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**What?** A highly varied self-led walk providing a break from the bustle of the city and a fresh perspective of the city's rich heritage, following a chronological trail of Bath's Georgian development.

**Where?** A circular route from the city centre to Bathwick Fields, part of the world-class historic setting of Bath, via other attractions including the Kennet and Avon Canal and Georgian pleasure grounds of Sydney Gardens.

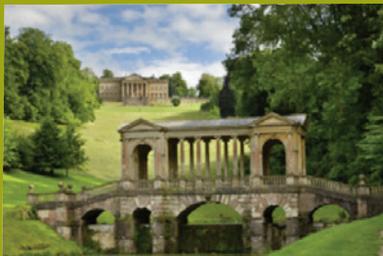
**Length:** 1½ hours, 3 miles / 4.75 km

**Terrain:** Mostly surfaced paths with a short stretch on well-marked grass paths. Mud possible after wet weather. One moderately steep hill, affording fine views of Bath from its slopes.

**Facilities:** Refreshments and toilets on the way.

#### More to see in Bath with the National Trust:

- Prior Park Landscape Garden (pictured)
- Bath Skyline Walk – 6 mile circular route starting from Bathwick Fields
- Family Discovery Trail on Claverton Down



For alternative formats,  
please call 01225 833977 or email  
[bathskyline@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:bathskyline@nationaltrust.org.uk)

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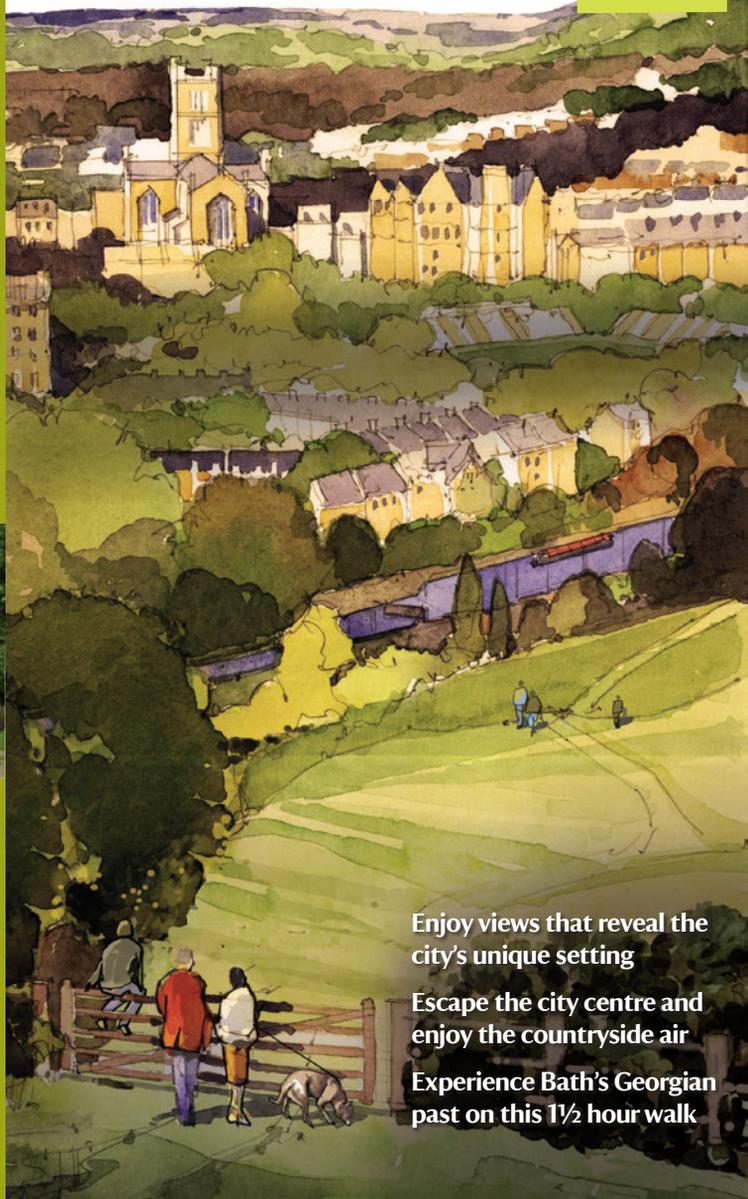
## Bath Skyline

# Walk to the view!

Discover the countryside in the city



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Trust



Enjoy views that reveal the  
city's unique setting

Escape the city centre and  
enjoy the countryside air

Experience Bath's Georgian  
past on this 1½ hour walk

Cover: Impression of Bath by Nick Hirst

# Walk with the Georgians

Attending balls, ‘taking the waters’, visiting neighbours – in the 18th century, Bath was at its most fashionable. The men and women of high society often felt the need to escape the hectic demands of the city to ‘take the air’ in the pleasure of its tranquil surroundings.

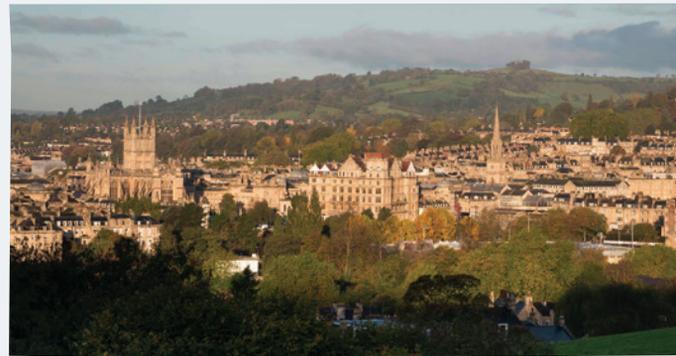
When the Georgian story began, Bath consisted of a couple of hundred houses and was still largely confined within its medieval city walls (see illustration below) but over the next 100 years it was transformed.

Today you can follow in the footsteps of the Georgians – through grand streets, public gardens, along the canal and on to the meadows of Bathwick Fields where you will be rewarded with a stunning view back to the city.

Take in the vistas that revived the spirits of Jane Austen and her companions. This harmony of countryside and city has been recognised today by Bath’s designation as a World Heritage Site.

“The pleasure of walking and breathing fresh air is enough for me, and in fine weather I am out more than half my time.”

Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey



The South East Prospect of the City of Bath, 1734 by Nathaniel Buck. © UK Government Art Collection



**KEY:**

 3 miles/ 4.75 km (1½ hrs)

 View points

 Public toilets

**REFRESHMENTS**

**1** Garden Cafe at the Holburne Museum for dining and light snacks. Open daily.

**2** Supermarket for picnic provisions. Open daily.

**3** Pump Shed for tea and cakes outdoors. Seasonal opening.

**Start/End of Walk**

To Bus/Train Stations 300m

## Starting at the visitor centre

Turn L out of the Visitor Information Centre, then immediately L into York Street.

1727

### The start of something special

Behind Marshfield's Ice Cream Parlour stands Ralph Allen's Palladian-style town house, designed by John Wood the Elder. It was the first step in Wood's vision to restore Bath to its former Roman grandeur and where Allen began his meteoric rise from postmaster to one of the richest men in the country. He achieved his wealth, in part, through his industrial-scale quarrying of the characteristic Bath stone. The influence of these two men on Bath's success is unrivalled.

Turn L at end of York Street. then soon after, turn R over 2 pedestrian crossings to the stone balustrade above Parade Gardens.

### ✦ The river and the rise of enterprise

The weir marks the head of the River Avon's navigation, another of Allen's enterprises. By building locks between Bath and Bristol, stone, timber and slate could be transported by boat, a cheaper option than going by road. The first cargo arrived in 1727 and marked the start of an economic boom for the city. In front of you are Parade Gardens, once an orchard tended by medieval monks from the Abbey, and in 1737 they became formal gardens, popular with Georgian walkers. Look up and you will see a picturesque green backdrop of fields and woods, much of which is owned and cared for by the National Trust.

1737



Pulteney Bridge 1779, open fields beyond (Bath in Time)

Abbreviations: KG = kissing gate R = right L = left

1769

### The city reaches over the river

This unusual shop-lined bridge was the first step in the spread of Bath east of the river. William Pulteney was the driving force behind the development. In order to gain permission to build, he had to provide a water supply for the city from springs on his estate in Bathwick – some of which originate in the meadows you will soon be walking in.

Continue straight on to the end of Great Pulteney Street. Cross the main road at the pedestrian crossings into Sydney Place with the Holburne Museum (free museum with excellent Georgian art collection and pavilion style café) on your L and in 40 m turn L into Sydney Gardens. Note: during museum opening times, you can enter Sydney Gardens through the museum grounds.

### The Holburne Museum – remnants of Pulteney's 'New Town'

Pulteney's ambitions did not stop with the bridge, he planned a scheme for a 'New Town' and the Sydney Hotel was to be the centrepiece. However, in 1793 Bath City Bank failed so Pulteney's vision had to be abandoned. The hotel is now the Holburne Museum and the land that had been earmarked for development remained as green spaces, still in use as sports grounds and parks to this day.

1793



Sydney Gardens and Hotel 1801 (Bath in Time)

1796

## Sydney Gardens – a Georgian pleasure ground

A succession of royal visits had elevated Bath to the height of fashion and after time spent in the health-giving spa waters, men and women of high society would spend time ‘taking the air’. Sydney Gardens proved a popular destination for promenades and concerts and was a favoured place of Jane Austen. It is now one of England’s few remaining Georgian public gardens.

Follow the tarmac path towards a stone ‘temple’ to meet a wide tarmac path and turn R, over railway bridge. Immediately before the next bridge (canal) turn R beneath a large plane tree and after 10 m go through a white iron gateway on the L onto the canal towpath and turn R.

Follow the towpath through the tunnel, up a ramp to cross the canal (on L see Cleveland House, the former canal HQ built over the water) and turn R to continue on towpath. At the boat basin go up cobbled ramp and cross road (Bathwick Hill). Turn R, over bridge then sharp L by supermarket, down steep steps to continue R along towpath.

Illustration: Nick Hirst



Kennet and Avon Canal, Bath

1810

## The Kennet and Avon Canal – a lifeline of commerce

The completion of the canal further boosted the city’s economy, extending the river navigation between Bristol and Bath beyond, to London. Fashionable residents had concerns about the impact of a working canal on the local character. The elegant wrought iron bridges were built as a response, to mollify local feeling.

At lock 13 cross canal footbridge, then go up slope / steps to Sydney Buildings. Cross the road, walk up two flights of steps and continue 300 m on the path beside Bathwick Fields past two KGs until you reach the end of the black railings and a wooden bench in the field on your R and a magnificent view to reward your efforts!

**VIEW:** Lyncombe Hill with the wooded bluff of Beechen Cliff dominates the south side of town. Georgian expansion can especially be seen on the hill of Lansdown. To the north is the well-known landmark of Kelston Roundhill’s ‘tump’ of trees, whilst 19th century and 20th century growth has spread to the west. The city sits harmoniously within a natural tree-lined bowl, the course of the River Avon leading the eye towards the distant Cotswold Hills (see photo below right).

Just past the end of the field turn R down narrow footpath with hedge on R.

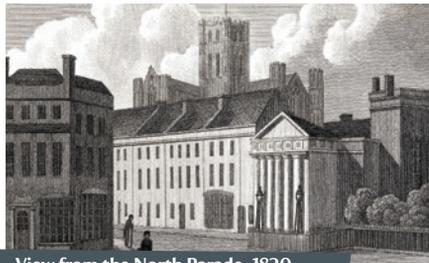
The rural and peaceful character of this secluded valley provides a welcome contrast to the pace of the busy city.

Pass gateway on the R; shortly after, turn R over small footbridge and stile in hedgerow.

*Note the hedge on R that was laid in 2014/15 in a traditional way. This is part of our sensitive management of these farmed meadows that is sympathetic to wildlife and promotes wildflowers. The National Trust acquired Bathwick Fields in 1984 with funds raised by the Council and local people keen to see this wonderful aspect of Bath preserved.*

Walk straight across field and through two KGs in close succession (into and out of Richens Orchard). After second KG turn L keeping field boundary on L and then go through KG adjacent to wide gateway.

**VIEW:** As you approach the gateway, the city centre is slowly revealed: The Abbey and Empire Hotel dominate and surrounding churches indicate ancient parishes.



View from the North Parade, 1820  
(Bath in Time)

From the gateway continue straight ahead for 90 m to a dip in the field, and then L downhill to KG, onto Sydney Buildings road and turn R. Shortly after turn L retracing route back to canal tow path and turn R, (or, for Pump Shed refreshments turn L for 140 m). After 80 m turn L onto footpath going downhill. Continue straight, past end of cul-de-sac, until reaching Pulteney Road beneath railway bridge. Cross straight over at pedestrian crossing onto North Parade.

1836

### North Parade Bridge – a view of Ralph Allen and John Wood's legacy

Half way over the bridge, look up to the hills on your left to see Allen's country mansion, designed by Wood, a symbol of the success of these two men with whom we started this journey. Their influence on the rise of Bath from modest medieval town to opulent Georgian city is admired worldwide to this day. The house is now Prior Park College and the gardens are managed by the National Trust.

After the bridge are North Parade Buildings on your left and Parade Gardens to your right, more of Wood's great legacy.

Continue along North Parade until the junction with Pierpoint Street. Cross straight over onto Terrace Walk and shortly after turn L into York Street, which leads you back to the Visitor Information Centre. Please share your walk highlights with us @NTBathSkyline.

