



Future Ambition Civic Agreement

A civic agreement between the University of Bath, Bath Spa University, Bath & North East Somerset Council and the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.



Our commitment

On behalf of the University of Bath, Bath Spa University, Bath & North East Somerset Council, and Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, welcome to our Future Ambition Civic Agreement. As large public institutions anchored in our communities, this document is our commitment to working in partnership to support the ambitions of the region.

In our *Future Ambition Civic Agreement* we have deliberately chosen to look to the future. We have often worked together but in recent years we have individually and jointly responded to the collective impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate and ecological emergency, the cost of living crisis, and the inequalities that these challenges have shone a light on.

Our collective responses to these challenges have demonstrated that we can work better together, be more community focused, and that we can do more by consolidating our strengths and jointly supporting initiatives to succeed that are important to our community.

We, as the signatories, put forward this Civic Agreement as a commitment to the people and place of Bath and North East Somerset.

Bath and North East Somerset Council
Kevin Guy,
Leader of Council

Bath Spa University
Professor Sue Rigby,
Vice Chancellor

Royal United Hospitals, Bath
Cara Charles-Barks,
CEO

University of Bath
Professor Ian White,
Vice Chancellor and
President

Being good neighbours

The Student Community Partnership (SCP) is a joint venture between the Universities, Bath College, the various Students' Unions, Norland College and B&NES Council. The SCP supports student residents and permanent residents in living together in our shared city of Bath, and campaigns for neighbourly relations, safety, sustainability, good housing, and other aspects of community awareness.

The partnership helps all residents to work together to benefit the community and offers all residents an active voice. Volunteering activities and active citizenship are organised through the partnership. The SCP also offers support when issues arise as we all live life together, and has introduced new Community Wardens to the city to support residents.



Thanks for moving so quickly as ever. I think that if it wasn't for knowing that you provide such an effective service we would have left Bath some years ago. Living in a student area has both positive and negative impacts - sadly the negative can seem overwhelming on occasion. However, the vast majority (of students) are lovely and very considerate."

Claude Avenue resident



Rapid response

In April 2020, in the midst of the first lockdown, Bath's universities, local volunteers, staff at the Royal United Hospitals and B&NES Council came together to design and make personal protective equipment in the form of gowns, face shields, eye protectors, and "ladders" for face masks.

Staff at the RUH informed the design of the equipment and helped to validate it for its intended use. University staff, community volunteers, the council and local organisations all got involved to produce 400,000 items of PPE which included 4,000 medical gowns stitched on the Sion Hill campus of Bath Spa University, 128,000 face shields produced in the University of Bath labs, and 200,000 eye protectors made by local firm 4Ground using university designs.



Please accept this message of congratulation and of sincere thanks, to you all in all the different projects and activities which you are undertaking at present to help with provision for protection against and treatment of COVID-19 with all it's far flung machinations. This comes to you on behalf of the people of Somerset."

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset



Mobilising our people

Bath is well known for its buildings and history, but it much less well known for the stunning landscape around it and across the wider region. Bathscape is a project which is changing this by supporting landscape conservation, mobilising volunteers, and providing new access routes. The programme is led by B&NES Council, with support from many organisations in the area, including both universities, to include activities such as being on the board, providing placement students, inputting to curriculum work, and student and staff volunteering. For example, students from Bath Spa University have produced social media, podcasts and locative audio experiences in Sydney Gardens and at the Bath Union Workhouse Burial Ground. Students have also engaged in Bathscape placements as part of their degree programmes, assisting with the organisation, marketing, and evaluation of the Bathscape Walking Festival and in regular conservation volunteering activities. Staff have contributed walks and shared and developed research work through Bathscape projects.



Having both universities involved in the Bathscape project has been hugely beneficial, from the rich expertise of the teaching staff to the fresh perspectives of the students. The breadth of how they have been able to support the project is reflected in the student placements we've engaged, who have come from courses ranging from Heritage MA's to Fine Art to Psychology, while we often have students volunteering ad hoc with our walks and conservation activities."

Dan Merrett,
Bathscape Manager



Drawing on our specialisms

The Institute of Coding is a national consortium of educators, employers and outreach organisations that is co-developing new courses to help a larger and more diverse group of learners into digital careers. The University of Bath leads the consortium and collaborates with Bath Spa University (BSU) to deliver free 12-week bootcamps funded by the Department for Education in Web Development and Creative Computing to re-skill adults and support them to find employment in these fields in partnership with Gradcore.

BSU, in partnership with Bath College, TechSPARK and The Bath Digital Festival has delivered Digital Marketing bootcamps funded by West of England Combined Authority to re-skill adults in the region to help them start their careers in digital marketing or grow their own small businesses using the skills acquired.



One of Bath College's strategic objectives is to seek collaborations and partnerships that benefit learners locally and regionally. The work we have been engaging in with Bath Spa University and the Institute of Coding has been a vital part of this journey and has enriched and extended the impact we have on our community of adult learners as well as promoting skills acquisition in some of the high priority sectors in the West of England."

Principal & Chief Executive of Bath College



Institute of Coding

Our organisations

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Bath and North East Somerset Council is the authority for the district of Bath and North East Somerset in Somerset, England. The council's purpose is Improving People's Lives and our recently-adopted Corporate Strategy sets our approach for delivering this to 2027, engaging with local communities and working with our partners towards a resilient, sustainable economy that is fair, green, creative and connected. We aim to provide an extensive and meaningful programme of community engagement and have a Community Engagement Charter that sets out how we achieve this. We work with our community partners to develop reciprocal expectations, ensuring that we provide a genuine opportunity to work in partnership with the local community. We also run a Connecting Communities programme which is designed to help public services, community organisations and residents work together to identify and address areas of concern in our local communities.

Bath Spa University

Bath Spa University currently holds 2023/24 Sunday Times Inclusive University of Year Award, is one of five Adobe Creative Campuses in the UK, and one of five Gold Mark Universities for Social Enterprise. It is ranked 18th amongst British Universities for Sustainability and is nationally leading as a provider of educational training, both for teachers via its School of Education or for vocational reskilling and upskilling through its Short Course Unit. The University is currently developing a vibrant campus at BSU London. Driven by a dedication to creative professionalism, Bath Spa's core values of 'curiosity, creativity, and confidence' underpin deep commitments to inclusive practice, sustainability, and equity'. We believe in the application of vision, harnessing all aspects of education to transform community locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. We co-create learning and teaching, research and innovation for this purpose.

Royal United Hospitals, Bath

At the RUH we aim to put people at the heart of what we do, striving to create an environment where everyone matters. Everyone means the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community. We are particularly motivated to understand and help address health inequalities and the many wider determinants of health and wellbeing within our shared place. We also work closely with other health and care organisations as members of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care System. We believe that by working together we can build one of the healthiest places to live and work.

University of Bath

The University of Bath is a globally leading university with an excellent reputation for teaching and research excellence. Our research and teaching are changing the world for the better, and our local area. We aim to contribute to the economic, social, environmental and cultural life of Bath and North East Somerset, benefitting residents, schools and businesses. Our staff and students regularly get involved with the community in and around Bath, developing partnerships with community groups and collaborations with local organisations. We support local students to prepare for their future, working with their schools and colleges to inspire them to pursue further study and careers. Our home within the city of Bath is core to our success.



Working together

This document is our commitment to working together so that you, as the people and organisations of Bath and North East Somerset, can more easily share in, help shape and benefit from these ambitions going forward.

We will work through the Future Ambition Board and other stand-alone initiatives to deliver on this commitment. The Future Ambition Board is a voluntary partnership that has developed through and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic based on co-creating and realising a shared vision for the region. It is a framework which enables partners and stakeholders to further develop our shared vision and to work collaboratively on projects and programmes to realise it. By working together, we will steer the activity of the Future Ambition Board and its associated workstreams.

Through the Future Ambition Board we will continuously listen to, and take input from, our communities to help us understand the needs of the region in more detail. This will mean we can really prioritise our efforts to support what is important to our communities and consequently deliver more relevant and valuable activities and initiatives together.



What's Next?

We are going to build on this momentum and appetite for collaboration as we look to a future which strengthens the social richness of our region and builds fairer, healthier, greener, creative, and more connected communities.

We are committed to working together for the longer term so that the people who live in the towns, cities, and villages of our region really thrive. Our work will both build on our regional strengths and help to overcome some of the challenges we face now and build resilience for the future.

As individual organisations we already know the value we bring to our region. By joining up people, resources, and facilities we can create a step change in

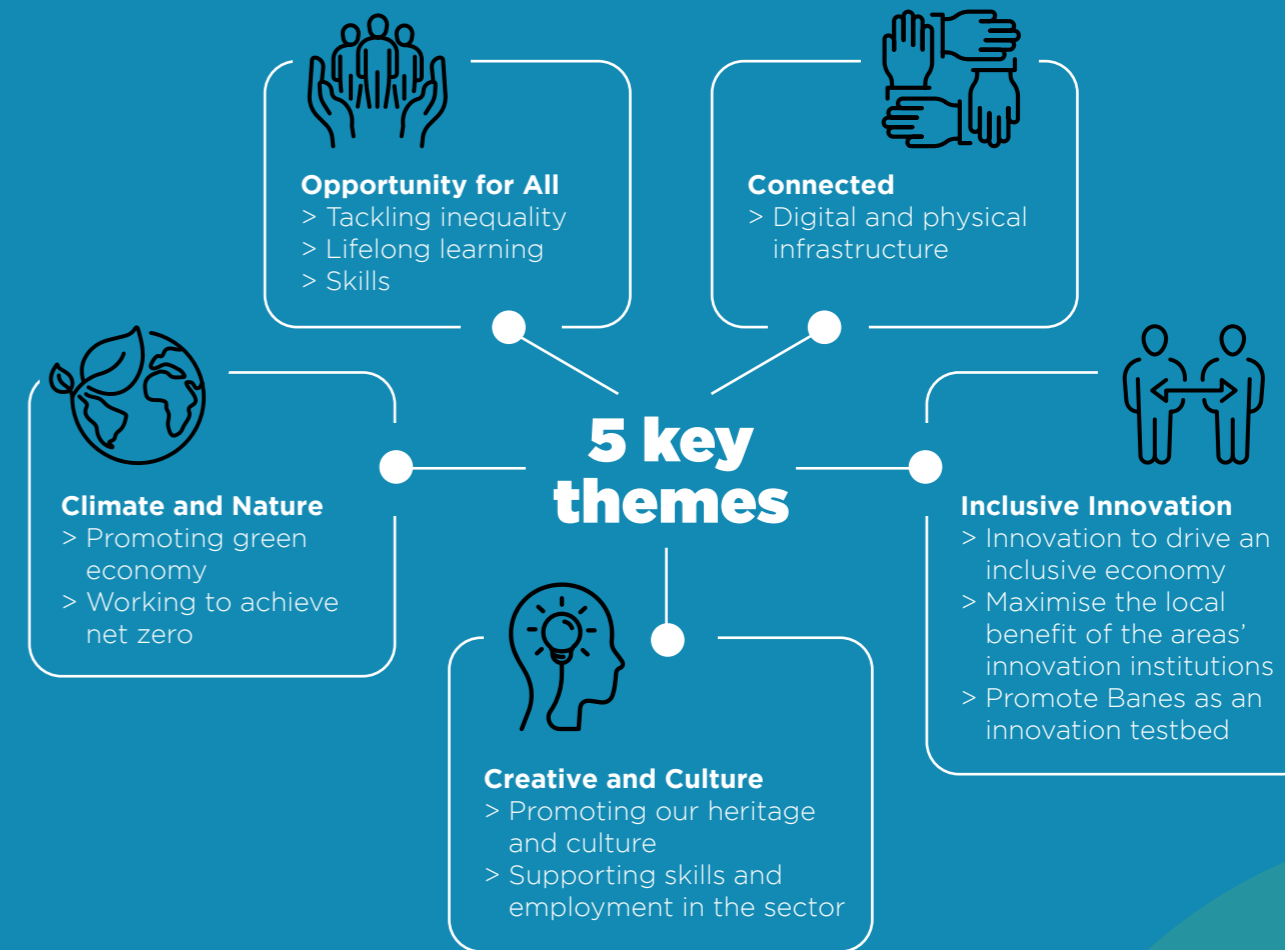
our collective contributions. These contributions go far beyond the economic - they shape the environmental, cultural, and social wellbeing of our region.

We also recognise that by working together we can do more to champion the region, putting it in the eyes of those thinking about living, working, and studying here, those who visit, local and regional policymakers, and investors.

In our **Future Ambition Civic Agreement** we are defining our region as the place where our work makes a difference when we collaborate with each other and with local and regional organisations, communities and partners.



The Future Ambition Board has identified five key themes to inform its work, with staff from all partner organisations working together, alongside other local stakeholders, to contribute to the theme working groups.



There are four ways in which we aim to make a difference to the wellbeing of our region:

- 1 How we work together** - For example, can we help each other do better things by sharing our knowledge and helping to champion initiatives led by others which contribute towards our shared vision?
- 2 How we behave** - For example, how can we ensure our ethical and social values are truly reflected in all of our activities?
- 3 How we mobilise our people** - For example, how can our staff contribute to the region's needs given some support such as training or different working conditions?
- 4 How we make and deliver our products, services and facilities** - For example, can we improve accessibility, reduce environmental impact, and support local business and communities?

Collective buying power

We are working to ensure that the way in which we buy our goods and services helps to minimise our environmental impact and benefits the local economy. How we buy goods and services has an impact on the environment as goods transported from further away often have a higher carbon footprint. When we buy produce closer to our organisations we can reduce our emissions and also help our local

economy. Agreeing to do this together sends a clear message to local businesses that we care about our environment and the economy. Local providers can develop their businesses without the risk of becoming overly focused on a single contract because they know there are several large organisations in the region who will want their goods and services.

Sharing data for research

Data at all our institutions is collected and managed to comply with GDPR requirements, however the collection and storage processes themselves and ease of usage for research can differ by organisation. Recently, an agreement was developed between the University of Bath and the RUH focused on improving data sharing arrangements. We hope this will help to develop new collaborations between staff at both organisations, to facilitate appropriate and safe access to data for the purpose of research and service improvement. The data sharing agreement is intended to streamline

the process of assessing different types of information the RUH holds, and making it easier to develop projects and work together. The agreement has been tested and fine-tuned by researchers from across the University of Bath in some work assessing the impact of switching to remote consultations in hospital settings, and how they can be improved. Learning from this project can be extended to improved data sharing across all Civic Agreement institutions and with others in the local area.



Capturing evidence

Making use of green space has positive effects on mental and physical health. B&NES' Somer Valley Rediscovered project aims to increase the connections between the people of Midsomer Norton, Radstock and the surrounding villages to green and blue space for the good of their health and wellbeing, as well as for the benefit of nature. The project involves restoring habitats, setting up volunteer networks, and creating new routes into local green

spaces. A programme of green prescribing, in collaboration with Public Health, Wessex Water, B&NES, the University of Bath and other local organisations provides access to green space with the aim of reducing the use of prescribed antidepressants which can end up in waterways. University of Bath researchers are working with the project to evaluate the effectiveness of green prescribing and to monitor water quality in the area.



Trying out something new

A brand new next-generation skills, training, research and innovation development programme created to help businesses, employees and learners become future ready is opening in Bath. FWD (formerly ISTART) is a disruptive collaboration between Bath Spa University, B&NES Council, Bath College

and University of Bath that brings together science, arts, creativity, and technology. The collaboratively-developed programme includes pathways that directly address the region's most pressing skills gaps and future job opportunities including digital technologies, sustainability, healthcare and enterprise.



Moving skills, talent and business forward.



Measuring success

Our success depends on whether our collective work improves the health, wellbeing and prosperity of communities across our region. In order to do this, we know we must listen and respond to people who live, work, study and play here.

We will continue as a group to actively listen to our community's needs, while also welcoming suggestions and input from all those who would also like to contribute to our ***Future Ambition Civic Agreement***.

You can keep up to date with the progress we make as a result of our Future Ambition Civic Agreement at futureambitionbath.com

