

## Appendix 4: Ownership and Other Key Stakeholders

In terms of how the site is managed, property ownership is an extremely important element as owners have significant control over how their land is managed. Much of the land within the site and many historic buildings are in the ownership of private citizens. These citizens are included in the site management in various ways. As property owners they are principally represented on the WHS Advisory Board through membership of the **Federation of Bath Resident's Association (FoBRA)**. FoBRA is an umbrella organisation representing 28 local resident's associations plus associate members including the Bath Independent Guest Houses Association.

Aside from residents, there are a number of organisations which hold large property portfolios. Ownership by conservation minded organisations has historically been (and continues to be) highly influential in the good management of the site. Notable here are owners including the Local Authority, Housing Associations, the National Trust, Bath Preservation Trust, University of Bath, Bath Spa University, and St John's Hospital charity.

**B&NES Council** is a unitary authority with the powers and functions of a non-metropolitan county and district council combined. The whole of the World Heritage Site lies within the B&NES district. The Council owns around 60% of city centre property, much of it historic. Many properties are leased out and the level of direct Council control therefore varies. In cases such as the Roman Baths, Pump Room complex and Guildhall, the Council owns, occupies and manages (through its Heritage Services) important heritage assets. This gives significant control over these buildings and good opportunity for public access and interpretation. The Council owns and has responsibility for protection of the hot springs.

Council owned properties are generally managed as commercial ventures, and the Council has full responsibility for the management and conservation of the properties. B&NES Council also has a role in maintaining and improving the public realm.

**Curo** is a not-for-profit housing organisation based in Bath. In 1999 Bath City Council passed its role as social housing provider to Somer Housing Community Trust, and this role has now passed to Curo. Around 10,000 of Curo's stock of 12,500 homes are within B&NES, with around 530 in the city centre. Many properties are listed buildings, some Grade I. In some areas a fifth of the local population will be Curo customers. Curo is therefore a significant property owner, plus another conduit for resident representation on the steering group.

The **National Trust** (NT) owns and manages over 500 acres of land to the east of Bath, between the A36 Warminster Road and Claverton Down Road. The land includes Bathwick Wood, Smallcombe Wood, Rainbow Wood Farm and Fields and

(since 1993) Prior Park Gardens. Prior Park mansion itself remains in the ownership of Prior Park College. By act of parliament, the trust has the power to declare land inalienable which gives it very strong protection against sale or development. Land ownership by a body such as the NT therefore provides a highly effective management mechanism. In addition, the NT have owned (since 1931) the Assembly Rooms, and since the Council's lease recently ran out the NT have taken back the building and developing its proposals for its renewal and reuse with B&NES, with a view to opening to public as a visitor attraction that celebrates the building and its history.

**Bath Preservation Trust (BPT)** is an independent charity, founded in 1934 as a pressure group. The Trust has restored historic properties, successfully campaigned on many proposals including new road schemes or demolition of structures and it routinely comments on planning and listed building applications and policy initiatives.

The BPT has approximately 1,400 subscribing members (UK and overseas). It draws upon expert advice from its membership and has significant influence, with for example his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in the role as patron. It is financially self-sufficient and independent of any controlling agency; a unique position for a heritage organization to hold within the UK. In the management of the WHS the BPT provides scrutiny of major decisions, pushes for high standards, provides advice and assistance, mobilises volunteers and (through its museums) provides interpretation. The BPT is a long-standing and active member of the WHS Advisory Board and part-funder, and secretariat of the World Heritage Enhancement Fund, which is a partnership between BPT, B&NES, local councilors and community.

BPT owns and manages No1 Royal Crescent (operated as a museum and Trust headquarters) and the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel (housing the Museum of Bath Architecture). The Trust is sole trustee of Beckford's Tower and is a trustee of the Herschel Museum of Astronomy.

The **University of Bath** is located at Claverton Down, on a large site at the edge of the Green Belt. The complex is self-contained with accommodation, shops and entertainment in addition to the educational facilities and the National Institute of Sport. The University also has city centre property, with for example small accommodation sites such as at Pulteney Street, Bathwick Hill and a site at Carpenter House, Southgate Street. The University has approximately 20,470 students<sup>1</sup>, 31% of them coming from outside of the UK.

**Bath Spa University** has two campuses, one situated around Sion Hill, on the northern slopes of the city, and the other at Newton Park, just to the west of the city. Several of the buildings occupied by the University are listed and Newton Park is on

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/facts-and-figures/>

English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The University has approximately 8,500 students (2019/20)<sup>2</sup>.

**St John's Hospital** (founded 1174) and the Trustees of the Bath Municipal Charities own and manage a number of historic properties in and around the city, including the St John's Hospital complex and Abbey Church House between Westgate Buildings and Bath Street, St Catherine's and Bellot's hospital on Beau Street and the historic Beauford Square.

### **Other Owners**

Also worthy of mention are the rail, river and canal owners. Network Rail owns and operates Britain's railway infrastructure, including the rail network that passes through the Site. The Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways) owns and manages the Kennet & Avon Canal, which enters on the eastern side and joins with the River Avon in the centre of the Site. The Environment Agency is responsible for the river and its floodplains. Above Pulteney Weir, the Avon is subject to the ownership of the Riparian Owners whose properties border the river.

Finally, the role of legal covenants on land, which may be separate from current ownership is important. For example, the green spaces fronting Georgian crescents such as Royal Crescent and Lansdown Crescent are integral to those architectural ensembles. Responsibility and ownership of these often lies with resident's associations and the land is likely to be covenanted against development.

### **Other Key Stakeholders.**

'Stakeholders' is the umbrella term used to describe those who have a stake in the management of the WHS. There is obvious overlap here with the landowners described above who are also stakeholders, but there are bodies such as government agencies who do not own land but who are influential and directly involved in management.

The **Department for Culture, Media and Sport** (DCMS) is the government department with responsibility for World Heritage in England. As such, all formal communication between Bath WHS and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre will pass via DCMS acting as the 'state party'. DCMS are named members of the WHS Advisory Board but do not attend in person.

**Historic England** (formerly English Heritage) is an executive [non-departmental public body](#) of the government sponsored by DCMS. It is tasked with protecting the historical environment of England by preserving and [listing historic buildings, ancient monuments](#) and advising central and local government. Historic England play an active role in site management by engaging with B&NES as planning authority and 'chief steward' on planning policy and development applications. A representative

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/media/bathspaacuk/hr/work-here/BATH-SPA-COUNTS-2021-final.pdf>

from the regional office (Bristol) sits on the WHS Advisory Board as well as the Head of International Advice, who works closely with DCMS at national level.

**ICOMOS UK** is an advisory body on matters of cultural heritage. This organisation is described in more detail in section 4.7 of the Plan, and it is important to make a distinction between ICOMOS UK and the wider international body.

**Visit West** is the destination marketing organisation for Bath. It is a private company (limited by guarantee), partially funded by public money from B&NES Council, and by income generated through the **Visitor Information Centre** and a membership scheme for over 500 local tourism businesses. [Bath Visitor Information Centre](#) receives over 500,000 visitors per annum and as such is one of the busiest centres in the country. Visit West are active WHS Advisory Board members and key partners on domestic and overseas tourism matters.

There are around 21 **primary schools** in or adjacent to the site. The pupils will be future custodians of the site and as such are important stakeholders. **The schools are currently represented on the Steering Group by the Head Teacher at Weston All Saints Primary who is the Chair of Bath Primary Teacher's Group.**

**Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA)** is a member organisation run by and for the local councils and parish meetings within B&NES and adjoining areas. ALCA represents the parishes in the setting of the WHS and they are members of the WHS Advisory Board.

The role of **volunteer** citizen participation is essential in the governance, conservation and interpretation the site, and as such they are key stakeholders. In terms of governance, a position such as the Chair of the WHS Advisory Board is a voluntary role, as are the positions of most councillors in and surrounding the site. With regard to conservation, bodies such as the National Trust and Canal and River trust are heavily dependent upon volunteer support. Many of the museums within the site providing interpretation are also reliant upon volunteers. An example is provided by the Holburne Museum, which retains approximately 200 diverse volunteers including retired people, teachers, artists, unemployed, and students under the supervision of a Volunteer Co-ordinator post. A third of these volunteers are young people, who receive formal training as part of their role and collectively provide work to the value of approximately £250,000<sup>3</sup> per annum to the museum.

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<sup>3</sup> Calculation based on payment at the UK statutory minimum wage.

