A photograph of three people sitting outdoors in front of a stone building with arches. On the left, a woman wears a dark purple headwrap with a white and orange band and a red and black patterned jacket. In the center, a person wears a purple long-sleeved shirt and a Roman-style helmet with a large blonde feather plume. On the right, a man wears a red velvet cap and a red cloak over a grey scarf, holding a sword with a wooden hilt. All three are smiling and looking towards each other.

Heritage Services Business Plan 26-31 Early-Stage Briefing

Vision

This statement informs all of our work. It is the guiding principal by which we seek to bring benefit to the world:

Learn from the past,
understand the present,
shape the future

We have three overarching priorities that this Strategy will deliver on:

1.

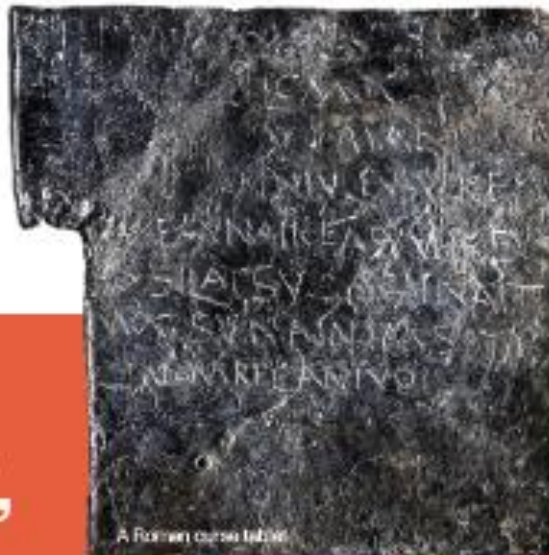
Return the service to its pre-Covid profitability

2.

Move the Fashion Museum

3.

Achieve Net Zero by 2030



Strategic Priorities

1.

To provide maximum access to our buildings, monuments and collections to as wide an audience as possible to facilitate learning, understanding and emotional connection

2.

To be a supporter focussed organisation

3.

Maximise income

4.

To operate efficiently and effectively as an organisation

5.

To bring benefit to Bath, the South West and the UK

6.

To act as an environmentally sustainable and responsible organisation in everything we do



Cover (clockwise from top left): The Roman Baths by torchlight, The Fashion Museum Collection, Bath Record Office and The Victoria Art Gallery.

B&NES Heritage Services:

- The Roman Baths
- The Victoria Art Gallery
- Bath Record Office
- World Heritage Centre
- Clore Learning Centre
- What will be the world's best Fashion Museum



- Heritage Services is a redistributive tourism business – the money from tourists is, unusually, not concentrated in a private company or charity but fed directly back to the community in which the tourism occurs
- Beyond this we also deliver social value activities which align with key Council policies rather than just supporting them through funding

A photograph of the Roman Baths in Bath, UK, at dusk. The scene features a large, rectangular stone pool in the foreground, reflecting the warm interior lights of the surrounding colonnade. The colonnade is composed of tall, classical columns supporting a roof with a decorative balustrade. Several people are visible walking around the pool. In the background, a building with a blue roof and statues on its facade is visible against the twilight sky. A purple semi-transparent overlay is on the left side of the image.

2025/26

2025/26: Challenging Sector wide conditions met with cost saving and entrepreneurship

Heritage Services will return an approx £11.8m surplus in 25/26 (6% up on 24/25)

This will support the most vulnerable people across BANES

- Delivered the successful Summer Lates programme for the first time
- The Victoria Art Gallery has had an excellent 125th year with 66k visitors ytd
- Developed our social value activity at the Roman Baths including: The Roman Baths Youth Forum, a monthly wellbeing group, social prescribing and key partnerships with Bath Carers Centre, Blind Veterans UK, local universities, and the Council's Resettlement Team. New collaborations included Blind Veterans UK, now a valued partner returning in 2026. Our Free School Meal initiative broadened access and attracted more schools that might not have otherwise visited, strengthening our educational outreach.
- Issued over 60,000 Discovery cards by the end of 2025 since May 2022
- Undertook the Remarkable Books exhibition using the Record Office Collection





Key project information:

- Opening winter 2030
- 250,000 visitor per/year
- The sustainable retrofit of a grade II listed building in central Bath – The Old Post Office (and surrounding public realm)
- Regenerative catalyst to the Milsom Quarter precinct in central Bath by increasing footfall and dwell-time in the area
- Project one of the key B&NES Council investments to deliver sustainable economic growth, tackle deprivation and improve health and wellbeing outcomes



Recent Progress:

- RIBA 3 concluded
- NLHF Development Stage Review passed
- £20m Capital allocation from B&NES
- £1.5m secured from West of England Mayoral Combined Authority
- NLHF Round 1 success - £768k secured
- ACE funding - £20k secured to further digital access to the collection
- 2X Myworld Fellowships
- Prominent inclusion of the project in the West of England Growth Strategy
- Consultation with over 4500 residents
- Dress of the Year 2024 Launched
- Planning and listed building application submitted



FMB Key Dates:

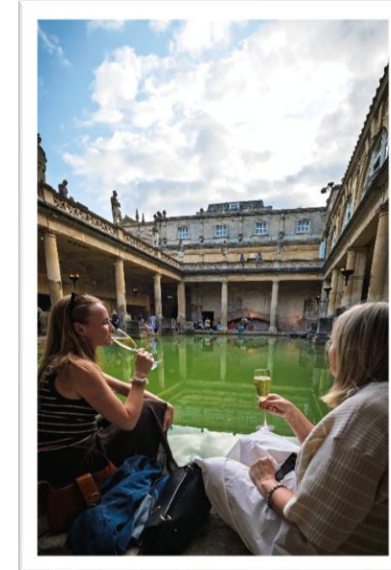
- WEMCA Committee – 30th January
- NLHF Submission – February 2026 (Determined June)
- Planning Determination – May 2026
- RIBA 4 – August 2027
- Procure Contractors – May – September 2027
- Basebuild – September 2027 – May 2029
- Fit Out – May 2029 – October 2030
- Open – Winter 2030



2026/27

2026/27

- £13.269m surplus
- Based on 1.005m visitors at the Roman Baths. Additional 33,000 visitors vs 25/26
- Retail £2.8m turnover
- Historic Venue Hire £703k of hire revenue + £475k of catering commission associated with events.
- Approx £1m of business rates also returned to the Council
- This makes the Roman Baths one of the most commercially successful visitor attractions in the UK



2026/27 Budget

Activity to Drive Visitors

A key part of our strategy for 26/27 is to arrest the trending decline in footfall we've seen over 25/26

This requires investment in key activity areas

Challenges include the cost of living crisis in the UK and the weakness of key international markets including China and the prospect of a softening in demand from the US

- **Domestic Visitors:**
 - **Programming:**
 - We will invest resource in our programmed offer to drive repeat visitation and encourage new visits
 - The Roman Baths is challenging due to its limited space and historic character
 - **Value Products:**
 - There is the opportunity to create products that encourage first-time and repeat visitation.
- **International Visitors:**
 - We have redirected resource to focus on relationship building and marketing with key inbound operators.
 - There will be a renewed focus on key inbound markets including China
- **Fundraising, Marketing and Supporter Development:**
 - We have procured a CRM system provided by 'Good CRM'.
 - We are investing more money in targeted marketing campaigns across domestic and international visitors



- Social Value
 - Introduce a £1 Universal Credit ticket for non-BANES residents
 - Apply for Museum of Sanctuary at the Roman Baths
- Victoria Art Gallery:
 - Continue with the successful exhibition programme incl 'World of the Snowman'
- Research and Collections Care
 - Undertake a 3D scan of the Roman Baths
 - Extensive research into the Roman Baths Collection based on cutting edge science
- Visitor Management + CRM systems
 - Continue systems roll-out to improve business performance
- Environmental Action Plan
 - Focus on: People, Place, Heritage
 - This will include: retail procurement, fabric performance and energy generation opportunities

