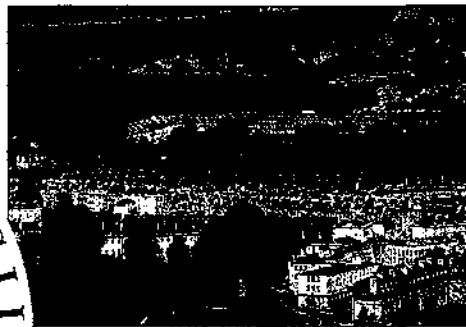
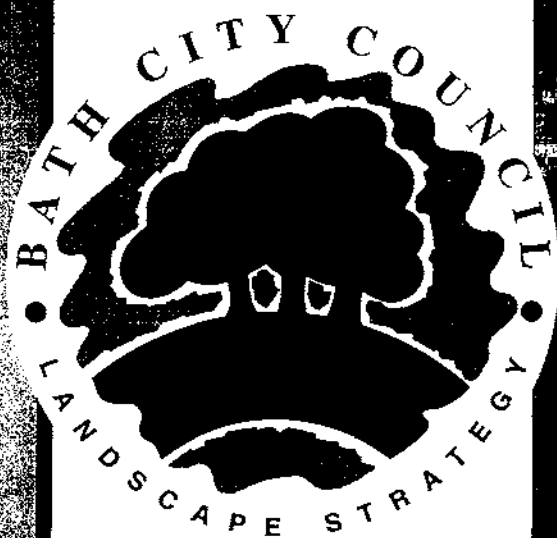


# Cherishing Outdoor Places

A Landscape Strategy for Bath



# **Cherishing Outdoor Places**

**A Landscape Strategy for Bath**

**Director of Environmental Services  
Bath City Council  
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York Street  
Bath BA1 1NT**

**ADOPTED  
SEPTEMBER  
1993**

## Environmental Context

Concern for the future of Bath's landscape has stemmed largely from the importance attached by many to its high quality appearance. There has been a growing recognition of its contribution to the character and appearance of the city and a desire to conserve and enhance the landscape's visual qualities and features. More recently this concern has broadened. We have all become more aware of the significance of the natural world, and many of us are taking our individual and collective responsibilities towards conserving its resources and diverse qualities more seriously.

We are witnessing an accelerating decline of landscape, habitat and wildlife throughout the world. Climatic change, pollution of land, air and water, combined with population growth and unsustainable practices in agriculture, forestry and development have caused, and are continuing to cause, major and irreversible changes to vegetation. Vegetation is an essential component of landscape, habitat and wildlife diversity on which nearly all life on earth depends. There is an increasing recognition of the interdependence of habitats and landscapes. Loss of, and damage to, habitat and landscape are as familiar on a local scale as at the global level. The adage of "think globally, act locally" has never been more poignant.

The landscape strategy for Bath is being brought forward at a time when an holistic approach to environmental management and sustainable living is being promoted. This is happening not only on a world wide basis but also within the city. In May 1993 the City Council agreed to prepare an Environmental Strategy and in advance of this adopted an Environmental Statement. This asserts the council's commitment to conservation and endorses the principle of sustainable development as a sound foundation for policy and action.

Sustainable living requires that human society lives within the absolute capacity limits of the life support functions provided by the environment. In some

cases this will mean that absolute, non-negotiable environmental targets or limits will have to be set, rather than the current practice of trading-off costs and benefits in individual cases. The landscape strategy is regarded as a part of this approach but it may have to be adapted as this emerging way of thinking develops over the next few years. By targeting the collection and monitoring of landscape information as one of the priorities of the landscape strategy, the City Council will provide a sound basis for this to be done.

## The City Heritage

Sustainable living also implies a concern for the quality of life. The conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and visual diversity of our landscape is seen as contributing to this and is part of the overall conservation philosophy of the City Council.

Following the inscription of the entire city on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites, the City Council prepared and adopted the Bath Manifesto. This reaffirms the Council's conservation objectives and is a statement of commitment and intent towards the protection of the city. It is set out within the draft Replacement City Plan. The Manifesto has had a significant influence on the development of the landscape strategy.

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“We are witnessing an accelerating decline of landscape, habitat and wildlife throughout the world.”

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# Part 1

## Introduction and Summary





## Bath's Special Landscape

Bath's rich and varied landscape is the product of its history. The natural setting to Bath – its geology and climate – has shaped the city's topography over thousands of years. Bath sits within the River Avon valley as it cuts through the southern end of the Cotswold Hills and where it is joined by a number of tributaries. The location of the hot springs within the river valley attracted early settlers. Throughout history the presence of the springs and the valley setting have contributed to the impact of the city on its surroundings.

The characteristic hilly, and often steep, topography of Bath, has both restricted and determined the pattern of development within the city. As a result it has provided Bath with its superb wooded skyline and allowed the retention of important greenspaces to penetrate deep within the built-up area. Many of these bring high quality rural landscapes right into the heart of the city.

The topography has also provided unique architectural opportunities. There are fine views across the River Avon valley from the hillsides and these have inspired architects to develop the high quality architecture of the crescents and terraces which characterise 18th century development in Bath and for which the city is so well renowned.

Throughout the city, buildings are viewed set within, or against, a backcloth of trees. Our forefathers planted exotic tree species within the city at the time of great explorations and plant collecting. Many of these were coniferous and evergreen and survive today as important features in the city's landscape.

From many city centre streets, views are channelled towards the fields and woodlands of the rural skyline. Many of the important Georgian buildings take advantage of these views. New landscapes were often created in association with the terraces and crescents to enhance the enjoyment of their views further. Many of these have been conserved as important townscape features within the city.

Bath's landscape is therefore part cause and partly an effect of the historical development of the city. It has been the interaction between the built and natural environment throughout history and their influence upon one another, which has created the unique composition of Bath.

The inscription of the City of Bath on the List of World Heritage Sites (1987) means that whole city has been recognised as being of outstanding universal value and thereby worthy of special protection. This accolade recognises Bath as a city of international importance for its contribution to the art of urban design, for its architectural quality, its Roman remains, its Georgian town centre and its historic associations. The City Council believes that the special quality of Bath lies not only in the fine architectural facades of its built environment but also in the urban and landscape spaces that they enclose and its setting amidst the high quality landscape of the southern Cotswold Hills.

The city has a wealth of greenery and open spaces, and this provides many different opportunities for leisure activities, learning, relaxation and the simple enjoyment of outdoor places. It also provides a home for a wide variety of plant and animal life. The biological diversity of the landscape is important and is a natural resource on which all life depends.

The landscape provides a natural beauty, which is an integral part of the city's special character and appearance and has the ability to soften the harshness of people's activities and a capacity to improve the quality of all our lives.

## What is the Landscape Strategy?

The landscape strategy for Bath is a plan of action which the City Council is developing to promote the better protection, enhancement and long-term management of the city's outdoor spaces and landscape features. It also seeks to

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“The characteristic hilly, and often steep, topography of Bath, has both restricted and determined the pattern of development within the city.”

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Throughout the city, buildings are viewed set within, or against a backcloth of, trees.



Freefields (Rainbow Woods) before it was destroyed in the 1990 storm. Now replanted, it requires long-term management to secure its future as a woodland.



The greenspaces of our housing estates are important components of the city's landscape. Not all achieve their full landscape potential.

develop a better understanding of the natural processes inherent in our landscape and the effects of people's activity upon them.

Through this plan the City Council seeks to address the problems of continuous, but varied, change within the landscape, which is brought about by the natural forces of growth and ageing, of competition between species, disease, decay, and the actions of people. It seeks to cherish and celebrate the rich and varied landscape of the city by protecting that which is good and by enhancing that which is not so good.

In developing the landscape strategy, the City Council has been mindful of the many facets of the city's landscape and the different interests it holds for the residents and visitors of Bath.

The landscape we see today encompasses a rich mosaic of open, and largely green, spaces comprising parks, recreation grounds and allotments, the greenspaces associated with housing estates and the rural surroundings of farmland and woodland. It includes public squares and designed historic parks and gardens, the grounds of our schools and other institutions. It also embraces private gardens, which in particular parts of the city are significantly large. Trees are important components of Bath's landscape. They grow singly, or in rows or clumps along the streets, in gardens and in nearly all of the public open spaces.

The landscape strategy is not confined just to looking at the city's greenspaces, nor just to land owned or managed by the City Council. It addresses the whole of Bath's landscape and considers the role of the landscape outside the city, which provides the context. It considers the hard elements within the landscape such as the walls and paved finishes and embraces the city's hard urban spaces.

Through the landscape strategy the City Council will undertake and promote action to conserve and maximise the contribution of the landscape to the character and appearance of Bath and to conserve its biological diversity for future generations. At the same time, the City Council seeks to provide comfortable and

attractive places for the people of Bath to use and enjoy.

## **Why do we need a Landscape Strategy?**

### **The Ageing Landscape**

The landscape of Bath has reached a critical stage in its development. It is suffering from the effects of having been taken for granted and its long-term management neglected for the last fifty to a hundred years. Much of it has been well maintained on a day to day basis. However, it has been depleted gradually because people in the past have not planned for its adequate protection or renewal.

The established landscapes in the older parts of the city comprise the settings to many of our listed buildings and are integral to the character of the city's conservation area. The visual impact of these landscapes derives mainly from the visually prominent, large tree species that grow within them. Many of these have reached maturity and are now in decline. There are few developing trees ready to take their place and those that are growing are either too young or of the wrong species to have the same immediate visual effect.

Many of our older parks and gardens, which were laid out in the 18th century and during Victorian times, have not retained their historical design detail and have lost much of their earlier vitality. Many of their impressive trees are also over-mature and more recent planting has concentrated on immediate and short-term effects rather than the planned replacement of these important landscape features. They are in need of protection and long-term management which caters for their renewal and repair.

### **Development Pressure**

As they deteriorate, some of our established landscapes become more vulnerable to the pressures for development. The consequent premature loss of trees, the damage and loss of designed open space and the alteration of boundary walls and hedgerows, means that the pattern and character of the

landscape is changed and depleted. As a result our landscape is being eroded more rapidly than by the natural forces of change alone. Also opportunities for landscape renewal and restoration are reduced considerably.

The effects of pressure for new development are not felt just within our established landscapes. Throughout the city the scarcity of development land means that all open spaces are being scrutinised continuously for their development potential.

Greenspaces which are overgrown, appear underused, or have few significant trees on them, are often the most vulnerable to development pressure. Yet many provide important habitats for wildlife, have historical significance or have potential to contribute more effectively to the city's appearance. Once these spaces are developed such interest and potential is lost, or, at best, reduced.

### **Managing the Landscape**

Many open areas remain vulnerable to damage and deterioration even though they are protected adequately from development. This is through inappropriate management, neglect or vandalism. Changes in agricultural methods, policies and subsidies, and the difficulties of farming on the edge of a densely populated urban area, have meant that traditional land management practises are no longer common within and around Bath. Consequently the character and quality of some of these areas are deteriorating and they have become more prone to vandalism and the adverse effects of unmanaged public access. Important natural habitats are also being restricted and put at risk by this decline. Some farmland has been abandoned.

In other areas it is the intensity of management which is proving restrictive, preventing a site from developing its full landscape potential and damaging its nature conservation interest.

To conserve the richness and biological diversity of our landscapes for the future we need to manage them appropriately. Also we need to demonstrate their worth and promote a

greater appreciation of their many facets amongst the people and visitors of Bath.

### **Ancient Landscapes**

Much of Bath's landscape has an historical significance which goes back beyond both the Georgian period and the Roman occupation. Parts reflect the earlier activity of people within the valley and amongst the hills which surround Bath. With the passage of time, changes have masked many of the clues to the historic settlements and activities that these ancient landscapes hold. It is likely that much still remains hidden from us today and that there are ancient landscapes and landscape features still to be discovered and recognised.

With the pressures of modern activities within the city and a lack of understanding of some of these landscapes, there is a danger that important aspects of the city's heritage could become marginalised and their significance lost to us forever.

We need to protect and manage historic and ancient landscapes and develop a greater awareness of the importance of such features to the understanding of Bath.

### **Quality New Landscapes**

Few new landscapes of quality are being created within the city, either as part of the development process or as initiatives in their own right. Many developments maximise the development potential of each site leaving little room for any meaningful landscape design or planting. In some parts of the city, which have been developed since the war, featureless open space has been created of little or no design quality, and remains underused and often abused as a result.

In Bath we have a very special landscape and yet we appear to be taking it for granted. We must not let the various forces of change erode its qualities and diversity. We must create new landscapes of quality and resist strongly the permanent loss of opportunities to do so.

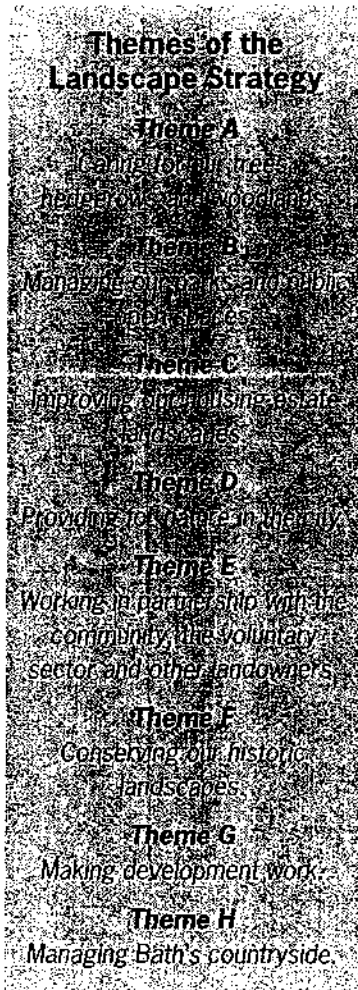


Farmland at Charlecombe provides a rich diversity of wildlife habitat. Only through appropriate management can this be conserved.

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“The landscape of Bath has reached a critical stage in its development. We must not let the various forces of change erode its qualities and diversity.”

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## What are the aims of the Landscape Strategy?

The overall aim of the landscape strategy is to:

*To initiate and review action to ensure that the city's landscape is adequately protected and cared for, so that its extent, quality, biological diversity and contribution to the character and appearance of the city can be sustained and enriched for the benefit and enjoyment of the people and visitors of Bath.*

The landscape strategy addresses the need to restore a balance within the city's landscape, whereby the natural forces of change are managed, the damaging actions of people are limited and a climate is created to encourage the development of good quality landscape design throughout the city.

Through the landscape strategy, the City Council aims to maximise and sustain the contribution of the landscape to the character and appearance of the city, whilst at the same time increase the enjoyment and appreciation of the environment by the local community.

The City Council seeks to encourage all individuals, groups or organisations to be more aware of how our many activities might affect the well-being of the landscape and to participate in its care. It also seeks to help people develop a greater understanding of both our natural and designed landscapes, and to recognise that through imaginative design and creative management, many of these landscapes could meet our needs more effectively and improve the quality of all our lives.

In particular the landscape strategy aims to:-

- *Protect, renew and enrich the character and appearance of Bath's heritage and rural fringe landscapes, that is, the "setting" of Bath, by identifying, protecting and conserving their key characteristics.*
- *Improve the suburban and commercial parts of the city by protecting and improving existing greenspaces, and creating new landscapes of quality within them.*

- *Provide for wildlife throughout the city by protecting existing sites of importance, enhancing the wildlife potential of others and creating new habitats.*
- *Protect, renew and develop the full landscape potential of key landscape features within the city, giving particular attention to:-*
  - *important greenspaces on prominent hillsides;*
  - *parks, gardens, churchyards and cemeteries of particular historic interest;*
  - *the river and canal corridors;*
  - *the main approach roads into the city;*
  - *specific individual trees and hedgerows.*
- *Develop partnerships with the community and between the public, private and voluntary sectors to encourage the greater involvement and participation of the people of Bath in caring for their city's landscape.*
- *Monitor the condition of the city's landscape and the success of the proposed action and review the strategy proposals to address any changes identified.*

## What are the principles of the Landscape Strategy?

There are eight main themes on which the City Council will concentrate its efforts. These have been highlighted in the tinted area on the left of this page. They have been identified partly to emphasise particular landscape issues of importance and partly to reflect specific areas of City Council responsibility and spheres of influence. They are intended to communicate more effectively the issues, information and ideas for action, to those people who are best placed to address them and effect change.

The issues and proposed action under each theme are presented in Part 2 of this document.

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## The Landscape Strategy and The Bath City Plan

The Bath City Plan adopted in June 1990 is the statutory Local Plan for Bath. It considers all the land-use planning issues of the city, and sets out planning policies to guide development within the city over a ten year period. The City Council is preparing a Replacement City Plan. This seeks to guide development within the city up to the year 2001. This plan is currently in draft and has yet to be adopted.

The statutory Local Plan is concerned primarily with land-use planning issues. It seeks also to be promotional. Through its policies, a proactive approach by the City Council is taken to encourage the stewardship of the city's environment. Many issues relating to the city's landscape are highlighted within the Bath City Plan and policies to protect and enhance its character and quality are included.

Because the landscape is always affected by change, it cannot be cared for adequately by land-use policies alone. The Bath City Plan, and its replacement, both include a policy to prepare and develop a landscape strategy.

The landscape strategy aims to expand on the policies of the statutory Local Plan (and its replacement) by identifying and initiating action to fulfil and implement them effectively.

In bringing forward the landscape strategy the City Council has been mindful of government statements on planning policy, which are material considerations in the determination of planning applications. Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) are one of the principal sources of policy guidance on planning matters and they have a relevance to a number of themes for action within the strategy.

However, although the two are not easily separated, the landscape strategy concentrates mainly on land-management issues rather than those of land-use. It considers the practical necessities involved in caring for the diverse landscape that we have within the city and in monitoring changes that occur within it. Its successful implementation

will depend on good partnership working with a number of different agencies, individuals and the private sector.

The landscape strategy provides a detailed framework for action and, in particular, advocates the setting up of various landscape information databases to direct landscape strategy action and monitor landscape and habitat change in the future. On the basis of this monitoring, action set out in this strategy will be reviewed on a regular basis. Such databases will also be valuable in reviewing certain aspects of the Local Plan in due course.

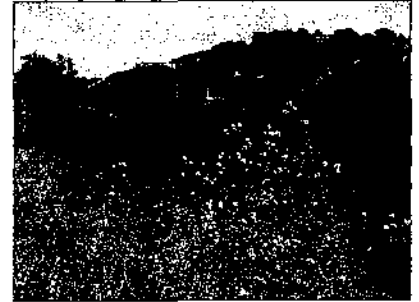
The landscape strategy is an additional measure of the City Council's commitment to the care of the city's landscape in its role as guardian of a World Heritage Site. It is also seen as an important component of a broader environmental approach which has been adopted by the City Council. This will be developed within the proposed Environmental Strategy and the two will be developed in an integrated way.

Unlike the statutory Local Plan the landscape strategy is not a statutory document. However it has been the subject of widespread consultation and the views of many individuals and organisations have been taken on board. Therefore, the City Council considers it to have the status of supplementary planning guidance and to be of considerable weight, to be taken into account when considering applications for development in the city.

### What has happened so far?

The idea of developing a strategy for the care of the landscape in Bath has been with the City Council for some time. In 1984 the City Council commissioned Cobham Resource Consultants to undertake a survey of the city's landscape and to contribute to a strategy for its future care and development. In 1986 the consultants presented their findings in a report entitled: "A Strategy for the Landscape of Bath". This formed the basis on which the council has developed this strategy document.

Since the consultants presented their report, change in the landscape has



The River Avon



The Kennet and Avon Canal

Both the river and the canal are important, but often undervalued, landscape features and wildlife habitats within Bath.



By providing 1000 free trees to residents of Bath each year since 1991, the City Council has promoted the planting of particular species to help conserve the landscape character of the city.



Improvements to the open space at Shaftesbury Road were completed in December 1993 after extensive consultations with local residents.

continued. In some areas, the pace of this change has accelerated. In particular, there has been a dramatic increase in the pressure for development throughout the city, whilst land available for development has become more scarce. As a result, the landscape has become increasingly vulnerable and some important areas of open space have been lost or are constantly under threat.

In September 1990 the City Council brought forward the Draft Principles of a Landscape Strategy for consultation. These reflected changes to the landscape since 1984 and developed the consultants ideas further. The main response was one of support and encouragement. The views and suggestions put forward have now been considered and many have been taken on board.

Between 1990 and 1993 the City Council set up a variety of initiatives, projects and programmes to meet the objectives of the draft strategy. These have included the Bath Wildlife Project, the woodland management project, the annual tree planting programme, the extended landscape grants schemes and improvement works to the Linear Park and Shaftesbury Road Open Space. They also included community based events such as fun days at Twerton Hill Farm and the twelve-month environmental interpretation project at Rainbow Woods, Combe Down. All have provided valuable improvements on the ground and have helped to educate and forge new links with the community.

The draft strategy has been amended and developed to reflect the lessons learnt through these initiatives.

### Who will do the work?

Initiating action to meet the objectives of the landscape strategy, and keeping it going once it has started, will not be simple. The many issues which relate to the landscape are both dynamic and complex and are influenced by a wide variety of people and organisations. It is not something which the City Council can undertake on its own.

In bringing forward the proposals for action the City Council has looked

carefully at the ways in which it can implement the proposals and bring about effective change for the better. They fall into two main categories:-

1. Areas of land and activities over which the City Council has a direct responsibility and can develop good working practices to meet the landscape strategy objectives.
2. Areas of land and activities over which the City Council has no direct responsibility but where it can try to influence the actions of others.

Both are crucial to the success of the landscape strategy and serve to emphasise that its effective implementation can only be brought about by a corporate willingness within the City Council and a partnership approach with the private sector, the community and other public bodies.

The establishment of good working practices on council owned land is particularly important since in Bath, the City Council owns or manages a large part of the city's landscape. This includes our parks and public open space, some of our city centre squares, street trees, housing landscapes, cemeteries, woodlands and some of our hillside farmland.

As the local planning authority the City Council has direct influence over large areas of private landscape and it is important that it uses its statutory planning powers and duties as effectively as possible to meet strategy objectives.

Under powers set out in the Wildlife and Access to the Countryside Act (1981) the City Council can enter into management agreements with private landowners, which can extend its influence over the management of private land even further.

The City Council is therefore in a unique position to effect change for the better within the landscape. Establishing good working practices within the City Council will also provide a very effective means of influencing others to do the same.

Even so, "setting a good example" is only part of a much greater dissemination of information which the landscape

strategy promotes. Providing people with the knowledge and encouragement to take account of issues with which they are not normally directly concerned can result in a long-lasting change of attitudes and a better understanding.

### **When will it all happen?**

We have inherited with our landscape the results of past inactivity. In the case of the more established landscapes in particular, this has left us with very little time to make amends. It will take many decades of concerted effort to offset the full effects of the decline of our ageing landscapes and landscape features. The longer it is left, the longer they will take to restore and some opportunities for renewal may be permanently lost as a result. As it is we must accept that the appearance of our more established landscapes, in the older areas and on the rural fringe, are likely to change quite dramatically over the next ten to twenty years.

Timescale is also an important consideration when trying to protect and improve the character of some of our farmland landscapes. Traditionally these areas have been managed mainly by grazing. Their character and appearance, and in some cases their value as natural habitats, is attributable directly to this type of management.

However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain successful agriculture on many of these areas due to a variety of problems. It is important that appropriate management is brought back as quickly as possible to save some of these sites from irreversible damage.

Pressure for development within the city is also causing rapid change within the landscape. Urgent action is necessary to address the adverse effects of this pressure. Early action is also required to maximise opportunities for landscape improvement and renewal created by new development and by the changes which are happening with regard to the ownership and management of our housing estate landscapes.

By its very nature the landscape strategy must be a long-term plan of action. Indeed it is probably something

which can never be "completed". It must evolve over time to take account of the changing needs of the people as well as the changing needs of the landscape. It will be important to regularly monitor this change and review the effectiveness of proposed action throughout its implementation.

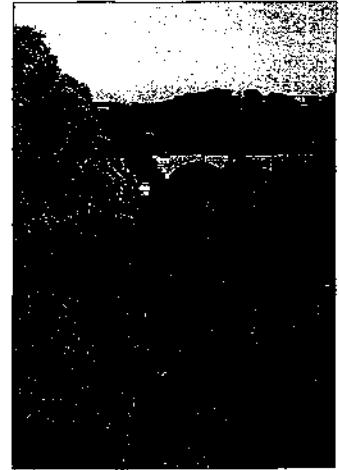
If the landscape strategy is to have a meaningful effect in securing adequate management and improvement to safeguard the city's landscape for the future, then it should aim to make significant progress by the year 2000.

### **What are the priorities for action?**

Determining priorities for action is not an easy task. The complexity of the landscape with its varied processes and pace of change, and the different and varied pressures it has to withstand, suggests that action required to safeguard it for the future needs to be brought forward on several fronts at once. It is for this reason that this strategy's themed approach has been adopted.

The advantages of this approach are several. It provides a flexible approach which will allow the City Council to achieve its objectives through several different courses of action. It also creates greater opportunity for partnership working and funding, either in a pro-active or reactive way. If we are to make significant progress by the year 2000 then we need to develop this multi-faceted approach in a way which allows us to make as much progress as possible in the shortest possible time.

The difficulties in implementing such an approach, are that it requires a broad and continuous commitment to the objectives of the landscape strategy, with the need to sustain several different courses of action at the same time. In almost every theme, the importance of undertaking specific works to upgrade, restore and replenish the quality and richness of the landscape, is emphasised. However much of the action proposed requires the development of on-going work associated with positive landscape management, regular monitoring and



The landscape quality of Bath's rural fringe is under threat particularly from recreational pressure and the lack of appropriate management.

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“By its very nature the landscape strategy must be a long-term plan of action. Indeed it is probably something which can never be ‘completed’.”

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continuous active resistance to the adverse affects of a variety of different activities.

The City Council is strongly committed to the protection of the city's quality of environment. Commitment to the themes of the landscape strategy is seen as an important part of this. It is felt that the City Council is particularly well placed to develop a multi-faceted approach to the care of the city's landscape.

The council is already undertaking some of this work. However, to meet the objectives of the strategy more effectively, such work may need to be done in a more informed way, with some changes in attitudes and working practices. Not many of these will have large resource implications and can be implemented through good management or changes in emphasis. Themes of the strategy have been devised to reflect the sphere of influence and activities of the City Council and highlight the way in which these changes can be achieved.

Priorities for action are shown in detail in Part 2 of this document. They have been identified within each theme, rather than between them. In bringing forward the strategy, the City Council has been mindful of the likely consequence of Local Government reorganisation in this part of the country. The life of the existing City Council is not likely to extend beyond 1996. It is hoped that the new authority for the area will adopt this strategy for Bath.

Priorities for action have, therefore, been identified as:-

- (a) **short-term.** That is those which are achievable or which should be started or continued within the remaining lifetime of the City Council;
- (b) **medium-term.** That is those which are achievable or should be started by the year 2000; and
- (c) **long-term.** That is those which are desirable, but need not be started until other more urgent work is completed or established.

It is proposed to concentrate on the following activities in the short-term and give priority to them within each theme.

### Short Term Objectives

- 1. The continuation of existing programmes: the annual tree planting programme; the landscape grants scheme; the resolution of long-term management for Twerton Hill Farm; the creation of at least one Local Nature Reserve within the city.**
- 2. The implementation of tree and woodland management programmes following recent surveys and the preparation of management plans for woodlands.**
- 3. The identification, and, where appropriate, evaluation of key landscape areas, sites or features within the city.**
- 4. The application and/or review of protective measures where available, to effectively safeguard key landscape areas, sites and features.**
- 5. The establishment of guidelines for the securement of the appropriate long-term management of key landscape areas, sites or features.**
- 6. The preparation of guidelines for the future conservation and/or enhancement of identified landscape character zones within the city, using information from a previous study as a basis.**
- 7. The setting-up of landscape information data-bases on which future change in the city's landscape can be effectively monitored and the effectiveness of landscape strategy action reviewed.**
- 8. The implementation of management and reinstatement plans for Sydney Gardens and Royal Victoria Park.**



The landscape character of some parts of the city contrasts sharply with others. Guidelines are to be prepared for the future conservation or enhancement of the different character areas.



# Part 2

## Themes and Key Action

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## Introduction

This theme considers the issues relating to trees, hedgerows and woodlands throughout the city, whether in public or private ownership. It highlights the importance of trees and hedges in the landscape and emphasises the need for their management and planned replacement. It overlaps with considerations within all other themes of the strategy.

## The Issues

### The Importance of Bath's Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands

Trees, hedgerows and woodlands are visually attractive and they sustain us all both physically and emotionally. They can inspire us in both art and science alike. They provide some of the food we eat and they give us shelter. They can also provide a home, a source of food, and shelter to a wide variety of wildlife. In a dense urban area their benefit to people and the environment is immense. Woodlands in particular create strong visual impressions, provide varied recreational opportunities to city dwellers and bring nature close to the homes of many people.

In Bath, the visual impact of the trees, hedgerows and woodlands makes a particularly important contribution to the city's overall character and the appearance of its high quality rural landscape setting.

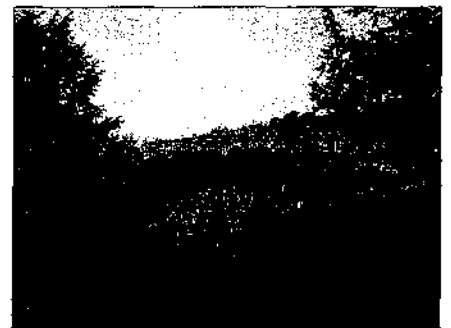
Woodland is one of the main habitats for wildlife within the city and some of the woodlands, hedgerows and trees of our more rural surroundings penetrate deep within the built up area. They make visual links with the trees of our city centre parks, gardens and river courses and create a network of habitats in which wildlife can thrive and move about. Native trees and hedgerows provide the best habitat for wildlife, but in Bath the visual quality of the landscape derives from its variety of trees and shrubs, some of which are highly ornamental and form part of the designed spaces between the buildings. It is important to retain this diversity whilst at the same time maximise the opportunities for wildlife.

The role of trees, hedgerows and woodlands in enhancing the visual appearance of the city, in providing for recreation and as a home for wildlife is important.

However, not everybody appreciates this role. There is a constant pressure to have healthy trees removed, particularly large ones which may be close to people's property. Some believe that trees are a liability or are a continuous source of nuisance, because of their leaf litter, shade or the activity of their roots. Many people create problems for themselves by inappropriately pruning or pollarding trees. Bath's special quality owes much to its trees, hedges and woodlands, but, as in many other cities in this country, they are taken for granted and consequently their need for care, replacement and renewal is neglected.

### Established Landscapes

Our established landscapes on the south-eastern skyline, and within the older parts of the city, eg. the historic core, Bathwick, Widcombe and the Lansdown/Beacon Hill hillside, are particularly significant because of their visibility, their appearance and their association with the historic development of the city. Such landscapes are typified by the large




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forest-size trees contained within the large gardens, or growing as copses and woodlands on the more open hillside areas. Most are in some form of private ownership and are now well in to maturity and going into decline.

In these areas there are few developing trees to replace the older stock. Some of the larger gardens have also been fragmented by infill development which has reduced space available for the planting and development of large species trees. The fact that many of these trees are in private ownership makes it more difficult for the City Council to take measures to address some of the changes taking place. If left unchecked these changes will threaten the quality and future well-being of these important landscapes.

### **Pressure for Development**

Throughout the city the pressure for development threatens the life and well-being of many of our trees. Designs for new development often fail to take account of the needs of existing trees and many proposals require their removal. Even those that are meant to be retained often fail to thrive because they are damaged during the construction process, or because the soil around them has become so compacted that their roots cannot feed or breathe properly. They may not die immediately, but they do die prematurely as a result. Such losses are avoidable. Many losses are brought about by inadequate planning, carelessness or ignorance.

### **City Council Owned Trees**

The City Council owns or manages over 25,000 individual trees within the city. They make a significant and important contribution to the city's overall landscape. In 1991 a survey of the condition of these trees highlighted the importance of regular tree maintenance and planned management, and identified a backlog of work to be done. It also highlighted the imbalance between the large numbers of mature and over-mature trees and the small number of semi-mature and younger trees in our older parks and generally within the conservation area. In the suburbs there are relatively few large mature trees and

there are a considerable number of young developing trees. Very few of these will have a city-wide impact in their maturity because they are not large species. Whilst the survey did not include trees in private ownership, it has been helpful in identifying the issues which affect much of Bath's tree population.

### **Woodlands**

The city's woodlands have not been managed for years. Many contain trees of a similar age, and being advanced in maturity, are all going into decline together. The visual impact of this change will be damaging to the city's character and appearance. In a few woodlands, natural regeneration is well established and this will help offset the visual effects of the eventual, and potentially sudden, loss of mature trees. However, in most of Bath's woodlands natural regeneration is not well advanced and there is very little semi-mature growth which has developed enough to have an immediate visual impact. The loss of mature trees from these woodlands will result in the loss of important features from the city's landscape for a considerable period of time. It will take several decades for the existing visual contribution of these woodlands to be restored.

The lack of positive management of our woodlands has also encouraged the spread of more vigorous species, such as sycamore which, although ultimately a large species, is not typical of the Bath woodlands. These comprise mainly beech woodlands or contain oak, lime and ash with large stands of beech. Thus the change to woodlands dominated by sycamore would radically alter the visual appearance of these woodlands and their overall character. It would also have a detrimental effect on the existing wildlife as the established, native species provide homes to a greater variety of insects and birds.

Some woodlands within the city, such as Smallcombe Wood, Bathwick Wood and Padleigh Wood are referred to as Ancient Woodlands. They are remnants of older, much larger areas of woodland which are known to have been on their sites since 1600 AD. They are important because of their history as woodlands, and because they are well established



Large, mature trees are vulnerable to the stresses caused by placing new development close to them, particularly during the construction phase.

and provide a particularly stable habitat for wildlife. As a result, they often contain a greater diversity of woodland plant species than our more recently developed woodlands, including many of the less common ones. Inappropriate management in the past has threatened to change the character of some of these woodlands, particularly by introducing fast growing conifers.

Woodland cover on the steep hillsides in Bath eg. Beacon Hill and Beechen Cliff, makes an extremely important contribution to retaining the stability of these slopes. However the even-age, over-maturity of these woodlands poses particularly serious threats and problems which the City Council and other owners must address as a matter of priority. The retention of large species trees on these hillsides has been considered important because of their visual impact. However, because of their size they could cause serious erosion when they are felled. Recent storm damage and the early death of some of the older trees, have created problems on some of these hillsides. These have had to be addressed with expensive and urgent action. Through the proper and careful on-going management of woody vegetation on these sites in the future, such problems can be minimised or eliminated. It is important to establish younger trees before the larger ones are removed and to remove the very large over-mature trees gradually in a planned and controlled way. The visual impact of tree cover on such sites may be changed, but not lessened, and the sites managed to maximise the stabilising effect of their vegetation.

The City Council owns and manages about 100 hectares of land on which there is woodland (see Appendix 2, Map 2). The council, together with the National Trust, own some of the visually most important woodlands within the city including Bathwick Wood, Carrs Wood and Beechen Cliff. Management plans have been prepared for these woodlands which seek to address the issues set out above. The plans for council owned woodlands take account of their visual significance, their recreational use and potential, their wildlife importance and their silvicultural needs. They set out programmes of work for the next twenty

years and lay down guidelines for their future longer term care. It is important that these plans are adopted and implemented immediately and that a long-term commitment is made to managing woodlands in City Council ownership. It is also important to encourage all owners of woodlands to follow the City Council's example.

### Hedgerows

Hedgerows are important elements in the city's landscape and some have particular significance in certain local landscapes because of their history or historical associations. For example, some are remnants of ancient field boundaries or indicate ancient routes into the city. Some also shape the spaces of our designed landscapes and have a more recent historical significance as a result. Many of the native agricultural hedgerows have a visual significance in their own right by determining the landscape pattern in the area and providing attractive visual features. They provide shelter for livestock and a habitat of considerable importance to wildlife.

Hedgerow removal is now not as common as it was during the 1970's and 1980's, when it was actively encouraged by the Ministry of Agriculture. Bath suffered less than in other parts of the country because of the mainly pastoral nature of the farmland within the city. However, reference to older Ordnance Survey maps illustrates a gradual enlargement of fields and the loss of possibly hedged field boundaries over the last 100 years.

In order to conserve the character and appearance of the city's landscape effectively, it is important that we understand the significance of the hedgerows and identify any trends of change occurring in their distribution, condition and visual contribution. Only then can we plan for their appropriate protection, care and reinstatement.

Of the hedgerows that remain within the city, many are looked after poorly, either being trimmed back too fiercely or, more commonly, being neglected altogether. Few new hedgerows are being planted in the city, although the City Council has reinstated, laid and planted



Hedges help to determine the pattern and scale of Bath's prominent and attractive rural setting.



Woodland at Beechen Cliff is visually attractive and prominent within the city. It is also essential to the stability of the cliff. Management plans have now been prepared for this site.

some hedges on its own land either by direct action or through negotiation with our tenant farmers. There are now a number of schemes which give guidance and financial assistance for planting new hedgerows and for managing existing ones eg. MAFF grants and Countryside Commission's Hedgerow Incentive Scheme. The City Council will use and promote these schemes, where they help to conserve the character and appearance of the city's landscape.

### Tree Planting and Tree Care

It is important to care for and manage our established trees, woodlands and hedgerows, but we must consider also the need to plant more within the city. The City Council has set up an annual tree planting programme of between £15,000 and £25,000 per annum and is following the broad priorities as shown in Map 3 (Appendix 2). It also seeks to maximise tree planting opportunities on its own development sites. Many others are also planting trees within the city, some with the assistance of grant-aid from the City Council. However, we are still not planting enough to sustain even the existing population of trees.

If we are to conserve and enhance the existing landscape character of the city, we need also to be more careful about what and where we plant. Often small modern varieties are planted in the place of former large species trees. Either this is because insufficient room has been provided, for example on new development sites, or because people consider small trees are easier to manage and cause fewer problems. However, the small varieties do not contribute as effectively to the character and appearance of the city's landscape. If this trend continues the visual quality of the landscape will deteriorate.

There are opportunities to strengthen the linear landscape features within the city, such as the river, the canal, and our main entrance routes, with strong planting. In this way a significant new landscape framework can be created for parts of the city which need improvement.

In spite of new planting many newly planted trees die within their first few years due to lack of watering or weeding.

Many more are badly maimed because the stake is not removed on time, early pruning is forgotten, or the bases of trees are damaged by the careless use of skimmers or mowers. All owners of trees, including the City Council, have a legal obligation to look after them to make sure they are safe.

As the local planning authority, the City Council has the statutory power to make tree preservation orders. The purpose of these is to protect trees for the public's enjoyment. This is particularly important where trees are in immediate danger. In general, an order makes it an offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy a tree without the council's permission. The City Council also has a statutory duty to keep a register of works to trees in the conservation area. Anyone wishing to cut down, top, lop or uproot trees within the conservation area generally must first give the council six weeks notice of their intention. This allows the council to consider the visual importance of a tree and to protect it under a tree preservation order where necessary. It is important that the City Council continues to use its statutory powers and duties effectively, and to develop them where possible, to protect the city's important trees.

The council acts as the local administering authority responsible for ensuring that highways are kept clear of vegetation which is liable to cause nuisance, obstruct or injure users. It must, when requested in writing to do so, investigate the condition of trees on private land that are thought to endanger neighbouring people and property. It is important, therefore, that the City Council maintains an up-to-date record of the distribution, age and condition of the city's trees.

The 1991 survey of council owned and managed trees has provided a database on which to monitor the changes and condition of many of the city's trees in the future. It highlighted priorities for action and has created an opportunity to devise a long-term rolling programme of tree management and maintenance to ensure their health, vigour and longevity. It is important that the City Council implements this urgently and



Planting on farmland at Primrose Hill was grant-aided through the City Council's Landscape Grants scheme.



This leaflet has been produced to help inform people about the special protection given to trees within Bath's large conservation area and to those covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

encourages private owners to develop similar planned approaches to the maintenance of their trees.

At the same time the premature loss of healthy, developing and mature trees from within the city must be addressed. These die mainly as a result of development but also perhaps, as a result of air pollution, created by the city's traffic and from other sources. At the moment we have incomplete information on the factors affecting the health of our trees and we need to set up regular monitoring and undertake the necessary research to gain a clearer understanding.

### Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan

The adopted City Plan contains policies which seek to protect and encourage the management of trees, hedgerows and woodlands throughout the city. Within the draft Replacement City Plan these policies have been strengthened and extended. The City Council proposes to use its Statutory powers to protect trees and woodlands, resist the uprooting and removal of hedgerows, and promote long-term management of individual trees, woodlands and hedgerows.

### Strategy Objectives

The objectives behind the proposed key action for the future care of our trees, hedgerows and woodlands are outlined as follows:-

- (a) To lessen the impact on the city's overall landscape of the decline of our ageing trees and woodlands, by protecting and prolonging the life of healthy mature trees for as long as possible and by planting and caring for new trees capable of having the same effect.
- (b) To conserve and enhance the important role of our woody vegetation in shaping the character and appearance of the city's landscape and in providing for wildlife.
- (c) To maintain and monitor the long-term health of our woody vegetation, and to identify and eradicate factors which threaten its well-being.
- (d) To increase the number of trees in the city and increase species diversity.
- (e) To develop an uneven aged tree population of the right proportions to sustain and increase long-term tree cover of the appropriate character within the city.
- (f) To retain and manage wood vegetation cover on specific sites to ensure the stability of difficult soils on steep slopes.
- (g) To promote sound long-term management of all woody vegetation within the city for the benefit of its health and visual appearance, its enjoyment and responsible use by the public and for the benefit of wildlife.



By working with the National Trust, who own this important ancient woodland at Smallcombe, the City Council has helped to secure its long-term management for both visual and wildlife benefit.



Newly planted trees, such as these at Abbey View Open Space, will require regular maintenance to ensure their successful establishment.

## Key Strategy Action

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To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

### **A1 Identify key trees, hedgerows and woodlands within the city and seek their appropriate protection and management by:-**

- (a) setting out prescriptions and guidelines for their future care and management;
- (b) reviewing and introducing, where necessary, the measures to protect them, using statutory powers where available and liaising with other authorities as necessary;
- (c) actively seeking to secure their long-term management and planned replacement and/or renewal through direct action on council-owned or managed land and by negotiation or management agreements with private owners and occupiers; including as appropriate the securing of funds, the provision of advice and networking with other authorities or voluntary bodies who could assist;
- (d) devising and implementing a programme for the regular review of tree preservation orders within the city to ensure their continued need, accuracy and effectiveness; and actively seek the long term management of trees and woodlands covered by such orders through negotiation or management agreements with owners;
- (e) identifying woodlands of importance to the city's landscape but which lie outside the city boundary and urge the County of Avon and Wansdyke District Council as appropriate to give priority to their positive management;

### **A2 Develop identified landscape character zones within the city, and identify the role, or potential role of trees, hedgerows and woodlands in preserving and/or enhancing the character of each area, including:-**

- (a) devising detailed tree/hedgerow guidelines for each character zone to direct the management of individual trees, hedgerows and woodlands within them and to guide new planting and its aftercare for the future, giving priority to the conservation area and Cotswolds AONB;
- (b) promoting and implementing tree/hedgerow guidelines for each character zone through:-
  - (i) direct action on council owned or managed land by incorporating the guidelines when devising and implementing tree, hedgerow and woodland management plans and encouraging our tenants and tenant farmers to do likewise;
  - (ii) the publication of information leaflets and guidance notes;
  - (iii) the consideration of planning applications;
  - (iv) the provision of direct advice and encouragement to other landowners and occupiers, including the use of grant-aid or the identification of more appropriate funding, and the networking with other organisations and voluntary bodies that may be able to assist.

### **A3 Set a good example on its own land and in undertaking its duties by:**

- (a) strongly resisting the destruction and removal of hedgerows and the felling of healthy trees when undertaking its statutory duties, giving grant-aid and undertaking work on its own land;
- (b) using its powers under the Planning (Conservation Area and Listed Buildings) Act 1990 to prosecute, where appropriate, anyone found to be responsible for unlawfully lopping, topping or felling trees covered by a tree preservation order or which lies within the conservation area;



- (c) when undertaking its statutory duties, insisting on the replacement of all trees that have been unlawfully felled which are the subjects of tree preservation orders or lie within the conservation area unless it is in the interests of good silviculture not to do so;
- (d) monitoring on a regular basis the condition of all trees and woodlands owned or managed by the City Council;
- (e) continuing to devise, implement and review management plans and programmes for the long-term care of all council owned trees and woodlands; giving priority to those identified as key features;
- (f) recording and monitoring on a regular basis the extent, character and condition of hedgerows owned and managed by the City Council, giving priority to those identified as key features and those situated within the Cotswolds AONB; and devising and implementing by direct action, conditions of lease or negotiation with tenants, management programmes for their future care;
- (g) continuing to implement the annual tree planting programme on council owned land in accordance with the agreed priority tree planting areas.  
(See Appendix 2 – map 3).
- (h) review the agreed priority tree planting areas on completion of action under A2 and A4(d).

**A4 Promote the active care of trees and woodlands throughout the city and promote appropriate new tree planting by:-**

- (a) continuing to provide advice and grant-aid to the private sector and other public bodies or advise on other sources of funding available, to promote tree and hedgerow planting in the city, giving priority to planting which meets one or more of the following criteria:-
  - \* helps conserve the landscape character of the area (see also A2);
  - \* provides for the appropriate planned replacement of maturing or felled trees, or for the renewal of woodland, giving priority to key features;
  - \* visually improves the approaches to and views within the city (see also A2);
  - \* provides and improves habitats for wildlife;
  - \* encourages species diversity and maximises the use of appropriate large tree species;
  - \* reinstates visually significant or historically important hedgerows (see also A2);
  - \* visually improves the appearance of the suburban landscapes (see also A2);
- (b) continuing to provide advice and grant-aid when available to the private sector and other owners of property, or advise on other sources of funding available, to promote active, tree, hedgerow and woodland management within the city, where this meets one or more of the following criteria:-
  - \* is visually significant within the local or city-wide landscape;
  - \* provides and improves habitats for wildlife;
  - \* conserves, maintains or enhances the visual appearance of the feature in the long term and/or contributes to the life expectancy of an individual tree;
  - \* is undertaken in accordance with good hedgerow, silvicultural and arboricultural management practices and, in the case of individual trees, complies with BS 3998 (1989) and involves no overall height reduction.

- (c) devising a strategy to target more effectively and monitor City Council grant-aid for trees, hedgerows and woodlands to ensure the effectiveness of the landscape strategy and to take account of financial assistance from other organisations;
- (d) identifying key areas for new tree and woodland planting or hedgerow re-instatement and incorporate into a review of the agreed priority tree planting areas and the strategy for targeting grant-aid;
- (e) publishing information leaflets and guidance notes, or distributing those of others where relevant, to promote the better understanding of the city's trees, hedgerows and woodlands and to encourage their better care, including the promotion of the dissemination of such information by giving targeted talks, organising seminars and exhibitions as appropriate;

Topics will include:-

- \* The activities which can cause damage to trees and techniques to avoid such damage;
  - \* Species selection, planting and establishment techniques;
  - \* Good tree surgery and council recommendations for arboricultural work;
  - \* Riverside and waterway trees;
  - \* Good hedgerow and woodland management;
  - \* Legislation relating to trees – TPO's, conservation area, Felling Licences etc;
  - \* Riverside and waterway trees;
  - \* Trees and shrubs for nature conservation;
  - \* Good hedgerow and woodland management;
  - \* Where to get advice, financial assistance and volunteer help;
- (f) continuing to support and organise events during National Tree Week to promote the better appreciation and care of trees throughout the city and encourage new tree planting;
  - (g) establishing a local project in conjunction with other authorities eg. the County Council, Wansdyke District Council and other bodies to investigate the feasibility of developing local markets for small woods produce;
  - (h) maintaining and enhancing our links with outside bodies involved in the promotion and care of trees, hedgerows and woodlands such as the Forestry Authority, the County Council, the Countryside Commission, the Tree Council and others; and making representations through appropriate channels to influence new policies and legislation to facilitate the protection and care of these features in Bath.

#### **A5 Monitoring the health, extent and character of woody vegetation within the city by:-**

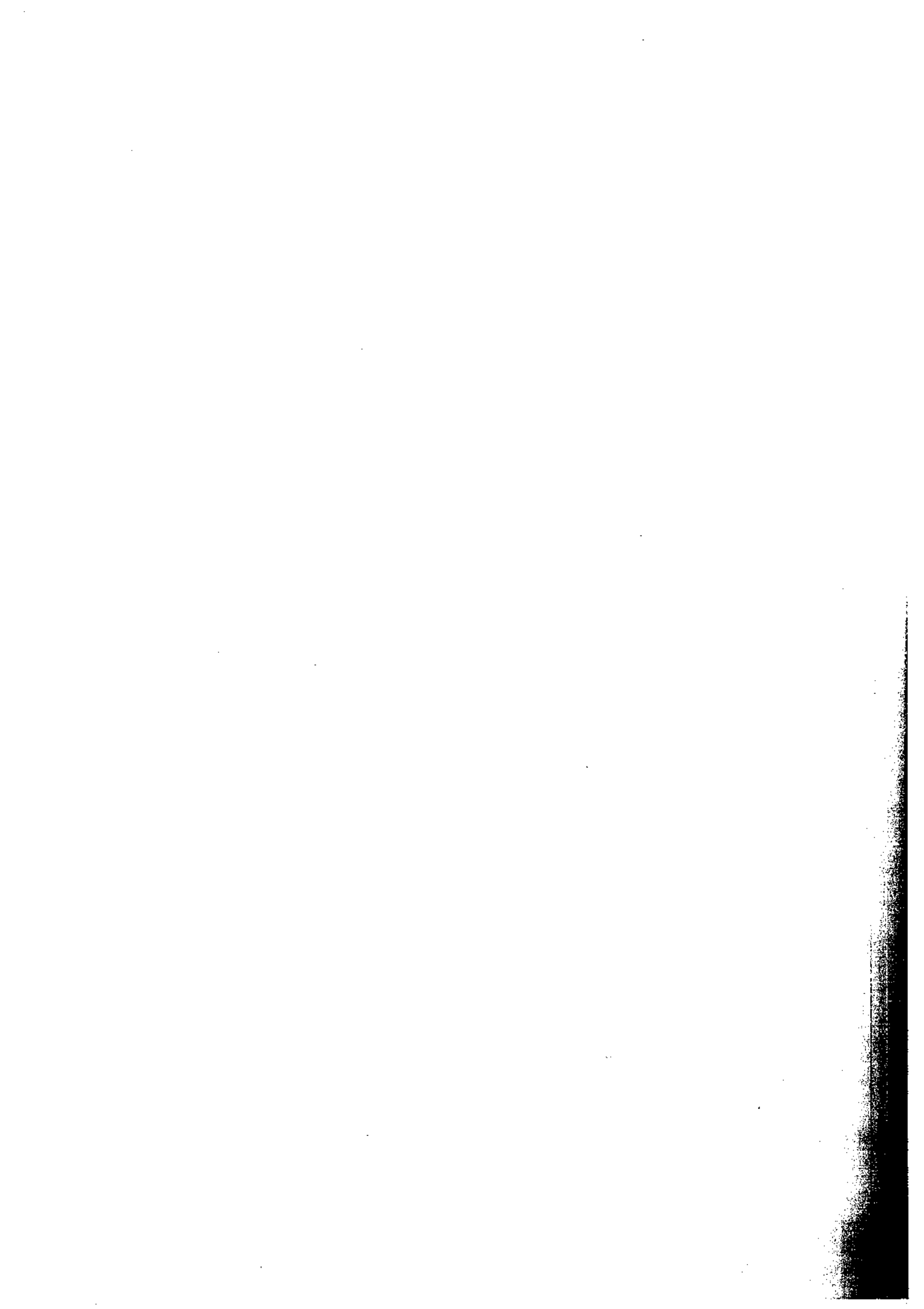
- (a) undertaking a broad survey of trees and woodlands throughout the city, taking account of information already collected on council owned land, giving priority to:-
  - 1) Key visual features and Ancient Woodlands.
  - 2) Council owned or managed land:
    - a) within the conservation area and the Cotswolds AONB
    - b) other areas
  - 3) Other land within the conservation area and the Cotswolds AONB
  - 4) Other land within the city.
- (b) developing and extending the Council's information data bases on trees and woodlands for future comparison and devising a planned programme to regularly update;

- (c) identifying key factors which appear to be threatening the health of the city's trees and woodlands and setting up research as necessary to help lessen or eradicate the threat;
- (d) identifying trends of change in the extent and composition of the tree population within the city and reviewing strategy action to address them;
- (e) establishing a hedgerow research project to survey, evaluate and identify any recent trends of change in the extent, character and condition of hedgerows in the city and devising action to address them;
- (f) setting up an information data base on the current extent, character and condition of hedgerows, updating at 10 year intervals and identifying any trends of change and reviewing action to address them.

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## Introduction

This theme considers open space within the city which is owned or managed by the City Council and is accessible to the public. It excludes the open space areas of our housing estates, which are considered under Theme C of this strategy. It overlaps with Themes A, D and F in particular.

## The Issues

### The Importance of Bath's Public Open Spaces

Bath's parks and public open spaces form a large proportion of the total open space within the city (see Map 4). They range from small suburban open spaces to the eight large parks of the city centre. They include recreation grounds, sports fields and allotments. All are currently managed by the City Council.

Some make a particularly significant contribution to the city's landscape because they support the large species trees which are important and characteristic features of our more established landscapes. They provide a soft green counterpoint to Bath's Georgian architecture. Others, like Royal Victoria Park, are also extensive in area and form significant landscape features in their own right. However, some make only a local contribution but they are valued and enjoyed because of their closeness to people's homes and their ready accessibility. They provide vital greenery and open air places in an

otherwise close urban environment. We value them as places for relaxation, for recreation and sport, for their floral displays and, in some cases, for their closeness to nature.

Many have historical importance and are components of the eighteenth and nineteenth century development within the city. The historical significance of Sydney Gardens as one of the earliest examples of public open space in this country, and Royal Victoria Park, has now been recognised by their inclusion on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England.

The effect of the architectural set pieces of Bath is heightened by their relationship to adjacent open spaces. Some have been created or defined by the buildings, such as Queen Square and Circus. These were designed specifically for social activities; for people to meet and be seen. Their design is integrated totally with the architecture that frames them and they make an essential contribution to the city's conservation area.

Not all of these spaces are accessible to the public today, but those that are provide a unique sequence of visual experiences for people passing through the city centre. Some are hard urban spaces but the high quality workmanship and materials used in their construction was special to Bath and they all engender a unique sense of place.

### Protection and Maintenance

The City Council has sought for many years to protect the city's open spaces from development. However, the landscapes of our parks and public open spaces are not static. They undergo continuous change as a result of vegetation growth and ageing, and in response to human activity. Protection against development alone will not ensure their continued well-being, nor will it retain or enhance the contribution they make to the city's overall landscape.

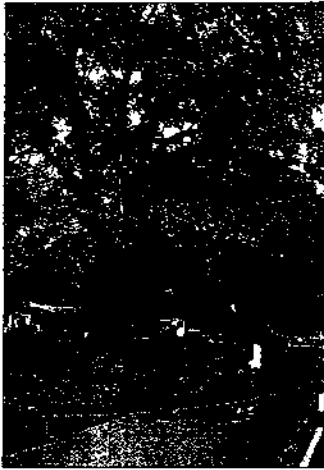
Our parks and green spaces have always been well cared for on a day to



Henrietta Park provides an attractive and tranquil open space only minutes away from the bustling city centre.



Royal Victoria Park is now included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England.



Many of our older parks support large mature and over-mature trees. They require regular inspection and maintenance to ensure their continued contribution and safety, whilst their planned replacements establish and mature.



Recent landscape improvements have transformed this much loved suburban open space at Shaftesbury Road.

day basis, but they have been vulnerable to design fashions and, perhaps, to the individual interests of park keepers. Many have not been managed in accordance with any long-term plans to help retain their essential character or original design concepts. The hard urban spaces of the city have suffered from the intrusion of traffic and from the lack of a coherent and comprehensive approach to tackling the design issues associated with this. The responsibility for their maintenance and management falls to a number of different agencies and the lack of co-ordination has resulted in the decline of the quality of these spaces. Many of the parks and open spaces deserve a higher level of investment than has hitherto been granted. They all need long-term plans or prescriptions, to guide their management into the future.

### Historic Parks

The condition of some of our older parks and gardens, such as Sydney Gardens, Parade Gardens and Hedgemoor Park, is at a critical stage. Some have lost their earlier vitality and richness, whilst in others the original designs have been eroded or masked by poor quality repairs, misguided "improvements" and later additions. The recent tree survey, undertaken by the City Council, highlights the large number of mature trees on these sites and the very small number of trees at a stage ready to take their place. The landscapes of some of these parks are now well into decline and are in urgent need of renewal and restoration. It is essential that the management of them strikes the right balance between providing for recreation and leisure and conserving the city's heritage.

The increasing pressure to accommodate traffic in the centre of the city also has eroded the quality of some of our historic parks and gardens. The main carriageways of Royal Victoria Park are used for car parking. Such a use detracts from the visual quality of the park and disrupts important views and vistas within it. It introduces an unwelcome intrusion into this historic park which was designed for open-air pleasures and a detachment from the hub-bub of city life. Recently with the

assistance of Task Force Trees (a Countryside Commission initiative), the City Council has prepared reinstatement and management plans for both Royal Victoria Park and Sydney Gardens. These plans can now be adopted and implementation can begin. Similar plans for our other historic parks need also to be prepared.

### Suburban Open Spaces

Not all our public open spaces are of a high landscape quality. Some suburban open spaces, for example, comprise only closely mown grass with a few trees. These contribute little to the local environment and even less to the overall city landscape. They are often under used because they lack variety or shelter and enclosure. Nevertheless, they are often valued by local communities as they are the only patch of greenspace in an area. Their management and design could be improved and developed to provide the full range of leisure, nature conservation and learning opportunities of which most are capable.

### Allotments

The allotments in the city are generally well used. Eight sites enjoy statutory protection, whilst others are in private ownership or are temporary. Allotments provide important leisure opportunities for the local community, but many are also important elements in the city's landscape. They help to provide an open-air feeling and contribute to the visual appearance of the city by virtue of the trees and hedgerows that they support. Some are important to wildlife.

Allotments have a special character quite unlike any other type of landscape. Partly, this is because of their visual appearance, but also it results from the involvement of different individuals in the care of each plot. The active pursuit of gardening and the productive use of land in this way can encourage people to take an interest in the natural processes of growth and develop an understanding of the need for regular maintenance and ongoing management. These are important considerations in the care of the whole of the city's landscape.

Demand for allotments fluctuates, and with the shortage of development land within the city, those sites that are not well used become vulnerable to development. It is proposed within the statutory Local Plan that a survey is undertaken of privately owned allotments to assess their role in meeting the needs of local people. It is also recognised that the future of some of the temporary sites may have to be reconsidered. It is important that the survey highlights the landscape importance of some of the sites as well as their use as allotments. It may be that where such sites might be reduced or abandoned as allotment sites, they should be retained as open space and made accessible to the public. In addition there is scope to manage some of the allotment areas differently to increase their overall visual contribution to the landscape of the city and to benefit wildlife where this does not conflict with their main use.

### **Open Space Network**

Some suburban open spaces are relatively isolated and form discreet greenspaces in otherwise densely developed parts of the city. Others offer particular opportunities to link with other nearby sites. In Bath countryside penetrates into the centre and linear features, such as the river, the canal and the Linear Park, run through its developed areas. There is opportunity therefore to create a network of linked open spaces which can also link with the countryside beyond. This could include the environmental upgrading and improvement of footpaths and suburban streets which already link or go near open spaces and should embrace the linear features which already link the urban areas with the surrounding countryside.

Whilst providing a network of open areas for public enjoyment, such improvements will also help to create a linked network of wildlife habitats and will introduce linked ribbons of vegetation throughout the city.

### **Nature in our Parks and Open Spaces**

Some of our public open spaces, such as Twerton Roundhill and Firsfield in Combe Down, have been identified as Bath Sites of Wildlife Importance because

they contain significant areas of unimproved limestone grassland. These sites have remained as grassland for a very long time and, in parts, have never been ploughed, fertilised or treated with herbicides. They display a diverse range of wild flowers and grasses as a result.

Until recently the day to day maintenance of these sites did not take account of their wildlife importance. This was because it was either not known or it was not considered to be of any real importance. Fortunately in the case of Twerton Roundhill for example, such maintenance has not been destructive and the value of its grasslands has been maintained. However, in others it is thought likely that wildlife habitats have been lost or greatly diminished because of past management practices.

Other open spaces offer different opportunities for wildlife. The Linear Park, for example, provides a ribbon habitat of native woodland edge. However, many do not reach their full potential in this respect and could be improved. The value of sharing some of our urban open spaces with our native plants, birds and other animals is immense and is becoming understood more widely. It can increase our enjoyment of a place, provide a unique learning opportunity and can bring us all closer to nature. Providing for nature in the city is discussed in more detail in Theme D.

### **Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan**

The adopted Bath City Plan contains policies which seek to protect from development land identified as open space (see Appendix 2 – Map 4). Much of this is owned by the City Council and is accessible to the public at all times. The draft Replacement City Plan has continued and extended this protection.

Reference should also be made to the Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG17) – on “Sport and Recreation”.

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“Some suburban open spaces are relatively isolated and form discreet greenspaces in otherwise densely developed parts of the city.”

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Firsfield at Combe Down is a public open space, which is important to wildlife. It supports a diverse range of flora typical of unimproved calcareous grassland.

## Strategy Objectives

The objectives of the proposed key action for the future management of our public open spaces are outlined as follows:-

- (a) to promote the landscape diversity and landscape importance of the city's parks and public open space;
- (b) to establish good practice in the long term management of our parks and public open spaces which addresses the continuous changes experienced by the landscape and which seeks to:-

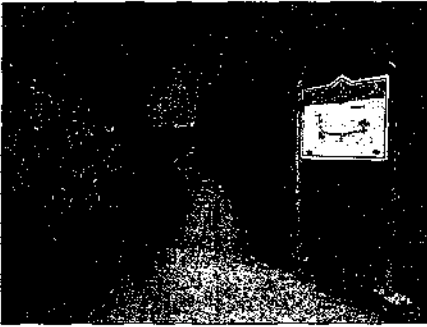
- (i) maximise the contribution of the open spaces to the character and appearance of the city;

- (ii) conserve features and areas of historic interest;

- (iii) conserve and enhance existing features of wildlife interest and where appropriate create new habitats;

- (iv) facilitate public enjoyment and recreation in a way which respects the landscape and minimises its erosion;

- (c) to provide a linked network of safe, rich and varied open spaces for us all to enjoy and value throughout the city and to promote links with the surrounding countryside.



The Linear Park provides a unique green pedestrian route through a densely developed part of the city and links with other green spaces.



## Key Strategy Action

To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

**B1 Undertake a landscape assessment of all parks and public open spaces within the city and work up a planned programme to prepare and implement landscape improvement/restoration and long-term management plans. The following priorities will be used in bringing forward the programme:-**

- a) public open spaces included on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England, (see also Theme F);
- b) public open spaces identified as Bath Sites of Wildlife Importance, (see also Theme D);
- c) public open spaces within the conservation area where the 1991 Bath City Council tree survey has highlighted the over-maturity and declining nature of their tree population;
- d) public open spaces identified as Bath Sites of Local Wildlife Importance, (see also Theme D);
- e) remote public open spaces within suburban areas.

**B2 Take account of the following when bringing forward and implementing landscape improvement/restoration and long-term management plans for the city's parks and public open spaces and in undertaking day to day maintenance:-**

- \* the site's historical significance or special designed layout; bringing forward proposals which seek to reinstate or conserve these aspects through the application of correct historical detail, high quality landscape design and the use of quality materials;
- \* any existing wildlife interest on the site; enhancing, wherever practical, this interest by adopting sympathetic management practices, including the reduction wherever possible of the use of all pesticides and artificial fertilisers;
- \* the visual significance of the site in the wider city landscape; identifying opportunities and making proposals to conserve or enhance the site's contribution, including considering the planned replacement of maturing trees;
- \* opportunities for habitat creation; identifying and making proposals for them where appropriate;
- \* the need to adopt high standards of landscape design and good quality materials generally, and seeking to create or conserve a sense of identity to each site;
- \* the need to involve local residents in the process and consulting with the wider public as appropriate;
- \* the need to liaise with relevant outside bodies as appropriate for advice, guidance and financial assistance if available eg. English Heritage, English Nature, Countryside Commission;
- \* public and personal safety; in any new designs and management measures to address safety issues.

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**B3 Identify opportunities to create safe green links between public open spaces and with the countryside, giving particular attention to:-**

- (a) the river corridor;
- (b) the canal corridor;
- (c) existing footpaths and the Cotswolds Way;
- (d) the south-western part of the city.

**B4 Bring forward proposals in partnership with outside bodies as necessary to secure the creation and enhancement of identified green links, including:-**

- \* the landscape improvement of suburban streets;
- \* the landscape improvement and demarkation of routes through housing estates;
- \* new pedestrianisation schemes;
- \* the imposition of planning conditions on consents for development where appropriate.

**B5 Review the distribution of publically accessible open space within the city, devising standards for provision and identifying areas of deficiency.**

**B6 Identify opportunities to create new areas of public open space or increase public accessibility to open space areas, and seek to secure their ownership, designation and improvement at the earliest opportunity, by:-**

- (a) reviewing and taking action on council owned land;
- (b) identifying sites/opportunities within areas where provision is considered to be inadequate;
- (c) imposing conditions on planning consents where appropriate;
- (d) identifying potential areas as part of a survey and review of allotments.



### Introduction

This theme considers the open and greenspaces of housing estates throughout the city, whether in public or in private ownership. It is recognised that most of the former council housing estates are now estates of mixed tenure. However, most of the larger open spaces in these areas are managed by the City Council and consequently, there is an implied emphasis on them. The considerations of this theme overlap with considerations within Themes A, D, E and G of this strategy. They compliment those of Theme B.

### The Issues

#### The Significance of Housing Greenspace

The city's housing estates are generally well provided with open spaces and they form a large part of the overall landscape of the city. Many are important open spaces for local residents and provide important greenspace within the residential suburbs of the city. However, their contribution to the character and appearance is disappointingly small.

Some estates are situated in visually prominent positions and their lack of developing or mature landscape features detracts from their appearance in views across the city and from rural areas beyond. All estates greenspaces have

the capacity to be attractive, comfortable and safe. They can provide opportunities for people to meet, for children's play and for a variety of other recreational and leisure pursuits. All have an ecological importance either as sites of known interest for wildlife or with potential for habitat creation. Others have an historical significance as examples of well-designed greenspace within early public housing.

#### Design of Housing Landscapes

Some of the city's older housing estates have well designed layouts in which the landscape was well planned as part of the overall design for the site. On some estates large areas of open space were incorporated to allow sunlight to penetrate the houses. Although these were provided mainly for health reasons, their design qualities make them comfortable and attractive places.

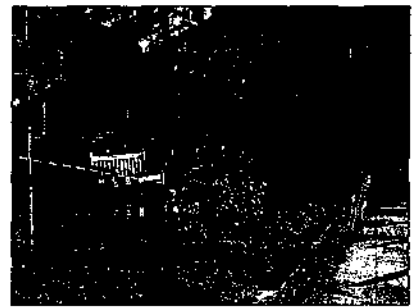
However, this quality of open space design was not carried forward to the estates which were built in the middle part of this century. On many housing estates of this period the greenspaces are quite extensive but they have not been laid out well. They comprise mainly large areas of grass with a few trees. They provide little sense of identity and are often quite featureless as a result.

The hilly nature of Bath and the situation of many of these estates on the higher land, largely to the south of the city, means that many of their outdoor areas are often exposed to the elements and are cold and windswept. They lack shelter and enclosure and they are often uncomfortable places to be in. They provide little privacy to those who live on the estates and their openness can be threatening. Many people are afraid to use the outdoor spaces, particularly at night.

The more recently designed housing estates are of a much higher density and are usually less extensive in area than those built up to the 1960s and early 1970s. Their landscapes and outdoor places comprise mainly the roads, car parks and footways. They have a far



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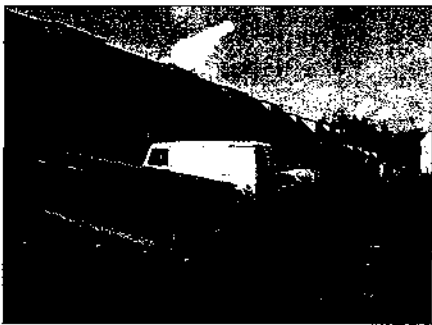
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Recent landscape improvements at Rosewell Court have helped to improve the privacy of the estate and have provided a sheltered sitting area for residents.

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“Many of the greenspaces in housing estates are undervalued and underused because they are featureless and lack character.”

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The need to provide for car parking has resulted in barren and featureless outdoor spaces in some of the housing estates within Bath.

higher proportion of tree and shrub planting, often in quite small areas, and very little grass. Such landscapes can, if properly designed, create a very pleasing appearance to an estate and develop a real sense of place.

The density of vegetation can help to break-up the spaces of a site, giving a sense of enclosure, ownership, and privacy. It can also provide the separation between neighbours which is so essential within high density development. Such planting requires greater skills of horticultural management than large areas of grass and requires regular renewal and rejuvenation. If these are not available or cannot be applied, it can get out of hand, or become rundown. Where this is happening the planting can become a nuisance to residents or an eyesore as its rundown appearance encourages further abuse. The long-term development of such vegetation as a feature, in either the local or city-wide environment, becomes threatened and the likelihood of it meeting its full potential as designed, is put at risk.

#### **New Housing Estates**

Space for new residential development within the city is limited. Much of that which is available comprises relatively small pockets of land, some of which are on steep slopes and will be more difficult to develop as a result. It is particularly important on such sites, that any development proposals brought forward for new housing, give proper consideration to the design and quality of the outdoor spaces and landscape, as well as to the number of houses that can be built.

New housing developments should create a strong identity from the start and provide a sense of place. This means giving attention to the spaces within the layout and to the way they are enclosed by buildings and planting. It can be achieved by creating contrasting and varied spaces that can be experienced when moving through the site and which provide the privacy required by residents as well as areas for social interaction and recreation. Since the design of the landscape affects the character, identity and security of a place, and will help determine the visual appearance of the

new housing within the city, it implies that landscape should be designed as an integral part of any new development. This approach is discussed further in Theme G.

#### **Pressures and Modern Demands within existing Housing Estates**

Many of the greenspaces in housing estates are undervalued and underused because they are featureless and lack character. They suffer from the effects of conflicting uses and piecemeal repair and maintenance. Some appear rundown as a result. Others suffer from repeated vandalism. Few provide the quality of living space of which they are all capable and even fewer reach their full potential to contribute more fully to the city's overall landscape.

The demands of modern living, particularly the need to provide for the motor car, are eroding further the quality and character of many of these spaces. They are causing serious erosion and damage in many more. There is a growing demand for private or communal gardens as the advantages of having defensible outdoor living space are being understood. This can result in the fragmentation of an important greenspace unless it is handled carefully and planned.

Often in the past these pressures and demands have been addressed in a piecemeal way to tackle individual problems or difficulties as they have arisen. Little thought appears to have been given to the effect of such action on the quality of the environment of an estate or its significance in the wider landscape. Such issues need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner and can, if planned properly, provide opportunities for considerable improvement of an estate and better use and care of its features.

As people have taken advantage of the Right to Buy legislation over the years, most of the city's former council estates have become estates of mixed tenure. This means that parts of the estates green and open spaces are no longer in council ownership. Usually this is land associated with individual properties and is confined mainly to easily defined garden areas. In some cases, however,

ownerships and tenancies extend over currently undefined open areas of grass, which might be particularly significant to the landscape of the site.

This poses a challenge when bringing forward comprehensive plans for landscape improvement to estates of mixed tenure. It requires skilful planning and negotiation at an early stage to maximise the advantages and opportunities of the situation and demands imaginative and sensitive design to overcome the problems it might impose.

### The Way Forward

It is important that the full value of the estate open spaces to the city and their community is assessed properly. Opportunities for improvement should be identified, which, in some areas might include small scale re-development, to help reshape spaces, create new opportunities and provide some investment in the landscape.

In the late 1980's the City Council introduced some pilot environmental improvement schemes within housing estates to address some of the issues identified. Private and communal gardens were created, and play areas were introduced. In one, public rights of way which ran right through the estates were extinguished to create more privacy for the residents and a sense of ownership of the landscape. In the longer term this has also resulted in the upgrading of the remaining public rights of way by improving lighting, surfacing, and defining main public routes through the estate. A considerable number of extra trees and shrubs have also been planted.

More recently, the City Council has made successful bids for Estate Action funding and has undertaken a number of environmental improvement schemes as part of this work. In bringing forward plans for these, a more comprehensive approach has been adopted. In some instances this has involved not only the consideration of the whole estate, rather than just a part of it, but also the consideration of major issues such as traffic management and the radical re-organisation of private, semi-private and public space. This approach has helped

to create new opportunities to improve the landscape, whilst at the same time address existing problems. It has been shown that by good spatial design and detailing, many of the conflicting uses and needs of our housing landscapes can be re-organised and resolved and a better environment created for all.

In order to sustain these improvements it is essential to establish high quality landscape management which understands the importance and value of these landscapes and addresses the on-going changes and pressures which occur within them. This must include a high standard of landscape maintenance and the application of sound horticultural knowledge and good practice.

An important aspect of any landscape improvement programme is the involvement of local residents. By helping to raise the awareness of people to the full value and potential of their estate open spaces, and by listening to their views and concerns, sensitive and imaginative designs can be brought forward which meet the needs of the people and the aims of this strategy.

During the next few years there may be other changes. For example, it may well be that tenants on an estate may opt to have their homes transferred to an alternative landlord. In such circumstances the management of the estate may also transfer to the new landlord. Alternatively, there may be some more collective or wholesale transfer of properties to another landlord, perhaps a Housing Association. In this case the City Council would not be directly managing the estate, although it might still retain responsibility for it. There are not any specific proposals for such changes at present but clearly they could have a significant effect on our housing landscapes in the future. It is essential that the future of these important open spaces is safeguarded if any new arrangements are made. Indeed certain types of transfer might produce substantial resources which could provide funding for major improvements in the landscape.

The estate open spaces should provide attractive settings for homes, routes to walk through and opportunities



Under the council's Estate Action programme, improvements have been carried out at the Snowhill estate, creating private and communal gardens restricting general public access and rationalising car parking.



A major refurbishment of the flats at Kingsmead provided a unique opportunity to re-design the central grass area to create this attractive new community garden.



for play and quiet relaxation. They can be designed or re-designed to create a special identity and engender a feeling of privacy. They should be rich, varied and attractive, perhaps even exciting in places. Above all they should be comfortable and safe. They are vitally important landscape assets to the city and to the people who live on them. We must protect and improve them to help them reach their full landscape potential. We also need to ensure their appropriate management in the future. In this way they can contribute more fully to the overall appearance of the city and can provide living spaces of quality within our suburban areas.

### Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan

In general the adopted City Plan policies seek to safeguard from development some specifically identified open spaces within housing estates. The policies also seek to ensure that any new housing development will protect and enhance the landscape and provide adequate open space within it. Encouragement is given to the improvement of existing housing estates.

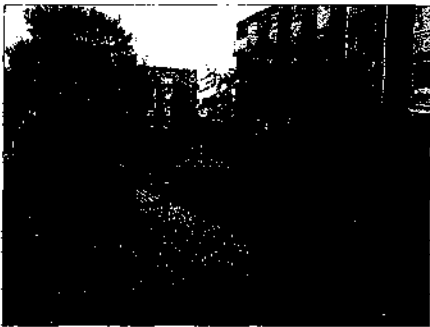
The policies of the draft Replacement City Plan recognise the importance of the standard and quality of open space to the quality of life enjoyed on our housing estates. It updates the adopted City Plan's stance by adding additional open spaces to be safeguarded. The draft Replacement Plan refers to the landscape strategy's role in identifying where new landscape improvements can appropriately take place on housing estates.

Reference should also be made to the Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG3) – "Land for Housing".

### Strategy Objectives

The objectives of the proposed key action to improve our housing estate landscapes are outlined as follows:-

- (a) to provide safe, comfortable and attractive settings to the homes within housing estates, maximising their privacy, their contribution to the city's overall landscape, reducing conflict with traffic and ensuring adequate amenity space for local residents;
- (b) to establish good practice in the long term landscape management of housing estates which addresses the continuous changes experienced by the landscape and which meets the needs of local residents;
- (c) to safeguard and conserve the essential design elements of the open space on specific, older housing estates, where the open space characteristics were developed as an integral part of the overall layout design.



Fencing off and planting up previously featureless open grass areas and re-routing public access, have been successful ways of improving these two areas on the Foxhill estate.

# Key Strategy Action

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To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies, the City Council will:-

**C1 Develop a programme to undertake the environmental assessment and evaluation of green and open spaces on housing estates in order to:-**

- \* assess their existing and potential landscape value to both the local residents and to the city at large;
- \* identify and prioritise areas in need of environmental improvement work;
- \* identify housing estates where the landscapes are of key importance to the city's landscape and devise guidelines for their future conservation and/or improvements.

**C2 Develop a long-term programme of environmental improvement and conservation work to housing estate landscapes which are in the ownership of or managed by the City Council giving priority to those areas which have been identified as of key importance and bring forward plans for improvement or conservation which will:-**

- \* continue to involve local residents and take account of their needs and issues which affect them;
- \* seek to maximise the estates' visual contribution to the character and appearance of the city's landscape;
- \* seek to create a sense of place, privacy and comfort within the estates' landscapes and make them safe;
- \* identify opportunities and, where practical, make proposals for the creation of wildlife habitats within the estates' greenspaces;
- \* identify opportunities and make proposals for children's play and other leisure, recreational and cultural activities as appropriate;
- \* address the issues of traffic management, landscape maintenance, ownership, vandalism and others as necessary to secure the lasting improvement or conservation of the estates' green and open spaces;
- \* seek to secure the highest quality of landscape design and the appropriate use of good quality, cost effective materials and a high standard of workmanship.

**C3 Continue to develop and implement environmental improvements to the green and open spaces of estates included in the Estate Action Programme.**

**C4 Prepare landscape management and maintenance guidelines for housing estates which are managed by the City Council, giving priority to those identified as being of key importance or which contain key landscape features identified under other themes in this strategy; to include:-**

- \* notes on the appropriate materials and design of hard details;
- \* notes on the management of vegetation;
- \* notes on the management and where appropriate, creation of wildlife habitats;
- \* the planned replacement of mature trees.

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**C5 Be guided by the advice as set out in notes prepared under C4 when undertaking general maintenance of the housing estates green and open spaces on council owned land.**

**C6 Promote and encourage the conservation and/or improvement of housing estate landscapes managed by bodies other than the City Council, giving priority to those identified as of key importance, through:-**

- (a) the use of statutory powers;
- (b) negotiation, the provision of advice and where appropriate grant-aid;
- (c) the promotion, in particular of the development of long term landscape management plans for each site.

**C7 Encourage and promote the development of landscape management plans in accordance with the broad guidelines set out in C4 for green and open spaces within estates which are not owned or managed by the City Council, through direct negotiation and advice.**





## Introduction

Theme D concentrates on nature conservation throughout the city. It highlights specific sites of importance and promotes the adoption of good nature conservation practice, monitoring and habitat creation whenever possible in all greenspaces. It considers both private and public land and waterways. It overlaps with Themes A, B, C, G and H of the strategy and links with Themes E and F.

## The Issues

### Bath's Wildlife

Bath's rural setting, its wooded hillsides, hedgerows and grassy open spaces generally make the city a good place for those living things which we collectively call "wildlife". By this we mean all the plants and animals which are not directly controlled by humans, including algae, mosses and grasses, fish, insects, mammals, birds and many more. Whilst wildlife is not directly controlled by people, it is affected by our activities. These can either encourage and help it thrive, or can inhibit and ultimately destroy it.

There are some important sites within the city, which contain some rare plants and animals. However in the main Bath's wildlife is relatively commonplace. Nevertheless, it is of enormous value to all. It contributes to our enjoyment of places we use for quiet recreation and thought, and occasionally it engenders a

sense of wonder. Wild spaces are often children's favourite places for exploration, providing them with opportunities for play and learning that few other places can equal.

We often associate wildlife only with the countryside, but in many ways, our urban greenspaces are better able to provide the sheltered refuges in which wildlife can thrive. Food supplies are often more plentiful and reliable in urban areas and we tend to use fewer chemicals on our urban greenspaces than in our intensively managed rural landscapes.

## Protection

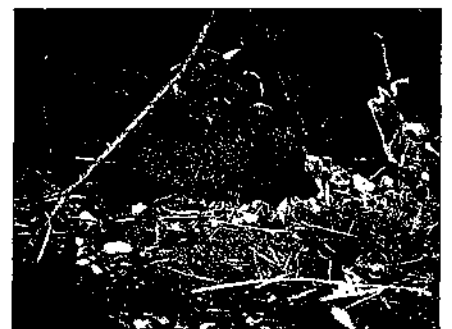
Several individual species found within Bath, both animals and plants, are afforded statutory protection under the Wildlife and Access to the Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The County of Avon Structure Plan also sets out policies to protect wildlife. These policies are developed and specific sites and areas identified within the Avon Landscape Strategy. The City Council has also brought forward policies in the draft Replacement City Plan to protect sites of wildlife importance. The openings of the mines at Combe Down are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of their importance to bats and are protected from development by policies within the draft Replacement City Plan. A geological SSSI is similarly protected at North Road Quarry.

Within the city there are other important homes and breeding places for bats – including the Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats. All species of bat are protected under the Wildlife and Access to the Countryside Act 1981. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that bats use for shelter or protection, or to disturb a bat while it is occupying such a place.

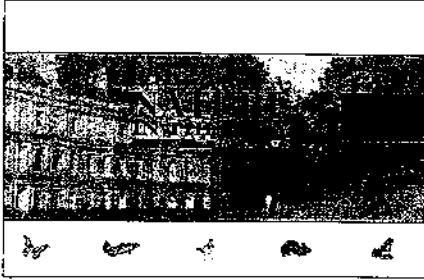
Two recent Acts of Parliament (1991) have tightened the law relating to badgers, increasing the previous protection to include the actual sett.



A guided walk on Twerton Roundhill helps to inform people about its special wildlife interest.



Different plants and groups of plants are important in providing a source of food and shelter for animals.



"Nature in the City" is the report of the botanical survey of Bath undertaken by the City Council in 1990.

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“Within the city habitats comprise mainly broadleaved woodland and unimproved calcareous grassland.”

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The main legislation passed before 1991 is the Badgers Act 1973 which was amended by Schedule 7 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the subsequent Wildlife and Countryside (Amendment) Act 1985.

The provisions of these Acts make it an offence to wilfully kill, injure or take a badger or to attempt to do so. Cruel ill-treatment including the use of tongs is outlawed and methods of legitimately killing badgers are restricted. It is an offence to possess a dead badger or anything derived from a dead badger; to offer for sale or have in possession a live badger.

The Badgers Act and Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991 were introduced to protect setts as well as their occupants and to deal with dogs used in offences. These Acts make it an offence to damage or destroy a sett or part of a sett, to obstruct access to a sett, to cause a dog to enter a sett and to disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a sett. A sett is defined as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating use by a badger'. All sett disturbance or destruction must only be carried out under licence, except for a basic sett survey to check occupancy.

All previous Acts are now consolidated as the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

#### **Wildlife Survey**

In 1990 the City Council worked in partnership with the Nature Conservancy Council (now known as English Nature) to undertake a botanical survey of much of the greenspace within Bath and to collect information on sites of geological importance. The council also collected data from other recent surveys which had been undertaken within the city. These included surveys of the River Avon and of the Kennet and Avon Canal. The 1990 survey did not provide information on all the nature conservation interest within the city. It was nevertheless a useful starting point. Almost all living things depend either directly or indirectly on plants, both for oxygen and food, as well as for the raw materials necessary to sustain life. Therefore the plant communities, or habitats, that were identified as part of the survey, therefore provide an

understanding of the basic framework of Bath's total wildlife resource.

Sites identified as being of wildlife interest have value not only for their contribution to nature, but also as elements of the urban landscape. They are a part of the culture and history of our city and provide a valuable resource for both formal and informal education. Therefore some sites which may be less rich botanically than some of their rural counterparts, gain a particular significance from their urban setting.

Within the city these habitats comprise mainly broadleaved woodland and unimproved calcareous grasslands. These provide homes for a wide range of different plants and animals, some of which are very specific to their habitat type and usually are not found elsewhere. Whilst being fairly common in Bath, the unimproved limestone grasslands are considered to be particularly important because of their comparative lack of abundance elsewhere. They are also impossible to re-create. Other habitats found in Bath include mixed woodland, scrub, some marshy and some neutral grassland and a very small amount of standing water. Where several different habitats are found together, their value to nature conservation is greatly increased.

From the information collected the various sites were evaluated for their habitat type and quality. This evaluation, together with a description of the survey project, is set out in a City Council report entitled "Nature in the City - Report of Survey 1990". As a result, sites identified as having particular habitat value are now safeguarded by policies proposed within the draft Replacement City Plan, as are sites of geological interest which were also identified as part of the survey. (See Appendix 2, Map 5). The survey also highlighted important habitats in the ownership of the City Council. The council is now in a position to review the management of these areas to ensure that their nature conservation interest is protected and, where possible, enhanced.

#### **Other Important Wildlife**

There are a number of other places important to nature conservation which the City Council's survey did not cover.

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There are places where bats roost and others with a large number of badgers, foxes, deer and other small mammals. There are many birds which live and breed within the city and many more who simply visit it. We have an incomplete understanding of the distribution of animals within the city although some local enthusiasts record certain species. However, there has been no comprehensive survey. By protecting certain habitats we stand a good chance of also protecting many of these other species, as they rely on the different vegetation types for their food and shelter and to complete their lifecycles. However a more complete understanding is required if we are to protect and conserve the whole of the city's wildlife resource effectively.

### Water-based Habitats

Most of the semi-natural habitats we have in Bath are land-based. Less than 1% of the area of semi-natural habitat is standing water, although there are water-based habitats associated with the River Avon and its tributaries. Water-based habitats are particularly important, because of their biological diversity, but they are particularly vulnerable to pollution, fluctuations in the water table and neglect. Their scarcity increases the importance of existing habitats and of those areas where new ponds or wet areas can be created relatively easily.

### Wildlife Corridors

The River Avon, its tributaries, and the Kennet and Avon Canal, are important linear habitats which provide links between sites of interest and between the centre of Bath and the surrounding countryside. They are corridors through which wildlife can move and disperse, and within which some wildlife lives more or less permanently. Greenspace either side of our watercourses can play a particularly important role in this respect by extending the size and diversity of habitats available to certain species. Hedgerows, railway cuttings and the Linear Park are also linear features which act as "wildlife corridors". The main value to wildlife is the link they provide between different habitats. These linear features can help to provide the basis of a linked

network of important places for wildlife throughout the city. Such links should be adequately identified, protected and enhanced.

### Development Pressure

The more natural parts of the city and many of its greenspaces have been well protected from most types of development for a long time. Although this has been to protect the landscape setting of the city, it has also helped to protect some of their nature conservation interest. However, some development is permissible within these areas and whilst this may not be damaging to the visual quality of the city's landscape, it can be highly damaging to wildlife.

Until recently the wildlife interest and value of many of our open areas had not been identified, and the increased activity and disturbance associated with some permitted development has put pressure on the existing nature conservation interest of a site or has depleted it. In some cases important habitats and links between them have been destroyed. It is important to continue efforts to ensure that effects of development are not permitted to deplete further the natural resources of the city. In order to do this effectively it is necessary to continue to find out more about our city's wildlife and to monitor changes within it.

### The Management of Land

Development pressure is always a significant potential threat to nature conservation, but perhaps the main threat in Bath is the way we look after our greenspaces. Left to their own devices, most non-wooded greenspaces in Bath would eventually revert to broadleaved woodland, which is the natural vegetation for this part of the country. Woodland is an important habitat for wildlife, particularly if it is well structured, with layers of vegetation within it. It has particular importance if it has remained on a site for several hundred years. Theme A discusses the need to manage woodlands effectively and their importance to nature conservation.

Grassland areas, of which several within Bath are considered to be important for wildlife, represent a stage in



The River Avon is an important linear habitat within the city and one of the city's few water-based features.



Farmland at Charlecombe is important for its unimproved calcareous grassland and its wetland flushes.

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“The diversity of plant species found within a habitat is linked closely to its age and stability.”

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The tranquility of Lansdown Cemetery and some of its scrub vegetation adds to the nature conservation value of this important grassland site.

a process whereby bare earth gradually becomes vegetated and, through a series of different vegetation changes, becomes woodland. They were created by our ancestors who gradually cleared the natural woodlands for agricultural purposes. They have been maintained as grassland sites only because of the continued action of people and comprise areas of farmland (see also Theme H) and open spaces (see also Theme B).

In some cases this action has maintained the natural flora typical of this stage of succession. The nature of the soil in Bath is largely calcareous, as much of the underlying rock is limestone. It is also often thin and impoverished. This means that certain plant species which grow aggressively and tend to dominate other, more fertile grasslands cannot survive. This allows species especially adapted to impoverished calcareous conditions to thrive.

The diversity of plant species found within a habitat is linked closely to its age and stability. Many of these grassland sites have been maintained in the same state for several hundreds of years by either grazing or hay-cropping. In other cases mowing has taken over this role in more recent years. They have become artificially stabilised as a result.

Some therefore exhibit a rich diversity of natural herbaceous plants and grasses which can only grow in such specific, stabilised conditions. It is important to maintain this stability to conserve these important unimproved limestone grassland habitats. However it takes only one catastrophic change for things to become unstable. This might be for example, ploughing, the application of herbicides or fertilizers (even organic ones), or the change in the grazing or mowing regime. In the past agricultural practices have tended to maintain the diversity of species, but more modern methods have tended to de-stabilise these habitats. Many of our grasslands have lost their nature conservation interest because they have been fertilised or treated with herbicide. The lack of appropriate grazing or cutting is threatening many more.

It is important to introduce the appropriate management on sites of

nature conservation importance to retain the rich diversity of habitat within the city. This means looking at the way we tend our gardens, allotments and cemeteries as well as the way we manage our school grounds, road verges, farmland and open spaces. Woodland habitats are more stable than most, but cannot be left completely to their own devices because they are vulnerable to the pressures of recreational use and vandalism. The natural process of decay and regeneration in some woods is hindered by the number of people that use them and most are not large enough to withstand such pressures naturally. They need sound management to ensure their habitat value is conserved and enhanced.

### **Creating New Habitats**

Providing for nature in the city is not just about protecting and looking after the rich places that we have. It is also about seeking ways to improve the less interesting places and to create new habitats. This does not mean that all our greenspaces will be, or even should be, turned into wildernesses overnight. Very simple changes could increase their ability to support wildlife. Few would change dramatically in appearance.

### **Wildlife and the community**

The community and educational benefits of nature conservation are recognised by many and promoted in particular by English Nature. By giving particular attention to habitat protection, restoration and creation within publically accessible open spaces and, for example, within school grounds, we can bring wildlife a little bit closer to all of us and enrich our everyday lives as a result. It is important that we recognise and take advantage of opportunities to do this and secure sympathetic management of these places for the future. It is also important to seek ways of improving public access to some of the other places important for wildlife within the city. This will help to broaden people's understanding of the value of urban nature conservation.

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### Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan

Adopted City Plan policies support and promote nature conservation in Bath and state that the requirements of wildlife and nature conservation are taken into account when considering development proposals. The council also recognises the wildlife potential of the River Avon and the Kennet and Avon Canal with a policy for their improvement and enhancement.

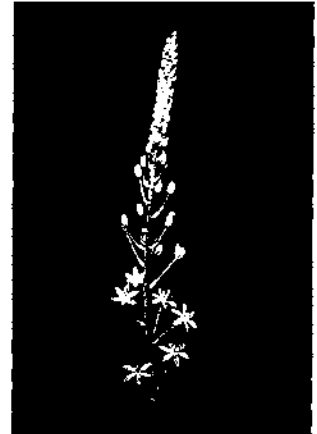
In the draft Replacement City Plan policies for nature conservation have been developed and made site specific. The Plan retains a general policy to take account of wildlife issues when considering development and now embraces the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and other sites identified as of particular wildlife or geological importance. The policies seek not only to protect these interests from the adverse effects of development on the site itself, but also of development in the near vicinity. The concept of protecting and safeguarding a network of vegetated areas to conserve a system of wildlife habitats is also introduced.

A draft Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) on Nature Conservation was issued for consultation in 1992. It has not yet been issued in its final form.

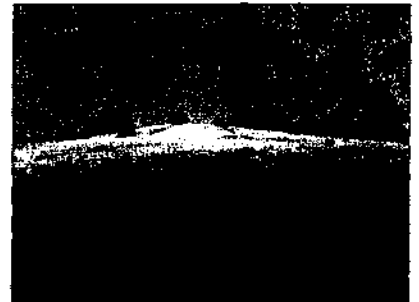
### Strategy Objectives

The objectives behind the proposed key action for providing for nature in the city are outlined as follows:-

1. To protect, and sustain as a minimum, the existing individual species, habitats and sites of nature conservation interest within the city from the damaging effects of any activity, but in particular from development, pollution, inappropriate management, and neglect.
2. To promote the benefits of urban nature conservation and to develop a greater knowledge and understanding of the wildlife of the city amongst the people of Bath.
3. To promote and encourage the creation of new habitats within the city, the enhancement of existing ones and the establishment of a network of habitats throughout the city.



Bath Asparagus is a national rarity, but it is relatively common in field margins and on the edges of woodlands in and around Bath.



Twerton Roundhill is a suburban public open space exhibiting a fine display of wild flowers in spring and summer. The site is to be designated Bath's first Local Nature Reserve.

# Key Strategy Action

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To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

## **D1 Continue to identify, record and monitor important places for nature conservation in Bath by:**

- (a) maintaining, updating regularly, and comprehensively at least every 10 years, the existing data held by the City Council on semi-natural habitats collected during the 1990 survey; and identifying and recording the changes;
- (b) collecting, maintaining, and comprehensively updating at least every 10 years information on animals, insects, birds, ponds and other water bodies within the City; and identifying and recording the changes;
- (c) working with other bodies including English Nature, Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre, the County of Avon, the Wildlife Trust, Bath Naturalist Society, the National Rivers Authority, British Waterways Board and various landowners as necessary to secure (a) and (b) and maintain a comprehensive understanding of the city's overall wildlife resource;
- (d) keeping up-to-date with methodology, national classification systems etc. so that Bath's data is developed in a way which is compatible and comparable with other authorities, preferably on a national basis;
- (e) reviewing strategy action to address the identified changes.

## **D2 Continue to afford maximum protection against development to sites of particular interest to nature conservation and to wildlife in general throughout the city by:-**

- (a) ensuring that the Landscape Elements Checklist (see Appendix 1) is completed for each planning application and strongly resisting any development on sites where wildlife interest is noted, unless it can be demonstrated by the submission of a detailed ecological assessment of the site, that the development and its construction will not adversely affect the site's wildlife value;
- (b) requiring all owners of sites important to wildlife and where development has been permitted, to submit as part of their detailed proposals measures to protect and enhance the wildlife value of the site;
- (c) strongly resist the removal and destruction of natural hedgerows and other ribbons of natural vegetation which help link sites of wildlife interest when considering any development proposal and seek through conditions on planning consents where appropriate the establishment of new links and the creation of new habitats.  
(See also D6.)

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(d) take particular note of the wildlife interest on the sites or parts of sites owned by the council which are listed below, and any others that are identified in the future, and ensure through its own development activities, or through those of its leaseholders and licensees, that the nature conservation interest of the sites is adequately protected:-

Alexandra Park	The Tumps
Bathwick Cemeteries	Haycombe Cemetery
Beacon Hill	Large Brickfields
Beechen Cliff	Lansdown Cemetery & Paddock
Carrs Wood	Lansdown Playing Fields
Charlecombe Valley Fields	Linear Park
Combe Down Open Space	Locksbrook Cemetery
Entry Hill Golf Course	Lyncombe Hill
Field by Redland Park	Penn Hill
Firsfield	Newbridge Slopes
Freefields (Rainbow Wood)	Newton Brook Fields
Newbridge Slopes	Twerton Hill Farm
Newton Brook Fields	Twerton Roundhill
Springfield Quarry	Weston/Primrose Hill
St James Cemetery	Weston Park Field

**D3 Manage land owned by the City Council for greater nature conservation benefit, giving priority to sites of known importance and seeking to establish and manage new habitats by:-**

- (a) preparing and implementing wildlife management plans or prescriptions, in consultation with local people, for open space sites included in the list under D2(d).
- (b) working with the council's tenant farmers and licensees to bring forward and implement appropriate management regimes and practices for farmland sites included in the list under D2(d); including making changes to the conditions of lease where possible; negotiation; the use of grant-aid from outside bodies; and the encouragement, where appropriate, of entering special agreements with outside bodies eg. Countryside Stewardship Scheme;
- (c) undertaking management on all other sites in such a way to maximise, where appropriate, the wildlife benefit of existing features such as wet areas, bodies of water, hedges, copses and some grassland or scrub areas;
- (d) creating new wildlife habitats, where practical, giving particular attention to those areas where the public have access to promote the education value.

**D4 Promote and encourage the active long-term management of land outside the ownership of the council for nature conservation benefit, giving priority to those sites of known wildlife interest, and will promote the creation and management of new habitats by:-**

- (a) identifying owners of sites of known wildlife interest and actively approaching them to negotiate the satisfactory management of their sites through the provision of advice, grant-aid, management agreements or the linking with others more able to assist appropriately;

- (b) distributing information leaflets, either those prepared by others or those specifically prepared by the City Council, giving advice and general information on how to manage effectively the habitats found within the city and how to create and manage new habitats; giving talks and holding exhibitions as appropriate;
- (c) encouraging where appropriate through direct negotiation the creation of new wildlife habitats and their long-term management in conjunction with planning applications for new developments; including entering into Section 106 Agreements as necessary or conditioning planning consents where appropriate.

**D5 Seek to develop a greater understanding and active appreciation of the city's wildlife by:-**

- (a) bringing forward proposals for the establishment and long-term management of a Local Nature Reserve within the city, giving priority to Twerton Roundhill, and identifying other possible sites;
- (b) publishing information leaflets, or disseminating those of other organisations, on the city's wildlife and how individuals could enhance and improve it; and giving talks and holding exhibitions or supporting others in doing the same; giving priority to schools and the work of others in schools;
- (c) supporting or initiating local activities, particularly in schools, which help people appreciate and learn more about the nature conservation interest of their neighbourhood;
- (d) supporting and promoting local community initiatives, particularly in schools, which seek to undertake practical projects to conserve or enhance the wildlife interest of an area, by way of advice, grant-aid or linking with other sources of funding and practical assistance;
- (e) providing information on the wildlife interest of particular sites within the city, including where appropriate the erection of site noticeboards and the identification of sites of particular wildlife interest.

**D6 Define and develop the concept of wildlife or natural corridors and identify where they are, how they should be protected and where new ones could be created effectively.**



# Working in Partnership with the Community the Voluntary Sector and other Landowners

## THEME E



### Introduction

Theme E promotes the active involvement of the voluntary and private sectors in helping to care for the city's landscape, particularly on land which the City Council does not own. Its application is important to all themes of this strategy.

### The Issues

#### The Importance of the City's Private Landscape

The City Council recognises that the task of effectively protecting and managing the whole city's landscape is not one which it can perform on its own. Large parts are held in private ownership or are owned by other public bodies. These are areas over which the City Council has little direct involvement or control, other than as the Local Planning Authority.

Land which is not in the ownership of the council is held by a variety of owners and other public bodies and is well distributed throughout the city. It includes some of our most important landscapes and landscape features such as our skyline woodlands and farmland. Also the gardens of Lansdown and Bathwick with their large trees; the lawns in front of Royal Crescent and Lansdown Crescent, and the large grounds of some of our older private schools such as Prior Park, King Edwards, Kingswood

and the Royal School. These all have great historic value and design interest and contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the city's large single conservation area.

Much of the wooded skyline to the south-east of the city is now in the stewardship of the National Trust, but there is also a patchwork of small plots which belong to a variety of individual people, some of whom do not live within the city. Other important tracts of skyline landscape – the farmland, for example, on the Lansdown hillside above Weston village – are also in a variety of different ownerships and in many cases the main occupation of the owners has little to do with the working and management of the land. As a result some owners do not give a high priority to maintaining their land and some areas have become run down and have lost some of their landscape quality.

Land which is not in the council ownership also includes land alongside the river, and land associated with the canal and the railway. These are important linear features within the city and land associated with them is vital to their appearance and wildlife value. It is also important as a resource for improvement. The large grounds of institutions such as the Royal United Hospital and the state schools are also landscapes of significance which the City Council does not own. The Ministry of Defence currently operates on three main sites within the city which are in key positions in landscape terms and the many small plots of private land which include incidental open space, some allotments, business premises, private parks and squares and individual gardens, make up a large part of the city's overall landscape.

#### Ageing Landscapes

The landscape issues which face the owners of these landscapes and greenspaces are no different to those which face the City Council on its own land. Many of the more mature



Involving people in the design or management of their local open spaces is important. Here a member of the landscape team is debating improvement proposals with residents of Selbourne Close.

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“The City Council recognises that the task of effectively protecting and managing the whole city's landscape is not one which it can perform on its own”

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“It is important to illustrate the benefits of good landscape management and improvement to all landowners.”

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landscapes have been taken for granted in the past and have been managed inadequately. Now they are going into decline, they are in need of urgent restoration and planned management to bring about their long-term renewal and replacement to ensure their continued contribution to the city's landscape in the future.

### Development Pressures

The council's policies seek to protect from development all important open spaces within the city, including those in private ownership. However the pressures both now and in the recent past for infill development, particularly for residential property, within many private areas has proved difficult to control. The landscape character of important historical parts of the city is being gradually eroded as a result.

There have been many opportunities for key landscape improvements on private land which have permanently lost to us because of the pressure to maximise the development potential of all developable land within the city.

### Other Influences

The landscape quality of some of our farmland landscapes is being depleted. It has become increasingly difficult for private landowners to sustain traditional farming methods within an urban setting and as with the changes in European Agricultural policy have taken effect. This is creating difficulties in maintaining appropriate management of these areas. It is threatening many of our important grassland habitats and changing the visual appearance of some of our highly visible greenspaces. These issues are discussed in more detail in Theme H.

### Unrealised Potential

Some land, such as the grounds of large institutions and many business premises have enormous unrealised landscape potential which, if it was developed, could contribute significantly to the improvement or conservation of the local and city-wide environment, whilst at the same time bring benefits to the people that use the sites.

The river is an important natural landscape feature and an important

wildlife habitat and corridor. Yet its visual contribution to the present landscape of the city is minimal and public access to it is limited. Its habitat value in certain stretches is depleted because of the character of the riverside development and the action of individual riparian owners along its length. The significance of this feature has been diluted because of the multitude of ownerships and divided responsibilities over its management.

With the opening of the Kennet & Avon Canal both recreational development and increased use of both the river and the canal will exert greater pressure on the fragile landscapes of these waterways. Co-operation with riparian owners and the statutory authorities (British Waterways and the National Rivers Authority) through the development of a watercourse management strategy will help safeguard both the landscape and its wildlife and promote a better appreciation and greater enjoyment of these important water features within the city.

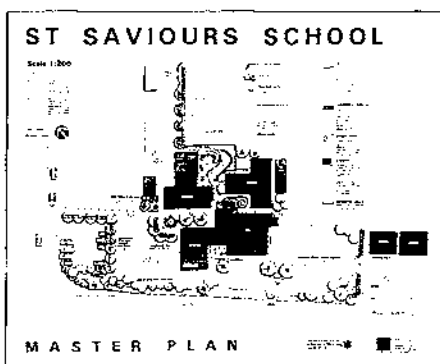
### Participation and Partnership

Privately owned open space has an important role to play in helping to maintain and enhance the existing landscape framework of the city. It is important that the City Council works in close partnership with other landowners to ensure that this is undertaken in the most effective way.

It is important to illustrate the benefits of good landscape management and improvement to all landowners. For example, the creation of a more attractive external working environment to business premises will not only contribute to the local neighbourhood environment, it will also attract other benefits to the business. Similarly the reorganisation of space as part of an environmental improvement scheme could also result in the more efficient and effective use of limited space for car parking and other users.

### Schools

The better use and design of school grounds has become more important recently, not least because of the increased awareness of, and concern for,



Landscape masterplans have been prepared for some school grounds through a special partnership with local landscape architect practices developed under the council's Landscape Grants scheme.

environmental issues, particularly amongst children. The work of bodies such as the Learning Through Landscapes Trust has helped enormously in providing examples of good practice and helping groups to link with each other. They have also demonstrated the enormous potential that sensitively designed outdoor spaces (and the processes of designing them) have in providing a resource for learning. They can contribute to all areas of the national curriculum and to the social and behavioural development of children.

Many schools in Bath have already shown a keen interest in developing the landscape of their school grounds. The City Council has been working with a number of them in different ways to devise a scheme which best meets their needs whilst at the same time meets the objectives of the landscape strategy. This has included the establishment of a pilot Community Design Service, whereby local landscape practices have helped prepare masterplan designs for selected schools, at reduced fee costs, and which have been grant-funded by the City Council. This type of partnership working is something the City Council will pursue and develop.

### The Community

The City Council's concern with Bath's landscape stems from the importance it attaches to conserving, and where necessary, improving the city's environment for all who work and live within the city, and those who visit. When taking account of the changing needs of the landscape we must also take account of the changing needs of the people.

Many residents of Bath already care deeply about their environment, both at a global scale and a local one. The City Council recognises that the ideas, opinions and actions of individuals, and community and voluntary groups within Bath can play a vital role in the care of our city's landscape. It is keen to promote their expression by providing support and information where it is needed and by encouraging active participation not only in the implementation but also in the decision making processes.

However, not everybody cares deeply about the environment. Some people

consider large trees near their property an inconvenience, perceive native planting for wildlife benefit as a potential source of danger, or feel threatened by the enclosure of some of our open spaces. These are genuine areas of concern and need also to be addressed. By explaining the reasons behind decisions and actions which affect the city's landscape and by involving people in the process, these perceived threats and fears often can be put to rest.

### Voluntary Sector

The role of the voluntary sector is crucial to the success of many environmental initiatives throughout the country and in Bath it is the same. Such groups vary from a small group of individuals who get together for a specific project to the more established groups like the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), the Wildlife Trust for Bristol, Bath and Avon and local enthusiasts within the Bath Preservation Trust or the Bath Naturalist Society. All have a different role to play or have different main interests, but all are important to the success of the landscape strategy.

BTCV, in particular, has been working with the City Council for a number of years and has provided volunteer labour to help with specific woodland management tasks and to provide additional support and guidance on community days organised by the City Council. These are when local school children or residents are invited to help with tasks such as tree planting or hedge-laying. Without their help, expertise and equipment, such events would be difficult to organise.

The value of the voluntary sector must be recognised. The City Council can do much to support these groups and can make greater use of their resources through partnership working and by helping to establish links between the private, public and voluntary sectors.

### The Enabling Role

The City Council's role in working with the community and other landowners in the city is an enabling one. The City Council employs a Landscape Liaison Officer whose main task is to forge links



© Liz Miller

Following its destruction in the 1990 storm, Freefields (Rainbow Woods) was the subject of a year long environmental interpretation and arts project involving local school children and residents.



The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) has helped the City Council organise volunteer local residents and school children to undertake practical landscape work on a number of sites throughout Bath.

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“The City Council is keen to promote and initiate joint working arrangements and to establish a local forum.”

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with residents, voluntary groups and outside organisations. This officer will find ways of working which will help the City Council meet its landscape objectives whilst at the same time allow local people to feel able to participate and contribute in ways that they would like.

In developing a partnership approach, the City Council is keen also to promote and initiate joint working arrangements and to establish a local forum whereby all sectors of the community will have the opportunity to participate in the long-term development of the landscape strategy.

### Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan

Policies within the City Plan and draft Replacement City Plan, which seek to protect land because of its landscape or wildlife importance, apply as much to privately owned land as they do to land in public ownership. They indicate that the City Council will encourage other landowners to take steps to conserve, enhance, improve and manage the landscape.

Policies in the draft Replacement City Plan suggest that landscape management will be encouraged by the provision of advice, financial support and information as appropriate. Mention is made of the need to secure the enhancement and improvement of the River Avon, the Kennet and Avon Canal and their immediate surroundings. The City Council intends to work with the National Rivers Authority and British Waterways to devise a strategy for the River Avon through the city which would address the issues of new development, ecology, leisure use, river management, moorings and flood prevention.

### Strategy Objectives

The objectives of the proposed key action to work in partnership with the community, the voluntary sector and other landowners are outlined as follows:

- (a) To persuade and support private landowners and landholding public bodies within the city to undertake active conservation management and landscape improvement of their landholdings which seek to conserve the important landscape character and features of the land, including its wildlife interest, and to maximise the land's contribution to the city's overall landscape.
- (b) To raise awareness, understanding and enjoyment of neighbourhood landscapes and their role in the city's overall landscape.
- (c) To encourage and facilitate the active participation and involvement of local communities in landscape conservation and landscape improvements within the city.
- (d) To encourage and facilitate an active debate amongst all sectors of the community on landscape issues affecting the city and the long-term development of the landscape strategy.
- (e) To establish new ways of working with people outside the City Council which effectively meet the objectives of the City Council and which help local people become involved in and contribute to the care of the city's landscape.
- (f) To establish and maintain links for effective working between the public, private and voluntary sectors including networking with other bodies such as the Forestry Authority, the Countryside Commission, English Nature and English Heritage.



The City Council operates a Landscape Grants scheme to encourage local communities, voluntary groups and landowners in the city to undertake practical projects which help conserve or enhance the city's landscape.

## Key Strategy Action

To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

### **E1 Promote good landscape management of key landscapes in private ownership to meet landscape strategy objectives by:**

- (a) identifying key landscapes and landscape features and the owner(s) of them;
- (b) seeking the participation of the owners in protecting, managing and improving their landholdings through negotiation, advice, management agreements and grant-aid or advising on other sources of advice and funding;
- (c) establishing regular liaison with key landowners to monitor, guide and assist them in the long-term management of their landholdings;
- (d) devising a strategy for targeting and prioritising grant-aid, including campaigns of approach and linking with the initiatives and grants of other bodies eg. Countryside Commission, Forestry Authority, English Nature.

### **E2 Prepare framework landscape improvement plans for the areas listed below, identifying the opportunities for improvements on privately owned land and seeking active participation of the landowners within the areas:-**

- (a) the river corridor and the Kennet & Avon Canal (as part of the planned watercourse management strategy);
- (b) the industrial core;
- (c) the main approach roads.

### **E3 Promote links between other public bodies, the private and voluntary sectors and the community to facilitate action which will meet the objectives of the landscape strategy, by:-**

- (a) keeping up to date on the activities of various local and national bodies and organisations and their local campaigns and disseminating this information on making new contacts;
- (b) attending meeting events which seek to co-ordinate the activities of the voluntary and public sectors within and around Bath;
- (c) networking between local community and voluntary groups and local companies to help match sponsorships with suitable projects and promote volunteer support where feasible;
- (d) supporting activities which promote the establishment and maintenance of links between the various sectors and the dissemination of information about various environmental, organisations, funding campaigns and initiatives.

### **E4 Seek to raise awareness, understanding and enjoyment of neighbourhood landscapes by:-**

- (a) initiating and supporting (through grant aid, ideas, advice and information) projects and local activities and events which help people find out more about their local environments and what they value about them;
- (b) encouraging people to explore the potential of their local landscapes and to identify and discuss local landscape issues, through the production of locally based information leaflets, the giving of talks and the networking with other groups.

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**E5 Support and encourage local community initiatives for landscape conservation and improvement by:-**

- (a) providing information on "how to go about it" in the form of information packs, giving direct advice or creating links with other organisations;
- (b) helping people to form themselves into representative community groups if none already exist, to facilitate the development of local initiatives for environmental works;
- (c) providing grant aid (or advise on other sources of funding) for specific projects;
- (d) providing technical and professional advice (or advise on how to get it);
- (e) responding positively to local initiatives involving council owned or managed land;
- (f) encouraging and helping to develop a network of community groups and organisations to more effectively spread information and other relevant skills.

**E6 Inform and provide opportunities for local communities to participate in council-led landscape projects by:-**

- (a) making early contact with local community groups to introduce new landscape projects and initiatives and to keep them regularly informed of progress throughout through public meetings, exhibitions, leafleting or through an event;
- (b) building into project timetables the time to work with the community, to allow them to become actively involved in the development of a scheme, to give their comments and ideas, to visit examples of similar projects and to find out how they might help or how the project might affect them;
- (c) organising community days or events to encourage the local community to participate in practical projects. For example, planting trees and shrubs, building walls and fences or making paths.



### Introduction

Theme F considers the historical significance of the city's landscapes whether in private or public ownership. It links closely with Theme A, B and E of this strategy.

### The Issues

#### Bath's Historic Landscapes

Bath's countryside and rural surroundings, and its many green and open urban spaces, contain and provide a rich legacy of historic landscapes and historic landscape features. The whole of the landscape in and around Bath has at some time been utilised and altered by the activities of people. Such obvious features as settlements, fields, woods, commonland, roads, tracks and other boundaries can date back to medieval times or much earlier and some are still in use today.

Those historic landscapes and features which can be recognised provide historical information of immense value. It helps us to understand the historical and social context of the city and its internationally important landscape and townscape qualities. Others provide only glimpses of former human activities within and around Bath. They present clues which demand further research and investigation before their true significance can be understood fully. Some landscapes of historical significance may yet to be discovered as a result.

The Wansdyke, Little Solsbury Hill and the iron Age Fort and tumuli at Lansdown and Bathampton Down are features which highlight the ancient historical significance of much of Bath's rural setting and emphasises Bath's importance as an early settlement and place of congregation.

Within the city, there are substantial remains of the Roman occupation. They hint at an underlying landscape which is now hidden from us having been superimposed by several layers of subsequent development. The medieval layout of the city can still be detected in parts, although this too has been largely obliterated by the expansion and redevelopment of the city, particularly during the 18th century. Nevertheless some of our urban spaces reflect the urban space pattern of medieval times, for example Abbey Green has a history which can be traced back to this time. Although all have been adapted, and some have been re-created they display qualities of size and enclosure which differ from the squares and open spaces of later dates. They provide an important link with the past and help create a sense of place which is as much rooted in its historical significance as it is in its aesthetic qualities.

#### 18th and 19th Century Landscapes

Within the city, the historical legacy of the 18th and 19th centuries is particularly prolific. It provides us with some of our most important public parks and pleasure grounds such as Sydney Gardens and Royal Victoria Park. It includes Parade Gardens, Henrietta Park, Hedgemoor Park and Green Park. It also provides us with the spectacular designed landscapes associated with important buildings such as the grounds of Prior Park and those of Crowe Hall and Widcombe Manor. The visual appearance of the wooded hillsides of the city's skyline which are part of the former Bathwick Estate, are also largely a product of this age.

18th century development within Bath is internationally renowned because of its quality, style and the homogeneity

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“The whole of the landscape in and around Bath has at some time been utilised and altered by the activities of people.”

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A Victorian view of Sydney Gardens. This important historic park is now on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England.



The construction of the Kennet and Avon Canal through the city during the 19th century created one of the most impressive stretches of urban waterway in Britain.

of its architecture. However the successful effect of much of 18th century building in the city is as dependent on topography and landscape setting as it is on its own inherent qualities. The effect of architectural set pieces is heightened by their relationship to the spaces created or defined by the buildings arranged as terraces or crescents around them. The squares and crescents are designed spaces which were developed for socialising, for parading or for the enjoyment of views across the river valley to the green hills beyond. In some cases the sequence of spaces is special. They lead one to another in a conscious, designed way. They provide variety and surprise to the viewer passing through the city and contain an element of concealment to invite and encourage further investigations. Queen Square, King's Circus and Royal Crescent provide an ideal illustration of this sequence.

The construction of the Kennet and Avon Canal through the city during the 19th century created one of the most impressive stretches of urban waterway in Britain. With its quality of architecture, its iron bridges and short tunnels, together with the spectacular views it affords across Bath, a working environment was created of great character and significance. Its qualities are still appreciated today. All of its structures are protected as listed buildings.

#### Conservation Area

Many of our historic landscapes and spaces are embraced by the city's conservation area (see Map 1). Section 72(i) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on a Local Planning Authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area in the exercise of planning functions. The City Council takes the view that our historic landscapes – the parks, gardens, and urban open spaces of Bath – make an important and integral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It seeks to use its landscape and conservation area policies to protect them from the adverse effects of development.

#### Register of Historic Parks and Gardens

Some of our more important and complete historic parks and gardens, have been placed on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England. They are:-

Prior Park	Grade I
Beckford's Ride	Grade II
Crowe Hall	Grade II
Royal Victoria Park & Botanic Gardens	Grade II
Sydney Gardens	Grade II
Widcombe Manor	Grade II

The Register recognises the national importance of these landscapes but their inclusion on it does not afford the degree of protection and control that is given to listed buildings and their settings. Nevertheless the highlighting of the significance of these sites is important and the provisions of planning legislation relating to the conservation area, listed buildings and tree preservation orders can be used to help protect them. Policies within the draft Replacement City Plan seek to protect the character and appearance of these parks and gardens from development and to encourage English Heritage to provide for their repair.

#### Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas

The features of some of our more ancient landscapes in and around the city have been scheduled as Ancient Monuments. As a result they receive statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. These are included on the County of Avon Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) which identifies a number of other sites, structures and areas of significance.

However, it should be recognised that undoubtedly there are archaeological deposits surviving in locations across the city which are as yet unidentified and thus not scheduled as Ancient Monuments or recorded on the County of Avon Sites and Monuments Record. These may be worthy of equal attention and protection once they have been revealed.

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“Some of our more important and complete historic parks and gardens, have been placed on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England.”

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## Settings to Listed Buildings

The settings to listed buildings can be described as the area, or areas, around the building which are important to its visual and historical appreciation. The setting usually comprises the garden or the grounds of a property or perhaps the immediate surroundings which have an historical association. It can include areas which are associated with the building when viewed from inside it. In some cases much larger areas are considered to be important.

The setting of a listed building is not always a landscape setting, but where it is, such landscapes may have a significance which is not easily recognisable on the ground. Many such areas have only remnants of former features and layouts. Many have been reduced in size, due to subsequent development or road improvements and others have been all but destroyed by the use of modern materials and modern gardening practices. Little is known about the important historical characteristics of these landscapes as in the past they have not been given the same attention as the buildings.

Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, require that special regard is given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historical interest it possesses when considering to grant listed building consent or planning permission.

In order to undertake this duty more effectively, the City Council needs to know more about the individual settings of these buildings. Their essential characteristics need to be recorded as well as their architectural features. This could be included in the description of a building when it is included on the list of buildings of architectural or historic interest.

### Small Gardens of Historic Interest

Many small gardens attached to listed buildings, or which are associated with unlisted buildings within the conservation area, contain features of their original historic layout or have

retained the essential characteristics. Some are very modest in size, but collectively they have an importance as a significant component of the conservation area and help to determine the special character of an area. It is important this role is both recognised and valued. Whilst architectural features within those gardens which are within the curtilage of a listed building are protected under powers of the Planning Act, many other small historic gardens and their landscape features receive no protection at all. The City Council will investigate ways to record and assess the condition of these gardens and to seek their better protection, repair and maintenance. It is recognised already that some useful early recording work is being undertaken within the city by volunteers.

### Recognition and Protection

Our historic landscapes, comprise a complex variety of designed parks and gardens, designed and "accidental" urban spaces, tracts or parcels of rural land, earth formations, trees, hedgerows, built structures and sites known to contain archaeological remains.

The measures to preserve or protect them are equally varied and have derived mainly from an early recognition of the importance of protecting buildings and built structures of historic importance and to preserve particular archaeological remains. Recently the historical importance of the landscape setting to these buildings and artifacts has been recognised and valued. Accordingly measures to protect them have been amended and evolved to take this into account.

Increasingly the significance of the landscape has been understood so that the city's conservation area embraces large tracts of landscape. Designed parks and gardens are being recognised and valued in their own right. The landscape, and its landscape features, are regarded as an integral part of the historical development of the city and help to illustrate people's activities over a considerable period of time. We must ensure that the protection afforded them is both adequate and appropriate.



The gardens at Crowe Hall are important historically and contribute significantly to the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.



The garden at Lambridge House is important as a setting to this Grade II Listed Building. There are many gardens of historic significance throughout the city, about which little has been recorded.

## Management

Like all landscapes within the city, our historic landscapes are vulnerable to changes. The City Council's policies to protect important landscapes and to conserve the character and appearance of the city's conservation area, help to withstand these pressures. However even where these are successful, some of these important landscapes are vulnerable to a number of other activities which may not be directly controlled with planning legislation. They require sound management to ensure that their modern uses take account of their historical features and restore and enhance them wherever possible.

Under its Task Force Trees initiative, the Countryside Commission have provided grant-aid for the preparation and partial implementation of management plans for certain historic parks and gardens within the city. These arrangements are for a limited period only and have been aimed at the repair of damage resulting in this part of the country from the storm of 1990. However, some historic parks and gardens are eligible for consideration under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for historic landscapes. Through this, appropriate management agreements can be made whereby financial assistance will be given for the implementation of an agreed management plan. The City Council will continue to work closely with the Countryside Commission, English Heritage, and other agencies as appropriate, in promoting and employing such initiatives and in encouraging owners of eligible properties to enter into such agreements.

## Knowledge and Understanding

All landscapes have a history, but some retain their historical significance through their characteristics and the features they display. Of particular vulnerability are those landscapes of potential historic significance which have not yet been identified but which, because of past discoveries and the knowledge of historical activities in and around Bath, are thought to exist. We know, for example, that over time the River Avon has altered its course within its valley. It

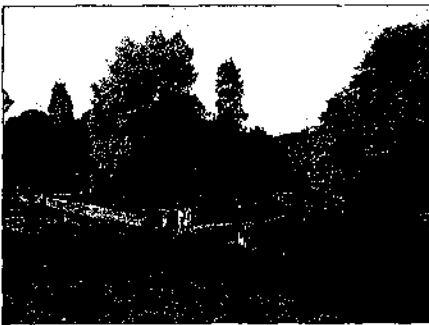
is likely that this would have changed the nature and pattern of people's activity in the area, but little is known about these changes and much of the evidence lies hidden. However, its former course is evident in the incised formations of Beechen Cliff and Beacon Hill which are believed to be former river cliffs and now represent important landscape features in the city in their own right. It will require a sensitive and informed approach in assessing the implications of change within the city to help research and identify such areas and to ensure they receive the protection and management they deserve.

The lack of widespread knowledge and understanding of many of our historic landscapes means that their important features can be overlooked or undervalued. The way in which they are looked after, whether in public or private ownership, rarely takes proper account of their true historical significance and their important characteristics and features are being downgraded or destroyed. It is important that all owners or managers of such landscapes are made aware of their historical significance and the importance of their characteristics. All are finite, unique resources and are irreplaceable. Many require research and need repair and renewal, all need protection and long-term management.

## Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan

The Bath City Plan and the draft Replacement Bath City Plan embody policies for the protection of historic parks and gardens, within its "Care of the Landscape" chapter, and for Listed Buildings and their settings, Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas and the conservation area under "Care of the Fabric".

A draft Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG15) – "Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas" was issued for consultation in July 1993. It has not yet been issued in its final form. Reference should also be made to PPG16 "Archaeology and Planning".



Sydney Gardens – a mature, declining landscape in need of repair and renewal. A landscape management plan has now been prepared for this park.

## Strategy Objectives

The objectives behind the proposed key action for the conservation of our historic landscapes are as follows:-

- (a) To retain and protect the historical character of the city's green and open spaces and of its rural surroundings and to preserve their archaeological features and remains.
- (b) To gather and spread knowledge about the different historical aspects of our landscapes and to use it to more effectively manage our historic landscapes and as a guide to future changes.
- (c) To develop and spread an understanding of the historical design concepts and details behind the creation of our designed historic landscapes and to develop sound planned management of them.



An important part of the Grade I Registered landscape at Prior Park has been acquired by the National Trust. The City Council will continue to work closely with the Trust to secure its appropriate long-term management.

# Key Strategy Action

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To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

**F1 Identify landscapes of historic significance which are owned or managed by the City Council and secure their adequate recording, protection and effective long-term management, by:-**

- (a) using existing records and information and devising a programme for further research and recording;
- (b) identifying key sites or areas of importance and devising and implementing management plans, prescriptions or regimes for the future protection, conservation and, where appropriate, the renewal and recovery of their important features and characteristics. Priority to be given to our parks and gardens on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and the settings of our Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments;
- (c) regularly monitoring the condition and character of key sites or areas owned by the City Council and reviewing management proposals accordingly.

**F2 Undertake and/or promote further research and recording of the historical significance of the city's landscape, including gardens, to:-**

- \* build on existing knowledge and understanding of key sites to guide management and restoration proposals;
- \* help investigate and identify historic landscapes as yet unknown;
- \* support the council's case to English Heritage to include other sites on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens;
- \* to support the City Council case when resisting development or other damaging activities on sites of historic interest.

**F3 Encourage developers to research and to take account of historic landscape issues when bringing forward development proposals throughout the city by:-**

- (a) requiring them to satisfactorily complete the Landscape Elements Checklist (see Appendix 1) and provide the necessary information;
- (b) providing additional guidance to developers through the inclusion of historical information in the assessments and guidance notes for landscape character areas proposed within Theme G and;
- (c) using its statutory powers to protect important historic landscapes and the features within them.

**F4 Encourage owners of important historic landscapes to manage their sites effectively to protect their historic characteristics by:-**

- (a) informing them, where possible, of the historic significance of their landholdings;
- (b) providing information and encouraging further research into the historical aspects of their landholdings, including helping to network with grant-aiding bodies where appropriate and other bodies able to assist;

- (c) encouraging through the provision of advice, reference to other grant-aiding and advisory bodies, and networking with voluntary schemes or special initiatives, the preparation and implementation of management plan for their historic landscapes and landscape features, including where appropriate small-scale funding for specific projects and, if appropriate, entering into management agreements. Priority to be given to sites on the Register of Historic Parks Gardens;
- (d) continuing to work in close partnership with the National Trust to assist with the long term management of the Grade I historic landscape at Prior Park.

**F5 Promote greater public awareness and appreciation of our historic landscapes by:-**

- (a) Publishing occasional papers and information leaflets to inform and encourage debate about our historic landscape;
- (b) supporting and working with voluntary bodies active in promoting the increase in knowledge, care and protection of our important historic landscapes including the Garden History Society, Avon Gardens Trust, Bath Archaeological Trust and the Gardens Committee of the Bath Preservation Trust.

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## Introduction

Theme G examines the way in which new development within the city can either damage or, if undertaken sensitively, enhance and help renew the landscape of the city. It refers to all operations requiring planning consent which might affect the landscape, whether on public or private land. It overlaps in particular with Themes A, D and F.

## The Issues

### Planning Policy Framework

The planning policy framework for Bath is provided by the Statutory Local Plan. Within the introduction to this document the relationship between the plan and this strategy is discussed.

The City Council recognises the importance of Bath's landscape to the city's overall appearance and quality of environment. Its planning policies seek to protect the landscape and to conserve and enhance its quality and character. The local plan identifies the need to secure long-term landscape management and promotes the consideration of landscape issues at an early stage when bringing forward proposals for new development.

### Over-development of Sites

There has been a gradual development and strengthening of policies to protect the important visual appearance and integrity of Bath.

However, the role of the management of the landscape in helping to achieve this, has not always been easy to implement. Many developers seek to maximise the development potential of every part of their site without any apparent consideration or understanding of the character of the city and how their proposals might affect it. There is a pressure to try to over-develop sites and because of the effect this has on the landscape, it is making a detrimental impact on the quality of the city's character and appearance.

The role that certain landscape features play in determining the character and appearance of the city is often not recognised fully or is inappropriately interpreted. It is not taken into account fully within new proposals. Often landscape features are regarded as unnecessary obstacles rather than opportunities around which to fashion new development and thereby create new landscapes of quality.

The need to retain mature trees on sites whilst younger trees develop is also not taken into account fully. Many proposals seek to remove mature or developing young trees to make way for buildings, access roads and car parks. Often it is not possible to plant new large species trees because there is not enough room within the proposed layout to accommodate them. Even the trees that it is intended should remain are imperilled by activities during the construction phase, such as the routing of underground services, the storing of building materials close to them, the lighting of bonfires, and the compaction of ground around their roots due to site traffic movement. They die early as a result.

The effects of development on trees are not always noticeable straight away. The way in which foundations and underground services are constructed, for example, can have an effect on underground water movement sufficient to change the growing conditions of mature trees on site and, indeed, on many neighbouring sites as well. Some trees can readily adapt to such changes



Infill development within some of the larger gardens in the city often means that new buildings are placed close to mature trees. This results in irreparable damage to the trees, particularly during the construction phase.

but our more mature, established ones do not have the same capacity. They gradually show signs of stress, become more vulnerable to disease and difficult weather conditions and die early as a result, often long after the developer has left the site.

### **Infill Development**

Infill development is eating away many of the greenspaces which comprise and contribute to the character and appearance of some of our older parts of the city and which lie largely within the city's conservation area. Such areas are being gradually downgraded visually as a result. Space within the large villa landscapes at Upper Weston and Bathwick for example, is being lost and divided up by new development within the typically large gardens of the late 18th century and early 19th century villas of these areas. Other open spaces where development has been successfully resisted remain under threat as they change ownership or are neglected and become run down and the case is put that any development is better than an uncared for site.

The large, mature trees which many of these gardens and open spaces support create the bosky appearance of some of our most important hillsides. They act as foils to the buildings which can be glimpsed or viewed amongst them. However, by allowing infill development within these areas, these trees are either being hemmed-in or are being lost altogether. Their growth and development is restricted and they appear hazardous to the people who now live closer to them. As a result there are constant demands to have them removed. Once they show signs of disease or decay they are now so close to certain properties that their removal nearly always has to be sanctioned, whereas they could have been kept in their original context. Few are replaced with similarly large species, because room for their development is no longer available.

Where development has allowed sufficient space for the retention of a large mature tree, without careful design there is little space left to plan for its eventual replacement. The older mature

trees which are visually significant in these areas cannot therefore be replaced until they die and are removed. Even then it is unlikely that a large species tree will be planted because they are regarded as threats or as shade bearers and not in keeping necessarily with modern gardening aspirations and use. The development has taken away the opportunity to plan for the renewal of these important landscapes, and is gradually eroding their character and appearance.

### **Landscape Survey**

Many proposals for new development are brought forward before an adequate and appropriate landscape survey of the site has been undertaken by the applicants. Inevitably such proposals fail to take account of the site's existing landscape features and characteristics, nor how they relate to their surroundings. It is then impossible to bring forward any meaningful new landscape proposals as an integrated part of the development process.

Within the draft Replacement City Plan, it is proposed that all applicants will be required to have regard to a Landscape Elements Checklist (see Appendix 1). The checklist aims to guide prospective developers on the landscape information and issues which need to be considered and addressed when bringing forward development proposals for a site within the city. It also requires that appropriate survey information is submitted as part of an application so that the City Council can assess properly the full landscape implications of the proposals. The council also has powers in the case of certain developments to require an Environmental Impact Assessment. This usually includes the consideration of the visual and ecological impact of a development proposal, as well as other environmental matters.

More careful consideration of existing site conditions and characteristics will help to protect site and features of importance. It might help also to reduce attempts to over-develop sites, and avoid the disadvantages of infill development by making prospective applicants more aware of some of the environmental limitations of their sites. It should also



The City Council has sought to resist large scale development at Cavendish Lodge in order to protect important trees and safeguard part of the site's open space characteristics. However, the Secretary of State has recently upheld an appeal to construct 20 flats and two lodges on the site.



In seeking to make development work, the council's landscape team helps to assess the impact of development proposals on the city's landscape and promotes the importance of considering landscape issues at an early stage.



encourage better landscape design, as opportunities to focus new development on specific features might be recognised and appreciated more readily.

### **Making Development Work**

The City Council believes that, through the positive use of its statutory powers, the implementation of its Local Plan policies and its encouragement of applicants to engage and take appropriate landscape advice, it can control development in such a way that it can be made to protect, enhance and, where appropriate, renew the landscape of the city.

Such an approach demands an understanding of the city's complex character, the importance of its views and the role of the landscape in helping to determine the character and appearance of the city. It therefore demands strong guidance from the City Council.

It is important that the City Council continues to be clear and firm about protecting the features and characteristics of value in our landscape. It will provide guidance to landowners and developers so that they understand which characteristics are important, and what measures are necessary to protect and enhance them. The council will also encourage landowners and developers to consider landscape issues at the earliest stage and to develop new landscape proposals of quality for a site as part of an integrated design and planning.

The council will seek to maximise the opportunities that new development can provide to improve the quality of an area, to help renew or rejuvenate damaged or ageing landscapes and to contribute to the creation of new imaginative landscapes of quality in parts of the city which require improvement. This demands a positive approach and strong guidance on how we wish to shape our city's landscape for the future.

### **Quality of Landscape Design**

Too often, however, new development proposals are brought forward with inadequately thought out proposals for the open parts of the site. This lack of concern and consideration for the landscape means that not only are

existing landscape features and characteristics lost or put at risk, but also that good landscape design is more difficult to secure, because basic decisions on layout design have been made already.

The quality of landscape design is as important as the quality of building design. The two should be integrated for new development from the early planning stages of a project. They can both affect the appearance of the development and its relationship to its surroundings.

Theme C has highlighted the importance of creating identity and providing a sense of place with new housing development. This is important with any new development within the city. Through the sensitive and imaginative co-ordination of natural features, such as vegetation, landform and water, together with details of paving, walls, lighting and street furniture, a layout for new development can be created to provide complimentary and well integrated spaces which are attractive, safe, and functional and which maximise the site's positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the city.

The City Council will encourage applicants, seeking to develop sites within the city, to engage the design skills and advice of landscape architects, and the advice of landscape managers and landscape scientists, (including ecologists and arboriculturists) wherever appropriate.

### **Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan**

The Bath City Plan recognises the importance of controlling development in such a way that the essential character and appearance of Bath, particularly its conservation area, are protected and enhanced. The main policies relating to this are embodied in the "Care of the Landscape" and the "Care of the Fabric" chapters. The City Plan includes specific policies for the conservation area, which recognise the role of the landscape in helping to determine its character and appearance.

Within the draft Replacement Bath City Plan, these aspects have been



The successful integration of this new development at Newbridge Marina with its important rural surroundings, was achieved through negotiation with the developers.



In permitting development on its own land, as here at the Newbridge Park and Ride site, the City Council seeks to integrate development and landscape considerations at the earliest possible stage.

strengthened further. The Plan places a greater emphasis on the combined effect of the fine buildings and the high quality landscape in determining the character and appearance of the city. Policies seeking to protect, preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, in particular, have been enhanced.

Policies are included to encourage developers to consider landscape issues early in the development process and to bring forward comprehensive landscape schemes for new development as an integral part of the overall development of a site. Applicants for planning consent will be required to demonstrate that they have had regard to the Landscape Elements Checklist (See Appendix 1).

## Strategy Objectives

The objectives behind the proposed key action for making development work are outlined as follows:-

- (a) to ensure that the landscape quality of the city, and important landscape features and characteristics within it, are preserved and protected from the adverse effects of development;
- (b) to ensure that new development within the city maximises the opportunities for landscape improvement and/or landscape renewal and rejuvenation through the application of high standard and imaginative landscape design;
- (c) to ensure that, wherever appropriate, new development within the city makes a significant contribution to the creation of new, quality landscapes of city-wide significance.



Opportunities for the re-development of sites along the river corridor or along the main entrance routes into Bath, should be harnessed to create new landscape frameworks for these important areas.

# Key Strategy Action

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To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

## **G1 Encourage the early consideration of landscape issues in all planning matters, particularly with individual planning applications, by:-**

- (a) continuing to identify key landscape considerations and issues when preparing site development briefs or planning framework guides;
- (b) defining landscape character zones and identifying key landscape features within the city and publishing guidance notes on their key characteristics and policies for their conservation and/or improvement; giving priority to the conservation area and the Cotswold AONB;
- (c) encouraging landowners and developers to discuss landscape issues with City Council officers prior to making an application for planning consent and engaging appropriate landscape professionals to advise them;
- (d) only accepting applications for consideration for planning approval where regard has been given to the Landscape Elements Checklist (see Appendix 1), and the information required by it has been submitted;
- (e) requiring applicants to have regard to framework landscape improvement plans as proposed under E2 within areas where they apply.

## **G2 Promote high standards of imaginative landscape design in association with new development including its implementation and subsequent management, by:-**

- (a) setting a good example when undertaking any development on City Council owned land;
- (b) encouraging the early use, and promoting the services of, professionally qualified landscape architects to advise, and design schemes associated with new development;
- (c) providing guidance to landowners and developers, through direct advice, examples and through talks and exhibitions;
- (d) reviewing and improving the monitoring of development sites to ensure that approved landscape schemes are properly implemented and taking consistent action as necessary to enforce this;
- (e) only approving landscape and planting schemes if it is demonstrated that regard has been given to the Landscape Elements Checklist (see Appendix 1) and that all the relevant information has been provided.

## **G3 Seek to secure the adequate protection of landscape features and important characteristics on development sites, particularly during the construction phase by:-**

- (a) making use of its statutory powers to protect specific features eg. tree preservation orders, where necessary and reviewing office procedures to ensure such action is given priority and can be implemented quickly;
- (b) requiring, as a condition of planning consent, the adequate physical protection of important features on site during the construction period and take action as necessary to prevent any development taking place on site until such protection has been satisfactorily installed;

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- (c) reviewing and improving the monitoring of development sites to ensure the protection of important landscape features is maintained throughout the construction phase and taking consistent action as necessary to enforce this;
- (d) providing guidance notes to all successful applicants and their contractors on how to avoid damaging landscape features of importance during the construction phase and the types of acceptable and appropriate protection for different situations.



## Introduction

Theme H considers the countryside areas, which surround and penetrate within Bath. It concentrates largely on the farmland. It links with Theme A regarding trees, hedgerows and woodlands and overlaps in Theme D and E in other areas.

## The Issues

### Bath's Countryside

Bath is fortunate in possessing an attractive and accessible countryside. (See Appendix 2 – Map 6) It comprises mainly woodland and farmland and provides the city with its attractive northern and south-eastern skylines. Countryside areas extend over the hills which surround Bath and create for the city an impressive backcloth of greenery. It forms some of the most prominent greenspaces within the city and is apparent in views out from many city centre streets. Large parts of the city's countryside are included within the city's conservation area and within Green Belt (see Appendix 2 – Map 7).

In some areas the farmland penetrates deep within the built-up area. Twerton Hill Farm and Stirtingale Farm are completely enclosed by urban development but they remain prominent countryside areas because of their hillside locations. Where these are not included within the Green Belt they have been designated as Important Hillside

within the Bath City Plan (see Appendix 2 – Map 7).

From different parts of Bath views can be gained to the more distant countryside. Much of this falls outside the administrative boundary of the City Council and lies within the area of Wansdyke. However, it is all part of Bath's natural landscape setting. It is important to the character and appearance of the city and also to how the city appears within its rural surroundings.

### Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Much of Bath's countryside is now included within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (see Appendix 2 – Map 1). The aims of the designation are the conservation and enhancement of the area. The Cotswolds AONB Joint Advisory Committee, which administers the area has approved guidelines for the control of development within its area. The principles of these will assist the City Council in decision making on planning control matters within the areas of AONB which lie within the city.

### Conservation of Bath's Countryside

The County of Avon Structure Plan and the Bath City Plan both embody policies, which seek to conserve the character of much of Bath's countryside, and which seek to protect it from the adverse effects of development. The City Plan also seeks to conserve the character of farmland areas within the city which are enclosed by urban development. These policies will safeguard these areas as greenspaces, but alone they cannot guarantee the conservation of the character and appearance of these important landscapes. This requires positive management.

The County of Avon recognised the importance of countryside management in preparing the Avon Landscape Strategy. Through this strategy the county seeks to conserve and enhance



Bath is fortunate in possessing an attractive and accessible countryside. This land at Charlecombe is now managed under the Countryside Commission's pilot Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

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“By setting up good practices on its own land, the City Council seeks to encourage others to do the same.”

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Bath's countryside comprises mainly woodland and farmland. The River Avon provides a strong, but undervalued, link between the urban centre and rural fringe.

the visual appearance of countryside areas by promoting active management and improvement of the land together with the resolution, through negotiation, good practice and good design, of the conflicting interests of countryside users and different land uses. Landscape priority areas have been identified within the Avon Landscape Strategy in order to direct any available resources and to highlight particular issues. Within the Bath area there are Priority Landscape Improvement Areas to the north-west and north-east of the city and Priority Landscape Conservation Areas on the east and to the north. The priority rating of these areas has been devised by the County in assessing priority action within the rural areas of Avon. Their priority has not been assessed in the context of any competing landscape priorities within the built up area of Bath.

The Joint Advisory Committee of the Cotswolds AONB intends to bring forward a landscape management plan for the area for which they are responsible. This will cover much of Bath's surrounding countryside. The Cotswolds AONB is a very large area only a small part of which comes into the administrative boundary of Bath. Through its work on the AONB Joint Advisory Committee, and the Technical Officers Working Party which supports it, the City Council will urge the preparation and implementation of this plan at the earliest possible stage.

Management of the city's countryside to date has been led largely by the City Council in working on its own land and with other bodies, including the National Trust. By setting up good practices on its own land, the City Council seeks to encourage others to do the same. The Trust owns a large part of the south-eastern skyline and is a key landowner within the city. Other private landowners own smaller parcels of land within our countryside areas, which are also important components of the rural scene. Many landscape management initiatives within Bath's countryside have been undertaken independently so that the skills and resources of other agencies working in the area may not have been fully utilised. The landscape strategy will help to improve the co-ordination of effort.

## The River and Canal

The countryside areas of Bath comprise mainly woodland and farmland. However, the River Avon, its tributaries and the Kennet and Avon Canal are strong linear features within the city. Because of their mainly natural characteristics they help to draw the surrounding countryside deep within the city. Themes D and E of this strategy discuss these important landscape features and wildlife habitats in greater detail. They are, however, significant to considerations of this theme and are important in linking the urban areas with the countryside and helping to provide access to it. Currently the County of Avon is working with a number of bodies and individuals, including the City Council, to develop a landscape management approach to the whole of the River Avon within the county between Bristol and to the east of Bath.

## Woodlands

Theme A of this strategy discusses the many issues which need to be addressed to conserve our trees, hedgerows and woodlands. It highlights the visual impact of these features and the important contribution they make to the city's high quality rural landscape setting. Properly caring for our trees, hedgerows and woodlands and encouraging further planting within some areas of farmland will go a long way to conserving, enhancing and perhaps reinstating the character and appearance of some of our countryside areas.

## Farmland

However the beauty of Bath's rural surroundings relies also on the farmland. This comprises small, hedged fields, mainly under pasture or hay meadow and extends down the hillsides and into the valley floors. In the early 1970's many of these farmland areas suffered a large loss of trees as a result of Dutch Elm Disease. Few of these trees have been replaced. As a result the appearance of these farmland landscapes has changed quite dramatically already and their visual contribution to the city's environment has been depleted. Consideration must now be given to restoring some of their earlier quality and character. At the very least we

should be ensuring that there is no further decline. The condition and appearance of these landscapes must be monitored so that any future changes are identified and addressed early.

The future of some of the farmland landscapes is very much in the balance. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to sustain successful agriculture on some of these areas due to the difficulties caused by vandalism or trespass. These are common problems for farmers close to or within urban areas and often discourage good farming practice. Often fencing is left unrepaired, or is patched up because it is being constantly broken down and damaged. Hedges are not managed and are allowed to grow out so that they disappear eventually or are grubbed up. Cattle are allowed to wander into copses and destroy developing young trees which would replace the maturing ones eventually. The gradual erosion of these features will downgrade the visual quality of our countryside areas, change their character and reduce the variety of wildlife habitat within the them. As a result, it will make it even more difficult to re-establish successful agriculture on the land in the future. It will also encourage further abuse and increase the threat from development as the downgraded areas are perceived to have little visual quality.

Already the difficulties of keeping livestock in some areas have resulted in the serious under-grazing of farmland within the city. It is difficult, for example, to keep sheep on land where dogs are allowed to run free, or to keep livestock on areas where fencing is vandalised, and litter, cans and broken bottles can endanger the health of the animals. Already some areas of pasture have been abandoned, whilst others are managed under only short-term arrangements. They have a high turnover of tenants and increasingly long gaps between leases, as the demand for grazing land diminishes.

Farmland areas, such as Twerton Hill Farm and Stirlingale Farm, suffer the added difficulty of being land-locked and isolated from other grazing areas. Cattle or other livestock have to be transported

in and this can be a further disincentive to take-up grazing licences and leases on enclosed farmland within the city.

Being under-grazed, or even abandoned, the character of the pasture changes. Gradually it is taken over by different plants or is lost altogether under the invasion of scrub – that is the natural development of shrubs such as hawthorn and blackthorn which eventually form thickets of vegetation within the grass areas. Theme D highlights the important nature conservation interests of many of our pastures and their reliance on a particular level and consistency of grazing to retain their species diversity.

Livestock grazing is the most effective way of managing these areas, many of which would be too expensive or too difficult to mow. However problems can also be created by over-grazing as this can create compaction of the soil and erosion. In Bath much of the pastures are growing on thin soils and this makes them particularly vulnerable to heavy grazing pressure, for example that often associated with horse-grazing. With such grazing, herbicides are also often used to kill off the plants that the grazing animals will not eat, and the grass is regularly fertilised to create faster growth and provide more fodder. Theme D has highlighted the damaging effects of these.

The Countryside Commission currently administers a variety of Countryside Stewardship schemes which seek to conserve specific aspects of the countryside through management agreements with the owners or tenants of the land. One such scheme is concerned with the proper management of calcareous grasslands and is relevant to a number of sites within the city. One of the City Council's tenant farmers has entered into such an agreement, which also embraces the reinstatement and maintenance of hedgerows. An access arrangement has also been agreed to allow public access to the land for informal recreation.

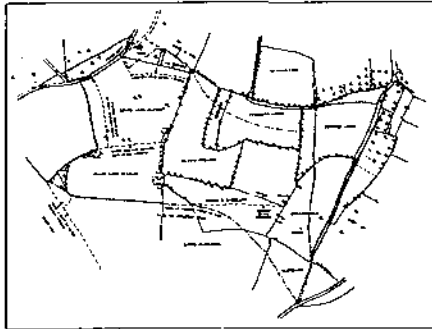
Such schemes help to make it more attractive to farmers to manage land in a way which they might otherwise find difficult to sustain. The City Council will continue to work with the Countryside



The fields on Lansdown are prominent within the city, but are becoming increasingly difficult to farm.



The indiscriminate dumping of rubbish is one of several difficulties encountered in trying to sustain successful agriculture on the edge of the city.



The survey of the history of hedgerows on Twerton Hill Farm is one of many initiatives to promote the more effective management of this piece of urban farmland and to support community involvement.

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“Alternative methods of farming may need to be promoted whereby community liaison, participation and greater public access is developed.”

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Commission, or other agencies, in promoting such initiatives which help to conserve the character and appearance of the city's countryside areas.

If these areas are to be kept in agricultural use, which really is the only way of conserving their character and appearance, then alternative methods of farming may need to be promoted whereby community liaison, participation and greater public access is developed as part of the agricultural management of the land. Some of the farmland is owned by the City Council and leased to tenants. It may be that the council can explore new ways of working on its own land first, particularly for example at Twerton Hill Farm where there is already an enthusiastic community interest.

It may be appropriate also to consider other uses for some of these marginal farmland areas. These might include afforestation for community benefit, where this did not conflict with other wildlife interests, or even the creation of new public open space with an emphasis on the enjoyment of the natural landscape rather than a formal park. In such areas livestock grazing would remain as the most appropriate way to manage grasslands. However, rather than being somebody's main livelihood, and therefore difficult to sustain, it could be regarded and supported as an alternative to mowing.

The City Council recognises the importance of farmland and woodland areas to the character and appearance of the city's landscape. It seeks to secure the appropriate management of these areas to protect and conserve their greenspace characteristics and to improve their landscape quality.

### **Approach adopted within the Bath City Plan**

The adopted Bath City Plan seeks to protect much of the city's important countryside and farmland areas with Green Belt, Important Hillside and conservation area policies. All seek to retain and conserve the rural quality of these highly visible and attractive parts of Bath. Other policies relating to the protection and care of trees, woodlands

and wildlife give further support to this. This approach has been carried forward to the draft Replacement City Plan and has been strengthened.

### **Strategy Objectives**

The objectives behind the key action for managing Bath's countryside are outlined as follows:-

- (a) To protect, conserve and enhance the character, appearance and wildlife diversity of the whole of Bath's countryside and farmland areas through the application of sensitive land, woodland and water course management.
- (b) To promote landscape improvements in farmland and countryside areas throughout the city.
- (c) To develop a sense of community responsibility and involvement for areas of farmland and countryside which lie adjacent to or are completely surrounded by urban development.



# Key Strategy Action

SHORT  
TERM

MEDIUM  
TERM

LONG  
TERM

To meet the objectives of the strategy and its policies the City Council will:-

## **H1 Monitor landscape change within the city's countryside and review action by:-**

- (a) undertaking an initial survey, and re-surveying at 10 year intervals, to record the extent, character, landscape features and condition of management of the city's countryside areas;
- (b) maintaining a photographic record (including aerial photography) updated every 10 years, of the city's countryside areas;
- (c) identifying significant changes and areas of change, including identifying discernable trends, and review landscape strategy action to address them.

## **H2 Promote landscape improvements and good practice in countryside management to conserve or enhance the rural character and quality of the city's countryside areas, to provide for wildlife and to allow public access wherever appropriate by:-**

- (a) identifying owners and tenants of sites on which significant landscape change has or is occurring, or which lie within an area of significant change, and make direct approaches to them to secure the necessary improvements or management;
- (b) continuing to work in close partnership with the National Trust to assist in the long-term management of their landholdings on the eastern skyline, to uphold current management agreements and to encourage their acquisition of more land as appropriate to consolidate their landholding and secure the more effective conservation of this important rural landscape;
- (c) continue to provide landscape conservation and improvement advice, discretionary grant-aid and entering into management agreements as appropriate with landowners and tenants of land within the city's countryside areas and advising on other sources of funding and advice;
- (d) developing and promoting in partnership with AONB and in conjunction with other bodies, the concept of countryside management within the rural environs of Bath, and investigating the potential to establish a countryside project officer to co-ordinate, advise and undertake landscape management projects and initiatives within this area.

## **H3 Identify the City Council's landholdings within countryside areas and seek to maximise their contribution to the city's landscape by:-**

- (a) considering the future management of the enclosed farmland at Twerton Hill Farm as a matter of priority, making recommendations for action as necessary and ensuring that the character of the area is conserved;
- (b) undertaking a survey and review of all land owned by the City Council which is currently managed for agricultural purposes or forms part of the city's countryside to:
  - \* determine for what purpose the land is currently held;
  - \* assess the viability of current uses;
  - \* consider alternative uses, where necessary, which might better conserve the character and appearance of Bath's rural landscape and make recommendations as appropriate;

- (c) developing a programme to introduce improvements and sound long-term management to all countryside areas owned or managed by the City Council and encourage the council's tenant farmers to enter into the Countryside Commission's Countryside Stewardship schemes (or subsequent initiatives) where appropriate and cater for public access.

SHORT  
TERM

MEDIUM  
TERM

LONG  
TERM

# Glossary and References



# Glossary and References

## GLOSSARY

1. **Ancient Woodland** – Ancient woods are those which have had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD and have only been cleared for underwood or timber production. The importance of ancient woodland is fourfold:
  - i. the great majority are believed to be PRIMARY, that is they are surviving fragments of primaeval forests, the climax vegetation type of this country;
  - ii. the characteristics of ancient but not primary woods (ANCIENT SECONDARY woods) are likely to resemble those of primary woods;
  - iii. ancient woodlands have had a long time to acquire species and to form stable floral and faunal communities;
  - iv. their soils have remained largely undisturbed.
2. **Ancient Woodlands Inventory** – A national inventory of ancient woods set up by the Nature Conservancy Council (now known as English Nature) in 1981. The inventory is used by the Forestry Commission and others to help identify woods that require special treatment in order to retain their nature conservation interest.
3. **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** – A national designation seeking to protect the natural beauty of important tracts of rural landscape. Designated by the Countryside Commission under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment.
4. **British Waterways** – The British Waterways Board was established by the Transport Act 1962 to manage the approximately 2000 miles of canals and river navigations in England, Scotland and Wales, together with their associated reservoirs docks repair yards and workshops.

Consistent with their statutory obligations and powers and objectives agreed with Government, the Board run their affairs on a commercial basis and promote the fullest use of the waterways for leisure, recreation and amenity, and freight transport where appropriate.
5. **The Countryside Commission** – works to conserve the beauty of the English countryside and to help people enjoy it. It is also concerned with the underlying environmental quality of the countryside, and with the economic and social well-being of those who live and work there. The Commission is the Government's official advice on countryside issues, and provides grants and advice for projects that enhance the landscape and make the countryside more accessible for public enjoyment.
6. **English Heritage** – the Government's statutory adviser on conservation legislation concerning the historic environment, and provides the major source of public funds for rescue archaeology, town schemes, and repair to historic buildings and ancient monuments. English Heritage is also responsible for the preservation and presentation of some 400 historic properties in its care. English Heritage maintain a Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England.
7. **English Nature (the Nature Conservancy Council for England)** – the statutory adviser to the Government on nature conservation in England and promotes the conservation of England's wildlife and natural features. Through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, English Nature works with sister organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on UK and international nature conservation issues.
8. **The Forestry Authority** – provides advice on forest practice pays grants, carries out research and is responsible for the implementation of regulations affecting forestry in Britain. It is part of the Forestry Commission.

9. **Important Hillside**s – The hillsides overlooking Bath which are to remain undeveloped are important in giving Bath its rural (and 'green') setting. Most of the hillsides are protected from development by Green Belt designation and A.O.N.B. Some, however, notably Stirlingale Farm, Twerton Farm, The Tumps, Entry Hill Golf Course, Beechen Cliff, Lyncombe and Mount Beacon are green oases within the built-up area and are vital to the city's landscape setting. Many of the hillsides are also important to wildlife. These are identified as Important Hillside

10. **Local Nature Reserve (LNR)** – land managed for the purpose:-

- a) of providing, under suitable conditions and control, special opportunities for the study of, and research into, matters relating to the flora and fauna of Great Britain and the physical conditions in which they live, and for the study of geological and physiographical features of special interest in the area; or
- b) of preserving flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features of special interest in the area; or both these purposes.

The framework for L.N.R.s falls within the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, which indicates that the selection, declaration and management of L.N.R. is a power of the Local Authorities. However, Local Authorities must consult with English Nature prior to exercising this function and must have an interest in the land.

11. **MAFF** – Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

12. **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** – a legal designation applied to land of special nature conservation interest, identified by English Nature.

13. **Task Force Trees** – a special, but temporary, unit of the Countryside Commission set up in 1987 to tackle damage to amenity trees and woodlands and help restore devastated landscapes in the south-east and east of England after the Great Storm in September 1987. It was extended to cover other parts of the country after the more widespread storm of 1990.

14. **Tree Preservation Order** – is an order made by the Local Planning Authority which in general makes it a criminal offence to undertake any work to, or wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree, without the written permission of the Authority. A Tree Preservation Order is a long term legal means of protecting a tree and controlling work on it.

15. **UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

## REFERENCES

1. **"Bath City Plan"**, the statutory Local Plan for Bath, adopted by the City Council 1990.
2. **"Bath City Plan , A Draft Replacement Local Plan for the City of Bath"**, January 1993.
3. **"The Bath Manifesto"**, Bath City Council 1992.
4. **"A Strategy for the Landscape of Bath"**, a report by Cobham Resource Consultants for Bath City Council, 1986.
5. **"The Draft Principles of a Landscape Strategy for Bath"**, Department of Environmental Services, Bath City Council, 1990.
6. **"Nature in the City – A Report of the Bath Wildlife Survey 1990"**, Department of Environmental Services, Bath City Council.
7. Bath City Council Policy Notes (Department of Environmental Services):-
  - "Policy Note One: Bath as a World Heritage Site"**
  - "Policy Note Two: Bath's Green Belt"**
  - "Policy Note Three: Historic Gardens in Bath"**
  - "Policy Note Four: The Conservation Area in Bath"**
8. **"Sydney Gardens, Bath. A Survey of the Landscape"**, prepared by Colvin & Moggridge and Debois Landscape Survey Group for the Department of Leisure and Tourist Services, Bath City Council, 1993 and supported by Task Force Trees, Countryside Commission.
9. **"Royal Victoria Park, A Survey of the Landscape"**, prepared by Colvin & Moggridge and Debois Landscape Survey Group for the Department of Leisure and Tourist Services, Bath City Council, 1993 and supported by Task Force Trees, Countryside Commission.
10. Planning Policy Guidance Notes. Department of the Environment. London.
  - PPG3 – Land for Housing**
  - PPG15 – Listed Buildings and Conservation Area (Draft)**
  - PPG16 – Archaeology and Planning**
  - PPG17 – Sport and Recreation**
  - [Draft PPG on Nature Conservation]**
11. **"Avon Phase 1 Survey, Nature Conservancy Council, 1990"**. A Land Use and Habitat Survey of the County.
12. **"Avon Landscape Strategy"**. The County of Avon. 1988.





# Appendices

**Appendix 1 – Draft Landscape  
Elements Checklist**

**Appendix 2 – Maps**



**NOTE: This draft is appended to the draft Replacement City Plan and is likely to undergo minor amendment prior to final adoption and publication.**

This checklist has been prepared as a guide to all applicants and summarises the environmental considerations which will be expected to be shown in planning applications. Where an application for planning permission does not demonstrate an acceptable measure of environmental consideration and understanding, then the City Council will negotiate changes to, or refuse, the application.

REFERENCE NO:  
LOCATION:  
DEVELOPMENT:

These guidelines are to assist you in preparing your application by drawing to your attention the extent of information required. This level of information is necessary to enable us to assess the suitability of the proposals. Please tick those areas where information is supplied or has been considered as part of your application.

Information concerning policy matters can be obtained from the Department of Environmental Services by telephoning Bath (0225) 461111.

## POLICY/STATUTORY LEGISLATION

Is the site affected by any of the following? If yes, please indicate. Your application should take account of such provisions.

- PLANNING BRIEFS/GUIDELINES
- STRUCTURE/LOCAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS      ie. Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Areas of Wildlife Importance etc.
- CONSERVATION AREA
- NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEGISLATION FOR NATURE CONSERVATION      eg. badger setts, bats, rare species listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), etc.
- LISTED BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST
- THE ENGLISH HERITAGE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Identify which categories the application site fits into.

- HERITAGE LANDSCAPE
- THE RIVER VALLEY
- LARGE VILLA SUBURBS
- SMALL VILLA AND TERRACE SUBURBS
- CONTEMPORARY HOUSING
- URBAN/RURAL FRINGE
- PROMINENT HILLSIDE
- WOODLAND
- WATERSIDE LOCATION
- CITY APPROACH (ROAD/RAILWAY)
- INDUSTRIAL AREA
- OTHER. Please state.

How is the proposed development appropriate for these areas?

## THE EXISTING SITUATION – SURVEY

Please tick where information has been supplied with the application.

- |                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | LEVELS  | Has a physical/levels survey of the <u>full extent of the site</u> been carried out? This should form part of the submission.<br><br>The survey should be shown at a scale which allows a clear understanding of the existing features, ie. 1:200, 1:100 or less for details. Indicate contours/spot heights.<br><br>Features on adjoining sites which may influence the development should be shown. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | GEOLOGY SURVEY  | Bath is noted for past mining practices and steep slopes. In certain areas investigations into landslips and mining practices will be required to establish the suitability of the site for development.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SOIL SURVEY (PH AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS)           | Necessary to establish suitability for establishment of vegetation.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS ON THE ENGLISH HERITAGE LIST | Identify the character and features of the park or garden.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | TREE SURVEY   | To BS5837 (Section 5). The position, height, spread, species and condition of trees on site, and where possible, on adjoining sites should be indicated. Trees on the site should be identifiable by a tag.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HEDGES  | The position, spread and species of hedgerows should be identified on plan.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SHRUBS  | The position, spread and species of shrubs should be identified on plan.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | GRASSLAND   | Identify the nature of the grassland on the site, ie:<br>Species rich grassland/unimproved grassland/improved pasture/unmanaged grassland/lawn.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WILDLIFE  | Identify wildlife sites statutorily protected and note any wildlife interest/habitat of local importance.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | FEATURES AND BUILDINGS                                  | Identify garden features such as walls, retaining walls, water features, garden buildings, steps, seats, gates, etc.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | VIEWS   | Identify significant views in and out of the site.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | WATERCOURSES/DRAINAGE                                   | Identify natural and man-made drainage courses, including ditches and culverts.   |

- SERVICES Identify above and below ground services, ie. drains, sewers, cables, pipes, etc.
- ACCESS Identify existing vehicular and pedestrian routes and any Rights of Way.

### THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Identify the following on plan.

TREES TO BE FELLED

DRAINAGE/SERVICES

All proposed underground and above ground services must be indicated. These should be sited outside the root/branch spread of trees and take account of future growth.

DETAILED DRAWINGS

Detailed drawings for special situations, eg. retaining walls close to trees, should form part of the submission. They should demonstrate the ameliorating measures proposed.

WILDLIFE

Demonstrate measures you propose to conserve and/or enhance any wildlife interest on the site to ameliorate the effect of the development on wildlife.

HISTORIC PARKS & GARDENS

Demonstrate measures you propose to conserve the character and features of your site if it is an historic park or garden.

### LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

We require you to state your LANDSCAPE DESIGN OBJECTIVES for the site, to ensure that the landscape potential of the site is fully recognised.

The landscape treatment of development sites must be regarded as an integral part of the design process, being considered at the earliest stage of the application. Adequate budgetary provision should be made at this stage to allow implementation of the landscape proposals.

Positive solutions should be sought which sensitively integrate the development into its surroundings and fulfil the site's landscape potential. The following should be taken into account when preparing your development proposals for the site. Please tick those you have considered.

- TREES RETAINED AND UNAFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENT The proposals should take account of future growth of these trees.
- TREES TO BE RETAINED WHICH MAY BE AFFECTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT Usually we will require tree surgery to be carried out to BS3998. A Schedule of Works should take account of future growth of these trees.
- TREE SPREADS Check that the spreads shown on the survey drawings are representative of actual spreads.

- TREE PROTECTION  
You will be required to erect protective fencing to protect the roots and branches of trees on site and adjacent sites if roots/branches extend into the site, in accordance with BS5837: 1991. All activities are to be excluded from these areas. The position of protective fences should be indicated on the proposals plan.
- CONTRACTORS' WORKING AREA  
In siting buildings, other structures and hard surfaces, the proposals should take account of the area required by the contractor for construction, so that the roots/canopy of any trees are unaffected by scaffolding, building operations and movement of machinery.
- CONTRACTORS' COMPOUND  
Identify the site.
- LEVEL CHANGES  
The submission should include sections to show any level changes, and how they relate to the entire site and adjoining sites.

Early consultation and co-operation between applicants and Bath City Council is advised.

## THE PROPOSALS PLAN

This should be presented at a scale of 1:200 or 1:100 or less for details. 1:500 is only appropriate for demonstrating layouts of larger developments. The plan should show the following:-

- EXISTING TREES AND SHRUBS  
What is the nature of existing vegetation? Does it already give landscape structure to the site? Can it be enhanced by adding new planting?
- OTHER EXISTING FEATURES  
How do the other existing features to be retained fit in with landscape proposals?
- GROUND PREPARATION  
Does the site history suggest special measures are necessary to ensure successful landscape establishment. Demonstrate how those will be implemented.
- LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS  
Planting should be seen as an integral part of the townscape rather than as a decorative addition to the built environment. It should give definition and meaning to the spaces between the buildings and enhance the buildings themselves. A green structure to the built environment can give a measure of enclosure – as sense of containment. Planting can be used to:-
  - GIVE EMPHASIS AND DIRECTION, as in avenue planting
  - DEFINE SPACES AND CREATE A SENSE OF ENCLOSURE, ie. to seating areas or children's play
  - SOFTEN THE IMPACT OF BUILT FORMS
  - CHANNEL VIEWS OR PROVIDE A FOCAL POINT TO A VIEW
  - PROVIDE A FEATURE ON A LAWN – A LIVING SCULPTURE
  - IDENTIFY CHANGES IN DEMARKATION, ie. from trafficked to pedestrian areas
  - SCREEN UNDESIRABLE FEATURES
  - REINFORCE AND/OR ENHANCE THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF THE AREA

You should show that you have given consideration to the following:-

STRUCTURE PLANTING	SHRUB PLANTING
GROUPS OF TREES	WATER COURSES/FEATURES
SPECIMEN TREES/AVENUES	BOUNDARY TREATMENT
WOODLAND	HARD SURFACES
HEDGES	OTHER SOFT SURFACES

Indicate all types and colours of materials, walls, fences, gates, hedgebanks, protective fences, rails etc.

**WHEN DETAILED PROPOSALS ARE REQUIRED AS A CONDITION OF PLANNING CONSENT THEY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:-**

**1. PLANTING PLAN**

Identify position, areas, number, densities and species of plant.

**2. SCHEDULE OF PLANT MATERIAL**

**SPECIES/VARIETY**

TREES: To BS3936.  
Rootballed/Bare Root/Containerised  
Staking/Guying

**NUMBERS AND DENSITIES**

HEIGHT/GIRTH/POT SIZE To BS3936.

**3. LANDSCAPE SPECIFICATION NOTES**

These should address the following:-

SITE PREPARATION General landscape operations to BS4428 & amendment 938; BS5837  
Trees in Relation to Construction.

**CULTIVATION OF SUBSOIL/TOPSOIL**

SOIL AMELIORATION MEASURES/FERTILISER To BS3551.

TOPSOIL QUALITY/DEPTH To BS3882.

PLANT QUALITY AND HANDLING Joint Liaison Committee for Plant Supplies for supply and delivery of  
plants. To BS3936, BS5236, BS4043.

**MULCH - TYPE/GRADE/DEPTH**

GRASS - SEED/TURF AND SPECIES To BS3969, BS4428.

**WEED CONTROL**

**WATERING**

**TIMING OF OPERATIONS**

MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT INTENTIONS In some cases a 5 year or more management plan would be required.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE SPACES Indicate responsibilities for future maintenance and whether it is your  
intention that open spaces are to be adopted by Bath City Council.

TREE SURGERY To BS3998.

## APPENDIX 2

## Maps

**Map 1**

Conservation Area and Cotswolds AONB

**Map 2**

Woodlands

**Map 3**

Bath Priority Tree Planting Areas

**Map 4**

Open Spaces

**Map 5**

Sites of Wildlife Importance




**Map 6**

Bath's Countryside

**Map 7**

Green Belt and Important Hillsides



-  Conservation Area Boundary
-  Cotswolds AONB
-  City Boundary









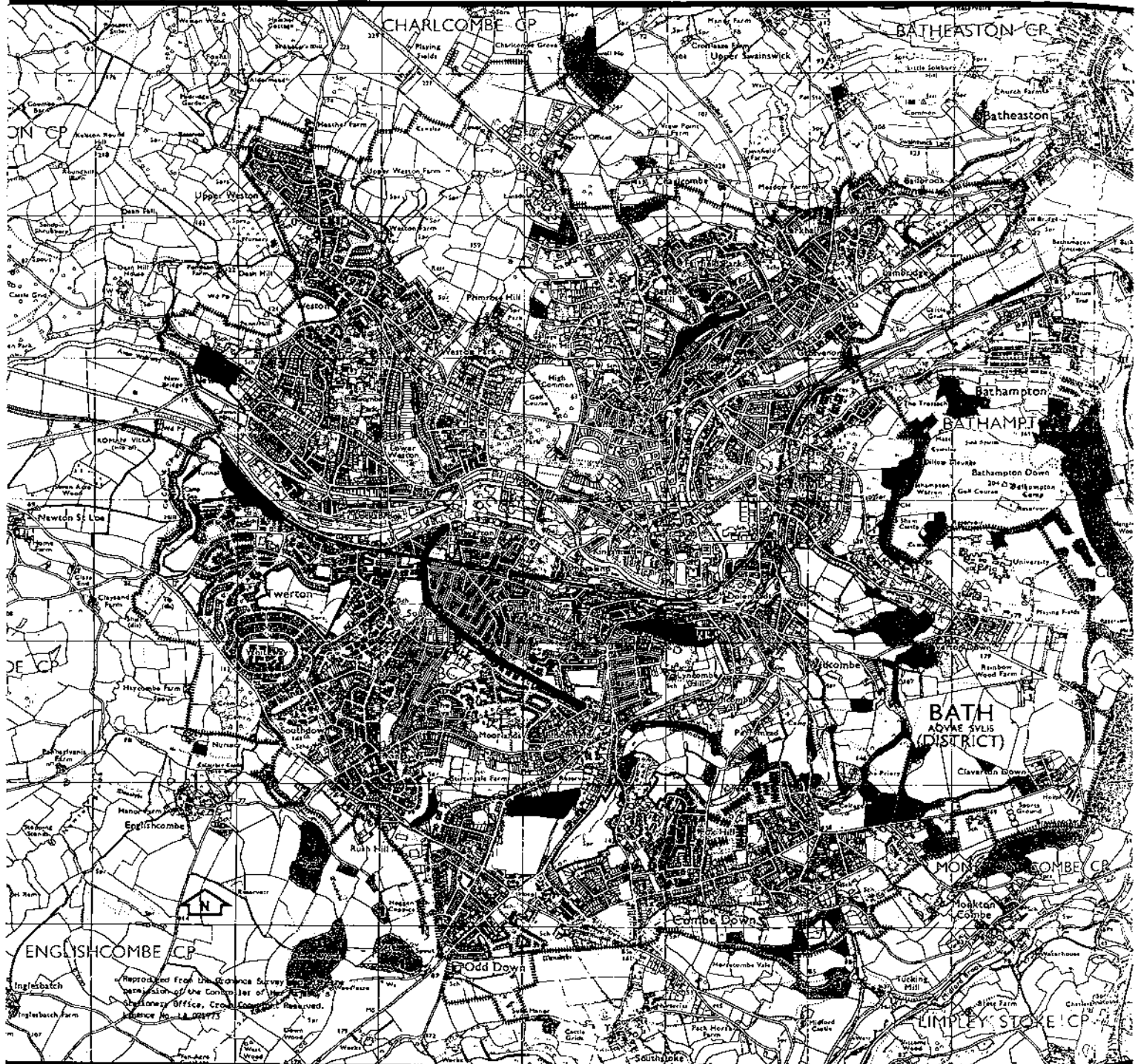
GLISHCOMBE C.P.  
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale map of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 1975. The map is reproduced by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright Reserved. Licence No. 18 102775

Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

# MAP 2

# Woodlands




- Council Owned 
- Private 
- Private Ancient 
- Private Replanted Ancient 
- Areas covered by the 1993 Woodland Survey 
- City Boundary 








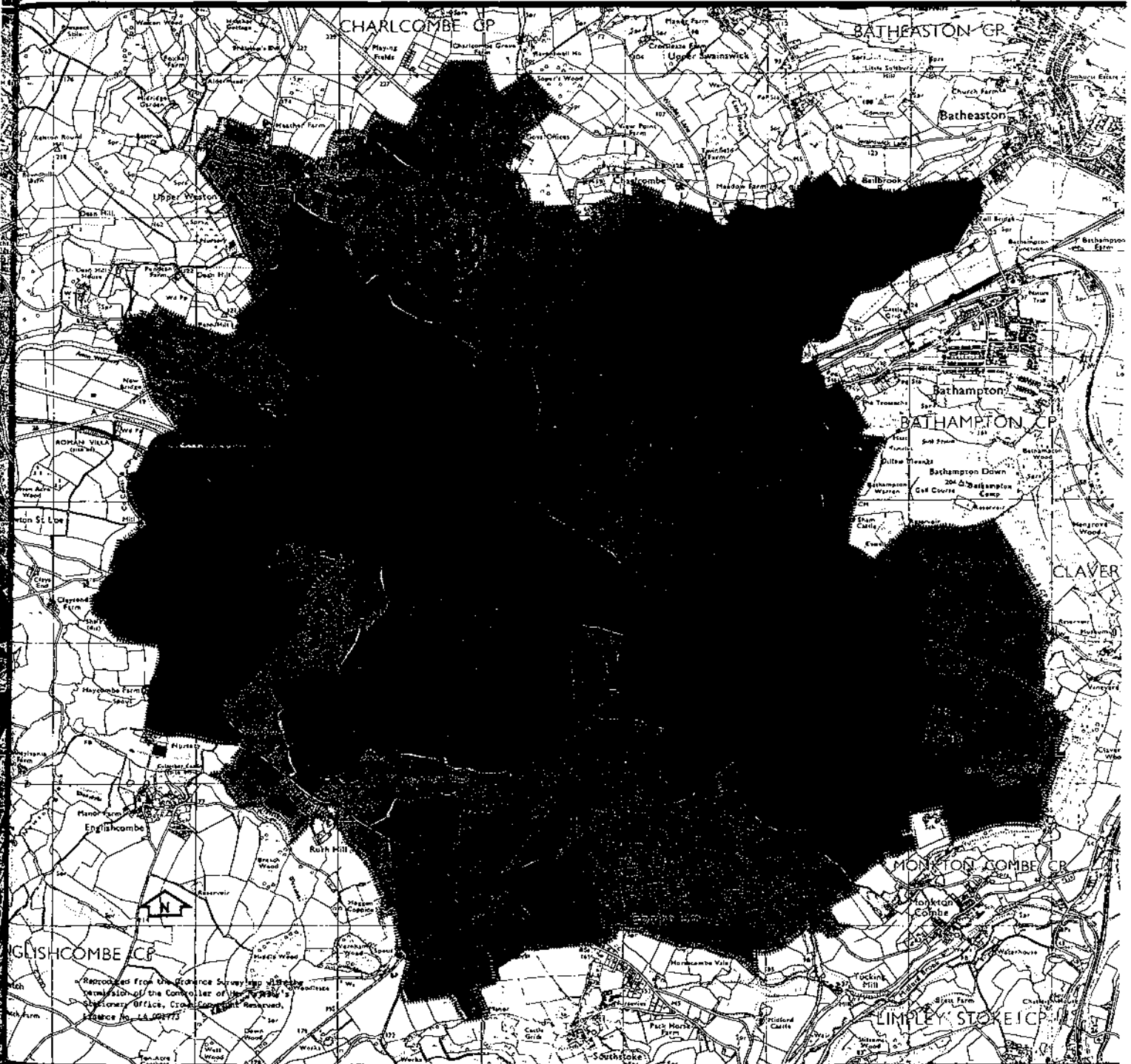
Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

# Priority Tree Planting Areas

# MAP 3

-  Primary Routeways
-  Secondary Routeways
-  City Boundary

-  1st Phase Tree Planting
-  2nd Phase Tree Planting
-  3rd Phase Tree Planting
-  4th Phase Tree Planting
-  5th Phase Tree Planting



Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

# MAP 4

# Open Spaces

Open Spaces as defined  
in Adopted City Plan.  
1990



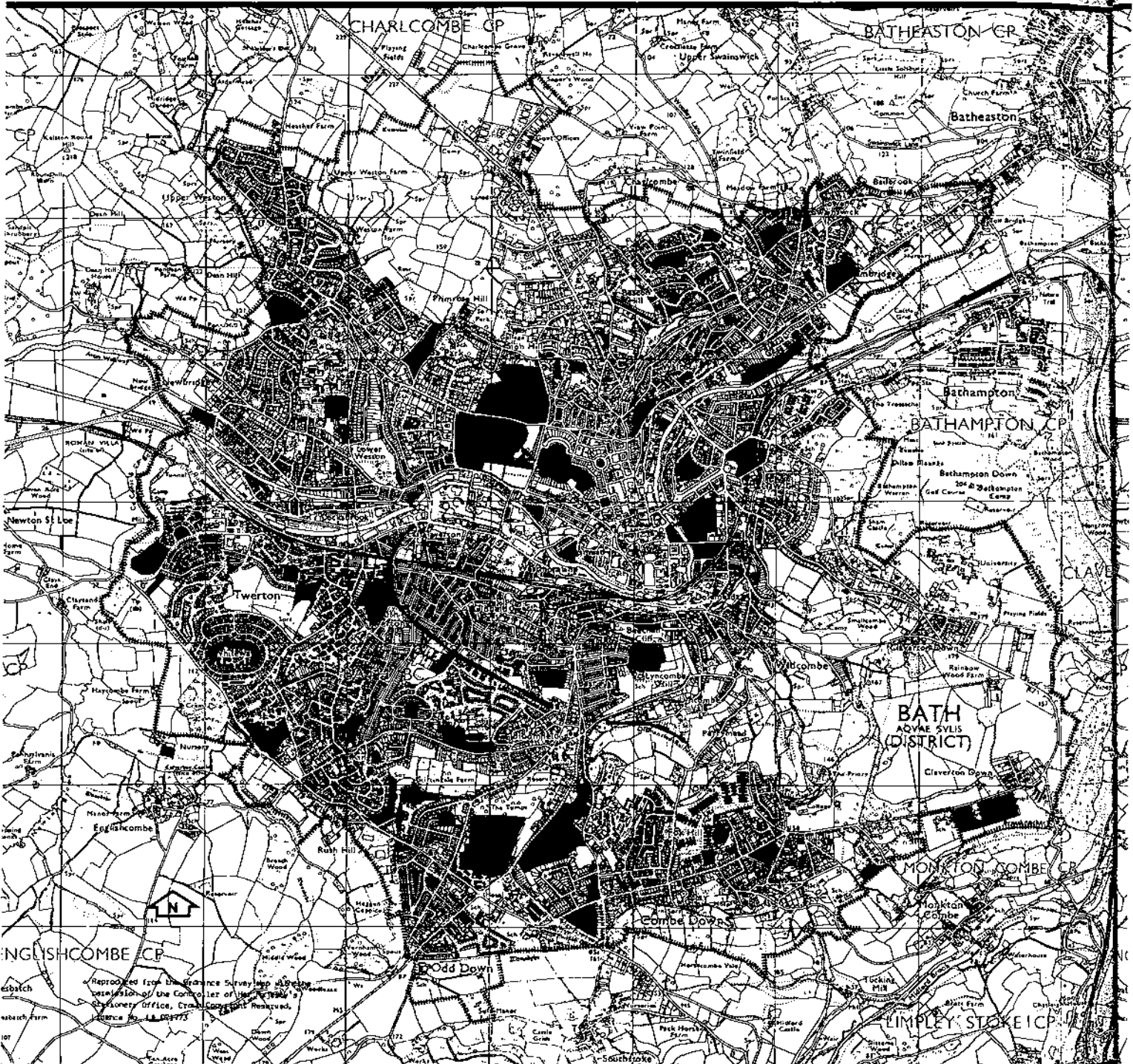
City Boundary



Additional Open Spaces  
as defined in Draft  
Replacement City Plan.  
1993




Open Spaces removed  
in Draft Replacement  
City Plan.  
1993





Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

# Sites of Wildlife Importance

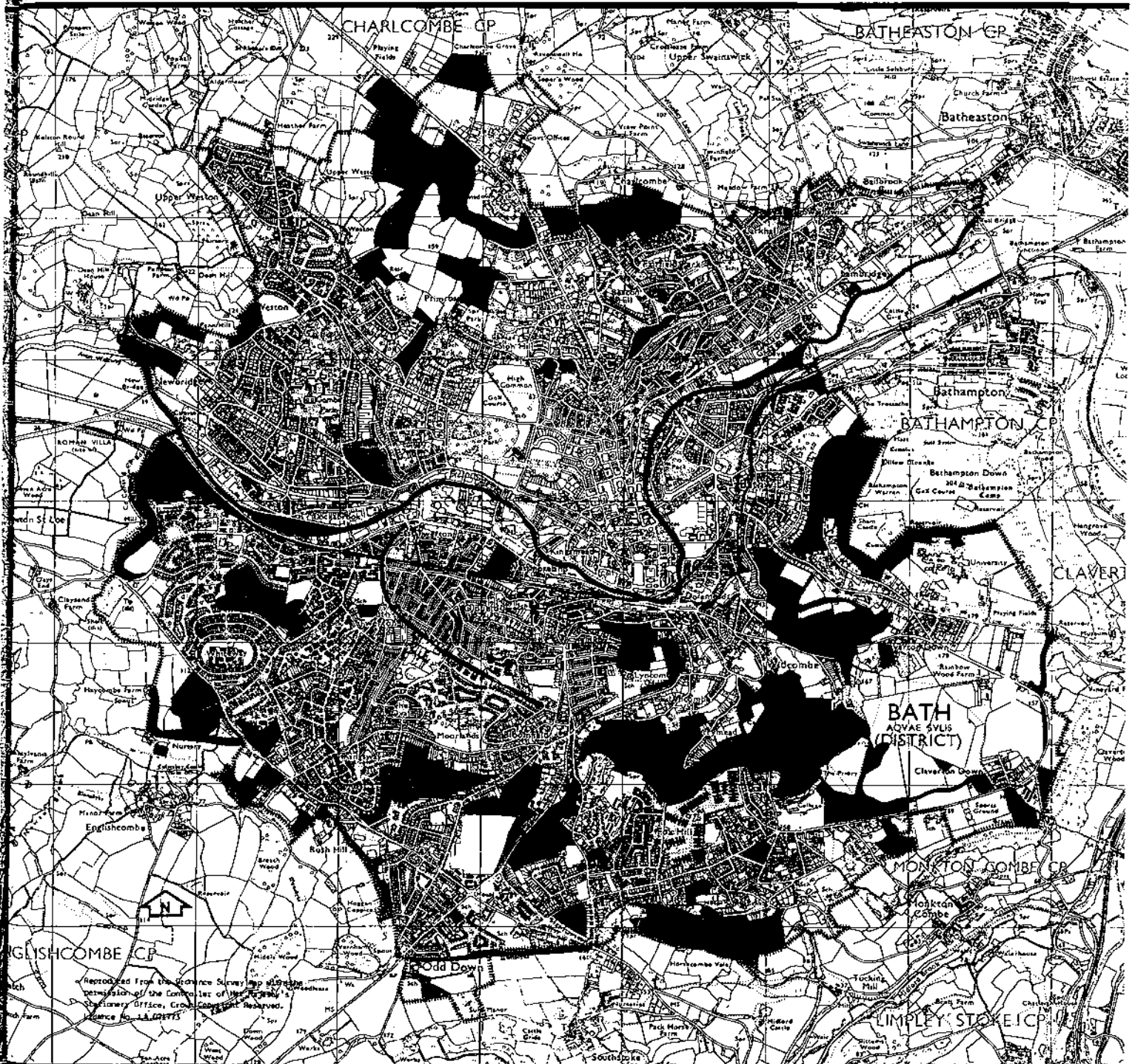
# MAP 5

 Bath Sites of Wildlife Importance

 Bath Sites of Local Wildlife Importance

 City Boundary





This map is taken from information contained in the 'Nature in the City' Report prepared by Bath City Council in 1990.

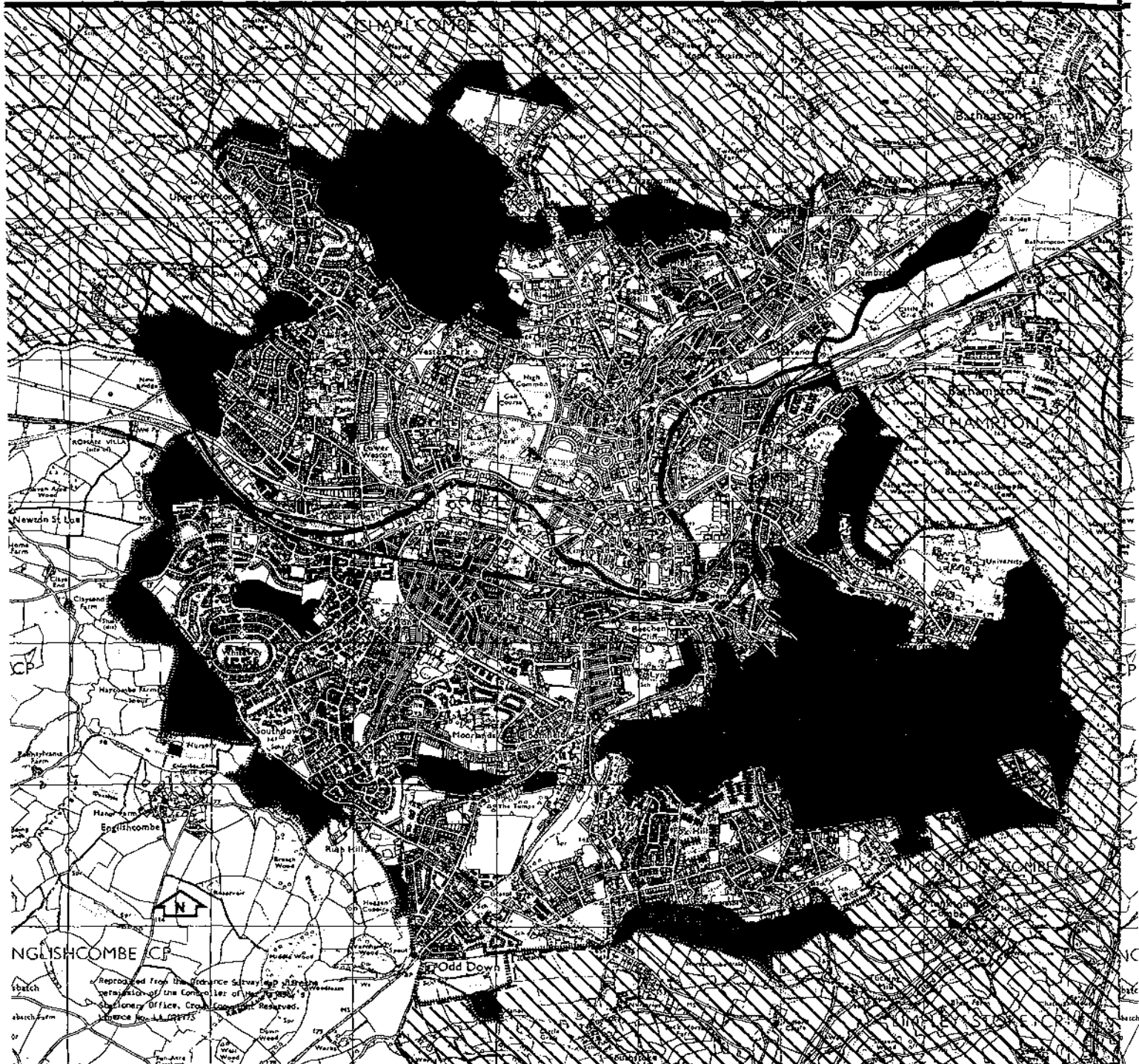


Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

# MAP 6

# Bath's Countryside




- Countryside 
- Cotswolds AONB Boundary 
- River Avon & Canal 
- City Boundary 



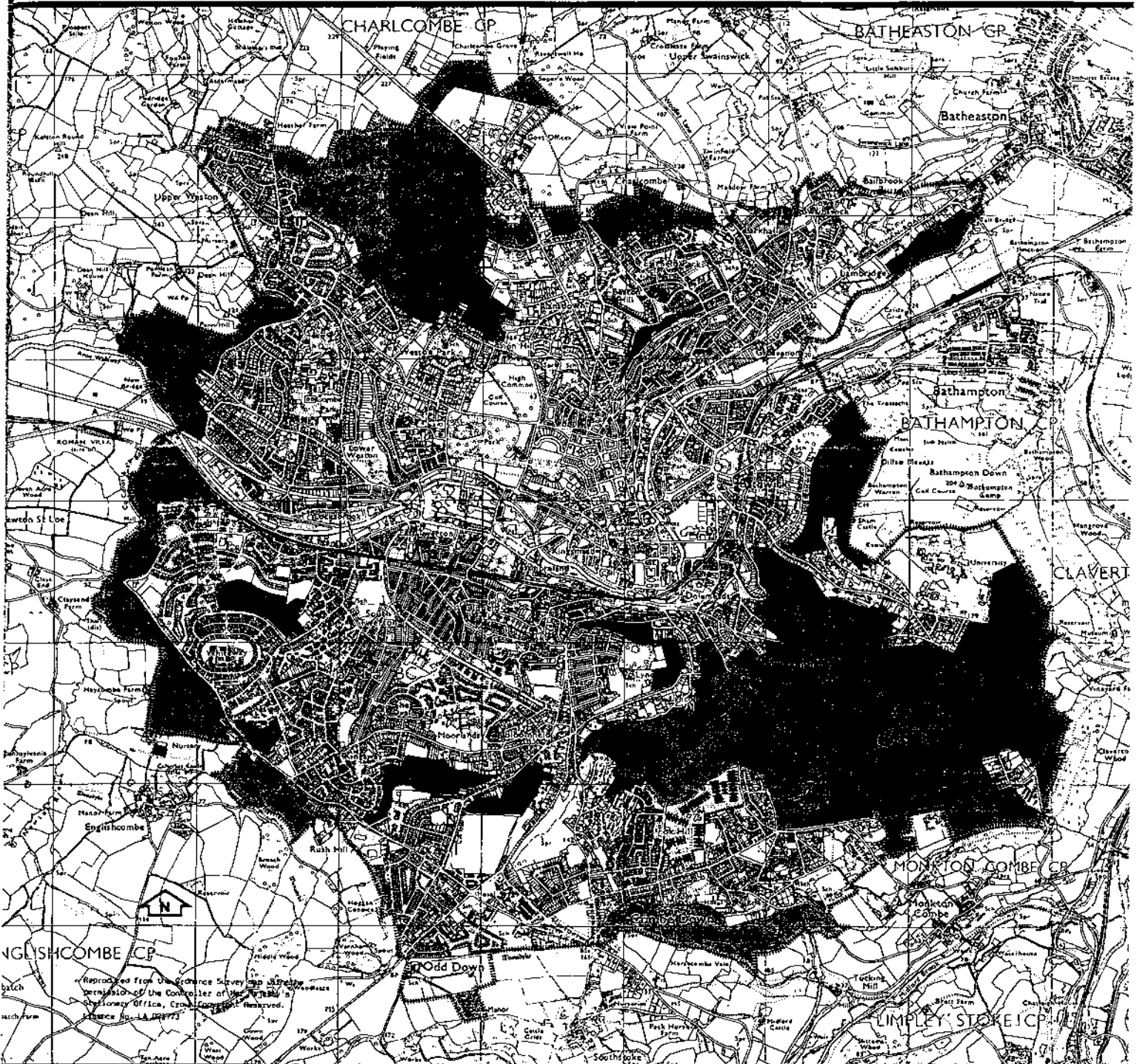
Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

# Greenbelt & Important Hillside

# MAP 7

-  Greenbelt
-  Important Hillside
-  City Boundary

As defined in Bath City Plan.



Due to the scale of this map, the information illustrated is indicative only.

