village.

Middle ground

Middle distance views extend to the ridge of the Cotswold Way to the south, the Weston Valley, which provides a rural setting for Upper Weston, and for the city of Bath beyond. Kelston Roundhill is a dominant landmark, with its distinctive round shape and hill-top clump of beech trees. The irregular profile of the valley sides below Kelston Roundhill is the result of landslips and cambering due to the underlying geology of alternating bands of harder and softer rock. Much of the middle ground is formed of a patchwork of pastoral fields, mostly irregular in shape and divided by hedgerows. There are also occasional patches of woodland, particularly on steeper slopes where they follow the contours. The Cotswold Way can be seen running along the ridge between Prospect Stile and Kelston Roundhill. Beckfords Tower, a 19th-century landmark designed for William Beckford is a prominent landmark on the skyline.

Background

The background of this view contains the city of Bath in its 'landscape bowl' with a wooded ridge behind. Distant views of the development rising up the slopes of Baths hollow including Bathampton, The University of Bath, Widcombe. Southdown, Odd Down and Twerton. Prominent landmarks within and around the city such as Bath Abbey and Prior Park can be seen with binoculars. The city of Bath is only one element in a much wider panorama which extends from Salisbury Plain to the Mendip Hills. Distant views include the Avon Valley and the hills beyond to the south, the wooded slopes of Bathampton Down, Twerton Roundhill, the hills above Newton St. Loe, Stantonbury Hill and distant Somerset hills. On clear days views extend to the Black Mountains in Wales and the Severn Bridges.

Heritage and historical references

Prospect Stile is a crucial vantage point for understanding the geographical landscape and aesthetic beauty of the World Heritage Site. The viewpoint was appreciated as early as the 18th century for its dramatic, expansive scenery. The approach to the stile along the Cotswold Way passes the site of Little Down Fort an Iron Age hillfort, and evidence of Roman camps.

The primary heritage feature of the view from is the entire World Heritage Site city of Bath "nested" within its natural landscape hollow. Historically, this specific viewpoint was praised by the renowned Georgian architect John Wood the Elder in the 18th century as a key visual link between his urban designs and the surrounding countryside. The view towards Prospect Stile and Kelston Round Hill was praised by John Wood seen from the southwest corner of Queen Square soon after its construction.

On the promontory of Prospect Stile, on the very edge of the Cotswold escarpment, the city of Bath fills the views to your left, a dazzling sprawl of honeyed-hued Georgian buildings and their whiter, modern additions. The Mendip Hills lie straight ahead, some 20 miles away and to your right, on a clear day, the Black Mountains in Wales appear as faded outlines, some 70 miles away. A topograph points to views of distant landmarks including Westbury White Horse, Cley Hill and Alfred's Tower, some 30 miles away in Somerset.

The northern slopes of the Weston Valley, to your left are topped by Beckford's Tower and Bath racecourse, the highest flat-racing course in Britain lies behind you, on the plateau of Lansdown. The racecourse provided a temporary WW2 air strip, as RAF North Stoke.

The beauty of this immense landscape was noted by John Wood the Elder, architect of Bath's Queen Square and The Circus. Looking down from Lansdown, which he calls Mons Badonca, in his 'An Essay Towards A Description of Bath (1749) j he writes that the view of Bath, Bristol, Cainsham [sic] and the River Avon was 'a region that sets paradise itself before one's eyes. And as such it might have been the very Elysian fields of the Ancients'. Today Wood's 'Elysian fields' are yielding to the inevitable developments of the modern world: a new hospital wing, a mobile communications mast, a row of poly tunnels, a new fence to lean on, a new surface to the footpath.

From the wooden gate on the footpath at Prospect Stile, descending the slope towards Kelston Round Hill, more of the city of Bath gradually unveils itself. In the far distance Widcombe Hill can be seen wending its way up towards the University, while artisan terraces spread out along the southern slopes. In foreground, the village of Upper Weston flows into Lower Weston, past the tall chimney of the Royal United Hospital and down into the heart of the city.

From Prospect Stile it feels peculiar to be looking down on one of Bath's most visible landmarks, the soaring, tree-topped Kelston Round Hill, or Kelston Tump as it's often called locally. The Round Hill, a mile away, is comfortably accommodated in the foreground of this vast overall vista. The field pattern between Prospect Stile and the Round Hill pattern forms a runway-like strip along the flattened brim of the bowl in which Bath sits.

Prospect Stile is significant in the routes from Avon Valley and the villages west of Bath, where Kelston Round Hill and Prospect Stile are also a key features in their own landscapes. It is a place where people have passed for millennia; heading to the Iron Age Hill Fort at Little Down Camp or the Roman Fort on Lansdown. The Cotswold Way, runs past Kelston Round Hill, along the ridged Camel's Hump at Dean Hill and disappears down into Weston village.

Stunning views are often the keenly anticipated reward for hours of sloggng determinedly up steep slopes and the views from Prospect stile on western edge of Bath repay your effort with a panoramic view over Bath, Bristol and the towns and villages between. A favourite way of getting to this popular viewpoint is to hike up one of the narrow country lanes that climb up the slopes of the Weston Valley and peter out into sinuous footpaths, rising up past springs, streams, pastures, woods and farms.



23068

View of Bath from Prospect Stile,
Lansdown, July 1935



Credit Peter Dafnis Bath in Time.

7b. Lansdown Prospect Stile

Location description On the north-west of Bath and approximately mid-way between the Upper Weston and North Stoke, Prospect Stile is on the Cotswolds Way and can also be accessed by footpath from Bath Racecourse.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
damage.such.prom	ST 713683	This is one of seven Lansdown views in this set (Woolley, Battlefields, Hanging Hill (2), North Stoke, Prospect Stile, Beckford Tower).



Significance of the View

Both Prospect Stile and Kelston Round Hill are famous Cotswold Way viewpoints, oft used by the Victorians and the Georgians before them.

Stunning views from Prospect stile on the SW corner of Lansdown racecourse, overlooking Kelston Round Hill below, and with views of over 200 degrees from East to North West.

The topograph at the viewpoint points of the various landmarks, including out to the distant Pen Y Fan over 85kms away in the Brecon Beacons.

Kelston Round Hill just 500m to the southwest (on the Cotswold Way) has even wider view (270degs) – probably one of the best around Bath.

Kelston Round Hill

Bath

Avon Valley



The view looking from Prospect style viewpoint.

Foreground

Topograph, steep bank down to young woodlands. Bench to rest upon.

Middle ground

Kelston Round Hill in front. Upper Weston to the left. Saltford and various villages to the right. And much more.

Background

Bath, Coombe Down, Corston, Keynsham, Bristol and the towns and villages to the North. The River Avon. River Severn and Severn Estuary.

Skyline:

Wiltshire and the North Wessex Downs, Salisbury Plains, Mendips and Chew Valley, Dundry, Leigh Woods, Clifton Suspension Bridge, Severn Estuary, S Wales (Cardiff and Newport), Brecon Beacons, Severn suspension bridges, Chepstow, Forest of Dean.

Probably well over 2000 sq miles to be viewed

Heritage and historical references

Evidence of flint working from the Mesolithic period has been found on the slopes of Kelston Round Hill and the possible line of a Roman Road traverses the hill.

The Mendip Hills in the distance have seen human activity since the Palaeolithic period and were a vital source of lead for the Romans, which is very likely to have been used in Roman Bath. Whilst there is some debate about the source of the water of the Bath Hot Springs, it is generally accepted that it starts as rain falling on the Mendip Hills.

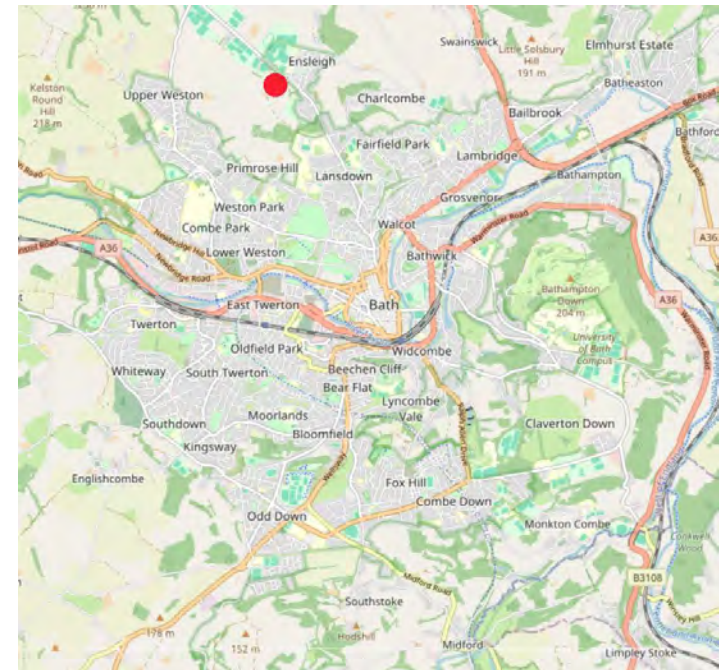
References:

Somerset Historic Environment Record (reference 61370: Prehistoric flint scatters at Kelston Round Hill, Kelston).
Somerset Historic Environment Record (reference 60148: Possible line of the Via Julia Roman road, Bath to Bitton).

8. Beckfords Tower

Location description The site is located to the north of the City of Bath in Lansdown cemetery, next to Beckford’s Tower. There is a capped drystone wall bordering the south-west cemetery perimeter from which fine sweeping views can be seen.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
newly.bared.steer	ST 737674	



Significance of the View

Situated adjacent to Beckford’s Tower on Lansdown Hill, the cemetery occupies land that originally formed part of William Beckford’s designed pleasure grounds and the terminus of Beckford’s Ride, a landscaped route connecting his Lansdown Crescent home to the Tower. This setting, formalized as a cemetery in 1848, retains the elevated position and spatial openness that once enabled visitors—including mourners, Victorian sightseers, and Beckford’s own contemporaries—to experience extensive views across Bath and the wider Somerset countryside.

From this vantage point, the city appears framed within a sweeping landscape that accentuates Bath’s characteristic bowl-shaped topography. The descent from Lansdown toward the Georgian urban fabric mirrors the picturesque principles admired during Beckford’s era, in which contrasts between cultivated city and surrounding natural contours were valued as essential aspects of aesthetic experience. Contemporary accounts of early visitors climbing the hill described the “cheerful aspect of the surrounding scenery...bathed in brilliant sunshine,” indicative of the cemetery’s early reputation as a place where solemnity and scenic pleasure coexisted. [batharchives.co.uk]

The view is further significant for the way it reflects the layered history of the site. The cemetery incorporates remnants of the earlier pleasure grounds created between 1825 and 1827 by Beckford and architect Henry Goodridge, whose design principles emphasized dramatic panoramas from the rising ground of Lansdown Hill.

Today, the view continues to embody both the landscape design legacy of Beckford's estate and the cultural identity of Bath as a World Heritage city shaped by its surrounding hills. It provides visitors with an elevated, contemplative outlook that merges historic burial ground, architectural heritage, and the enduring visual harmony of Bath's landscape setting.



The view looking from Beckford's Tower viewpoint February 2025

Foreground

Middle ground

Background



Farmhouse and farmland.



Royal United Hospital and Newbridge.



Mendip Hills National Landscape.



Farmland and hedgerows.



Kelston Roundhill.



Penn Hill TV

Heritage and historical references

The city's distinctive sweep of **honey-coloured Bath stone** immediately signals its 18th-century transformation into a model Georgian spa city. From this height, the urban plan appears as a coherent architectural set-piece shaped by the Woods' Palladian ideals—terraces, crescents, and axial streets arranged with almost theatrical intent.

The **Avon valley** corridor visible from Lansdown carries Bath's 19th-century story: the route of the **Great Western Railway**, Brunel's engineering interventions, and the industrial edges that once supported the city's expansion. These linear elements subtly cut across the pastoral setting, marking a shift into the modern age.

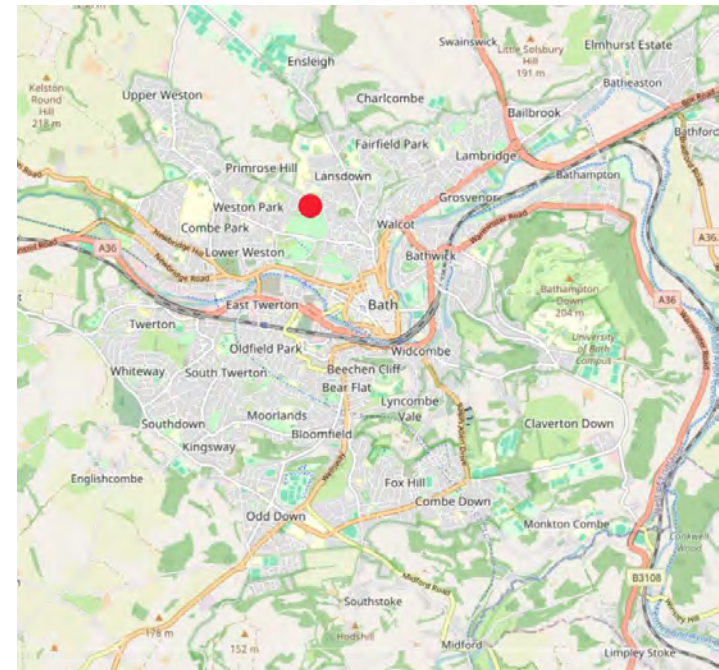
The cemetery sits close to the site of the **1643 Battle of Lansdown**, a defining Civil War encounter. The commanding vantage point makes clear why the ridge was strategically significant. The view today is peaceful, but the topography still carries the memory of conflict and defence.

Surrounding fields, hedgerows, and wooded slopes reflect centuries of agricultural practice and estate management. The contrast between the planned Georgian city and the ancient, folded Cotswold landscape is one of Bath's most distinctive heritage signatures—a dialogue between human design and deep geological time.

9a. Approach Golf Course

Location description The golf course is located on High Common, a popular open swathe of land on a steep hill north of Royal Victoria Park and between St James Square and Sion Hill.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
cake.spring.ports	ST 742659	Looks towards and enclosed landscape valley (ELV7) and a High Wold Diop Slope (HWDS4)



Significance of the View

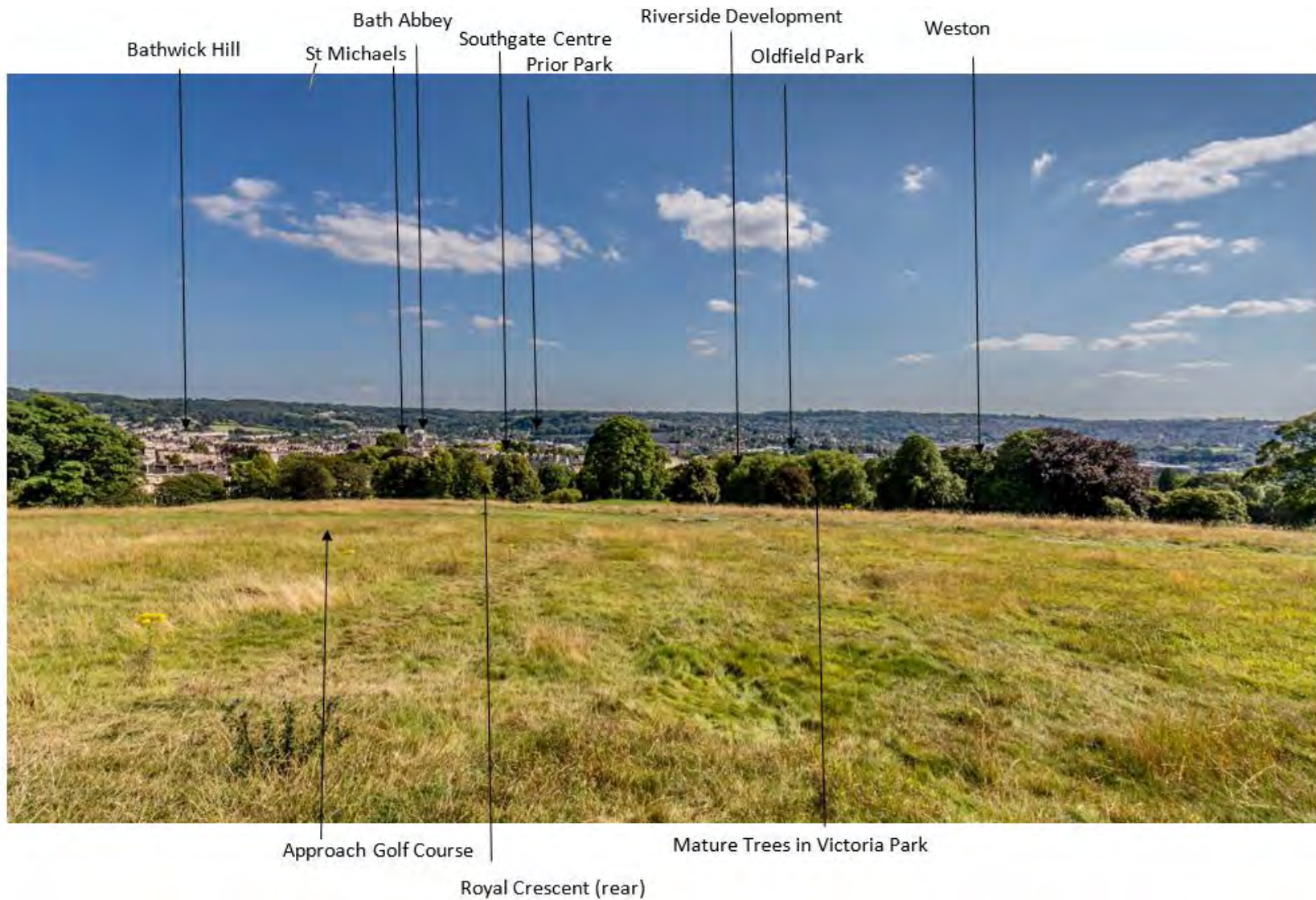
This view provides a panoramic view of the City of Bath from one of the City’s open commons towards the North of the City. The view provides a clear view of City centre landmarks including Bath Abbey and several of the City’s churches.

It is located on one of the City’s outside leisure facilities, a 9-hole approach golf course, that has recently been redeveloped and opened by a private company.

New developments such as the Southgate Shopping Centre and the Riverside development can be seen.

The view extends from Bathwick Hill in the east to Weston and beyond in the west. Prior Park can be seen near the skyline.

Mature trees can be seen in the midground that are in Victoria Park, south of the view point.



The view looking South across approach golf course August 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view is the approach golf course itself. It has a complicated history as a civic amenity and has reopened in Summer 2024 as a golf course open for use by the public for a fee. Beyond the Golf Course to the south is Victoria Park and its mature trees edge the foreground along both sides of Weston Road which goes along the bottom of the Approach Golf Course. The mature trees in Victoria Park, beyond Weston Road are also visible.



Middle ground

The middle ground, especially to the left of the view gives the best views of the City itself. Highlights include Bath Abbey, St. Michael's Church (just to the left of the Abbey) and the back of the Royal Crescent (which lacks the regularity of the frontage).



Background

The background of the view of an extensive and panoramic view of the Bath Skyline to the south of the City from Bathwick Hill in the East to Weston and Newbridge in the West. Prior Park can be seen just below the skyline in middle view.





The view looking South across approach golf course January 2025

Heritage and historical references

The history of High Common, before it became a golf course, is interesting and is covered in this article from 2022 which explains its original ownership by the <https://bathnewseum.com/2022/04/25/theres-room-for-compromise-on-the-high-common/>

In the 15th Century, 'Bath Commons (as they were then called) came under the management of the Bath Freemen – a powerful group of traders who virtually ran the city. The Recorder of Bath, Nicholas Hyde, gave judgment against the Freemen but granted the Freemen part of the West Field, which became known as the Bath Commons. One condition was that 'the Common Fields were for the use and enjoyment of the free burgesses inhabiting the city, and should remain so forever'.

This view has evolved as Bath has developed into a modern City and will continue to change as the City does.

The Approach Golf Course reopened in April 2024 after being closed for two years. After a lot of political wrangling, BANES awarded a four-year contract to Future Golf Ventures who are based in Swansea. They promised open access to all parts of the land so that walkers and golfers can continue to co-exist as they have for many years and both groups can appreciate the excellent view available.



High Common in 19th Century from the Bathnewseum article.



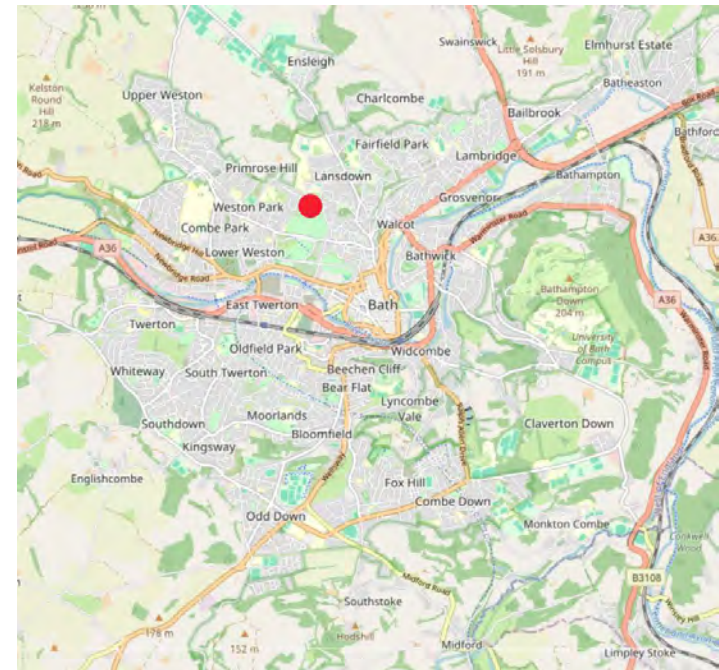
Golf in 1950 from the Bathnewseum article.

9b. Approach Golf Course

Location description The golf course is located on High Common, a popular open swathe of land on a steep hill north of Royal Victoria Park and between St James Square and Sion Hill.

What 3 Words **Grid reference** **Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area**

agrees.wasp.little ST 742659



Significance of the View

This view looks from the Northern side of Bath towards the south. It sweeps from Bathwick hill in the south-east, round to Beechen cliff and the Holloway which is south of the town centre. This view has Approach Golf course in the immediate foreground, which is a semi landscaped area, with many mature and newly planted trees. Beyond this is the northern area of town which holds the Royal Crescent, Royal Circus and Royal Victoria park. A very built-up area of predominantly Georgian buildings. In the middle ground are Bath Abbey and St Michael’s church and slightly further on, the modern Southgate development.



The view looking South across approach golf course September 2024

Foreground

Approach golf course is a wide open area in the immediate foreground. The northern end is semi wild grassland with pathways intersecting it and many wild grasses and flowers growing. There are one or two areas of newly planted saplings.

The ground slopes away down to the golf course itself, which is interspersed with mature trees.



Middle ground

The middle part of this view is a large urban area, covering a central section of Bath city centre.

The closest features are Marlborough buildings and the rear of the Royal Crescent. Deeper into the view are Bath Abbey and St Michael's church.

The Avon and Kennet canal, River Avon and Great Western railway line run east to west through the centre of this view, though mainly hidden.

Bath college and the base of Beechen cliff sit just south of the city centre, along with the Southgate shopping centre and hideous new bus station, which fortunately is hidden from view.



Background

The background to this view is a beautiful back drop of hills which make up the skyline walk of Bath. To the east is Bathwick hill with Bathwick fields. Next comes Widcombe hill, then Prior Park landscape garden is nestled into the side of Ralph Allen drive, which meets Beechen Cliff as it rises up to Alexandra Park in the far distance.





The view looking South across approach golf course March 2025

Heritage and historical references

I am going to focus on 3 precise areas within this view, as there is so much to describe and see within this view of Bath city centre.

Marlborough buildings

Marlborough buildings are a fine example of Georgian architecture. Seen from the rear in this view, the terrace runs North to south down the western edge of the green in front of the Royal crescent. It was constructed from 1788 by Mark Fowles and John Fielder.

Supposedly, the Duke of Devonshire rented one of the houses. For a time nos 27 and 28 were the Ear, Nose and Throat hospital.

Bath college

Bath college is one of the newer developments in this view, built on Avon street. Originally established in 1892, then known as Bath City Science, Art and Technical school. It has occupied sites at the Guildhall, Long Acre and the Old Jail in Twerton. Having evolved into the Bath Technical college, there was a temporary home at Lower Borough walls in 1935, until the new campus on Avon street, begun in 1955, was opened in 1960. There have been extensions and alterations over time, including the Allen Building in 1993.

In this same photograph, sitting on the Holloway, against the side of Beechen cliff is the Calton Road and Walk modern development.

The Holloway

The Holloway has a fascinating history. It was the main southerly road out of Bath until the building of the Wells Road in the 1770s, which was for pilgrims travelling from Bath to Wells and Glastonbury. At this time, Holloway Turnpike was created, at the summit of Wells road, near the surviving Bear Inn. The only historic buildings that date back as far as the mid 18th century left standing on the Hollway are the Chapel of Saint Mary Magdalen from the 11th century and the adjoining Magdalen house, Paradise house, built in 1735 and the Hospital, built in 1761. Opposite Paradise house was Holloway Pound, which was a small enclosure for stray livestock, which would be returned after a small payment to St Mary's chapel and later the City authority.

Holloway fair was a popular feature in Bath's annual calendar every May and held on the Holloway, originally to celebrate the 'Feast of the invention of the Holy Cross'. It was particularly popular in the 18th century when the sale of livestock and produced were included, along with a horse fair in 1754. At this point the occurrences of drunkenness and brawling became more widespread and by the 19th century become so unpopular that Reverend Tyte described it in 1839 as comprising only 'two ginger-bread stands and a swing boat'.

In 1942 Holloway suffered significant war damage and a redevelopment programme was commissioned in the late 1960s by Marshman Warren Taylor. The new houses on Calton Walk, Calton Gardens and Alton Place were completed and occupied between 1972 and the early 1980s.



Marlborough Buildings as seen from approach golf course.

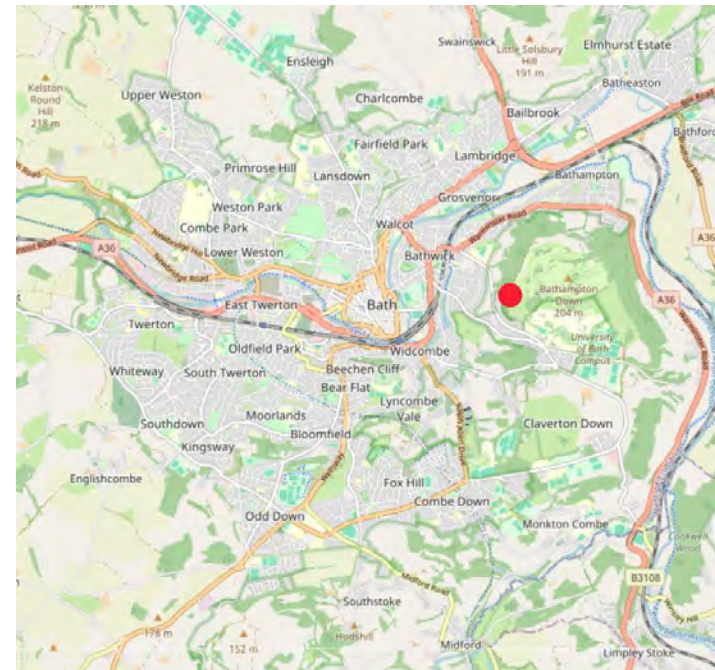


Bath College and the Holloway as seen from approach golf course.

10. Sham Castle

Location description Sham Castle is a highly visible landmark, which sits on the rising hillside to the east of Bath, above Bathwick. It can be located by footpaths across Bathampton Down.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
detail.legal.task	ST 766648	15 North Rd



Significance of the View

This view looking westward provides a nice opportunity to admire Bath city centre.

Sham Castle was built in 1762 as an eye-catching folly, purportedly located intentionally, to be seen from Ralph Allen's townhouse although this is disputed.

Design: the structure is a Gothic style facade with battlements and towers, with no rooms behind.

Materials: it is constructed from the locally sourced Bath stone.

Modern context: The castle is now much less visible from the town, being shrouded in deciduous trees, apart from a narrow vista being maintained free of trees to allow views towards the city, and from the city toward the castle.

Tourism: today it is a popular tourist attraction, accessible via various paths including Bath Skyline, and its illuminated at night.

Heritage: Sham Castle is a Grade II listed building.



The view looking west from Sham Castle June 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view is composed by weedy vegetation surrounded on both sides by trees, on the right mainly Sycamore maples, on the left Hedera Colchica, Hawthorns, and few Ashes.



Middle ground

Vista of Bath city centre, unfolding in a series of elegant Georgian buildings and landmarks notably Bath Abbey, Empire Building, St Michael Without, Rugby Stadium.



Background

Rolling green hills dotted with trees and fields that add depth and texture to the view. Often clouds drift across the sky and on clear days the blue expanse contrast beautifully with the greenery below.





The view looking west from Sham Castle December 2024

Heritage and historical references

Sham Castle is an 18th-century folly located on a hill overlooking the city of Bath. From its vantage point, you can enjoy sweeping views of the historic city below, framed by the rolling hills of the surrounding countryside. The castle itself, a mock-Gothic structure, adds a romantic and picturesque element to the landscape.

It is a Grade II* listed building. It consists of a screen wall with a central pointed arch flanked by two 3-storey circular turrets, which extend sideways to a 2-storey square tower at each end of the wall. There is building behind the Facade.

It was probably designed around 1755 by Sanderson Miller and built in 1762 by Richard James, master mason for Ralph Allen.

Ralph Allen was a famous entrepreneur, philosopher, and at one time Postmaster of Bath. The construction of Sham Castle was intended to improve the view from his townhouse. Collinson, writing in 1791, noted that the castle and woods "... appear pleasing objects, not only from almost every part of the city, but through a great extent of the country westward to the other side of the Severn, the light colour of the stone forming a conspicuous contrast with the deep mass of shade from the grove close behind it".

Views:

City of Bath: The iconic Georgian architecture of Bath, including Bath Abbey, Royal Crescent, and other landmarks, often visible in the distance.

Countryside: Rolling green hills and trees, forming a natural and serene backdrop.

Sky: Depending on the weather, the sky can range from bright and clear to moody with clouds, adding atmosphere to the scene.

The castle is now much less visible from the city, being shrouded in deciduous trees, apart from a narrow vista being maintained free of trees to allow views of the castle and from the castle towards the city. The castle is best seen when illuminated at night.

Legends with no historical proof

1. Secret Fortress: Sham Castle was intended to be a hidden fortress, designed as a decoy, meant to lure enemies away from the true defensive positions. However, this is purely legend, as Sham Castle was never intended for military use—it was constructed purely for decoration.

2. The Ghostly Architect: Another tale speaks of a ghost that haunts Sham Castle, said to be the spirit of the architect Richard James who, after being ridiculed for building a "fake" castle, took his own life. His spirit is said to wander the grounds, especially on misty evenings, lamenting the folly he created. This ghost story adds to the castle's eerie charm.

3. The Hidden Treasure: Sham Castle was built over a hidden treasure, buried deep within the hill on which it stands. Some believe that the castle was constructed as a marker, with the treasure still waiting to be discovered. Treasure hunters have reportedly searched the area, though no treasure has ever been found, and the story remains a part of the local folklore.

4. A Royal Escape: A more fanciful legend claims that Sham Castle was a secret retreat for royalty, built as a place where kings and queens could escape from the pressures of court life. According to this story, secret tunnels connect the castle to the heart of Bath, allowing for discreet entrances and exits. While this tale adds a layer of intrigue to the site, there's no historical evidence to support it.



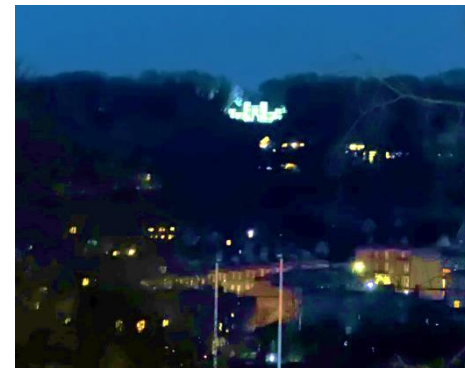
Oil on canvas painting by John Syer (1815–1885), titled. View of Bath from Sham Castle. [Victoria Art Gallery, Bath]



Sham Castle, Lithograph by Richard Guyatt 1936. [Victoria Art Gallery, Bath]



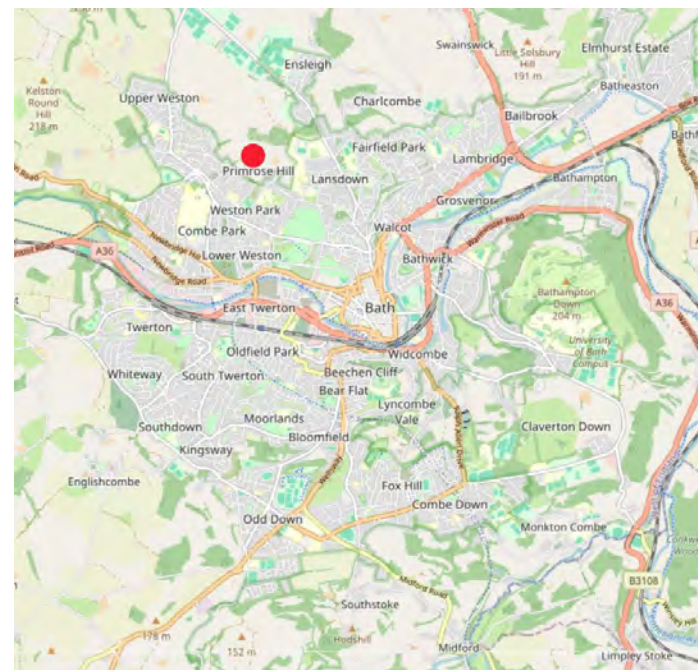
Sham Castle, mid-19th Century. Photo by Francis Frith [V&A Museum]



Sham Castle, from the Parade Gardens at night

11. Primrose Hill

Location description The viewpoint is located in open agricultural land on the South West facing slopes looking towards Weston village and the Royal United Hospital. The exact location is currently marked by a park bench.

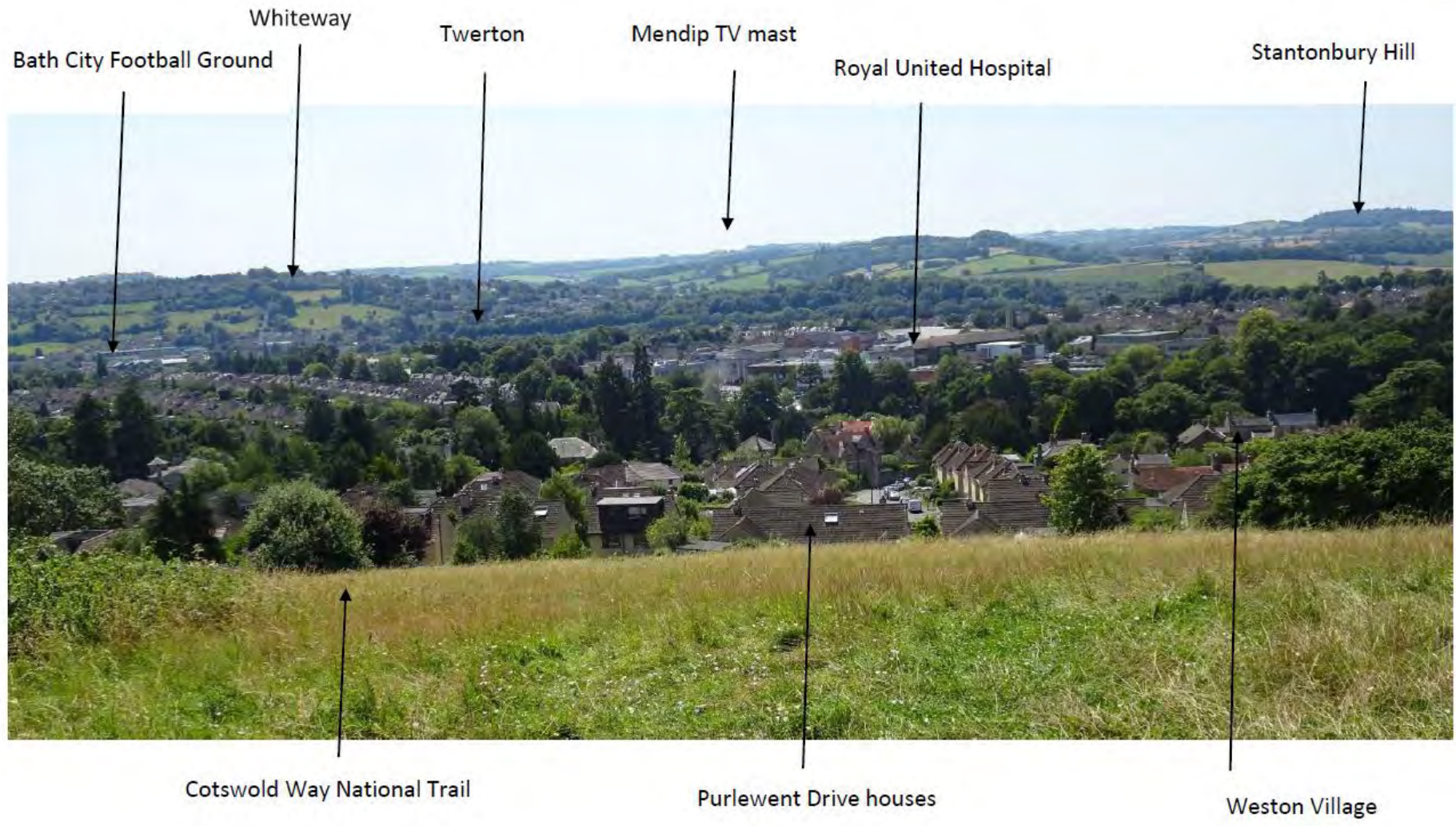


What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
elaborate.bride.hobby	ST 734664	Weston Valleys ELV1

Significance of the View

Primrose Hill is within the Bathscape Landscape Type ‘Enclosed Limestone Valley’. It is listed as one of the ‘historical viewing places and sights outside Bath’ and was on a popular route for walkers in the Georgian era.

The Cotswold Way National Trail passes to the South of the view as it winds its way from the city centre. It then heads into Weston and then up Penn Hill to the right of the viewpoint. Looking to the North the land slopes up to the boundary with the Primrose Hill Community Woodland. This is a 24 acre site planted in 2000 with 24,000 British native species of trees and shrubs.



View from Primrose Hill photographed July 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view comprises a gentle slope down to the boundary with the residential properties in Purlewent Drive. The view is constrained by hedgerows to either side. There is currently a park bench that defines the precise view location.

Middle ground

The middle ground of this view comprises the Royal United Hospital and Weston Village. The hospital opened on the Combe Park site in 1932 and has been constantly extended since. The residential properties date from 1950s to 1980s.

Grey and brown concrete roof tiles are the predominant feature, broken up by areas of coniferous and deciduous trees.

Background

The background of this view is dominated by the Northern edge of the Mendip Hills.

Beyond the hospital arable farmland extends up Newton St Loe and Englishcombe.

On a clear day, the Mendip transmitting station on Pen Hill near Wells can be seen.

It is the tallest structure in the South West of England.



View from Primrose Hill photographed January 2025

Heritage and historical references

For walkers in the Georgian era this view was on a popular route, either to Lansdown (via St. Winifred's well – valued for its curative properties), or as a circular walk across the fields beyond Primrose Hill to Weston village. It was this route that was taken by Jane Austen and her companion Mrs Chamberlayne in 1801, and by Katherine Plymly, who in October 1794, accompanied Miss C Isted to Weston 'a very pretty village about a mile from Bath. We took a round in going to it and from Sion Hill above Bath we had a fine view of this singular city'.



Royal United Hospital 1930s



1888 Ordnance Survey Map

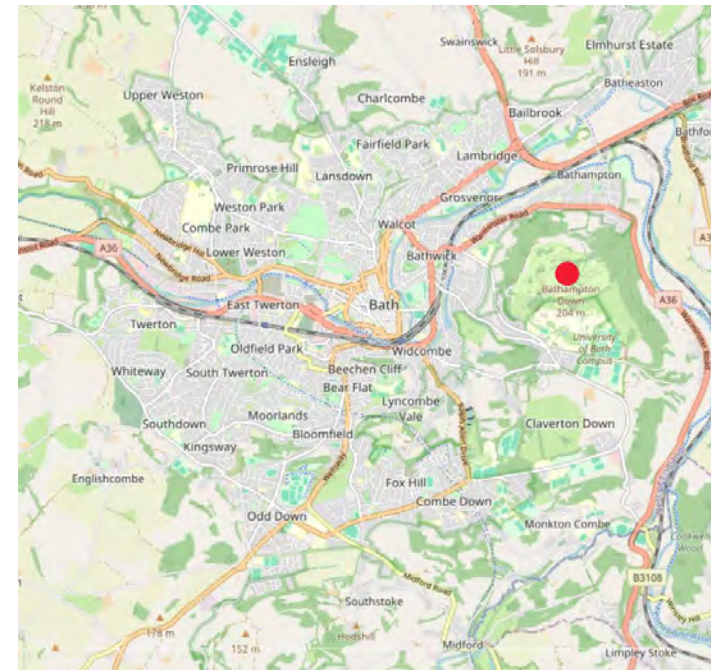
12. Bathampton Down Ralph Allen's Carriage Drive

Location description The view spot is high on Bathampton Downs, a High Wold Dip Slope Landscape type, close to Ralph Allen's 18th Century Carriage Drive which provided a route up to and around the downland.

What 3 Words **Grid reference** **Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area**

jukebox.bunch.motel ST 774654

host.rushed.ranked



Significance of the View

The viewpoint overlooks a loop in the River Avon and the Kennet and Avon Canal and the mainline from Bath to London which runs in between the river and canal at this point on the floor of the Limestone Valley.

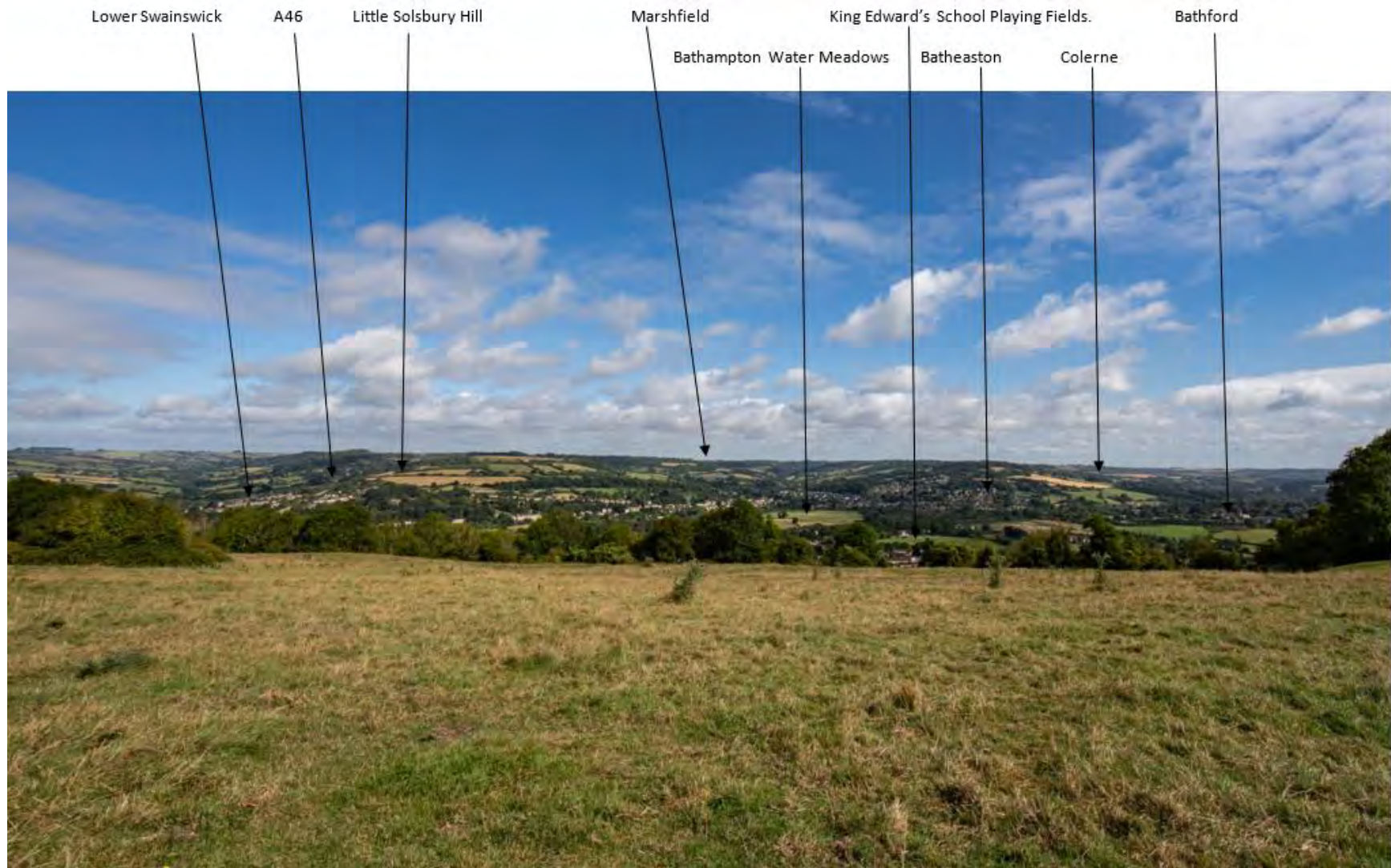
Numerous centres of population can be seen from Lower Swainwick in the west to Colerne on the skyline in the north-east of the view.

The skyline follows the route of the A420 from Tog Hill towards Chippenham.

The far view is another High Wold Dip Landscape from the Lansdown Plateau in the east, then over Charmy Down and Little Solsbury Hill.

It covers the easterly edge of the World Heritage Site Boundary and the north-eastern sector of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Bathampton Down is the site of Bronze Age round barrows, the 'Celtic' field system and an Iron Age Hilltop enclosure.



View from Bathampton Down viewpoint looking North East August 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view is Bathampton Down, which is rough grassland and the site of a rich pre-Roman history (see below).



Bathampton Water Meadows, along the River Avon, and Batheaston.

Middle ground

The middle ground, offers a panoramic 180 degree view to the east of Bath covering (from left to right) Lansdown (not shown in the main photo above), Lower Swainswick, the A46 (travelling North from Bath), Bathampton and its Water Meadows, King Edward's School Playing fields, the Bath to London Railway line, Batheaston and Bathford.



King Edward's School Playing fields.



Bath to London Mainline which runs between the River Avon & the Kennet and Avon Canal.

Background

The background of the view covers a skyline to the North of Bath which follows the line of the A420 road, you can see the well-known 'Caterpillar Trees' on Freezing Hill as well as the villages of Marshfield and Colerne.



Lansdown showing Beckford Tower and new build housing.



A46 going North out of Bath.



View from Bathampton Down viewpoint looking North East January 2025

Heritage and historical references

Ralph Allen (1669-1764) was a major 18th Century landowner in Bath and its surrounds, He lived in Prior Park and his lands stretched 5 miles from Bathampton Village along the top of the hills to present-day Odd Down providing him with magnificent views from the Carriage Drives he had constructed. He accumulated his fortune by establishing a network of postal routes across England. He acquired the northern side of Bathampton Down in 1758. He created a 2-mile horse-racing course with Grandstand and stables which would sometimes attract 800 carriages and 20,000 spectators. (see The Story of Ralph Allen's Estate at Prior Park in Bath by Robin Dixon published online by bathscape.co.uk).

The pre-Roman History of Bathampton Down is well documented by Rod Thomas in his book 'A Sacred Landscape – the Prehistory of Bathampton Down', 2008, The Short Run Press, Exeter.

The Bathampton Water Meadows (now owned by the NT) were a cause of modern controversy when a plan was devised to turn them into a Park & Ride carpark. Extensive local opposition led to the decision being reversed by the local council in 2017.



Ralph Allen.
[Wikipedia.org]



Bathampton Meadows looking towards Bath.
[John Miller, The National Trust]

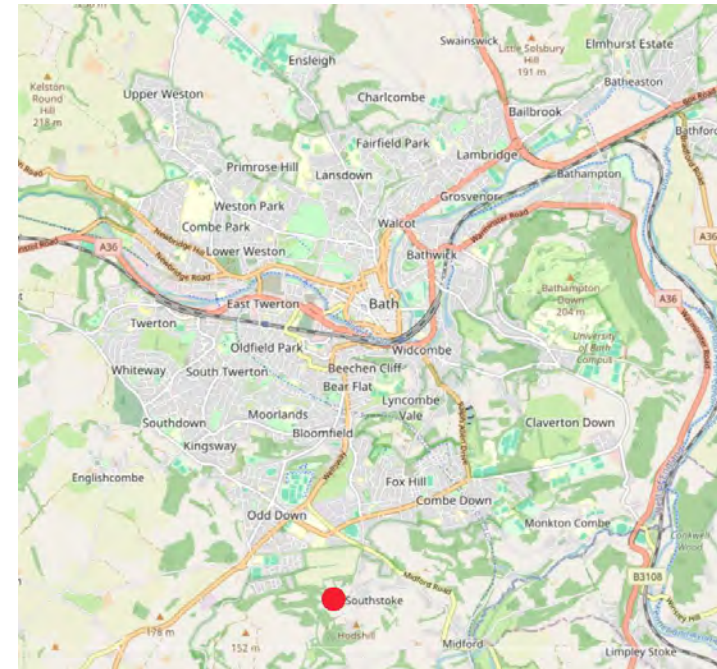
13a. South of South Stoke

Location description The viewpoint is located above the South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint.

Access is via a footpath and the viewpoint is a 300m walk to the west of the centre of South Stoke village.

The entrance to the footpath is opposite the Church of St James.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
follow.sheet.crops	ST 743613	Midford & Cam Brook Valley Zone



Significance of the View

The view from South Stoke is of the rolling north Somerset countryside that lies to the south of Bath.

The Midford & Cam Brook enclosed limestone valley runs from west to east across the middle distance and was the scene of industrial activity in the 19th Century with the Somerset Coal Canal, which was superseded by the Somerset & Dorset railway in the early 20th Century.

The settlements of Peasdown St John and Hinton Charterhouse are almost lost in what is essentially an agricultural landscape interspersed with woodland.

Salisbury Plain is visible to the SE on a clear day.



The view from South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint July 2024

Foreground

South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint is in the foreground.

This was created by the local community as a Millennium project on land made available by the Hignett Family Trust.

In front of the viewpoint the ground drops away into grassland and cattle pasture.



South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint

Middle ground

In the middle ground is the Midford & Cam Brook Valley. To the east of the view, around Midford, the valley is relatively tight but moving west into the Cam Brook Valley it broadens considerably with gentle undulations on the sides of the valley.

The valley is grazing land interspersed with deciduous trees along the streams, field boundaries and in isolated woodlands.

The Midford & Cam Brook Valley is underlain by the Jurassic sequence of sediments common to all the valleys around Bath and the viewpoint itself is on the Greater Oolite limestone with the underlying Fullers Earth Formation and outliers of Inferior Oolite forming the north side of the valley. Bridport Sands and Charmouth Mudstone underlie the valley itself. The south side of the valley is a simpler sequence of the same stratigraphy with Inferior Oolite underlying Twinhoe.

Background

South of the Twinhoe ridge the undulating rural landscape of grazing land and isolated woodlands continues.

The majority of the area is underlain by Lower Jurassic sediment before the Cretaceous chalk escarpment of Salisbury Plain is reached in the south east.



Below the South Stoke

Heritage and historical references

The Somersetshire Coal Canal was built in the 1790s to serve the Somersetshire coalfield and ran from Paulton to connect eventually with the Kennet & Avon Canal. It entered the Cam Brook Valley via a tunnel at Combe Hay and then ran more or less along the valley floor. A feature of the Canal was the Caisson Locks which employed novel techniques to move boats to the required level. These were subsequently replaced by the 22 Combe Hay Locks. There are significant remains of the Locks in the area of Caisson House at Combe Hay as well as the aqueduct at Midford.

The Somerset Coal Canal Society was first formed as a historical society in 1992. The main work of the Society was to research, document and preserve the canal. As a result it is one of the best researched unnavigable canals in the country. In 2008 it was apparent that there was a huge local appetite for restoration and regular work parties are involved with clearing vegetation and slowly restoring the locks and other features of the canal.

The Canal was eventually abandoned in 1898 due to the decline of the coalfield and the route through the valley taken over by the Bristol and North Somerset Railway. The Somerset and Dorset railway ran across the valley and the Bristol and North Somerset along the Cam Brook Valley utilising the route of the Somersetshire Coal Canal. Where the routes crossed at Midford their viaducts run one over the other. The railway rose to fame when the 1953 comedy “The Titfield Thunderbolt” was filmed on the line. The line closed in 1959 but today the Somerset and Dorset is a Sustrans National Cycleway route which passes to the south of Twinhoe, but the Bristol and North Somerset has not been re-used.

There are extensive Fullers Earth workings along the north side of the valley and particularly around South Stoke. At Tucking Mill, to the east of Midford, there was the Fullers Earth factory from 1883 to the end of WW2. The factory had an 80ft high chimney and was linked with Tucking Mill. This hamlet is named after a process in the woollen industry known as “Tucking “ or “fulling”, in which woven cloth was cleaned with Fullers Earth. The original mill was demolished in 1931 but the mill pond has been restored by Wessex Water and is now used as a small storage reservoir with disabled fishing.

William Smith, known as the “Father of English Geology”, has strong associations with the Midford & Cam Brook Valley. Whilst supervising the building of the Somersetshire Coal Canal through Tucking Mill he was so impressed by its beauty that he bought an estate there in 1798 for his own home. Below his house he created a fishing lake behind the canal to drive a small mill which was intended to provide income to support the estate. All of this, he lost after his bankruptcy in 1819. However, Smith’s house still remains together with a gothic cottage which adjoined the mill which was itself demolished in 1927. The fishing lake, after being filled in later for the Fullers Earth works, has been restored by Wessex Water as a disabled fishing lake and storage reservoir

Combe Hay is centred around Combe Hay Manor, built in about 1730 for the Smith family, together with the landscaped park which includes a serpentine river on the Cam Brook and an artificial lake. John Smith became M.P. for Bath and, as Grand Master of the Province of Somerset,

played an important role in the development of freemasonry in the city. In the 1790s it passed to his son whose friendship with the Prince of Wales (later George IV) presumably led to the Prince's visit to witness the operation of the Caisson Lock.

The South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint itself is a location recommended by Bath Astronomers as a great place for stargazing. A great east through south to west horizon without local light pollution sources. Seating available and some shelter from northerly winds.



Combe Hay Lock c.1880



Combe Hay Lock 15 in 2024

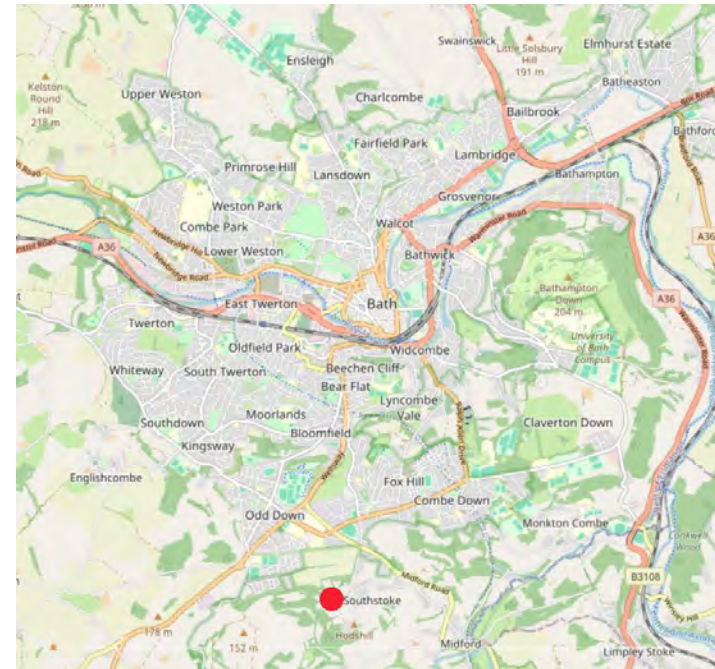


Fullers Earth Work, Tucking Mill, c.1905

13b. South of South Stoke (Millennium viewpoint)

Location description The viewpoint is in an elevated position with 180 degree views across open countryside towards Salisbury Plain and the Mendip Hills to the south of Bath. It is situated in a gated area with a semi-circular stone seat built into the hillside and was created to mark the year 2000.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
accent.sizes.mash	ST 743612	Hinton Charterhouse Plateau and Cam Brook Valley



Significance of the View

The landscape to the south of South Stoke overlooks the Cam Brook valley, the northern slope of which contains tributary valleys and is an example of an enclosed limestone valley landscape type. It is part of the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

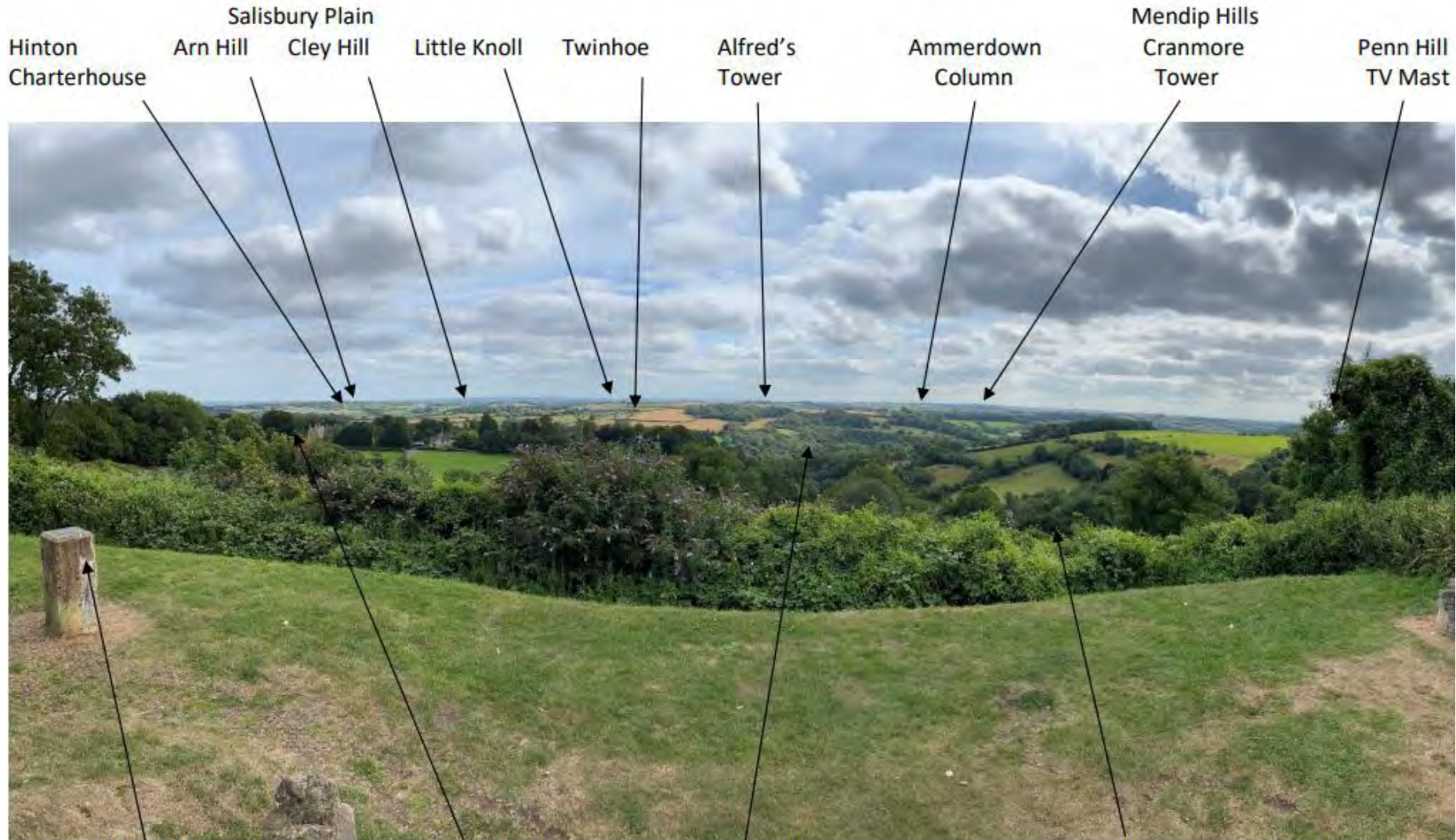
The extensive open vista is free of large scale modern development. It is used for agriculture, mainly pasture in the middle ground and arable in the background, with defined hedgerow field boundaries and irregularly shaped fields probably dating from the medieval period. There are also extensive areas of ancient deciduous woodland.

Features visible from the viewpoint include Hinton Charterhouse 2.5m, Arn Hill 16m (Warminster), Cley Hill 11.5m, Little Knoll 15m (Maiden Bradley), Twinhoe 1m, Alfred's Tower 16.5m (Stourhead), Ammerdown Column 6m, Cranmore Tower 11m and Penn Hill TV Mast 13.5m.

The absence of street lighting and modern development makes this a good place for stargazing at night.

Historical features include a roman villa site at Hodshill, South Stoke. The Fosse Way, a major roman road and route into and out of Bath is nearby, whilst a portion of the West Wansdyke is in the vicinity, to the north of the viewpoint.

Industrial heritage includes the Somersetshire Coal Canal in a tributary valley in the middle ground, whilst Victorian railway development saw the GWR branch line of the Limpley Stoke to Camerton Railway in the Cam Brook valley.



Plinth with view direction finder Roman Villa site Hodshill Cam Brook Valley Tributary Valley, Grove Wood, Somersetshire Coal Canal

The view from South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint looking South August 2024

Foreground

The viewpoint is within a grassed and mown, gated area with a semi-circular stone seat.

The hillside beyond dips steeply away into a tributary valley of the Cam Brook, with shrubs and vegetation partially obscuring the view from the seat. A direction finder plaque is mounted on a stone plinth near the seat.



Stone seat in sloping hillside, with entrance gate behind.

Middle ground

The middle ground is part of the Cotswold AONB. Grove Wood can be seen within the tributary valley. Beyond this is the Cam Brook valley where Combe Hay is located, with the wooded southern slopes of the valley visible.

This is an ecologically rich area with ancient woodland and the Cam Brook valley is a designated horseshoe bat corridor. Elevated limestone areas between the valleys contain farmland of mainly pasture, with defined field boundaries of hedgerows.

To the south of South Stoke is a treed limestone ridge with some buildings visible off Hodshill.



Direction finder.

Background

In the background is an elevated limestone plateau with farmland, mainly arable and with defined field boundaries.

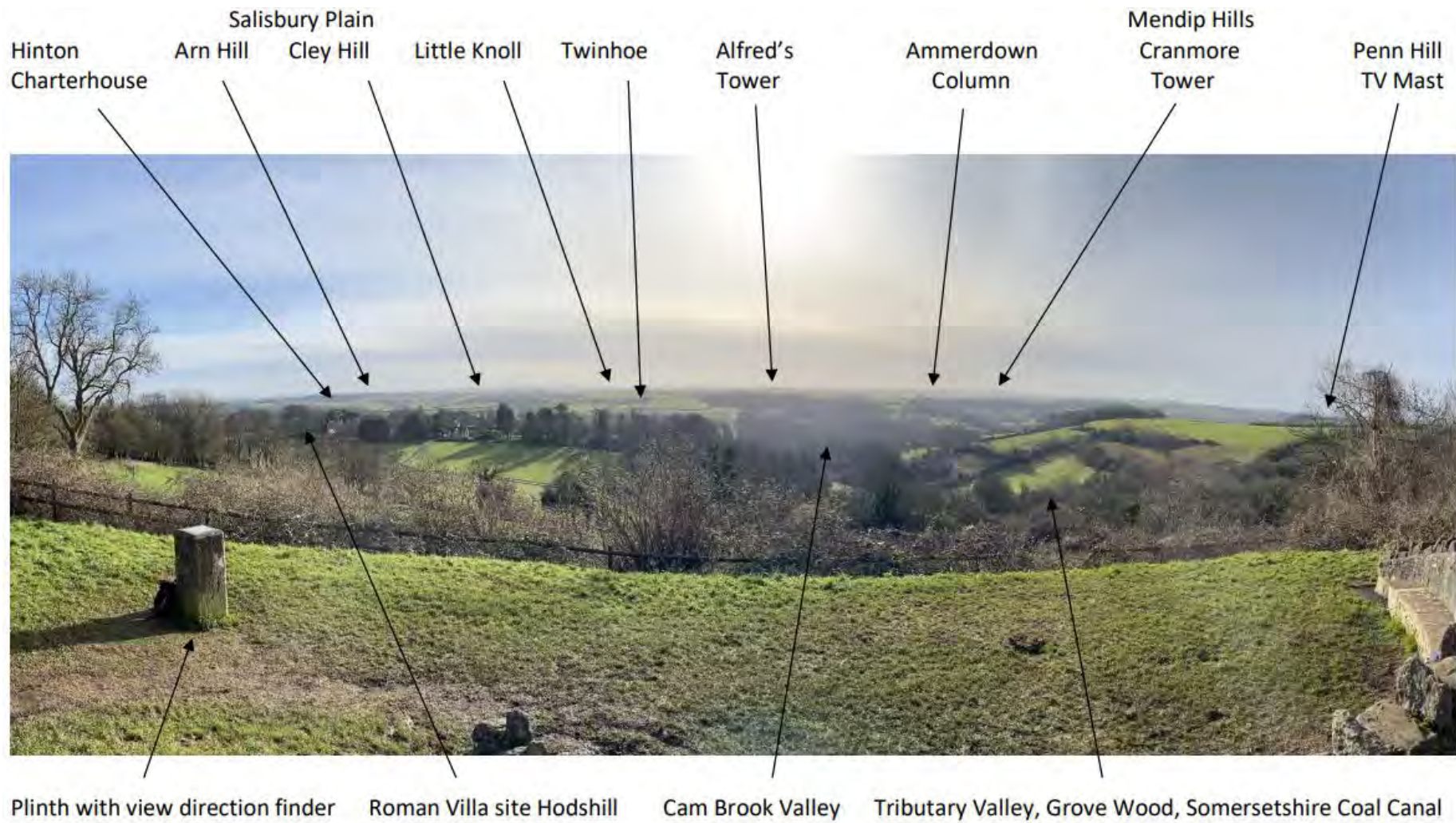
Ancient woodlands of Brake Woods on the plateau to the west of Twinhoe and Underdown Woods on the slope to the south of Combe Hay can be seen.

Features visible up to 16.5 miles distant and referenced on the direction finder include Arn Hill, Cley Hill, Little Knoll, Alfred's Tower, Ammerdown Column, Cranmore Tower and Penn Hill TV Mast.

The distant plateau of Salisbury Plain can be seen to the east and the Mendip Hills to the west.



Shrubs partially obscuring view from stone seat.



The view from South Stoke Millennium Viewpoint looking South January 2025

Heritage and historical references

The viewpoint is in the outlying setting of the World Heritage Site of Bath and is in part of the Cotswolds AONB.

Archaeological features in the visible area include a roman villa site situated at Hodshill, south of South Stoke. The villa was constructed close to the nearby Fosse Way, one of the main routes into and out of Bath. Approximately half a mile to the north is a section of the West Wansdyke, a defensive structure on the South Stoke plateau to the south of Bath.

Farming would have been a feature of the landscape of the landscape for centuries and it is probable that field boundaries date from the medieval period. Areas of ancient woodland remain, including some on steeper slopes.

There is a rich industrial heritage with the Somersetshire Coal Canal (dating from around 1800) situated within a tributary valley close to the viewpoint. This valley links to the Cam Brook valley where the former GWR branch line of the Limpley Stoke to Camerton railway operated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although there was some passenger traffic, the railway mainly transported goods including coal from Dunkerton and Camerton collieries and fullers earth.

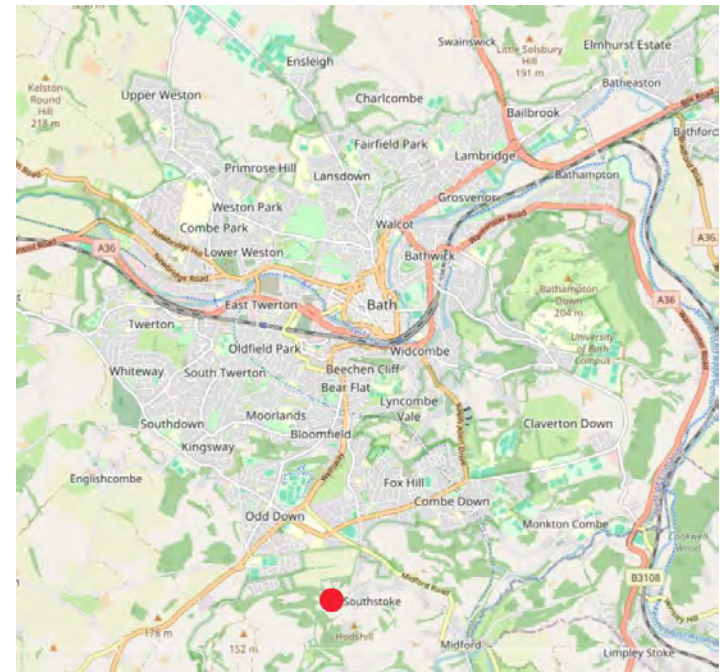
The viewpoint “was created to mark the year 2000 by local people with South Stoke Parish Council by whom it is managed” (source: information and liability limitation notice attached to entrance post).

13c. South of South Stoke

Location description The view to the South from South Stoke is best appreciated from the Millennium Viewpoint, at an altitude of 160m above sea level, to the west of the village off a public footpath.

What 3 Words **Grid reference** **Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area**

sweep.still.herbs ST 743613



Significance of the View

The Millennium Viewpoint at South Stoke offers the prospect (but not currently the reality) of a continuous 120-degree vista of the north Somerset. There are numerous listed structures in the villages of South Stoke, Twinhoe and Hinton Charterhouse.

Far horizon, as seen from the viewpoint, includes features that are between 10 and 20 miles away. Amongst those features are a high point of the Mendip Hills to the south west and Salisbury Plain to the south east. The view is predominantly rural, part agricultural and part wooded. In the past (roughly from 1750 to 1950), the view would have included indicators for the industrial character of this part of north Somerset, with evidence of coal mining, stone mining, canals and (later) a railway network. Although some of that evidence is still present in the landscape, in the main it is not visible from the viewpoint due to the nature of the topography and the density of woodlands.



View from Millennium Viewpoint, South Stoke looking South East September 2024



View from Millennium Viewpoint, South Stoke looking South September 2024



View from Millennium Viewpoint, South Stoke looking South West September 2024

Foreground

The foreground comprises the agricultural land to the south west of the village of South Stoke. The village itself is not visible from the viewpoint, with the exception of Hodshill country house, (including estate buildings). Hodshill, although a notable Edwardian country house, is not a listed building.

There are a number of listed structures (1 Grade I; 3 Grade II* and 40 Grade II) and 1 scheduled monument within the parish of South Stoke including, for example, a K6 telephone kiosk. None are visible from the viewpoint. The village of South Stoke is within a conservation area. The Grade I listed structure Midford Castle overlooks Horsecombe Vale, 1km to the east and is not visible from the village of South Stoke.

In summer, the view from the Millennium Viewpoint is restricted by the growth of tall trees to the east and the west of the viewpoint. In addition, the growth of bushes and other undergrowth across the foreground restricts the vertical extent of the view that can be seen from a seated position at the viewpoint, so that the full vertical view can now be appreciated only from the top of the mound behind the seat.

Middle ground

The middle ground comprises rolling hills and valleys of agricultural land and woodland. Within the Middle Ground, the villages of Twinhoe and Hinton Charterhouse can be seen.



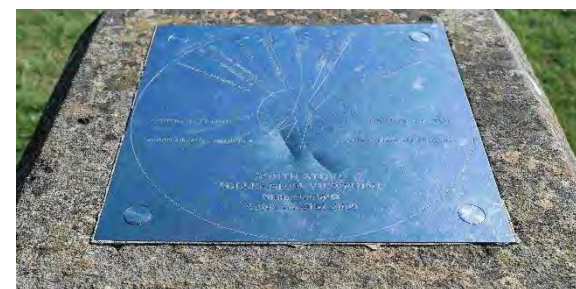
Twinhoe village.

There are 5 Grade II listed buildings in the village of Twinhoe – three farmhouses, one cottage and “Link Hill.” They may not all be directly visible from the viewpoint.

The village of Hinton Charterhouse can be seen in the middle distance in the image of Hodshill country house. There is 1 Grade I listed building and 31 Grade II and II* listed structures in the village of Hinton Charterhouse. The general location of these buildings can be seen from the viewpoint but individual buildings would be difficult to

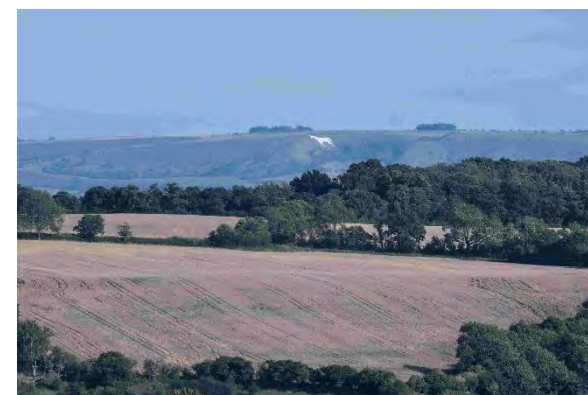
Background

The elevation of the Viewpoint allows a continuous view of the background landscape including features up to 20 miles distant. An orientation map (toposcope) at the Viewpoint indicates points of interest.



Viewpoint toposcope.

To the south east, the map indicates Westbury White Horse on the edge of Salisbury Plain. This is obscured by a tall tree to the far left of the Viewpoint. Nonetheless, the White Horse is visible from elsewhere in





Hodshill House.

identify without binoculars and may be obscured from view.

The hamlet of Iford situated in the valley of the River Frome (not visible from the viewpoint, but within the local area) includes a Grade 1 listed Manor House and Grade II* listed bridge.

Within the landscape, there remains some evidence of the industrial past of the area. For example, the disused Somersetshire Coal Canal runs along the valley of the Cam Brook to connect the coalmines of the Paulton area with the means of delivery of coal to distant markets via the Kennet and Avon Canal at Dundas. Due south of South Stoke, a flight of 22 locks was required to scale the 40m height difference between the coal mines and the K&A canal. 5 of the locks remain within the landscape and have been restored to a recognisable condition by the Somersetshire Coal Canal Society and are Grade II listed.



the village of South Stoke, including Pack Horse Lane to the east of the village.

To the south west, the map indicates Penn Hill TV Mast, on a high point of the Mendip Hills. This is partly obscured by a trees to the right but is visible from the far left of the Viewpoint.



Although hardly a thing of beauty, the TV mast marks a high point (but not the highest point) of the Mendip Hills at a distance of more than 13 miles.

Three towers are visible of the horizon as seen from the Viewpoint: Ammerdown Column, Cranmore Tower and Alfred's Tower. Those with keen eyesight may be able to identify them on the horizon within the image of Engine Wood.

Alfred's Tower (Grade I listed) on the Stourhead estate is a notable landmark. The

The general location of the canal can be inferred but is not directly visible from the viewpoint.

A pumping engine was required at the top of the flight of locks, to recycle the volume of water used when the locks are operated. Some elements of that structure remain at Engine Wood, although only the wood can be seen from the Viewpoint (in the centre of the image).



Engine Wood.

49m tall triangular tower was built in the 1760s by Henry Hoare to commemorate the end of the Seven Year's War with France at a site that is claimed to be the rallying point for the forces of Alfred the Great (King of Wessex) before the decisive battle with the Vikings at Erdington in 878CE. The tower is visible from the Viewpoint, and can be seen in the image of Engine Wood on the far horizon to the extreme left.

Ammerdown Column was built by the Jolliffe family (then owners of Ammerdown Estate) from 1854 as a near-replica of the Eddystone Lighthouse. The glass dome and light that once formed the top of the structure are no longer present. The column is Grade II* listed.

The Cranmore Tower is a 45m tall folly built in 1862-64 for John Moore Paget of Cranmore Hall. The tower is Grade II listed and can be seen on the horizon to the right of the image of Engine Wood.

Cley Hill, a prominent conical hill to the west of Warminster, is visible from the Viewpoint. Once part of the Longleat Estate, the hill is now owned by the National Trust and offers a viewpoint over the surrounding countryside.



Cley Hill.

Heritage and historical references

The Millennium Viewpoint at South Stoke was built around the turn of the millennium and funded by the people of South Stoke. The Viewpoint is accessible only from a footpath.

At the height of demand for coal, there would have been evidence of mining activity within the Somerset Coalfield, with more than 70 pits operating in Somerset at one time or another. There were concentrations of pits between Timsbury and High Littleton, around Paulton and between Writhlington and Farrington Gurney (all locations to the far south west of South Stoke). Very little physical evidence of mining remains at these sites. In any case, many of the mines were located in valleys and would not have been visible from South Stoke.

Stone mining was a second major industry in the local area. Oolitic limestone was cut from stone mines in the hills around Bath to build the expansion of the city in the Georgian period and supply stone to markets across the country. As the stone was mined underground rather than cut from surface quarries, there was little to see in the landscape even at the height of the trade. The means of moving stone from the mines to the routes to market (canals, tramways and eventually railways) provided the only visible evidence of the industry, most of which has been removed. Today, it is hard to believe that the landscape once contained major industry.

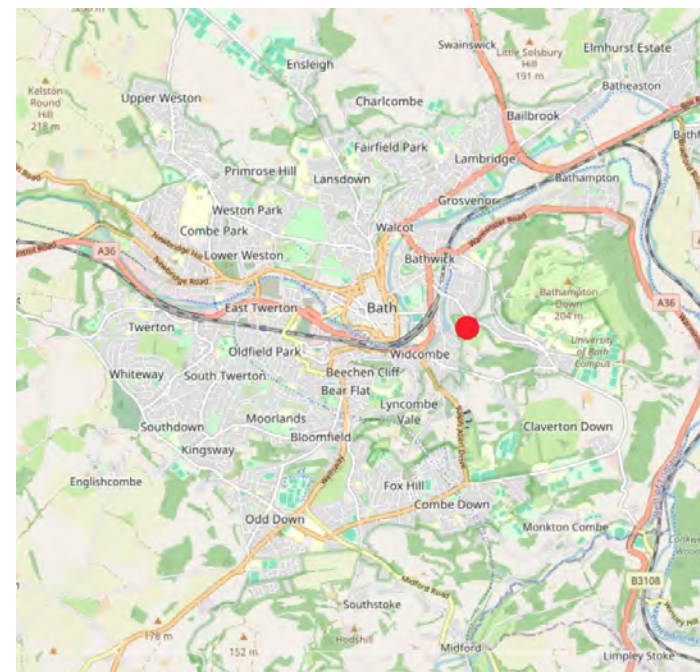
There was a fashion for folly-building in Somerset in the mid-19th century, of which Ammerdown and Cranmore are good examples. Another folly that no longer stands, Turner's Tower in the village of Faulkland, is an example of competitive tower building. John Turner (1818-1894), a local gentleman farmer and entrepreneur, decided to build a tower in the village as an added attraction for his pleasure gardens and ballroom. The original tower was built of stone and wood, was 60m tall and opened in 1890. A local legend claims that Turner built the tower to compete with the Ammerdown column. The tower was indeed taller than all of the other follies that could be seen from the viewing platform. Turner died in 1894 before he had realised a return on his £4000 investment in the tower, which was then sold. From that time on the tower declined (in height as well as popularity) and was demolished in the 1960s.

A walking route (which forms part of the Limestone Link long-distance footpath from the Cotswolds to the Mendips) follows the line of the Somersetshire Coal Canal between Tucking Mill and Combe Hay south of South Stoke (and not directly visible from the viewpoint). The path continues westward, crossing the Mendip Hills at Dolebury Warren before terminating at Rowberrow.

14. Bathwick Fields

Location description The viewpoint is at the bench by the gate above Richens Orchard in the middle of the meadows owned by the National Trust. The Fields have panoramic views of the city and to the west down the Avon valley.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
owner.hears.hills	ST 761645	North Road & Cleveland Walk (?)



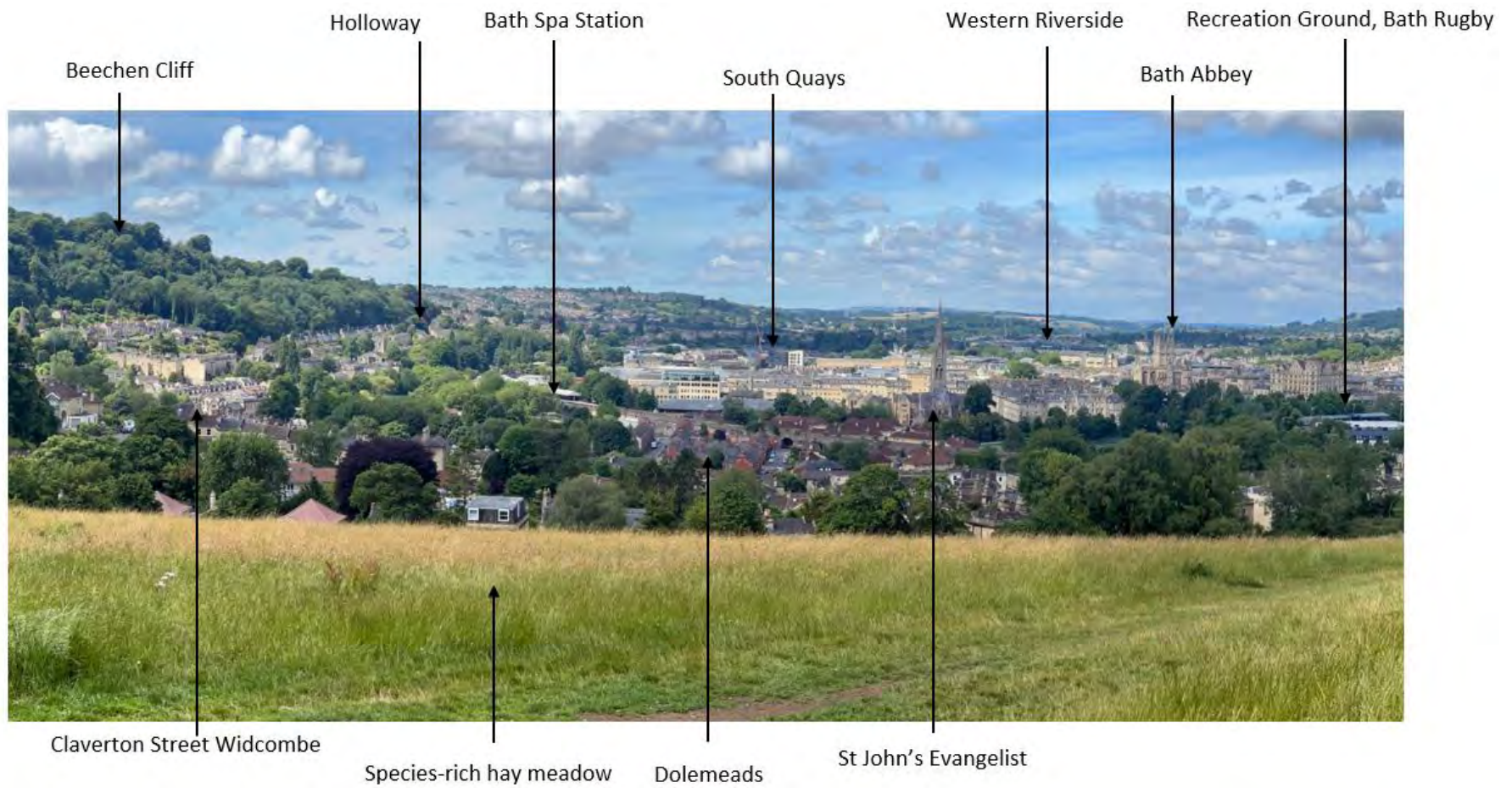
Significance of the View

This viewpoint represents a key view from fields to the east into Bath. The fields, bounded by Sydney Buildings, Bathwick Hill and Smallcombe are owned by the National Trust have changed little in hundreds of years. The National Trust Skyline Walk passes through.

The view from open meadows near the city edge offers views across the historic centre and westwards down the Avon Valley. Also looking South towards Widcombe and Beechen Cliff highlighting the villas and valleys comprising some of the rural setting of the World Heritage Site.

The fields are within the Bath City conservation area and the World Heritage Site and the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ANOB), and the field in the foreground is managed by the National Trust as meadow land as is a nearby orchard.

The open fields form the foreground to the view and play an important role in the backdrop to Bath views from within the city, and from the Western Hillside.



The view looking west from the Bathwick Fields viewpoint September 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view is Bathwick Fields formed of grassland and meadows leading down to the treeline of Sydney Buildings. In the centre you can see the area of red-brick housing, called the Dolemeads, which is bounded by the railway line and the river. This was a ground-breaking development of social housing built in the early 20th Century. The area was prone to severe flooding and damaged by bombs during the Bath Blitz in 1941.



View taken towards Beechen Cliff and Widcombe.

Middle ground

The middle ground of this view comprises the historic centre of the city of Bath seen with the hills and cutting through the Avon Valley. Built landmarks include Bath Spa Station, St Johns, South Parade, Bath Abbey, the Empire and the Bath Rugby Stadium at the Recreation Ground. To the left you can see the centre of Widcombe, the ancient route of the Holloway with Beechen Cliff above. Behind the historic centre you can see the new developments along the Avon valley including the South Quays and the Western Riverside (phase 1).

Background

The background of this view is formed by Whiteway on the south western edge of Bath and the hills either side of the river Avon, Dean Hill, Asbury Hill and Stantonbury Hill.



View taken to the west highlighting the new developments of the Western Riverside.

Heritage and historical references

As can be seen by the picture from the 1860's Bathwick Fields have remained unchanged for several centuries whilst the City below them has grown and developed. From these fields you could have monitored progress as the City grew to the east of the river. The development of Pultney Bridge and the grand streets that followed, the pleasure gardens at Sydney Gardens and other pleasure gardens long gone like those at Bathwick Villa. Fine villas were developed on Bathwick Hill and Sydney Buildings set on the edge of the countryside. The Kennet & Avon Canal and then Brunel's railway would have introduced major changes to the near- landscape setting. You can clearly see the town gas works on Pultney Road removed in the 1960s.

From the fields you would have also seen the changes to the setting of the City particularly in Widcombe & Beechen Cliff. Many of the significant changes took place in the 1960s when the Rossiter Road by-pass (A36) was created leading to a loss of many historic buildings on the southern riverbank. Parts of these areas were prone to flooding and needed re-development but many fine streets were also lost in the period often referred to as the 'sack of Bath'. Now many more trees are visible and the housing less dense.

Turning back towards the city centre and the Avon valley from Bathwick Fields the development of the riverside area initially through Victorian industrialisation would have been clearly visible. As are the brownfield developments of more recent years with new office spaces (South Quays) and residential housing (Western Riverside) being clearly visible with more planned.



View taken towards the viewpoint from Beechen Cliff in the 1860s.



View towards Widcombe and Beechen Cliff taken in 1938.

15. Kelston Roundhill

Location description Located to the north-west of Bath, on the Cotswold Way.

What 3 Words

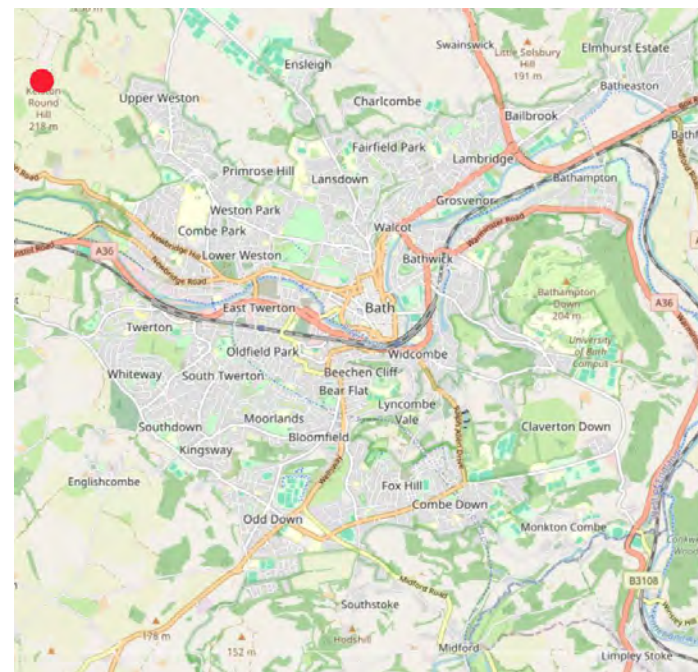
Grid reference

Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

bombard.sprouting.amuse

ST 710674

This is one of seven Lansdown views in this set (Woolley, Battlefields, Hanging Hill (2), North Stoke, Prospect Stile, Beckford Tower).



Significance of the View

Both Prospect Stile and Kelston Round Hill are famous Cotswold Way viewpoints, often used by the Victorians and the Georgians before them.

Stunning views from Prospect stile on the SW corner of Lansdown racecourse, overlooking Kelston Round Hill below, and with views of over 200 degs from East to North West.

The topograph at the viewpoint points of the various landmarks, including out to the distant Pen Y Fan over 85kms away in the Brecon Beacons.

Kelston Round Hill just 500m to the southwest (on the Cotswold Way) has even wider view (270degs) – probably one of the best around Bath.

Foreground

Small tree copse on apex of hill. Open fields dropping down in all directions.

Middle ground

Kelston Round Hill in front. Upper Weston to the left. Saltford and various villages to the right. And much more.

Background

Bath, Coombe Down, Corston, Keynsham, Bristol and the towns and villages to the North. The River Avon. River Severn and Severn Estuary.

Skyline:

Wiltshire and the North Wessex Downs, Salisbury Plains, Mendips and Chew Valley, Dundry, Leigh Woods, Clifton Suspension Bridge, Severn Estuary, S Wales (Cardiff and Newport), Brecon Beacons, Severn suspension bridges, Chepstow, Forest of Dean.

Heritage and historical references

Ancient Landscape and Possible Prehistoric Use

The hill's distinctive conical form has long prompted speculation about prehistoric activity. While no confirmed archaeological structures survive on the summit, its prominence above the Avon valley makes it a plausible site for ancient wayfinding, ritual gathering, or territorial marking. Its silhouette reads like a natural barrow in the wider prehistoric landscape of the Cotswolds and Somerset.

Medieval and Early Land Ownership

Kelston and its surrounding lands appear in medieval charters and estate records. The hill formed part of the manorial lands associated with Kelston village, with its slopes used for grazing and woodland management. The name "Kelston" itself is thought to derive from "Celf's tūn," indicating early Saxon settlement in the area.

Georgian and Picturesque Associations

By the 18th century, Kelston Roundhill became part of the **picturesque circuit** enjoyed by visitors to Bath. Its clean, symmetrical profile and elevated views made it a favoured subject for artists and topographers. The hill helped frame the western edge of Bath's celebrated landscape setting, reinforcing the city's identity as a place where architecture and nature were in harmonious dialogue.

Victorian Landmark and Local Folklore

The lone tree that once crowned the summit became a beloved Victorian landmark, appearing in sketches, postcards, and local stories. Even after its loss, the idea of the "Kelston Roundhill tree" persists in collective memory, symbolising endurance and rural identity.

20th-Century Recreation and Public Access

The hill became a popular walking destination, offering panoramic views across Bath, the Mendips, and the Cotswold escarpment. Its role as a public vantage point reflects broader 20th-century shifts toward countryside access, leisure walking, and landscape appreciation.

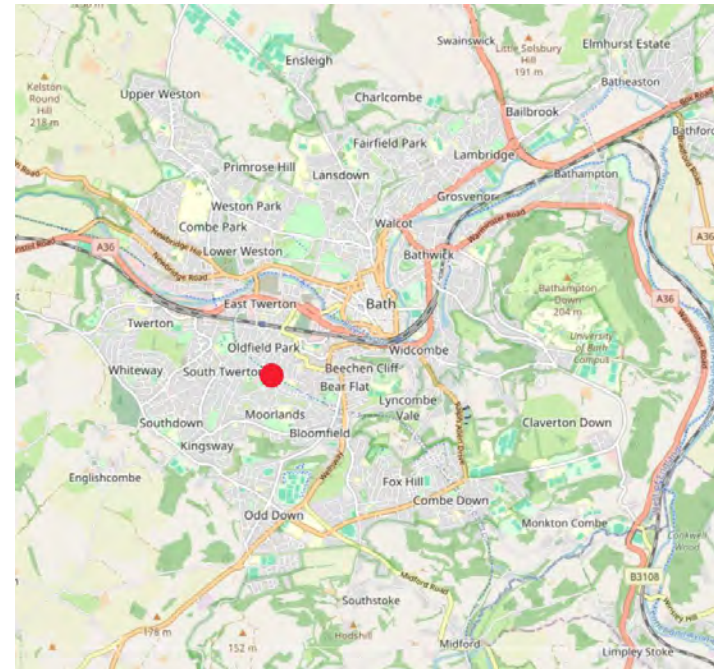
Contemporary Cultural Identity

Today, Kelston Roundhill stands as a visual anchor in Bath's western skyline. It embodies the layered heritage of the region—prehistoric possibility, medieval landholding, Georgian aesthetics, Victorian sentiment, and modern recreation—while remaining a powerful symbol of the city's relationship with its surrounding hills. For this reason it is a feature relevant to one of the six Outstanding Universal Values of the City of Bath World Heritage inscription.

16a. Two Tunnels Linear Park (Monksdale Road)

Location description The former Somerset & Dorset railway, now Linear Park, passes through Oldfield Park on an embankment. A bridge takes the footpath and cycleway over Monksdale Road from where views can be seen over Oldfield Park, towards Lansdown and Solsbury Hill to the north north east.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
sparks.agents.ages	ST 737639	Oldfield Park, Lansdown and Solsbury Hill.



Significance of the View

The embankment was constructed on the southern slopes of Bath, as part of the northern extension of the Somerset and Dorset Railway, which opened in 1874 and became an important cross country route and holiday line to the coast. The line was eventually closed in 1966 as part of the Beeching cuts. The original brick arch railway bridge over Monksdale Road was demolished in 1972. The present pedestrian and cycleway bridge was constructed in 2012 as part of the Two Tunnels Greenway which was opened in 2013 and allowed the view to the north east to be seen once again from the bridge.

The viewpoint looks down Monksdale Road to the suburb of Oldfield Park, constructed in Bath stone in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. The east side of Monksdale Road is presently a construction site for a care home, replacing the red brick former Wansdyke Business Centre, originally workshops of the Kingstone Ironworks in early 1900s.

Beyond Oldfield Park, the northern slopes of Bath can be seen with the terraces and crescents of the Georgian Upper Town. In the distance can be seen wooded slopes of the limestone hills of Lansdown and Solsbury Hill to the north and north east of the city of Bath.



The view looking north east from Two Tunnels Linear Park, bridge over Monksdale Road August 2024

Foreground

The foreground is the cyclepath and railings of the pedestrian bridge/cycleway. There are mature and semi mature trees on the embankment slopes, which obscure the view either side of the bridge, particularly in summer. Brambles and vegetation previously growing over and narrowing the pedestrian/cycleway have been cut or have died back improving accessibility. However, graffiti has appeared on the bridge and surroundings.



Cycle path on former railway line.

Middle ground

The middle ground of this view is along Monksdale Road in the suburb of Oldfield Park, with Victorian terraced houses on the west side and a construction site for a care home on the east side. From the western end of the bridge the Moorfields pub can be seen, as can St Bartholomew’s Church. A development on Upper Oldfield Park is a prominent feature on the skyline. The trees to either side of Monksdale Road frame the view but, particularly in summer, also narrow the vista that can be seen from a single point.



Construction of care home on former ironworks site.

Background

The background is the green hillside of Lansdown. On the lower slopes are the bath stone terraces and crescents of the Georgian Upper Town of Bath. Solsbury Hill is also visible to the east.



The view looking north east from Two Tunnels Linear Park, bridge over Monksdale Road January 2025

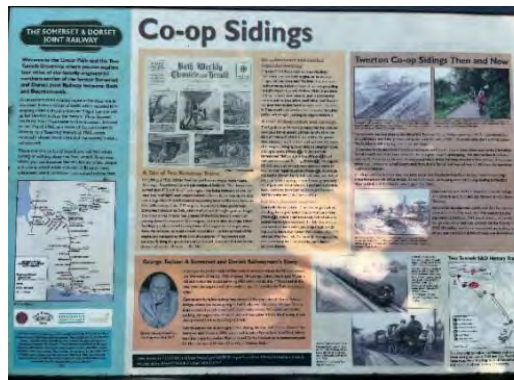
Heritage and historical references

The viewpoint is on the southern slopes of Bath, situated on a bridge between embankments constructed as part of the northern extension of the Somerset and Dorset Railway. This section of the railway opened in 1874 and became an important cross country route and holiday line to the coast. At this time the view would have been visible to passengers travelling on the line.

After the construction of the railway line, the suburb of Oldfield Park was developed with predominantly two storey stone terraced housing at a time when Bath was becoming more industrialised. Along the east side of Monksdale Road were red brick buildings from 1900 forming workshops of the Kingstone Ironworks which opened in 1903.

To the west of the viewpoint is an information board entitled Co-op Sidings, which tells the story of two runaway trains in July 1936. A heavy train was brought to a halt near Radstock when a driver of a tank engine jumped off his train and climbed on the runaway locomotive to bring it to a stand. However, the fireman also jumped down, leaving the tank engine propelling 8 wagons towards Wellow, Midford and Bath. Seven wagons were derailed at Midford, partially demolishing the signal box whilst the remaining wagon and engine continued through the two tunnels and eventually came to a stop at Claude Avenue bridge. The story was recounted by local railwayman George Tucker in 2017.

The railway line was eventually closed in 1966 as part of the Beeching cuts. The original brick arched railway bridge over Monksdale Road was demolished in 1972. The present pedestrian and cycleway bridge was constructed in 2012 as part of the Two Tunnels Greenway, opened in 2013 and allowed the view to be seen once again from the bridge. Since this time vegetation has grown and encroaches. The former ironworks, which became the Wansdyke Business Centre is now a construction site for a new care home.



Nearby information board about the former railway.



Former Ironworks, which became the Wansdyke Business Centre.



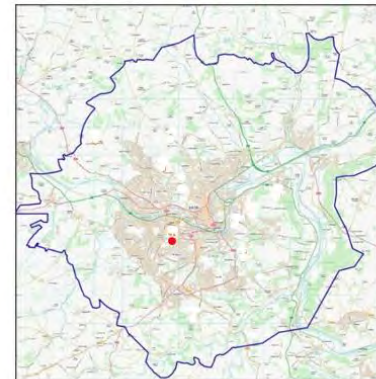
Pedestrian and cycleway with encroaching vegetation.

16b. Two Tunnels Linear Park (Monksdale Road)

Location description

The former Somerset & Dorset railway, now Linear Park, passes through Oldfield Park on an embankment. A bridge takes the footpath and cycleway over Monksdale Road from where views can be seen over Oldfield Park, towards Lansdown and Solsbury Hill to the north northeast.

The bridge over Monksdale Road provides one of the few places in the area that offers distant views of the city of Bath and the plateau of Lansdown to the north, including many of the architectural and natural features that contribute to Bath's listing as a UNESCO World Heritage.



Source Bathscape Views and Vistas Project



Source Bath and NE Somerset Council Maps

What 3 Words

tilt.groups.jaws

Grid reference

ST 737639

Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

Bear Flat & Oldfield Park Character Area

Significance of the View

The Two Tunnels Greenway (TTG) follows the route of the disused Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway (S&DJR) as it climbs from the Lower Bristol Road at the south west of the city, through the Devonshire Tunnel and Combe Down Tunnel, emerging in the countryside near Tucking Mill, south of Bath. Where the line crosses Monksdale Road in Oldfield Park a new bridge enables continuity of the shared cycling and walking route. The bridge provides one of the few places on the TTG that has views of the Georgian City of Bath and surrounding countryside to the north. It provides a traffic-free route for cycling and walking from the western edge of the city to the countryside south of Bath. It is used for daily commuting, recreational activity and organised events. The TTG ascends through urban Oldfield Park in a series of cuttings and embankments until it reaches Devonshire Tunnel. Views from the route are scarce.



The view looking north north east from Monksdale Road bridge on the Two Tunnels Greenway July 2024

Foreground

The foreground comprises high-density housing of Oldfield Park, which merges into a roofscape. There is little of architectural or historical interest in the immediate area. To the right foreground is a development site for a 68-bed care home, which replaces the former industrial buildings. The former buildings were described as non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) and the proposed scheme aims to replicate the façade of the west elevation of the former structure to give at least the visual impression of a mixed residential and industrial area.



Development site for new care home.

Middle ground

The middle ground comprises further roofscape of housing in the Oldfield Park area. To the right of the view, the relatively recent apartment building “Charters” at 43 Upper Oldfield Park is prominent. The planning application for this site was controversial and received a number of objections from community groups. The proposed scheme was revised twice before approval. The Moorfields public house is obscured by vegetation at the present time and is very likely to be obscured by the care home being constructed on the site of the former Wansdyke Business Centre.

Rising above the roofscape towards the west of the view is the modern development of apartment buildings along the riverside that are prominent due to the brightness of the stone finish.

Background

The distant provides the real value of the view from this location. Many of the listed buildings from the Georgian expansion of Bath are visible, at least in part. Chief amongst these sites are: Royal Crescent (top half visible), Lansdown Crescent, Cavendish Crescent and Somerset Place. The mature trees of Royal Victoria Park as well as the field of the former Approach Golf Course are visible to the west of and below Cavendish Crescent

St Stephen’s Church can be seen together with a range of buildings on or around Lansdown Road, some from the Georgian and Victorian periods while others are more recent infills, including the recent development at Hope House (the former Bath High School). The hill reaches the plateau of Lansdown, where the tower and spire of Royal High School, Bath can be seen. Further to the west along the skyline, Beckford’s Tower is visible from the eastern end of Monksdale Road Bridge (but obscured by trees in the general view). To the east, the flat top of Solsbury Hill is seen above the rooftops of the Middle Ground. The right-hand margin of the view is obscured by trees in summer.

By traversing Monksdale Road Bridge from west to east, it is possible to extend the range of view, particularly towards the western outskirts of Bath. Open fields and woods can be seen below Beckford’s Tower, which emphasises the proximity to open countryside that the city of Bath enjoys.



Development site for new care home, January 2025.

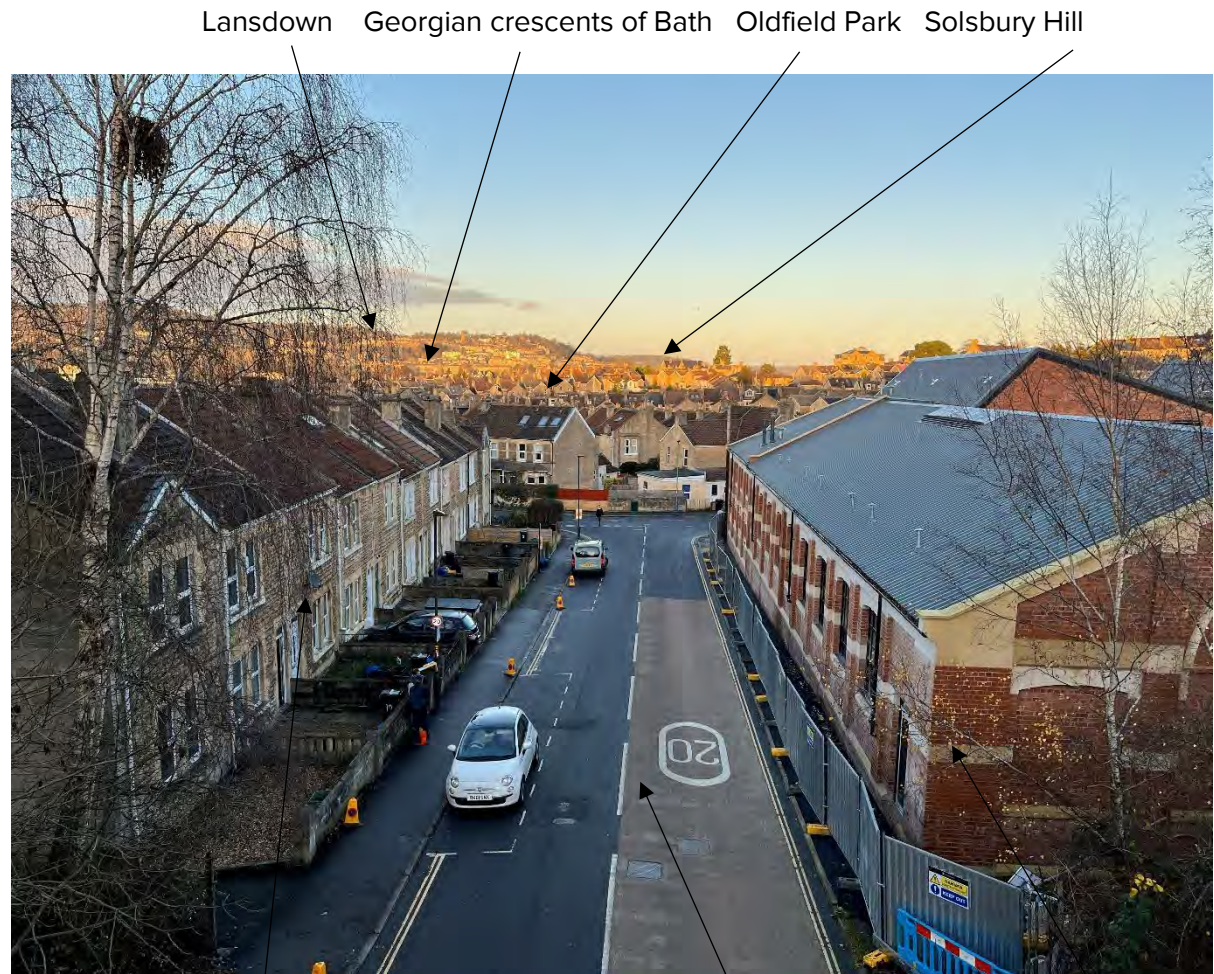
This substantial building will be of three stories. Construction has yet to reach the maximum planned height. The façade of the west elevation is not complete and in any case is covered by sheeting. It is not possible at present to assess the extent to which the façade of the former industrial buildings has been replicated. When completed, this building will obscure much of the Oldfield Park housing in the middle ground, as well as the Moorfields public house.



The Royal Crescent and Lansdown Crescent can be seen above the roof tops.



During winter, Beckford's Tower can be seen on the skyline to the far left of the view.



Lansdown Georgian crescents of Bath Oldfield Park Solsbury Hill

Victorian terraces of Oldfield Park

Monksdale Road

Construction site for care home

The view looking north east from Two Tunnels Linear Park, bridge over Monksdale Road December 2025

Heritage and historical references

The Monksdale Road overbridge was built in the 1870s as part of the Evercreech to Bath extension of the Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway (S&DJR). The bridge allowed a single file of road traffic to pass beneath the railway (Image 1968_Monksdale_Rd_Railway_Bridge). The Somerset & Dorset Railway (built 1862) connected Burnham on Sea with the Dorset Coast at Broadstone. It was not a commercial success. The extension to Bath connected the S&DJR to the Midland Railway at Green Park Station, which enabled through trains from the west and north of England to the south coast (for example the Pines Express daily service from Manchester to Bournemouth). The line to Bath faced technical challenges. The incline through Oldfield Park was 1:50, which required double-heading of locomotives or bank engines in some cases. Two tunnels were required through the limestone hills (Combe Down Tunnel is over one mile in length) to access the open countryside south of Bath. The line was single track which limited the traffic flow. The S&DJR was closed in 1966 follow the rationalisation of the railway network by Dr Beeching.

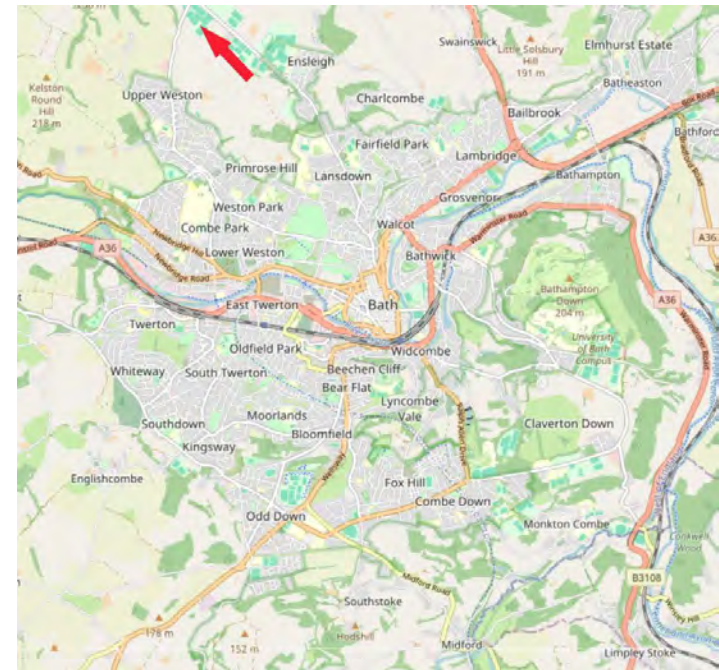
In 1942, the Luftwaffe carried out a series of bombing raids on Bath. Bombs were scattered over a wide area of the city (aerial bombing was not accurate at the time). Two bombs fell immediately north of the Monksdale Road overbridge, which caused serious damage to the terrace of houses to the west of the bridge and the industrial premises to the east (Image: Bath_Damage_Maps-Credit-Bath_Record_Office). The terrace of houses was repaired (or rebuilt) after WW2 along with many other damaged houses in Oldfield Park. The industrial site was repaired, but has recently been demolished.

Due to the restriction on free movement of traffic in the Moorland Road area, the opportunity was taken in the 1973 to demolish the bridge and its abutments and widen the road (Images: Railway_Bridge_Monksdale_Rd_17_Sept_1972 and 1973_Monksdale_Rd_demolition-Credit-John_Rawlings). Also in the 1970s, the land that carried the line of the S&DJR was purchased by the local authority and a linear park was developed, but this was discontinuous due to the removal of Monksdale Road overbridge (amongst other factors). Following a campaign by Sustrans and support from the local authority and community fundraising, the Two Tunnels Greenway was opened in 2013. Within the scheme, a new steel bridge was installed at Monksdale Road. This had a very much greater span than the old railway bridge but a much lighter structure, to match the loading of cyclists and walkers. (Image: 2012_Monksdale_Road_Bridge_delivey-Credit-Two_Tunnels)

17. Lansdown Hanging Hill looking North

Location description Hanging Hill is located to the north-west of Bath, close to the Grenville Monument, marking the location of a 1643 battlefield.

What 3 Words arise.darling.storage
Grid reference Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
 ST 712701 This is one of seven Lansdown views in this set (Woolley, Battlefields, Hanging Hill (2), North Stoke, Prospect Stile, Beckford Tower).



Significance of the View

Two views in one – Hanging Hill has this truly awesome view to the north along the Cotswold escarpment, to the Malverns in the distance, the Wye valley and the Forest of Dean. Then there are the Welsh Montains! On a clear day you can see Pen-Y-Fan over 50 miles way. Yet just a few steps to the south through the kissing gate at Hanging Hill, takes you to a magnificent view to the South West across Keynsham and south Bristol – to the Mendips to the south across to the Severn.

The viewpoint is on the Cotswold Way.



View from Hanging Hill looking North March 2025

Foreground

Steeply descending “common” down to Upton Cheyney.

Middle ground

Wick, Abson, Pucklechurch and north east Bristol (Filton)

Background

Mid and North Bristol, the river Severn and the many many towns and villages up the severn estuary. Newport and Chepstow across the river.

Skyline: Cotswold Escarpment, with a glimpse of the Malvern hills in the very far distance (50 miles away). Anticlockwise to the Forest of Dean, to the Welsh Mountains (Black Mountains, Brecon)

Heritage and historical references

Hanging Hill is a prominent high point in South Gloucestershire, immediately north of Bath and closely tied to the region's historical landscape.

Hanging Hill lies directly along the battlefield landscape of the Battle of Lansdown (1643)—a major engagement of the English Civil War. Information boards and flags along the Cotswold Way near Hanging Hill mark this historic site.

The hill sits on the Cotswold Way, a long-distance trail that passes key heritage markers including Sir Bevil Grenville's Monument, commemorating a Royalist commander who fell during the battle.

A historic OS Trig Pillar (TP3599) stands near the summit, marking Hanging Hill's role in historic cartography and surveying. The hill is also the highest point in South Gloucestershire, giving it long-standing geographic significance.

Walking routes linking Bath and Hanging Hill include views toward Beckford's Tower, a Grade I listed building, and landscapes shaped by notable designers such as Lancelot "Capability" Brown in the wider Bath region.

The drystone wall has just had a huge repair by the Cotswold Wardens with significant clearance of annoying vegetation – it now looks SO good.

18. Lansdown Hanging Hill looking South West

Location description Hanging Hill is located to the north-west of Bath, close to the Grenville Monument, marking the location of a 1643 battlefield.

What 3 Words **Grid reference**

port.blatantly.clumped ST 713701

Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

This is one of seven Lansdown views in this set (Woolley, Battlefields, Hanging Hill (2), North Stoke, Prospect Stile, Beckford Tower).



Significance of the View

Two views in one – Hanging Hill has this magnificent view to the South West across Keynsham and south Bristol – to the Mendips to the south across to the Severn. Yet just a few steps to the north through the kissing gate at Hanging Hill, takes you to an even better view to the north across to the Welsh mountains.

The viewpoint is on the Cotswald Way.



View from Hanging Hill looking South West March 2025

Foreground

Recently repaired very long drystone wall – with most of the obstructive vegetation (scrub/bramble) removed. Steeply descending open escarpment.

Middle ground

Saltford, Swineford and Keynsham and other villages.

Background

So much! Bath, Coombe Down, Corston, Keynsham, South Bristol and the towns and villages to the South West.

Skyline:

Mendip Hills, Dundry, River Severn. A huge vista.

Heritage and historical references

Hanging Hill is a prominent high point in South Gloucestershire, immediately north of Bath and closely tied to the region's historical landscape.

Hanging Hill lies directly along the battlefield landscape of the Battle of Lansdown (1643)—a major engagement of the English Civil War. Information boards and flags along the Cotswold Way near Hanging Hill mark this historic site.

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The drystone wall has just had a huge repair by the Cotswold Wardens with significant clearance of annoying vegetation – it now looks SO good.

19. North Stoke

Location description

What 3 Words

Grid reference

harp.units.abode

ST 706688

Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

This is one of seven Lansdown views in this set (Woolley, Battlefields, Hanging Hill (2), North Stoke, Prospect Stile, Beckford Tower).



Significance of the View

Sitting just below Little Down Roman Fort, on the famous Cotswold Way, this spot has stunning views overlooking North Stoke and Bitton below. With views of over 270 degs from South East (across southern Bath) clockwise to the North East looking along the Cotswold escarpment toward Gloucester.

In the distant, the farthest point that can be seen is Pen Y Fan over 85kms away in the Brecon Beacons.



View from North Stoke viewpoint looking East March 2025

Foreground

The hill drops way with open ground to the villages below.

Middle ground

Villages of North Stoke and Bitton.

Background

Southern part of Bath, Coombe Down, Corston, Keynsham, Bristol and the towns and villages to the North. The River Avon. River Severn, Severn Estuary and North to Gloucester and the Malvern Hills (75kms).

Skyline: Cranborne Chase and the West Wiltshire Downs, Salisbury Plains, Mendips and Chew Valley, Dundry, Leigh Woods, Clifton Suspension Bridge, Severn Estuary, S Wales (Cardiff and Newport), Brecon Beacons, Severn suspension bridges, Chepstow, Forest of Dean, Malvern Hills, Gloucester, Cotswold Escarpment.

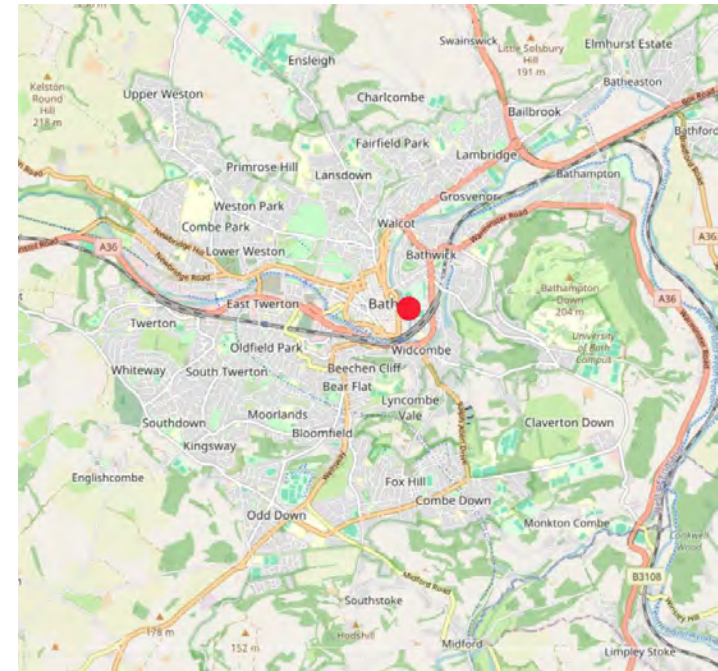
Heritage and historical references

A particularly wide vista. And just behind you when looking at this vista is the Little Down Roman Hill fort. So you need to imagine the Romans soldiers taking in a similar vista (but no Bristol!).

20. North Parade Bridge

Location description The viewpoint is located in the centre of North Parade Bridge, on the northern pavement, looking north-west towards Pulteney Bridge. There are also views looking south towards Prior Park, but this view was chosen because of its views of Pulteney bridge and the riverside walks.

What 3 Words	Grid reference	Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area
prop.deputy.began	ST 753647	14 - Pulteney Road



Significance of the View

This viewpoint provides an opportunity to see the River Avon in the city centre and to learn about the history of the relationship between the river and the city, including the mill buildings which formerly stood in this area. The weir was built in its current V-shape in the early 1970s, with an associated sluice gate to help prevent flooding.

This city-centre viewpoint is busy and popular with tourists. It is easily accessible, and provides excellent views of Pulteney Bridge and associated buildings. Camden Crescent and the tower of St Stephen's church can be seen on the hillside behind.

The low height of this viewpoint gives a different perspective on the setting of the city- looking up at the wooded backdrop of Beacon Hill.

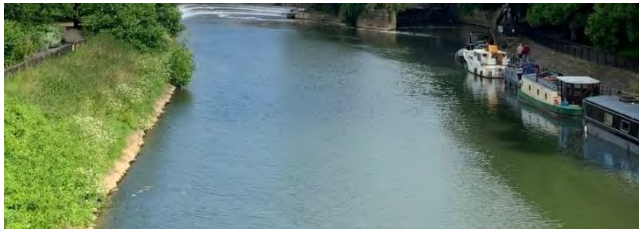
North Parade Bridge was originally constructed in 1835 as a wrought-iron structure, as part of mid-19th Century improvements to the infrastructure of the city. This view would therefore not have been possible until this date. However, views of the river and Pulteney Bridge were possible from the adjacent Parade Gardens and Georgian riverside walks (still popular today).



The view looking north-west from North Parade Bridge June 2024

Foreground

The foreground of this view is dominated by the river Avon (a Site of Nature Conservation Importance) and its banks. The western (left) bank is covered in weedy vegetation, The eastern (right) bank is concrete-faced with utilitarian railings and an avenue of trees which screens the Rugby Ground. There are riverside paths and benches on the right banks. Compared to the 2017 image in the foreground on the east bank the Rugby Stadium isn't visible anymore, due to the growth of the trees.



River in foreground with Parade Gardens on left and Stadium on right.

Middle ground

The middle ground of this view comprises Pulteney Bridge and the weir below. The iconic Pulteney Bridge was originally designed by Robert Adam and opened in 1773 to connect the city centre with the new suburb of Bathwick (then still countryside).

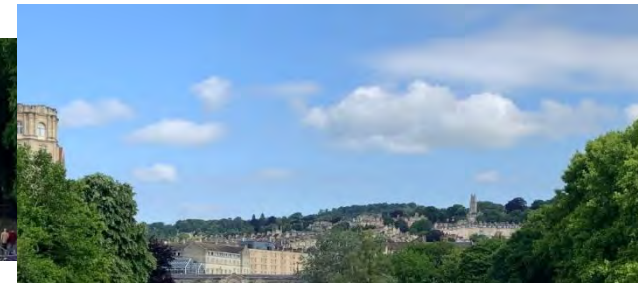
The bridge was designed in a Neo-classical Palladian style), and the roadway is lined with shops. Today Pulteney Bridge is a Scheduled Monument and Listed Building, and one of the most popular sites in Bath. Visible immediately beyond the bridge are the rear elevations of buildings in Walcot Street. To the right of the bridge is the flood channel and sluice gates.



Pulteney Bridge and weir.

Background

The background of this view is made up of the well-treed slopes of Beacon Hill. Georgian buildings visible in the background of the view include Camden Crescent and the tower of St Stephen's church, which is the only building to break the treed skyline. Because this viewpoint is so low, there is a stronger sense of looking up towards the skyline.



Beacon Hill and Camden Crescent.

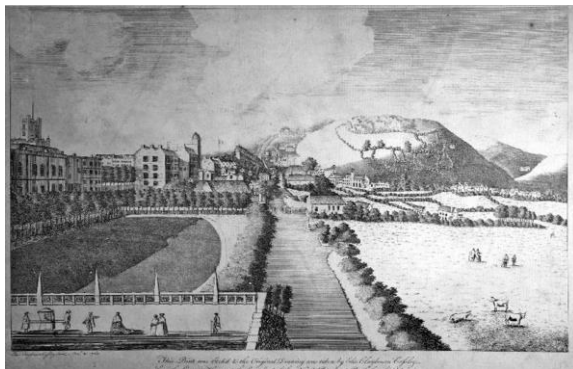
Heritage and historical references

The view looking northward from about this point became popular soon after the building of North Parade in the 1740s, as shown in the early print by Elizabeth Crossley (above right). The Parades, built high above the flood plain of the river, with level access over the city wall to the Assembly Rooms, Pump Room etc., provided an ideal extended viewing platform, with views to the north, east and south. On the right bank are Bathwick Mill and the Pleasure Grounds which opened c.1730. On the left bank are Monk's Mill, the Lower Assembly Rooms, North Parade and the open green below the city wall (now the site of parade gardens).

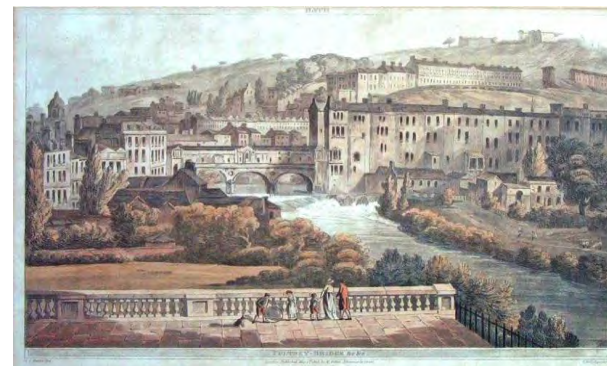
With the building of Pulteney Bridge in 1774, together with Great Pulteney Street on the Bathwick side in the 1790s, this view became even more important, and numerous illustrations were produced in the early 19th century, such as the J.C.Nattes print of 1805 (below right). Although the Pleasure Gardens were largely destroyed by the development of Great Pulteney Street, its remaining buildings can be seen on the extreme right. In the background is Camden Crescent, together with the end of collapsed buildings which remained as a picturesque ruin for many years.

The river was an important power source so industry was located nearby. Monk's Mill and Bathwick Mill were originally corn mills, but later used for fulling cloth, and for laundry. Monk's Mill was subsequently enlarged and used for various purposes, including steam pumping water for use in the city, before burning down in 1884. The bank below the tailrace became a wharf and the surrounding area, now part of the Recreation Ground, filled with light commercial premises such as Joseph Day's engineering workshops where he invented the 2-stroke engine. Bathwick Mill and the Spring Gardens house were cleared in the 1970s to make way for the new weir and flood gates.

North Parade Bridge, originally constructed in 1835 from cast-iron, provided a road route to the attractions around Prior Park and Beechen Cliff without having to pass through the commercial area of Southgate Street and riverside slums of Dolemeads.



*North Parade View 1759 by Elizabeth Crossley.
This view pre-dates Pulteney Bridge. [Bath Central Library]*



Pulteney View, J.C.Nattes (1805) [Bath Central Library]

21. Dean Hill

Location description

The viewpoint is from the Cotswold Way footpath a short distance south-east of the summit of Dean Hill (197m) that forms a gently descending ridge between Kelston Knoll (218m) and Penn Hill (134m). The view from here is extensive; this study focuses on the view from north-east to south-east.

What 3 Words

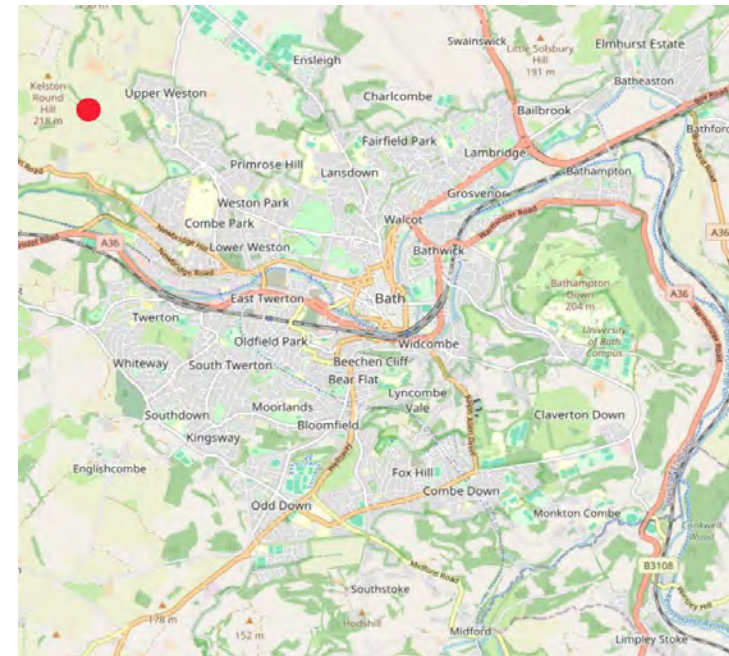
dash.orchestra.fence

Grid reference

ST 715670

Bath City-wide Character Appraisal Area

Weston Valley



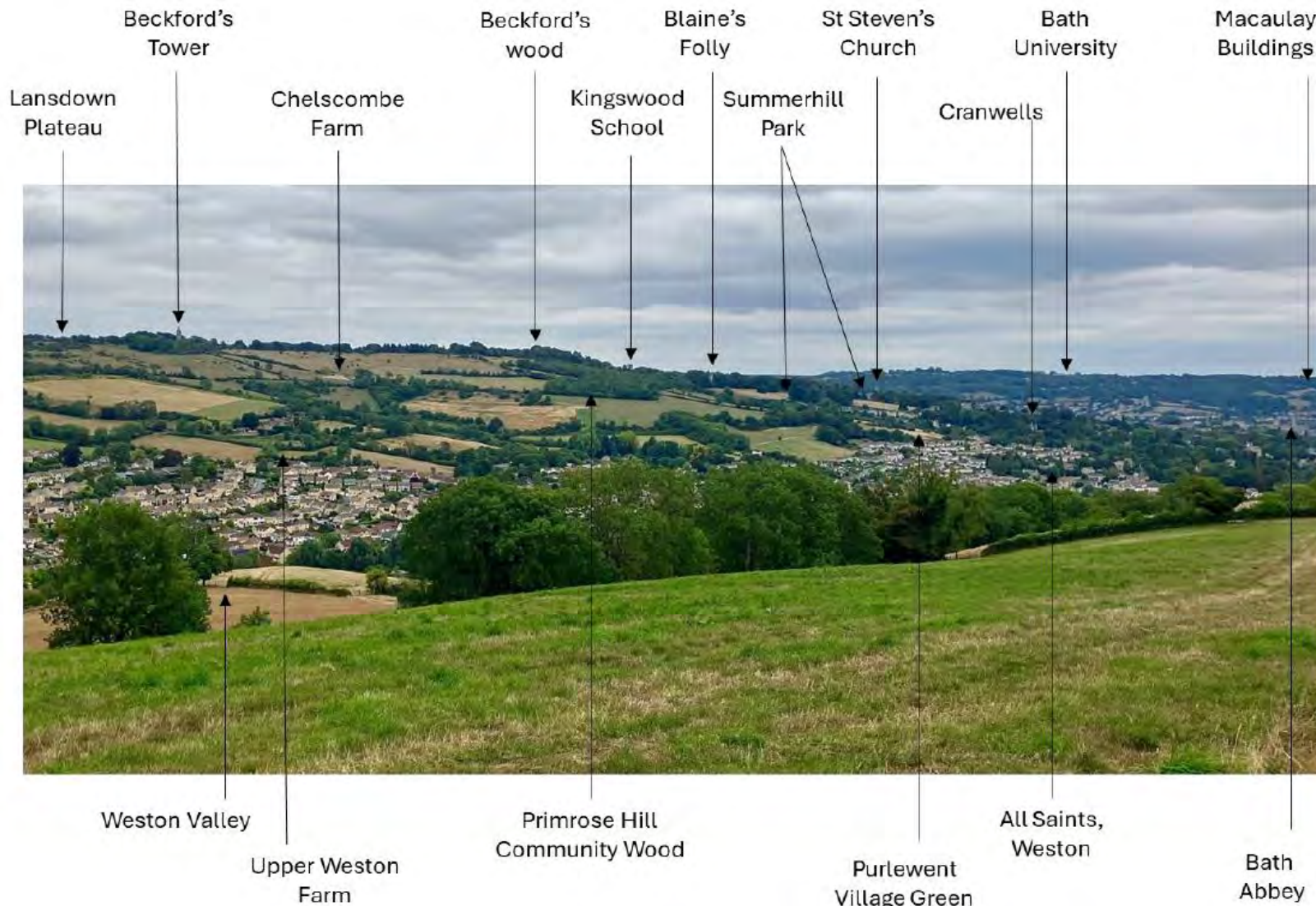
Significance of the View

The location is within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB) and its landscape provides a good example of the steep-sided escarpments to the north of the city. These slopes have many springs that emerge where the clay meets the limestone and comprise ancient field systems with evidence of Late Medieval farming practices. Today the fields that are classed as lowland calcareous grassland are mainly used for stock grazing and haymaking; this has preserved the wildflower-rich pastures.

To the east the view extends over the limestone valley of Weston to the Lansdown plateau with its escarpment that descends southeast to Bath city centre. This is a beautiful view of the City in the context of its landscape setting, nestled in the Avon valley with the National Trust's 'Skyline' on Widcombe Hill as its backdrop.

For southbound walkers on the Cotswold Way the first sighting of the City is just north of here at Prospect Style. As the walker descends this curving ridge along Dean Hill and then Penn Hill, the expanse of the city is gradually revealed beyond the Lansdown escarpment.

Beckford's Tower and the lesser-known Blaine's Folly can be seen to the east. To the south-east Weston All Saints Church and Bath Abbey are visible and in the far distance is Bath University on Claverton Down and Macauley Buildings on Widcombe Hill.



Looking east to south-east from the Dean Hill viewpoint

Foreground

In the foreground is the grassland and well treed east slope of Dean Hill descending to the late 20thC development of Upper Weston. Beyond the houses the land rises steeply again to the Lansdown plateau. Two isolated farmhouses can be seen from this viewpoint; Upper Weston Farm (built 1890) and higher up the much older Chelscombe Farm (built 1651). There are several other historic farmhouses in and around Weston village as these hillsides have been farmed for centuries. This is a beautiful and peaceful spot with the sound of skylarks, distant views and attractive scarp slopes with fields in a patchwork of hedges, trees and wildflower meadows.

Middle ground

Up on the Lansdown Plateau is a significant local landmark, the 19thC gilded belvedere-topped Beckford's Tower. Tracing to the right along the Lansdown escarpment horizon is Beckford's wood above the tower of Kingswood School. Downhill and this side of the school is Primrose Hill Community Woodland. To the right of the wood is Blaine's Folly (built c.1870), Lansdown's less celebrated belvedere tower. It sits within the mid 18thC Summerhill Park of mature beech trees, now part of Kingswood School. To the right on the Lansdown scarp horizon is the tower of St Stephen's Church in Richmond (built 1840-45). Further right and on this side of the escarpment is Cranwells (built 1852) set within its arboretum in Weston Park, now the Royal High Junior School. The mature trees of Weston Park and Audley Park extend to the right. The ancient settlement of Weston can be seen with the tower of All Saint's church. The historic village core lies in the valley bottom, the settlement was much enlarged by extensive postwar development up its northern slopes.

Background

In the distance the city of Bath lies in the Avon valley with Bath Abbey visible to the right of the picture. Behind the City are the slopes of Widcombe Hill with Macaulay Buildings (built early 19thC) visible in the trees. To the left along the face of this slope are the early 19thC houses on Bathwick Hill snaking up to Claverton Down where on the horizon is the sprawl of Bath University. These slopes are well treed, obscuring or softening the buildings and forming a dramatic backdrop to the City.



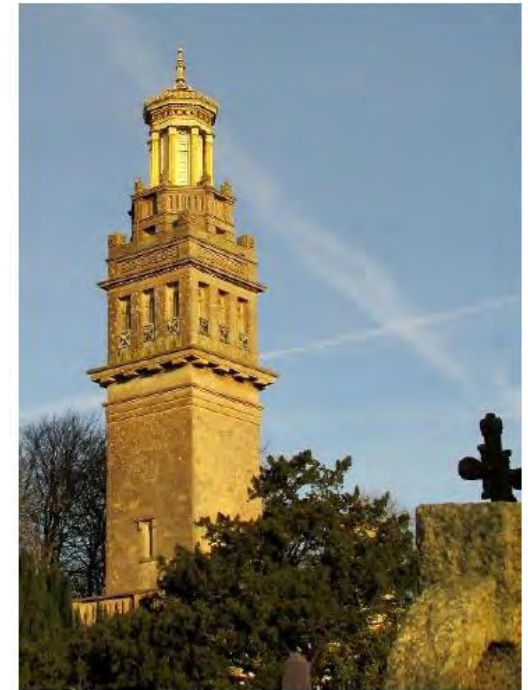
Chelscombe Farm with Beckford's Tower above right



Looking north from Dean Hill



Blaine's Folly



Beckford's Tower



Summerhill Park Mansion brought from Chippenham



Dean Hill from above Chelscombe Farm



Cranwells, Weston Park



Dean Hill from Purlewent Village Green

Heritage and Historical References

Many of the fields on the slopes of **Dean Hill** are small and medium and quite irregular. This is typical of the Cotswolds landscape and is the result of the piecemeal clearance of wooded landscape that occurred from the Bronze Age through to Saxon times. Other fields here are more regular, suggesting further enclosure during the later medieval period when agricultural practises included the laying out of small regularly outlined fields through local arrangement and exchange. Some of the steeper parts have strip lynchets and other earthworks along the contours that enabled cultivation, indicating centuries of continued agricultural use.

On the **Lansdown Plateau** to the east sits the Grade I listed, gilded lantern-topped, neo-classical **Beckford's Tower** (built 1826-27, Henry Goodridge). At 154 feet tall, it is a key landmark for the City of Bath. It was built for William Beckford (1760-1844) as a retreat and together with his two adjoining houses in Lansdown Crescent, it housed his collection of art, furniture and books; this considered to be one of the greatest collections in Georgian England. William Beckford had moved in 1822 to Lansdown Crescent from his estate at Fonthill Abbey in Wiltshire and soon began purchasing and renting the land behind the Crescent. Over the following 19 years he created a mile-long landscape garden with a ride up the escarpment from his house in Lansdown Crescent to his Tower. The garden was arranged with buildings, plants and trees in the style of the Picturesque, creating a journey through nature and architecture. Towards the top he planted **Beckford's Wood** using already mature trees. The extent of his ride can be seen from this viewpoint as its start at Lansdown Crescent is located just below St Stephens Church.

St Stephen's Church (built 1840-45, James Wilson) on Lansdown is another key landmark for the City. It is an outstanding example of Victorian Gothic Revival. The same architect also designed Kingswood School higher up Lansdown, the tower of which can be seen from here.

Kingswood School (built 1851, James Wilson) was founded by John Wesley in 1748 in Kingswood, Bristol before relocating to Lansdown. During WWII, the buildings were requisitioned and used by the Admiralty. Reverting to education at the end of the war, Kingswood School purchased the adjacent **Summerhill Park** in 1956.

This beautifully situated parkland with outstanding views was originally laid out in the mid-18th Century. At the beginning of the 19th Century it was purchased by Dr Caleb Hillier Parry who enlarged the house and added land to the estate, then amounting to some thirty-two acres.

In 1868, Dr Parry sold the property to Sir Robert Blaine, MP for Bath 1883-86, who in 1870 built **Blaine's Folly** within the parkland. This 120-foot high, Grade II listed structure is a late example of a Picturesque Prospect Tower. Blaine was a philanthropist and he built the folly in part to provide local employment. When Blaine died in 1898 the estate was purchased by the Cook family of Cook's Famous Tours fame.

In 1928 Thomas Cook's grandson, Ernest Cook (1865–1955) moved to Summerhill Park. The original mansion had been demolished in the early 1900s following a fire. To replace it, Ernest saved a fine building in Chippenham High Street that was marked for demolition and re-erected it stone by stone to join with Number 1 Sion Hill Place, creating a substantial mansion to house his art collection. During his life he accumulated a

large collection of fine and decorative art, which on his death became the largest bequest ever left to The National Art Collections Fund. He was a philanthropist who founded the Ernest Cook Trust, an educational charity giving grants to benefit children and young people, notably to schools for improving their outdoor education and play area. He was also a major benefactor to the National Trust, acquiring for it many important buildings including Montacute House in Somerset and the Bath Assembly Rooms.

A second mansion set in parkland on Lansdown is Grade II listed **Cranwells** (1850-52, Wilson and Fuller) built by seven-times-Mayor of Bath Jerone Murch. Murch planted an extensive arboretum and made a small lake in the parkland. After Murch's death in 1895, the estate was purchased by Saxton Campbell Cory, a wealthy colliery owner. In 1909, Alfred Pitman, the founder of Pitman Press, acquired the property. It is now owned by the GDST Royal High Junior School.

Grade II listed **Chelscombe Farmhouse** (built 1651) high on Lansdown hill is romantically set in rough grazing land with abundant wildflowers, little changed for centuries in its rural, hilly landscape. Its adjoining and now defunct agricultural buildings are at the time of writing being sensitively developed as ancillary accommodation. Lower down on this hillside is the later **Upper Weston Farm** (built 1890).

Primrose Hill Community Woodland was planted by volunteers in 2000 to celebrate the new millennium and is solely funded by public donations. Lower down this hill is a second community green space, **Purlewent Village Green**. In 2014, this space was earmarked for housing but a thousand-plus signature petition and nearly 500 user evidence forms detailing recreational use of the land resulted in it becoming legally protected as a registered Village Green for Weston.

There has been a settlement at **Weston** for some two thousand years. Evidence of Celtic people has been found here; in 1825 two spoons dating from the third century were found by the Lox (Locks) Brook that runs in the valley below this viewpoint. From its Saxon origins, Weston prospered with the wool trade in the 15th and 16th Centuries. It is a village with seven streams and this abundance of water made it ideal as the 'Laundry of Bath' during Georgian and Victorian times, but it also suffered many floods until the brook was culverted by Wessex Water the late 20th Century.

All Saint's Church was built in 1832 (John Pinch) to replace a 15th Century church of which only the perpendicular tower remains. Weston has many fine buildings and the churchyard in this picturesque village was a popular resting place for Bath's gentry. There are several interesting tombs and some well-known names can be found on the stones, including that of Dr William Oliver (of biscuit fame) who lived in Weston Manor. This Grade II* listed manor was built in the early 18th century to replace a Tudor mansion. It now exists in a sorry state within the Royal United Hospital grounds.

Weston village remained unspoilt until the mid-20th Century. It was absorbed by Bath in 1951 whereupon the Council's controversial compulsory purchase of property and farmland enabled much needed council houses to be built, enveloping the old village core. It was necessary to this development to demolish several fine buildings; many of the remaining survivors are now protected with listing.

To the right and in the distance is **Bath Abbey** in the centre of the city. In 675 AD this site was a Saxon convent and in 973 AD it saw the coronation of King Edgar, the first King of All England. In 1088 the building was replaced by a Norman cathedral, then rebuilt as a parish church in the 16th century with a beautiful fan vaulted ceiling. In 2010, a major project saw the installation of the world's first eco-heating system using piped hot water from Bath's famous hot springs.

Up the steep hill behind Bath Abbey can be seen the distinctive outline of the Grade II 19th Century paired villas at **Macaulay Buildings** (Thomas Macaulay Cruttwell).

Up in the middle of the far horizon of Claverton Down is **Bath University**. A purpose-built campus in the modernist style with construction starting in 1964, it received its royal charter in 1966 and currently over 30,000 study here.



Weston Village in the early 1900s with Kingswood School, Blaine's Folly and Summerhill Park on the horizon



Fan vaulting in Bath Abbey

Issues and Risks

The issues and risks identified by the many volunteers who recorded views were numerous, with some being detailed and others being brief, but all contributing to a view of what issues and risks might be encountered now or in the future. Following appraisal, they are not being individually itemised as so many of the identified issues have common application across most of the Views and Vistas of Bath.

It is very evident that amongst the most serious risks experienced in the last few years is that of the changing tree-scape of the city, with the dramatic impacts of ash dieback. This phenomenon has affected the whole of the UK and caused a once-in-a-generation change to landscapes. Although a negative and sad experience, more positively, it has caused many people to re-engage with the value of trees as the importance of something is so often missed until it is no longer there. Although the national programme of reinstatement and positive advice from so many partners, the succession planting which is accompanied the removal of fragile ash trees is not yet realising its full potential but it is becoming more evident.

Inappropriate development was of course one of the most significant risks and issues identified with the loss of views. Amongst the nuance were unsympathetic choices for buildings and poor positioning as well as the introduction of vertical installation such as pylons or telecommunications masts. Specific issues were identified particularly with reference to individual developments including Oldfield Park, Sulis Down, North Quays, western Riverside and the new proposed stadium.

These points were however also positively contrasted by the opportunities for mitigation through planning control, through ensuring design quality and through strategic tree planting.

Some feedback was provided about the loss of agricultural or grassland, as well as woodland, as a potential force for change. Trees which might also be considered as rapidly spreading such as sycamore were also mentioned as potential issues. This falls into the category which was also identified many times over, of unmanaged canopy growth and a reduction in overall control of the skyline.

Some transient risks were identified such as graffiti which can rapidly turn from transient to permanent.

The loss of legibility of historic landscapes was considered a significant risk, mentioned several times over, particularly with reference to industrial heritage but also evident archaeological features such as strip lynchets, earthworks and historic signs of formal land use.

Mitigation factors were also proposed which are summarised in the next section relating to the future and active management to maintain the Views and Vistas.

The Future and Management

Alongside the risks and issues identified, many positive views were contributed about methods of management which would safeguard Views and Vistas for future generations.

A dominant theme was that of **succession planting** and positive and active management of landscape changes, which can fluctuate significantly over time with growth and die back and encroachment. The need for sustained and active management was identified as being of primary importance to ensure that attrition of the views did not take place. There were some ancillary recommendations such as working with farmers, with landowners, with homeowners to ensure the responsibility for these actions was shared and 'owned' by many people.

The enactment of **conservation principles** including management of archaeological monuments, tree preservation orders, listed building consents and the barrage of related local and national policies which protect Bath and World Heritage, as well as the conservation area was a common theme. This is an important point to ensure that the SPD referenced earlier continues to be a major consideration and any development proposals should be rigorously evaluated against the potential introduction of harm. The presumption is not necessarily against the concept of development, but expressed as ensuring it is sympathetic, consistent and appropriate within the area in which it is proposed and planned.

The observation was made about the need to protect and manage the difference between the city and the **rural character** surrounding it to ensure the protection of undeveloped horizons and ridgelines, and the retention of trees to protect sites from opportunistic development.

The need for active management of streetlight levels was evident, particularly to protect nighttime views and their intrinsic and inherent beauty.

A significant area of response identified what might lead to a landscape management plan which is directive to protect specific features which contribute to the outstanding universal values of World Heritage but also the Cotswold AONB national landscape. This presents a real opportunity and the need might be strengthened by the enactment of the recent Levelling Up and Housing Act 2023 which places additional protections on national landscapes. A catchment-based approach may also be reasonable in this case to consider what landscape scale management looks like, which provides ecosystem services to manage flash-flooding as well as protecting and enhancing the Views and Vistas which are so important to Bath and to its special characteristics.

Some of the benefits of the recommendations were also alluded to or referenced including the importance of the legibility of the landscape and the river line for example, as historic features which also contribute to the contemporary enhancement of the city.

The final reflection is that if the Views and Vistas of Bath are promoted and are important and strengthened in the minds of residents and visitors, that in itself will serve to provide future risk mitigation and management which enshrines and protects those Views and Vistas for future generations.

About Bathscape

The Bathscape Scheme was launched in October 2018 to promote better management and use of the Bathscape, the beautiful natural landscape surrounding the historic city of Bath. Its aim is to restore and enhance the Bathscape, to make it more accessible and help ensure its appreciated and actively enjoyed by more people in Bath, both residents and visitors alike.

Thanks to the vital support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, The World Heritage Enhancement Fund, Network Rail, Bath & North East Somerset Council and partner organisations, the Bathscape Scheme received funding of £2.2 million to cover its many different activities over more than five years.

To help people in Bath to more closely connect with the landscape and the heritage around them, the Bathscape Scheme comprises 25 interconnected projects, under the key themes of exploring, restoring and learning. It will care for 80 hectares of woodland, 100 grasslands and 30 important viewpoints, will create 12 new flower-rich meadows and survey 10 important archaeological sites.

Bath Preservation Trust

Bath Preservation Trust campaigns for and promotes the conservation, sustainable enhancement and celebration of the unique historic built environment and amenity, green setting and global contributions of the City of Bath as a double-inscribed World Heritage Site. We use our collections and our museums to shine a mirror on our history so we can illuminate our future. At our heart are the principles of equity, informed advocacy, social responsibility and growth through learning and creativity.

Our vision is that Bath will be a brilliant place to live in and to visit for everyone – a world-leading model of an environmentally sustainable, evolving and vibrant city making the most of its beautiful built and natural environment, and a major cultural hub.

We will use our advocacy and campaigning skills to include residents throughout the Bath area in creating a shared sense of place, as an enabler of contemporary change and carrying our unparalleled heritage into the future, creatively, sensitively and collaboratively. Our museums will offer a major contribution to the richness of Bath's cultural life, sharing stories and challenging perceptions to inform the present and inspire the future.

Thank-you and credits

We are very grateful to the many volunteers who contributed to this project and spent their time, not only walking the hills and streets of Bath and taking photographs of the various views, but moreover contributed extensive research, knowledge of Bath and their time spent researching historic sources of information about the history of individual buildings or reference points visible from the views. This was a significant undertaking and the commitment of time has made this publication so extensive and well sourced.

Our thanks go to: Jon Allman, John Bartram, Jeremy Boss, Matt Brooks, Barry Cox, Lindsey Davis, Bob Ford, John Gordon, Tom Hole, Helen Martin, Adrian Matthews, Claire McCormick, Jacquie Murray, Diane Riley, Ron Ritchie, Matt Roberts, Maria Williams, Sophie Williams



We would also like to thank the team at Bathscape: Dan Merrett, Lucy Bartlett and Emma Carlisle

From Bath Preservation Trust: Nikita Hooper, Claire Nodder and Joanna Robinson

Thanks must also go to Fiona Fyfe, the person who came up with the methodology for the project and undertook a considerable amount of research to inform its inception.

Our final thanks go to all of those people who might have been inadvertently missed off of this list including the Bathscape board and the many officers from the various organisations who have done so much to make Bathscape the success it has been. The Bathscape project is made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, we have been able to create this valuable resource.

And if reading this has inspired you to explore more of Bath, enjoy the Views and Vistas!