

Bathampton Meadows

Business Plan 2020-2022

1. About the organisation

History and what we do

The National Trust was founded on 12 January 1895 by Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley. “The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty” is a registered charity (no. 205846). It is incorporated and has powers conferred on it by Parliament through the National Trust Acts 1907 to 1971 and under the Charities (National Trust) Order 2005. The 1907 Act states:

“The National Trust shall be established for the purposes of promoting the permanent preservation for the benefit of the nation of land and tenements (including buildings) of beauty or historic interest and as regards lands for the preservation (so far as practicable) of their natural aspect features and animal and plant life.”

As Europe’s largest conservation charity, we look after nature, beauty and history for the nation to enjoy:

- Over 780 miles of coastline
- More than 250,000 hectares of land
- Over 500 historic houses, castles, parks, and gardens
- Nearly one million works of art

In 2020 we’re celebrating 125 years since the National Trust was founded. With the help of our supporters, we protect and care for special places so people and nature can thrive for generations to come. Community spirit is the motivator to making special places better for everyone, and we’re working to open up city landscapes to encourage nature back into urban areas, partnering with councils and other organisations to achieve this.

Governance, Constitution and Management

We are a large charity with a clear purpose and broad range of interests. Our governance arrangements reflect these and are designed to support and challenge our staff.

The National Trust was first incorporated in 1894 as an Association Not For Profit under the Companies Acts 1862-1890. Underpinning our governance arrangements are Acts of Parliament. The first National Trust Act was passed by Parliament in 1907. A number of successive Acts have since been introduced to update and, where necessary, revise our constitution to ensure the National Trust continues to be well governed and remains true to its cause. The Charities (National Trust) Order 2005 describes our current governance arrangements and is the starting point for the arrangements in the Governance Handbook, available for download at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/governance-handbook

Our governance volunteers serve on a range of groups intended to support our staff and the Trust’s activities. Of these groups the starting point is the Board of Trustees which agrees plans and holds the staff to account for their delivery. The Council appoints the Board, holds it to account, and debates wider issues of policy.

Our professional staff run the properties and the wider organisation. Bathampton Meadows upon transfer will become part of the Bath Portfolio of properties, managed by a General Manager with a local operational team (Rangers, Visitor Experience etc..) and supported by an internal team of professional Consultants (Surveyors, Land Use and Visitor Experience Advisers, Planning Consultants etc..).

A list of all supporting documents is available in Annex A.

2. The vision for the future use of the land

National Trust ownership in the city comprises of Bath Assembly Rooms, Prior Park Landscape Garden and over 200 hectares of countryside which forms a crucial part of Bath's green setting – one of the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage Site.

The meadows alongside the River Avon form an important part of the setting of the World Heritage Site on the eastern side of the city, acting as a green wedge alongside the river that extends to within 2km of the city centre. The meadows are highly visible from many vantage points around the city including the NT owned Little Solsbury Hill and the NT Bath Skyline Walk.

The transfer of ownership of 24.66 hectares of grazing meadows known as Bathampton Meadows to the east of the City of Bath, from Bath & North East Somerset Council to the National Trust will enable the protection of a key part of the green setting of the World Heritage Site, the improvement of this land to become priority habitat forming a key link in the regional nature recovery network and create opportunities for new active transport routes that will connect the city to the countryside (there is already a shared use cycle path on the site).

This land will be managed by our existing countryside team comprising of Countryside Manager, Area Ranger and Ranger. Our current assumption is that the land will continue to be grazed and a modest grazing income and grant income will cover specific costs associated with managing this piece of land. Overhead costs will be absorbed into the running costs of the Bath Portfolio.

We are also actively working in partnership with Bath and North-East Somerset Council, Avon Wildlife Trust and local community groups including the Bathampton Meadows Alliance to develop a future vision for the whole of Bathampton Meadows.

Bathampton Meadows forms a key part of the Bath River Line, a project being developed by Bath and North East Somerset Council to create a continuous, high quality cycling and walking route from Batheaston to Newbridge. The path, verges and green spaces along the Bath River Line will be improved as part of this project.

This project delivers against all three of Bath and North East Somerset Council priorities – Bathampton Meadows is a free to access park and walking and cycling route, improvements to the park and route will benefit all users; it will deliver wellbeing outcomes through increased access to green space and recreation, leisure and active travel opportunities. Finally, the implementation of the Bathampton Meadows project will support volunteering and community involvement.

In March 2019, Bath and North East Somerset Council declared a Climate Emergency and have developed a priority action plan to address the crisis. Included in the action plan are commitments to develop the business case for the Bath River Line and east of Bath cycle route and to deliver a Nature Recovery Network through landscape-scale projects. The asset transfer supports both commitments, as well as wider strategies around green infrastructure, parks & greenspaces, public health, planning and flooding. A list of the relevant council policies can be found in Annex F.

Our vision

- The Trust will improve the access to the Meadows. We will work with local community groups and other charities such as Avon Wildlife Trust to develop a shared vision for Bathampton Meadows. Local people have already told us they want to improve the “green corridor” connecting the city to the countryside with a network of walking and cycling routes. We’ll work with partners at the West of England Nature Partnership and B&NES Council’s “Bath Riverline” project to provide more access through the meadows. Here at the National Trust, we want everyone to have the chance to get out easily into natural spaces.
- We’ll engage the local community in volunteering opportunities on the Meadows. Work parties to help develop and manage the meadows will compliment an expansion of our existing community programming in the city to incorporate the Meadows in guided walks and talks and nature events.
- We’ll develop the ecological value of the Meadows. We want to breathe new life into the river setting and make sure that the meadows provide the best home for nature in the future. We’ll transform the farmland to become Priority Habitat with wildflower meadows, ponds, new hedges and trees to replace those lost in the landscape. Lowland meadows underwent a huge decline in the second half of the twentieth century and the restoration of the meadows would see a return of former species such as yellow rattle, meadow cranesbill, common knapweed and field scabious. With new native wild grass and wildflower seed added nature will move in, there should be an increase in the types of invertebrates that will live here as the grass grows and cattle grazing is re-introduced, providing excellent habitat and feeding areas for the important greater horseshoe bats. The meadows will be managed extensively to allow nature in as a managed meadow landscape.
- Scattered trees, shallow pools created for insects and even a traditional orchard will sit alongside enhanced and new hedges offering connectivity and shelter for small mammals and birds. Invasive species such as Himalayan balsam will be managed to protect the native species.
- The area will not take on the appearance of a park but will sit in the landscape as a naturalised farmed space in an urban environment offering the relief of nature to those living there. Our interventions in the landscape will be sensitive to the character of the area, enhancing people’s experience as they wander through it.

3. The need and benefits

3.1 The Social Benefits

- *The Community – volunteering and programmes*

This asset transfer to the National Trust will enable enhanced and increased community involvement in Bathampton Meadows. We will work with the local communities, specifically Bathampton and Batheaston, as well as the City of Bath, to increase access, create volunteering opportunities and co-develop a range of community programming initiatives that have been successful elsewhere in the city and throughout the Trust.

The WaterSpace Partnership estimated that volunteers did over 4,500 hours of volunteering last year along the full length of the river. They undertook a wide range of activities, some of those which took place on or near to Bathampton Meadows included; creating wildlife art and poetry trails for the Meadows, Waterblitz citizen science project, various tree planting and pollarding projects, installing new footbridges, seats, picnic tables, litter bins and accessible gates, extending the path from Meadows to Bathampton Mill pub (avoids crossing Mill Lane), regular wildlife surveys, volunteer work days, and bringing in funding to mow grass strip on either side of path (payment to local farmer).

The National Trust have approximately 50 volunteers who regularly support conservation activities on the Bath Skyline. These comprise different groups including Conservation volunteers, dry stone wallers, walk rangers, archaeologists and ecological surveyors. In all they contributed 5,300 hours last year, that's equivalent to £46,216 in kind contribution (at minimum wage). In addition, event volunteers put on a range of community programmes including guided walks, wildflower identification and butterfly spotting events.

We anticipate this project will be an opportunity to grow our volunteering in this community and to work with existing organisations, such as the Bathampton and Batheaston River and Footpath Friends, WaterSpace Partnership and our own volunteers to expand their numbers. We also anticipate expanding our Community Programme, establishing a range of guided walks and events on the Meadows. Current Covid-19 restrictions make it difficult to assess how many of these may be able to take place and what maximum group sizes will be allowed, but we would hope to arrange at least 6 events in the first year. These events would be organised and run by existing internal staff time and expanded volunteer opportunities in this area also, so the additional costs of these events would be minimal.

Conservatively we are estimating establishing an expanded volunteer work group for the Meadows of approximately 6 regular volunteers, occasional volunteers for surveying and additional volunteers for organising and running events and community programmes. Overall, we estimate an additional 1,250 volunteer hours per year, equivalent to £10,900 increase in social benefit through National Trust ownership.

- *Recreation*

This asset transfer to the National Trust will enable enhanced and increased access to the Bathampton Meadows.

To help us calculate the increase in value for recreation the transfer of this asset to the National Trust will bring we have used the Outdoor Recreation Valuation (ORVal) tool. The system was developed by the University of Exeter supported by DEFRA. This system

uses the theory of welfare economics and is Green Book compliant. ORVal's key function are: 1) It allows users to explore the visitation and welfare values that are generated by currently accessible greenspaces. Welfare values can be viewed at individual site level or aggregated by regions, 2) It allows users to estimate how visitation and welfare values might change if the characteristics of a recreational greenspace were changed, and 3) It allows users to draw new recreation sites on the map, define their characteristics and estimate the visitation and welfare values that might be generated by creating that new greenspace in that particular location. For further information of how ORVal calculates the valuations please see the full User Guide attached as Annex H.

The main area to focus on is the increase in estimated recreational value through National Trust ownership. The ORVal tool gives an estimated 48,099 annual visits currently to a limited area of the meadows, resulting in a current baseline recreational value of £60,780. With improved recreational facilities over the whole of the meadows ORVal estimates 13,321 new additional visits (i.e. are not just visits that would have been made to nearby or neighbouring green spaces) increasing the recreation value to 152,014 p.a. Overall, we estimate an additional 13,321 visits per year over a wider area than currently, equivalent to £91,234 increase in recreational benefit through National Trust ownership.

By working with partners to develop the vision for the whole of Bathampton Meadows, we will also look for opportunities to develop new active travel routes to encourage communities to use alternatives to car travel. There will also be added benefits of using this land to provide access/views into other land, for example, Avon Wildlife Trust have a reserve which is the triangle of land adjacent to the meadows on the east, there is currently no public access into this reserve (stipulation of Highways ownership) but providing access across Bathampton Meadows will provide views into this site and additional opportunity values.

- *Physical Health and Wellbeing*

When Octavia Hill founded the National Trust in 1895, it was on the simple principle that “the need of air, the sight of sky and things growing” are basic needs that allow us, as human beings, to thrive. The impact of Covid-19 is touching all our lives, in previously unimaginable ways, but the period of lockdown has brought that need for access to nature for health and wellbeing into sharp relief. Our senses seem heightened to the sounds, sights and smells of nature, whether experienced through an open window or at our local park. These simple everyday experiences are not a luxury, but a necessity that we cannot afford to take for granted.

Bathampton Meadows are a vital part of Bath's historic landscape and provide much needed green space for people to take their daily exercise, stop for a moment of reflection or simply escape the hustle and bustle of Bath's city life. Never-before have places like this felt such an important part of our lives and having come under threat of development once already, we recognise the significant loss this would be to the local community and the wildlife which lives there.

Work has been undertaken using the English Natural Capital Accounting (ENCA) Services Databook to give an ecosystem services assessment as to the financial value the land currently contributes in terms of physical health and wellbeing and what this might increase to through National Trust ownership and management, with recreational data input through the ORVal tool. This is a developing science in ecosystem services but the tool above gives current baseline figures that Bathampton Meadows for physical health

value of £3,073 per year. Under NT management we estimate this value increases to £7,689 per year, calculated specifically by the reduced health burden on health services. Overall, we estimate an increase of £4,616 in physical health through National Trust ownership.

The ENCA tool does give option to calculate a valuation for physical wellbeing, and the table at Annex G shows this, but on investigation of how that is contributed we feel this overlaps with the recreation value so have chosen to exclude from our calculations to ensure no double counting.

- *Community support*

This proposal has been strongly supported by Bathampton Meadows Alliance, the Local Authority and Members of Parliament including a pledge that received cross party support in December 2018 to protect the meadows for future generations.

3.2 The Environmental Benefits

- *Biodiversity*

The asset transfer will significantly improve the outcome for nature and ecological value of the meadows as we will manage the land to create Priority Habitat and achieve High Nature Status (HNS). HNS is a measure the National Trust use to assess how well all its land is contributing to wildlife and nature through nature friendly farming, habitat management and species recovery. The Trust has set itself an ambitious target of at least 50% of its land being in HNS by 2025. We would aim for Bathampton Meadows to be meeting HNS within 3-5 years of acquisition.

The meadows offer huge potential to become a place where nature can truly thrive. They are already an important part of the feeding grounds for the greater horseshoe bat colonies of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Special Area of Conservation (15% of the UK's greater horseshoe bats), and with careful management we can create a thriving ecosystem that is rich in beautiful wildflowers in early summer, supporting an ecosystem that thrives on wet grassland. Our work will help piece together and add to the grassland restoration that has been an important part of our ownership in Bath. The Avon Wildlife Trust reserve immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Meadows site will also benefit from improved management of the Meadows and truly embrace and deliver the Lawton principles of Bigger, Better, More and Joined up.

By working with partners to develop the vision for the whole of Bathampton Meadows, we will also look for opportunities to connect habitats as part of a Nature Recovery Network.

- *Air quality and Carbon sequestration – Ecosystem Services*

Work has been undertaken using the ENCA Services Databook to give an ecosystem services assessment as to the financial value the land currently contributes in terms of air pollutant removal and carbon reduction and what this might increase to through National Trust ownership and management. Again, this is a developing science in ecosystem services, but the tool above gives current baseline figures that Bathampton Meadows contributes £345 to air pollutant removal and £1,923 to carbon reduction. Under National Trust ownership and management we intend to make changes in habitat management

resulting in improved carbon sequestration through the soil and taller vegetation, plus increases in hedge and tree planting across the site. Through improved management the tool suggests these figures can increase to £4,232 of air pollutant removal and £6,894 of carbon reduction per year.

Overall, we estimate £3,887 increase in air pollutant removal and £4,971 increase in carbon reduction, total £8,858 through National Trust ownership.

- *Flood regulation*

Over the winter of 2019/2020 the UK suffered major flooding incidents from Storm Ciara, Storm Dennis and a wetter than average winter. Bathampton Meadows flooded several times. In February 2020 during Storm Dennis the meadows were completely submerged, providing excellent natural flood alleviation. An article in Somerset Live had excellent photos and quotes reporting that the land “saved” Bath from flooding and one individual being quoted as saying: “good to see Bathampton Meadows doing its stuff to prevent central Bath being deluged”, see link <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/in-your-area/storm-dennis-bath-national-trust-3861496>

Protection of the Meadows by the National Trust will see the meadows continue to provide that natural flood alleviation so crucial for the protection of Bath, and using our knowledge of other natural flood projects elsewhere in Somerset and Gloucestershire will look to improve the flood management capability measures of the meadows.

Continuing the work on ENCA there are standard figures for floodplain woodland and inland wetlands (peat bogs) but none for floodplain grassland. We will continue to investigate this area, but conservatively taking the lower of the figures (the woodland figure rather than the peat bogs), estimates that the meadows current baseline figure contribute £17,912 per year in flood regulation. We have taken the conservative view that although changes in land management will have some beneficial increase in flood regulation, as the meadows are already providing excellent flood regulation there will be no significant increase in the financial figures for flood regulation under NT ownership.

3.3 The Economic Benefits

Alongside the social and environmental benefits there will also be economic benefits, although acknowledging that these are not the primary driver for NT ownership. We will aim to maximise all possible grant income from agri-env schemes to help towards future management, maintenance and improvements.

We will also aim to optimise rental income from the grazing, providing valuable and useful grazing land for a local tenant/graziers business. Section 11 shows all the expected financial income.

We will aim to work with our tenant/grazier to support their business further in terms of local food production marketing and farm visit opportunities. Continuing our work on the ENCA tool estimates a current baseline figure of £4,218 contribution from food. Whilst we expect the changes in land management will have some beneficial increase in food quality and the expected improvements in food marketing will also increase contribution from food, as the number of livestock on the meadows is likely to reduce we have taken the conservative view that there will be no significant increase in the financial figures for contribution from food under NT ownership.

The management of the meadows will be undertaken by our existing countryside management team. This will provide additional job security to that team equivalent to approximately 0.2 FTE. Alongside the land will provide fantastic volunteering opportunities for local community to help in the management of the meadows.

Summary of the Benefits Valuation

The ORVal/ENCA work (full spreadsheet is attached as annex G) shows the increase in value of all ecosystem services through the ownership and enhanced management of the National Trust. The table below shows the increase from a current baseline figure of £88,251 to £192,959 per year, therefore an overall increase of £104,708 per year. The table below only shows ecosystem services value so doesn't include the additional £10,900 per year of volunteer time which would give a total increase of £115,608 per year.

Service	Estimated annual value under current management	Estimated annual value under NT management	Increase in annual value under NT management
Food	£4,218	£4,218	£0
Air pollutant removal	£345	£4,232	£3,887
Carbon reduction	£1,923	£6,894	£4,971
Flood regulation	£17,912	£17,912	£0
Recreation	£60,780	£152,014	£91,234
Physical health benefits	£3,073	£7,689	£4,616
Total annual value	£88,251	£192,959	£104,708
Net present value (30 years)	£1,843,437	£4,131,640	£2,288,203

The Net Present Value is discounted each year, so that benefits in year one are worth more than benefits in 10 years time, which are worth more than benefits in 30 years, the exception being carbon, as the price of carbon is set to increase a lot in the next 20 or 30 years. We have used 30 years as this is a standard long-term investment timeframe used in property / land acquisitions. There is certainly an argument that we could have chosen to use a longer timeframe given the long-term investment view of the NT, “for everyone, forever”, but 30 years is standard. **The above therefore shows an overall increase in contribution from ecosystem services through National Trust ownership and management, discounted and taken over standard 30 years of £2,288,203.**

Balanced against the current valuation we believe the asset transfer of this land to the National Trust represents excellent “value for money” for BANES on social, environmental and economic grounds. Whilst we accept that some of the ecosystem services and

community programmes listed above may not be established immediately and so some of the financial benefits won't be immediately realised, this is a long-term investment which will result in increased benefits over time. The National Trust has a proven track record in safeguarding land for future generations to enjoy and improving public and environmental benefits from land. We have the unique ability to declare land inalienable preventing it from being sold. Our ownership will directly add to public amenity and the health and wellbeing of the local community, for everyone, forever.

4. Impact of the activities

What did you do?	What happened as a direct result of the activity?	What longer term change occurred as a result?	What big picture change has happened?
Social impacts			
Improved access to the Meadows.	Increase in visitor numbers to the Meadows.	Increase in use of the meadows for recreation and physical wellbeing.	Improvements to physical health and wellbeing.
Consultation with community around future management of Bathampton Meadows.	Vision developed for the Meadows with strong community support to achieve positive outcomes for people, natural and historic environment, climate.	Outcomes achieved through National Trust management of green space.	Meadows secured as a much loved, used and cherished part of the green setting of the City of Bath World Heritage Site.
Expanded volunteer groups and organised community programme of events.	Increased community involvement through volunteer activity and events.	Greater appreciation and involvement with the Meadows by local communities.	Increased input and feeling of ownership of the meadows, together with improved health and wellbeing.
Environmental impacts			
Increased the ecological value of the Meadows through improved and enhanced management.	Land improved in ecological achieving Priority Habitat and High Nature Status on the land.	Long term change in land management delivers sustainable future for nature.	This land connects to other high nature status land and priority habitats to deliver the nature recovery network.
Improved air quality and carbon sequestration through improved habitat management and tree planting.	Air pollutant removal and carbon sequestration rates increased	Long term change in land management delivers sustainable future for the environment	Long term improvements to support carbon sequestration to address the climate emergency.
Improved management maintaining (and in	At a minimum maintaining (and over time improving)	Maintaining (and over time increasing) water	Contributes to flood protection of the city of Bath.

longer term improving) flood regulation.	flood regulation of the land.	holding capacity on the meadows providing flood regulation to the city of Bath.	
Economic impacts			
This transfer will support active transport routes, wellbeing and the creation of a natural environment that benefits the local community and makes Bath and North East Somerset an even better place to live, work and visit.	More people enjoying the meadows	Greater connectivity from the city to the countryside to the east of Bath and awareness of the meadows.	Further cements Bath as a 'demonstration par excellence of the integration of architecture, urban design and landscape setting, and the deliberate creation of a beautiful city.' (Statement of Outstanding Universal Value)

5. Project resources

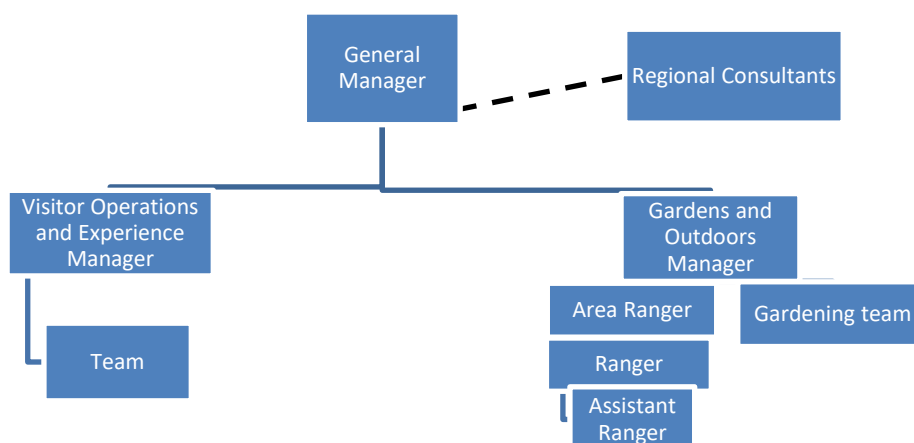
Staffing and volunteer resources

- Within the Bath Portfolio, this property will be supported by five key members of staff – General Manager, Gardens and Outdoors Manager, Area Ranger, Ranger and Visitor Operations and Experience Manager. We will also have support from our Regional Consultancy and National Whole Trust teams including our Estate Manager, Nature Conservation Adviser, Land Use and Farming Adviser, Cultural Heritage Curator, Archaeologist, Planning Adviser, Experiences and Partnerships Consultant, Volunteer and Participation Consultant, Fundraising Consultants and our Finance Business Partner, Operational Risk Business Partner and People Business Partner.
- We have approximately 50 volunteers who regularly support conservation activities on the Bath Skyline including: conservation work parties, walk rangers, archaeologists, dry stone wallers and ecological surveyors. We anticipate this project will be an opportunity to grow our volunteering in this community and to work with existing organisations, such as the Bathampton and Batheaston River and Footpath Friends.
- All National Trust staff have a full induction and have to comply with our National Trust rulebook which includes our responsibilities for safeguarding, equalities and health and safety

Management and supervision resources

This property will be managed by the Bath Portfolio using our existing staff and staff structure as illustrated on the following diagram. It will be supported by our team of regional consultants.

Responsibility and accountability for this property will rest with our General Manager who oversees the financial resources of the portfolio (operating turnover c. £2.8 million) though day to day expenditure will be managed by our Gardens and Outdoors Manager who manages delegated budgets of c. £120k.



Partnership working and stakeholders

We have held initial discussions with Bath and North East Somerset Council, Avon Wildlife Trust and Bathampton Meadows Alliance to develop a draft vision for the area (see Annex B). We plan to continue working with these partners to develop and deliver this vision. We are also a key partner in the Bathscape Partnership which will continue for the life of this business plan and might incorporate Bathampton Meadows into its activities. We are also a member of the West of England Nature Partnership and through this will ensure that the meadows form a key part of the nature recovery network.

6. Managing the land

We will manage the land in accordance with our approach to managing the Bath Skyline as a whole. Specific planning elements of this will involve:

- Incorporating the land into our Estate Management Plan
- Creating a Site Management Plan for Bathampton Meadows
- Developing a visitor site risk assessment for Bathampton Meadows
- Carrying out risk assessments for any activities at Bathampton Meadows
- Incorporating Bathampton Meadows into our Emergency Plan and Procedures for the Bath Skyline
- Ensuring our existing insurance policies will extend to include Bathampton Meadows

- Incorporating Bathampton Meadows into our Compliance Tracker to ensure all legal responsibilities and requirements are met as part of our annual cycle of work (e.g. tree surveys)

Actual practical management for the site will include:

- Regular maintenance carried out by Rangers and volunteers
- Habitat improvement by staff and volunteers including tree planting, wildflower seed sowing, hedge gapping and planting, pond creation, all as proposed through the management plan drawn up with the local community
- Volunteer recruitment and community programmes of events, such as dawn chorus walks, wildflower identification and other nature events
- Toolbox talks with volunteers prior to any practical conservation sessions

Training for our staff and volunteers is primarily provided internally through specific training courses, mentoring, on the job learning and e-learning, and training needs are identified through our personal development plans. Some accredited training is provided externally, and we have an annual training budget for the portfolio to ensure we have the right level of skills and expertise to manage our land effectively. We have allowed for regular maintenance in our budget including to paths and fences and this will be managed by our ranger team.

We manage over 200 hectares of countryside in and around the City of Bath and c. 250,000 hectares of land nationally, and we will be applying our organisational experience to ensure that the management of Bathampton Meadows will follow best practice.

7. Equalities, accessibility and diversity

The National Trust is committed to developing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all that it does, and to developing and promoting inclusive access solutions that are creative and sensitive to the surroundings. The Trust has developed a full “Diversity and Inclusion Statement” which is attached for reference. In essence, to ensure we embrace the requirements of the Equality Act (2010), we aim to:

- Promote access for everyone by working to ensure that our properties, services and workplaces are accessible to all sections of society.
- Promote inclusion and equality of opportunity in the workplace and across all our activities.
- Provide opportunities for individuals and community groups from diverse backgrounds to engage and participate in all aspects of what we do.
- Engage in activities that support and promote the diversity of local communities and reflect our shared multicultural heritage.
- Raise awareness of the Trust’s core purpose and its relevance to all members of society.
- Break down barriers that prevent engagement by sections of society, whether physical, sensory, intellectual, cultural, social or economic, especially for under-represented, excluded or disadvantaged groups.
- Use data to measure our progress and work with external organisations to monitor standards and deliver sustainable benefits.

Accessibility at Bathampton Meadows

As 24.66 hectares of grazing meadows there is currently significant access to the riverside area along the surfaced cycle path which wheelchair users may use, at their own risk. This path is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is free of charge. Access to the remainder of the meadows is currently not possible due to lack of any paths or access gates. There are benches alongside the cycle path beside the river. The National Trust will work with partners to develop a vision for the Meadows which will look to increase and improve access to currently inaccessible areas, in line with conservation principles. The car park at Batheaston provides car parking for access to the Meadows via an accessible foot/cycle bridge over the river, the bridge only opened in 2016. The car park comprises 32 hard-standing spaces on flat, even and tarmacked surface. Of the 32 hard-standing spaces, 3 space are allocated as wider spaces for disabled people. The car park includes a toilet block with an accessible WC and a baby changing table. The car park and toilets are currently owned and managed by BANES. Parking is free up to a 3 hour maximum stay.

Information on Bathampton Meadows currently comprises interpretation boards on site managed by the Bathampton and Batheaston River and Footpath Friends group. At present there is limited online information and no pre-recorded audio interpretation at the property. New services will be designed to accommodate disabled people in line with Building Regulation Approved Document Part M and British Standard 8300:2010.

8. Project delivery

Following the transition of ownership from Bath and North East Somerset, we will undertake consultation with partner organisations and the local community to develop the vision for Bathampton Meadows in the future. This may extend to land beyond the area currently owned by the council, but any larger project will be resourced separately.

We are working closely with B&NES Environment Design team, who are leading the development of the Bath River Line, a high quality route that runs from Batheaston to Newbridge along the River Avon.

Key milestones

- Winter 2020/21 – announce asset transfer
- Spring 2021 – community consultation and engagement to develop the vision and produce a Management Plan for Bathampton Meadows
- Spring 2021 – B&NES Council submit the Bath River Line Full Business Case to include assessments of the ecology, footfall, economic potential and use of the Bath River Line
- Summer 2021 – launch Management Plan
- Summer 2021 – establish volunteer group to undertake maintenance and improvement works
- September 2021 – Bath Walking Festival, opportunity to run pilot walks through the meadows
- Winter 2021/22 – Begin habitat improvement works to the Meadows to include hedgerow restoration and tree planting
- Winter 2021/22 – Develop increased access routes on the Meadows including community programme of events.
- Spring 2022 – Continue habitat improvement works to include wildflower seed sowing.

9. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks

How will we measure and track progress?

- We will monitor usage of Bathampton Meadows through gate counters
- We will measure visitor engagement via surveys / consultations
- We will measure progress towards high nature status using the expertise of our internal staff

How will you plan to monitor the long-term impact of your project?

We will continue to monitor access, visitor engagement and the nature value of the site. We have a rolling three year business plan for the Bath Portfolio and this will identify future opportunities and threats in relation to our land management, and plan to ensure we have the resources to look after our places forever for everyone.

10. Risks analysis

Risk	Mitigation
Range of different views about how the land should be managed, reputational risk if some disagree with our decisions.	Work in partnership and with the local community to explore all future options. Clear rationale behind decisions allied to our core purpose and strategy.
Costs associated with maintenance are higher than current estimates.	As a countryside site the liabilities are relatively small and any major investment (such as upgrading the cycle track) might be eligible for grant funding. There is already a dedicated local volunteer group supporting the maintenance of the land between the cycle track and the river and we would continue to work with and support this team.
Flooding and consequent damage caused.	Manage the land according to flood risk identifying areas of vulnerability and adopt strategies as appropriate.

11. Project costs

Income (£)	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Start-up funding	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grants (BPS, CS, ELMS)	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Rental (Grazing)	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,900	3,900
Other income	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Volunteer time in kind	10,900	11,227	11,564	11,910	12,268
Fundraising	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Income (£)	19,500	19,827	20,164	20,810	21,168

Expenditure (£)	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Salaries (direct additional staff costs)	3,500	3,605	3,713	3,825	3,939
Staff time (existing internal staff in kind - ecological surveying, advice, mgmt. plan preparation and community engagement)	10,000	10,300	10,609	10,927	11,255
Training and development	500	515	530	546	563
Utilities	200	206	212	219	225
Repairs and maintenance	3,850	3,966	4,084	4,207	4,333
Other	500	515	530	546	563
Total Expenditure (£)	18,550	19,107	19,678	20,270	20,878

12. Examples of previous National Trust acquisitions

12.1 Bath Skyline

The Bath skyline provides an important green backdrop to the setting of the City of Bath and its World Heritage Site status. In 1959 part of the skyline was secured in perpetuity by the Trust when it was left Rainbow Wood Farm on Claverton Down. Further generous gifts from the Mallett family added more open country such that by the early 1980's 360 acres were secured. In 1983 126 acres of even more strategically important land, extending north from Widcombe Hill to Bathwick Wood giving a coherent and outstanding landscape feature when viewed from the city was put up for sale. The National Trust launched a funding appeal to raise £220,000 to acquire this important land. The appeal was successful with generous donations from the local community and also a substantial donation of £100,000 from Bath City Council itself, with the land being secured in 1984.

Since its acquisition the Trust have undertaken a range of work to increase the social benefits provided by the land. These include public access improvements by upgrading paths, creating new routes and providing a well used and loved woodland play area, to the extent that the Bath Skyline Walk leaflet is the most downloaded walk from the National Trust website. The Trust also continued to improve the nature conservation value of the land and has established a volunteer group of approximately 50 volunteers who regularly undertake conservation activities on the Bath Skyline. These comprise different groups including Conservation volunteers, dry stone wallers, walk rangers, archaeologists and ecological surveyors. In all they contributed 5,300 hours last year, that's equivalent to £46,216 in kind contribution (at minimum wage). In addition, event volunteers put on a range of community programmes including guided walks, wildflower identification and butterfly spotting events. The Bath Skyline is a great example of what the Trust can achieve to improve social and environmental benefits that can be delivered by land in its ownership and the transfer of Bathampton Meadows will add to this work in the City.

12.2 Watermeads, Morden Hall Park

Watermeads was a project on an area of land in the Wandle Valley south of Morden in South London. The land itself was one of the NT's earlier acquisitions, with Octavia herself acquiring it on behalf of her sister (c.1910) before gifting it to the Trust. The project was stimulated / funded by a variety of grant bodies – the London Mayor's Big Green Fund, Biffa & Viridor grants – and, interestingly with potential particular relevance to Bathampton Meadows, the whole fundraising exercise was coordinated through a body called the Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust: Fundraising Working Group.

The project itself was a mix of nature and access delivery, involving the development of a Conservation Management Plan, habitat mapping, creation of a nature reserve, and the building of boardwalks and bridges through, essentially, water meadows. It was delivered through a vehicle called the Living Wandle Partnership, with the NT as the lead, and completed in 2015.

This is a good example of what the National Trust can deliver in urban or peri-urban settings, and in partnership with others. Further information is available on: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/morden-hall-park/features/the-watermeads-at-morden-hall-park> Further details can be supplied if required.

Annexes

- A. List of supporting documents
- B. Draft vision for Bath Riverline East
- C. Extract from Historic Character Area Appraisal, by Peter Davenport, commissioned by Bathampton Meadows Alliance
- D. Ecological Assessment, Simon Ford, Wildlife and Countryside Adviser, National Trust
- E. Maps and photographs
- F. Relevant Bath and North East Somerset Council Policies and Strategies
- G. Ecosystem services calculations based on DEFRA's English Natural Capital Accounting (ENCA) Services Databook from February 2020.
- H. ORVal User Guide

Annex A – List of supporting documents

- Governance Handbook
- Public Liability Insurance
- Employer's Liability Insurance
- Annual Report 2018-2019 (includes within it the Governance Structure)
- Diversity and Inclusion Statement
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Other policy documents from the National Trust are available on request.

Annex B – Draft vision for Bath Riverline East

An ambitious project that will secure the future of the green and blue corridor from Bathampton Meadows through to Kensington Meadows for the benefit of people, nature and the climate.

Bath and North East Somerset, the Avon Wildlife Trust and the National Trust have come together as partners to work with the local community to establish a vision for this stretch of land that covers 65 hectares to the east of the City of Bath.

The vision is to establish ownership and management of this area of land to:

- Protect the green setting of the City of Bath World Heritage Site from the risk of future development;
- Manage the land to increase biodiversity and form a key part of the nature recovery network;
- Through this, maximise opportunities for carbon sequestration as part of our response to the climate emergency;
- Develop new active transport routes to encourage carbon free methods of transport with associated health benefits.

In developing this vision, the following principles for future management were agreed by the partners. The project will:

- Improve outcomes for nature
- Extend public access through the development of new routes, maximising value to the community and enabling educational visits
- Provide visual access to the Avon Wildlife Trust reserve – e.g. through development of hides
- Work with all local stakeholders to develop the detailed vision and management plans for the sites
- Extensive grazing as a core element of land management
- Maximise potential for flood mitigation
- Explore potential for future tree planting, but not look to establish large areas of new woodland

Annex C – Extract from Historic Character Area Appraisal, by Peter Davenport, commissioned by Bathampton Meadows Alliance

The council owned section of the meadows

This is the core of the meadows as most people probably see them. This is because they are the largest section easily visible and accessible. Before the railway this formed one managed agricultural landscape. These are ancient meadows, for a period in the 18th and into the 19th century, managed water meadows. Traces of the water management system and what appear to be managed spring-fed streams are visible but have not been mapped or studied. They seem to include canalised streams draining into the Avon, often dry in the summer.

The whole area of the meadows was clearly enclosed by parliamentary agreement. This can be deduced from the field pattern on the 1848 Tithe Map, although I have found no documentary evidence. This enclosure took place after 1750 when the area was mapped on the Ralph Allen estate map and before 1848. This is the heyday of parliamentary enclosure. The present fragmentary field boundaries are clearly the remnants of the enclosure process and pre-date the railway (late 1830s). The fields were essentially unchanged when mapped in 1884, but by then the canal and railways had cut across them. This part of the canal was constructed in 1804.

East of Mill Lane the land is managed pasture. There is now a wide surfaced cycle path along the river side from the new bridge over the river at Stambbridge turning along Mill Lane just north of the track and footpath to Grosvenor. This has a stock-proof fence separating it from the rest of the meadows. The south-eastern corner has been turned into the AWT nature reserve (Area 8).

This is part of the historic meadow and pasture of Bathampton Parish, the settlement (tun) at the ham or “meadow in the river bend”. Grosvenor Bridge marks the western end of the parish along the river. The field boundaries, such as remain, are those of the enclosure which clearly pre-dated the canal and presumably took place in the later 18th century. The tithe map shows these parcels still largely pasture although some had turned to arable by that date. Such usage had probably begun in the Napoleonic Wars and was probably ended with the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846. There is thus an historic significance in the “fabric” of the meadows, the physical evidence of their past uses.

They also form the largest part of the green tongue, the open space forming an important part of the setting of the World Heritage Site of Bath. It also forms the local core of the surrounding hills of the Cotswold AONB. This is an important recreational space for the people of the surrounding communities especially as a corridor for walking into and out of town or as a circular route across the canal and river linking both sides of the latter.

The main significance is as a lightly wooded pastoral (grassland) landscape with historic boundaries (hedgerows) and access routes (footpaths) separating the three villages and providing a green wedge into the eastern edge of Bath.

Annex D – Ecological Assessment, Simon Ford, Wildlife and Countryside Adviser, National Trust

Summary:

Mostly situated on the Avon floodplain and underlain by alluvium and clays.

Mix of semi-improved grassland, graded G3 to G4 on the NT Grassland indices (where G1 is most diverse and G4 the least). This area would not meet Priority Habitat at present, but could be moved that way with some intervention. (It would become Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh on lowest areas and Lowland Meadow higher up the slope.

One area composed of 'made up ground' from the bypass creation, which had more calcareous grassland species, presumably from limestone ballast.

Common herbs and grasses include doves-foot cranesbill, birds foot trefoil, sheep's sorrel, with Yorkshire fog, cock's foot, creeping thistle and hogweed. Along the river corridor, ruderal weeds such as nettle, greater willow-herb, curled dock and charlock are common, with a mixture of willow and alder trees. In addition there are some areas of non-native invasive species such as Himalayan balsam on the riverbank.

Much of the land sits very wet in the winter and easily poaches.

A small tributary stream has wetland flora including yellow flag, brooklime, sedges, soft rush and water mint.

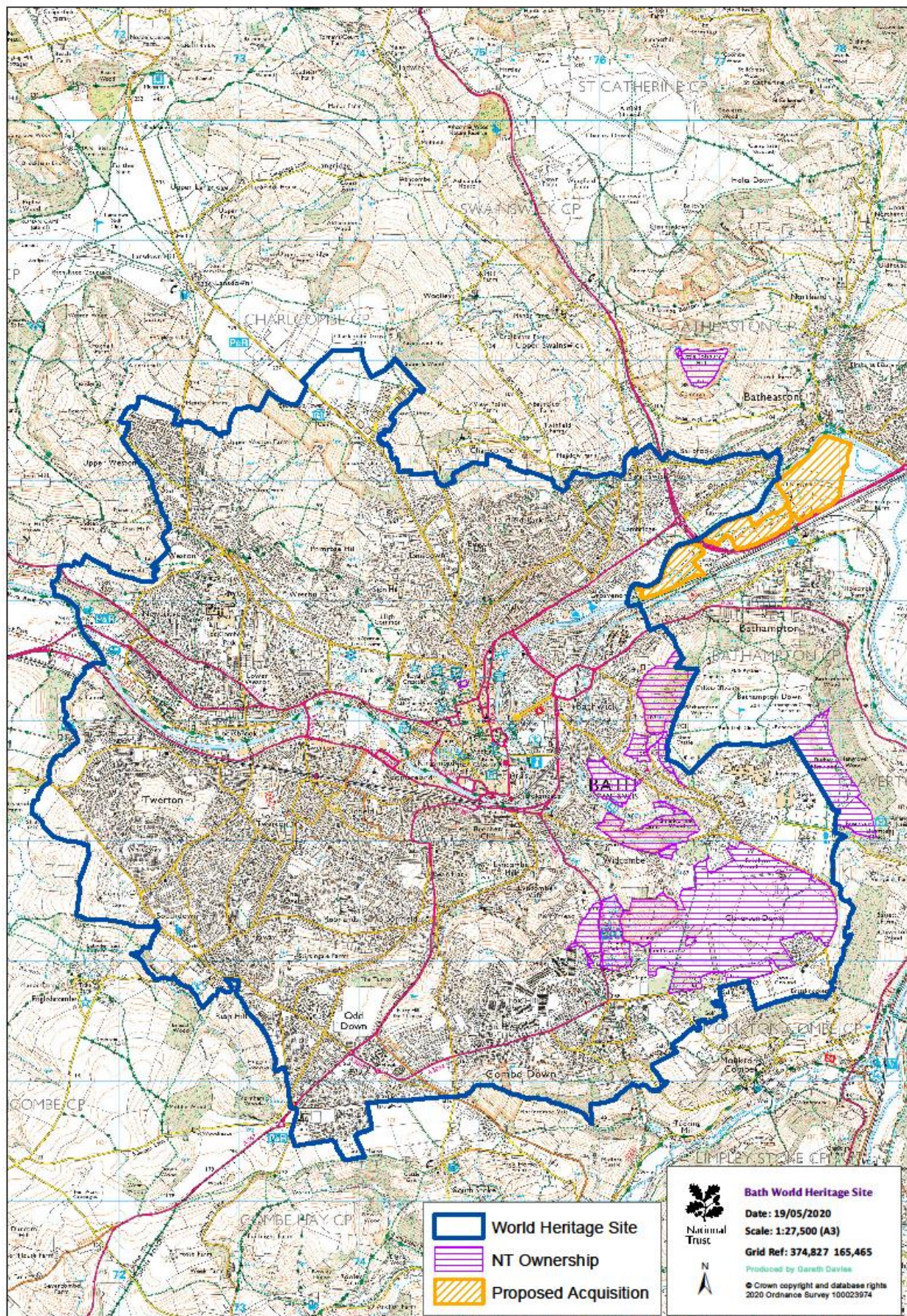
Adjacent to the land is the Bath Bee Research Station in an old orchard.

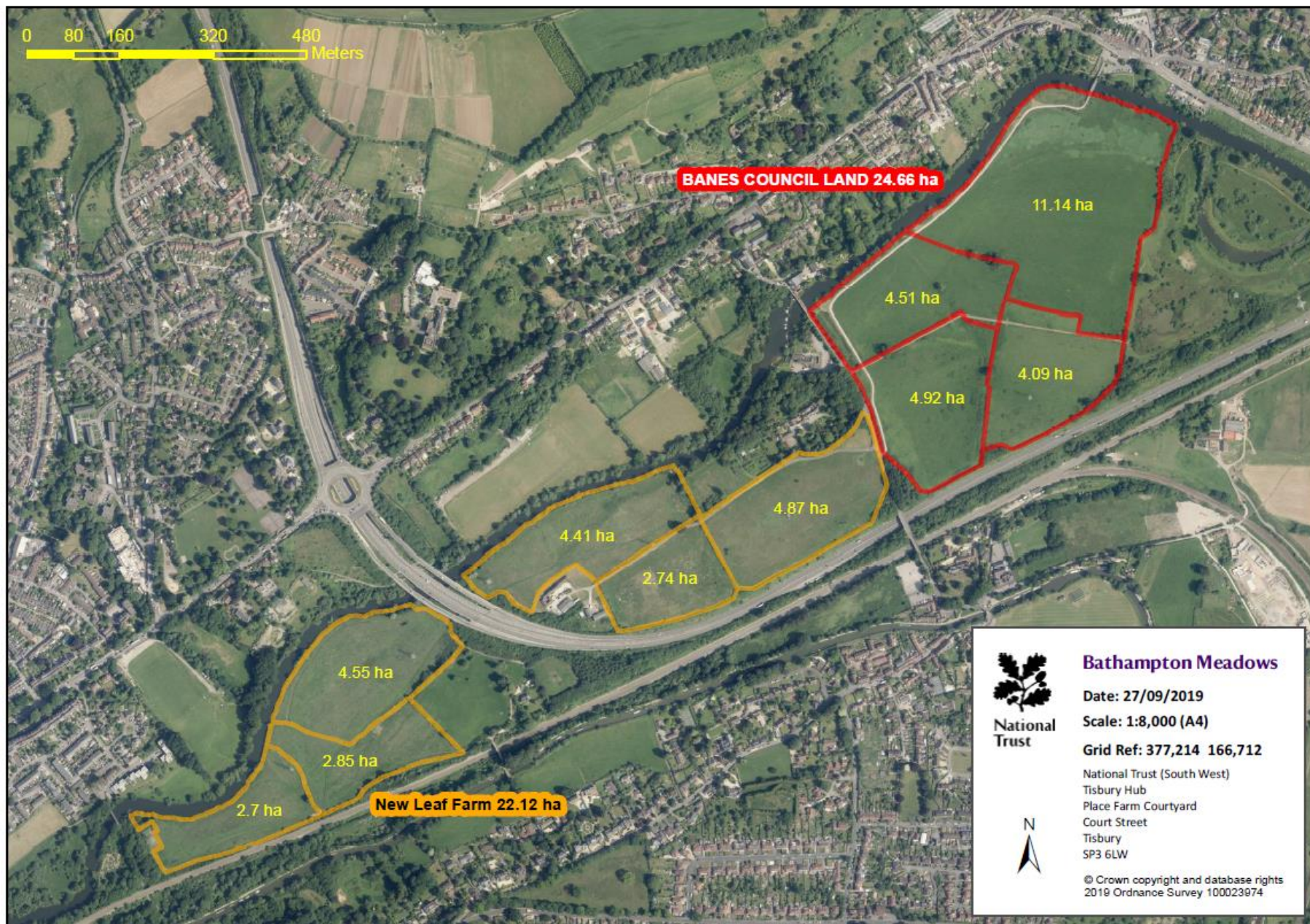
The property is bordered by the bypass and the railway line. It is one of the last undeveloped areas in Bath and creates a green corridor for people and wildlife to link central Bath and the eastern villages near Bathampton.

Management recommendations.

The area would ideally be allowed to be managed following the Trust's LON objectives as either HNS farming or Priority Habitat creation. This might include supplementing the sward, grazing it with summer cattle and if required, winter sheep. Fertilisers would be restricted. Alternatively, hay production is a consideration, along with some small areas of traditional orchard. Hedges would be allowed to develop and become better structured, with occasional standards. Some shallow pools and scrapes would also be very beneficial. Some ongoing control of invasive species along the river corridor would be required. There may be a possibility of additional linkage with land owned by BANES to the east, for which I also have some brief notes.

Annex E – Maps and photographs





View from Little Solsbury Hill (NT) with Bathampton Meadows sitting in the valley

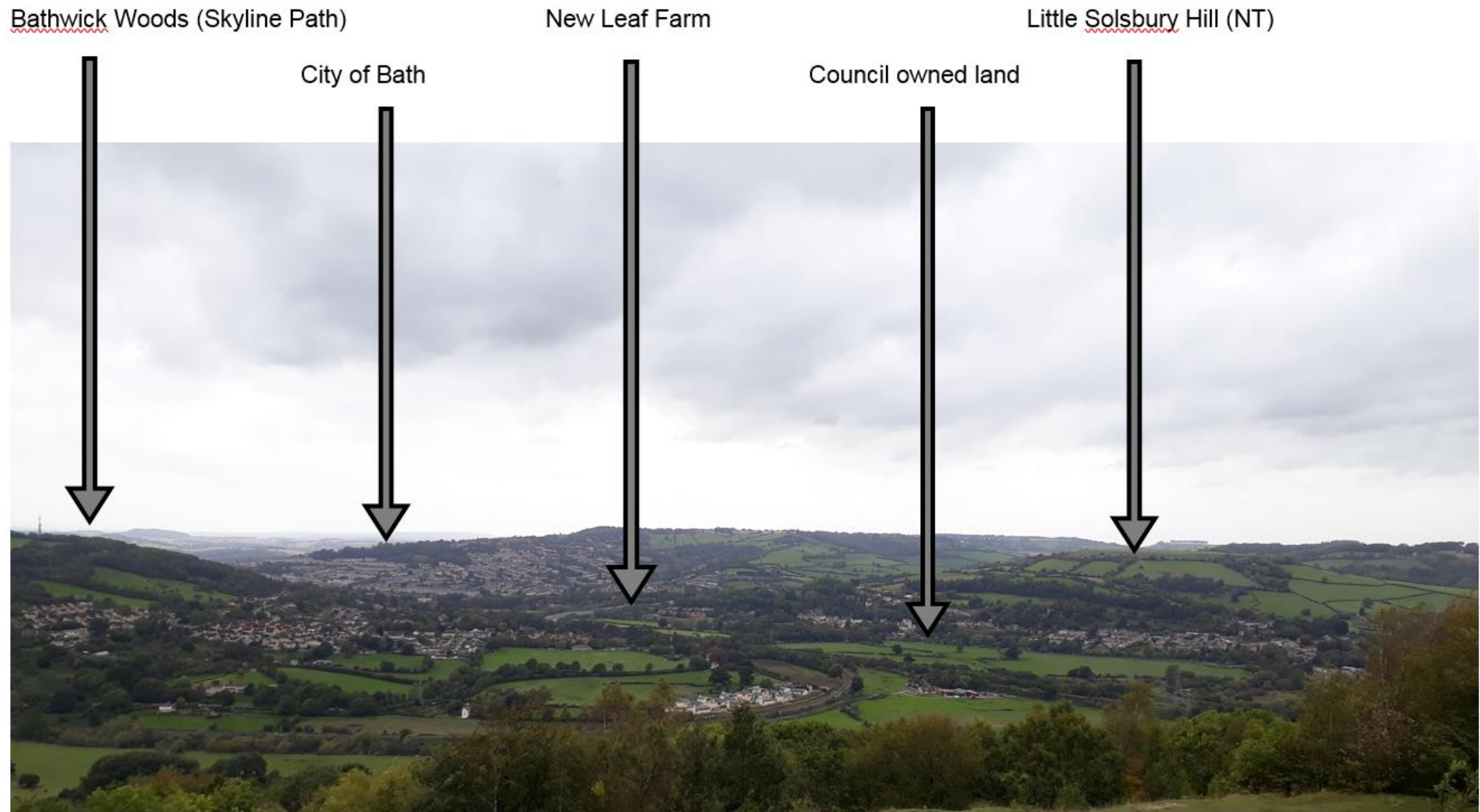
Brown's Folly

Council owned Bathampton Meadows

New Leaf Farm



[View from Brown's Folly towards the City of Bath](#)



View from pedestrian bridge linking Batheaston to Bathampton Meadows, Bathwick Woods in the distance



View from north access point towards Bathampton Down



View east across fields



View from cycle path west towards Bathwick Woods



View of river and meadows beyond from pedestrian bridge



View towards Batheaston



Annex F

Relevant Bath and North East Somerset Council Policies and Strategies

Core Strategy & Placemaking Plan - The Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan identify the River Corridor as a key part of the Green Infrastructure network. The **Local Plan Options** Report (Nov 2018) also identifies the Bath River Line (BRL) as a key Green Infrastructure Project.

The River Avon Corridor is identified as a key concept in the Council's adopted **Green Infrastructure Strategy**.

Getting Around Bath, Transport Strategy - Promotion of walking and cycling are priorities, as are improving the quality of routes. The River Path (known as the Bath River Line) path is noted as an important car free route.

B&NES Council Priorities – In terms of the three priorities for the council, this project delivers against all of these – Bathampton Meadows is a free to access park and walking and cycling route, improvements to the park and route will benefit all users; the Bath River Line will deliver wellbeing outcomes through increased access to green space and recreation, leisure and active travel opportunities. Finally the implementation of Bathampton Meadows project will support volunteering and community involvement.

The scheme also relates directly to a number of elements contained in the **B&NES Public Realm and Movement Strategy**.

Furthermore, the scheme ties into the wider ambitions for the region, as identified by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) including the Joint Transport Plan and West of England Green Infrastructure Strategy.