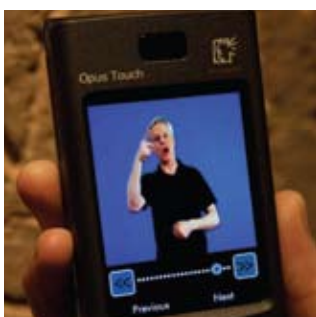


Heritage Services Annual Review 2010/11



For learning, inspiration
and enjoyment

romanbaths.co.uk
fashionmuseum.co.uk
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bathvenues.co.uk

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

BE: Distinctive

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE**



The Government Standard

Highlights of 2010/11

Numbers

- Surplus of £3.5 million returned to the Council
- Net income per Bath & North East Somerset resident: £20
- Net income per Bath & North East Somerset Council Tax payer: £46
- Net income per staff member: £30,700
- Catering commission exceeds £500,000 p.a. for the first time
- 919,000 visitors to the Roman Baths – highest for 10 years
- 125,000 visitors to the Fashion Museum – highest for 8 years
- 116,000 visitors to the Victoria Art Gallery – best ever for a financial year
- 270,430 shop customers bought 668,580 items
- 65,000 guests attended events in Heritage Services venues
- 44,300 attended Heritage Services teaching sessions and workshops
- 24,500 valid Discovery Cards in circulation
- 20,000 people attended 100+ activities in Heritage Open Week
- £103,000 secured in grant-aid

Awards

- Roman Baths – Museums & Heritage Awards for Excellence 2010 ‘Classic Award’
- Roman Baths – Chinese Tourists Welcoming Award 2010 This is a separate award
- Roman Baths – ‘Gold Award’ from ABLE Radio, the on-line station for the special needs community
- Roman Baths – Meetings & Incentives Travel Industry Awards 2011 ‘Access Excellence’ Bronze Award
- Victoria Art Gallery – awarded the Government’s ‘Learning Outside the Classroom’ quality badge
- Fashion Museum – *The Diana Dresses* exhibition won the Bath Life ‘Best Event of the Year 2010’

Milestones

- The *Don McCullin: Shaped by War* exhibition at the Victoria Art Gallery, opened by Kate Adie, was the Gallery’s second most popular exhibition ever
- British Sign Language (BSL) tour introduced at the Roman Baths
- Fashion Museum ‘Dress of the Year 2010’ donated by Vivienne Westwood
- Portrait of the ‘last Tommy’ Harry Patch acquired by the Victoria Art Gallery
- Museum shops’ turnover the best year on record
- Work started on the new Roman Baths Café in Abbey Church Yard



Clockwise from top left: Bath resident Geraldine Dunlop using the Roman Baths British Sign Language tour. Fashion Museum Manager Rosemary Harden with writer Colin McDowell at the opening of ‘The Diana Dresses’ exhibition. ‘Museums at Night’ sleep-over in the Roman Baths by Brownies from Saltford. Heritage Apprentice Jess Newby at work in the Roman Baths. Kate Adie with Jon Benington and Sue Lucy at the Don McCullin exhibition opening.



Councillor Gazzard collecting the 'Classic Award' for the Roman Baths with Stephen Bird and Stephen Clews at the Museums & Heritage 2010 Awards for Excellence.

Foreword

by Councillor Terry Gazzard, Cabinet Member for Tourism Leisure and Culture 2007-2011

I am delighted to introduce this Annual Review for 2010/11, my final year as Cabinet Member with responsibility for Heritage Services.

2010/11 was an excellent year, both financially and in services delivered. The Service generated a net surplus of £3.5 Million which contributes directly to the Council's finances. This increase in profit, up 10% on 2009/10, was achieved after first meeting the borrowing and maintenance and renewal costs of investment over the last 5 years.

Roman Baths visitor numbers were the highest since 2000, driven by the ongoing 'stay-cation' effect and new marketing to promote the new family-friendly interpretation. Retail turnover, buoyed by the enlarged Roman Baths Shop, achieved record levels. The Roman Baths Development, formally opened by ALVA Chairman Lord Lee in September 2010, has attracted a number of awards (see opposite) and I was pleased to go to London to receive the Museums & Heritage 2010 Awards for Excellence 'Classic Award'.

The *Diana Dresses* exhibition at the Fashion Museum, opened by writer Colin McDowell, drove visitor numbers to their highest level for eight years. Other shows there have included *What Will She Wear?* exhibiting works from the Museum's own collection – a very swift response to the announcement of the Royal Wedding!

The Victoria Art Gallery, the museum visited by more local residents than any other in the district, had its best financial year ever. The important *Don McCullin: Shaped By War* exhibition, opened by Kate Adie, was the Gallery's second best attended exhibition ever and the

jewel in the crown of another top quality exhibition programme.

Significant additions to our public collections have included the last portrait from life of local boy and 'last Tommy' Harry Patch, Dress of the Year 2010 by top British designer Vivienne Westwood, and the family and business papers of the early 19th century Langley family of Bath and Cadiz.

Over the past four years, I have championed the case for better facilities for the Record Office collections, and I am therefore pleased that the report commissioned by Heritage Services to investigate the case for a new Local History Centre in Bath has stimulated new debate and raised the profile of this pressing need within the Council.

Teaching sessions, workshops and community projects during the year engaged around 60,000 mostly local people. Public events included World Heritage Day, Museums at Night, the Festival of British Archaeology, Heritage Open Days, our own unique Heritage Open Week, 'Heritage Feast' at Snow Hill and Half Term Holiday activities.

2010/11 has again been a year of firsts. It has included the innovative archivists' workshop with Big Issue vendors, the first TV advertising campaign for the Roman Baths, and the appointment of the first Heritage apprentices. Above all I am delighted that, during my final year of office, work started on the creation of a new Roman Baths Café in Abbey Church Yard opposite the Baths' main entrance, to further improve visitor facilities and strengthen revenues into the future.



Top: ALVA Chairman Lord Lee of Trafford opening the Roman Baths Development in September 2010.

Below: Alex Gage enjoying his visit to the Roman Baths with his mother.

Top: New projection table and animation in the West Baths.

Below: James Dodson with a phial of snails recovered from the Great Bath.

The Roman Baths

Roman Baths Development.

2010/11 saw the completion of the five-year Roman Baths Development programme of conservation, interpretation and access improvements. The Development won four awards in 2010/11 which are listed on the 'Highlights' page and attracted good press coverage with substantial articles in Current Archaeology, the Museums Journal, Primary Times, Leisure Opportunities and a large spread in The Guardian, as well as special visits by HRH The Duke of Kent, Viscountess Cobham, Chairman of Visit England, and John Penrose, Tourism Minister.

Snails in the Roman Baths.

James Dodson, retired zoology lecturer and now Visitor Services Assistant, has discovered some tiny snails in the Great Bath and identified them as a species originating from North America. They are very small, breed very quickly and tolerate high temperatures. How the snails got there is a mystery, but may have happened either when water lilies were put in around the beginning of the 20th century or when fish were introduced later.

Other activity in 2010/11

Apart from the high profile Development activity, other work has included:

- Ongoing care of the Designated collection of c.60,000 objects, and integrating finds and archives from archaeological excavations in Bath & North East Somerset into the museum record;
- Regular store tours led by curators taking local residents behind the scenes to see this work in action and, in some cases, to see objects found near their homes!
- Preparing for future developments by reorganising storage areas to use space more effectively and extend public access;
- Installing an improved environmental monitoring system to monitor temperature and humidity levels throughout the site and museum;
- Working with the Keynsham Heritage Trust volunteers to improve the records of Roman and medieval objects that belong to the Council and are kept in Keynsham Town Hall;
- Advising the project team leading the proposed new development in Keynsham on the display of the most important of these objects.

Stephen Clews, Roman Baths & Pump Room Manager

The Fashion Museum

Displays and exhibitions

Nearly 73,000 people visited *The Diana Dresses*, a special exhibition organised by the Museum based upon ten dresses which originally belonged to Diana, Princess of Wales. Other exhibitions included *Behind the Scenes: The Historic Collection*, showcasing the entire 19th century collection against the backdrop of stored museum objects. *Top Trends* aimed to attract fashion-conscious teenagers by showing the main up-to-the-minute catwalk trends and re-creating the looks using objects from the Museum's collection. *Turn of the Century / Helmut Lang* exhibited Lang's substantial donation of work from the turn of the 20th/21st century alongside a selection of white 'Jane Austen style' dresses from the turn of the 18th/19th centuries and black dresses from the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, including a dress which belonged to Queen Victoria.

The Museum celebrated the Royal Wedding by arranging a special wedding dress display *What Will She Wear? The Enduring Romance of the Wedding Dress*, which opened on Valentine's Day. Thirty five wedding dresses, from a dress of 1829 to one of 2010 designed by the late Alexander McQueen, were included in the display.

Collections

During the year generous donations added to the collection. Fashion designer Helmut Lang chose the Museum when placing his archive in museums around the world and donated over 25 ensembles. Top Shop donated seven pairs of shoes from the Autumn/Winter 2010 collection; and Dame Vivienne Westwood donated a pale green silk dress from her Spring /Summer 2010 collection as Dress of the Year 2010.

Work experience placements, internships and an army of volunteers have helped to document objects, scan images and enter new records on the collection management system. The West of England Costume Society Volunteer Group made head-dresses for the wedding dresses exhibition and sorted, listed and organised the Museum's extensive collection of fashion magazines for a new Reading Room to open in Summer 2011.

During the year the Museum loaned a collection of hat pins which belonged to Mary Chamberlain to the University of Birmingham for the *Chamberlain Women* exhibition, and a 1940s swimsuit ensemble and 1950s crochet blouse to The Women's Library for the exhibition *Hand Made Tales: Women and Domestic Craft*.

Study Facilities

Just over 600 people studied a huge range of objects during the year. In addition to regular classes in the Study Facilities for Bath Spa University BA Fashion Design students, the Museum's continuing association with the University included a module for MA students following the 'Investigating Fashion' programme.

Rosemary Harden, Fashion Museum Manager

The *Diana Dresses* exhibition won the Bath Life 'Event of the Year 2010' award



Above: Gallery scene in the 'Diana Dresses' exhibition.

Right: Dress of the Year 2010: a pale green silk dress by Dame Vivienne Westwood.

Far right: Detail of a display in the innovative 'Behind the Scenes' gallery.



Victoria Art Gallery

Exhibitions

Highlights of 2010/11 included the *Bath Society of Artists Annual Exhibition* with 419 works of art on show and 72 pictures sold. This was followed by *The English Matisse: Landscapes by Sir Matthew Smith (1879-1959)*, the first ever show devoted to the landscapes of this great British colourist. The *Don McCullin: Shaped by War* exhibition, opened by BBC journalist Kate Adie, featured 100 iconic photographs plus personal memorabilia on loan from the veteran Somerset-based photographer. It attracted 29,000 visitors, making it the second most popular exhibition ever at the Gallery.

Life in Victorian Bath, looked at architecture, politics, industry, the discovery of Roman remains, rejuvenation of the spa, and the harsh realities of life for the poor in 19th century Bath. The most successful selling show of 2010-11, 50/50 Working in Partnership featuring mosaics by Cleo Mussi alongside textiles and collages by Matthew Harris, all on a Japanese theme, achieved 86 sales out of the 113 works on view.

The 2010-11 attendance figures of 115,974 were the best ever for a financial year at the Gallery

Collections: displays, acquisitions and conservation

In May 2010, two large new display cases for decorative arts were installed on the first floor, paid for by a generous £20,000 donation from the Friends of the Gallery. In June 2010 the Gallery hosted the public launch of the Public Catalogue Foundation's Somerset volume of *Oil Paintings in Public Collections*. 87 of the book's 328 pages are devoted to the Gallery's works.

New acquisitions included the last portrait of local WWI veteran Harry Patch (1898-2009) by artist Dan Llewelyn Hall. Another significant purchase was the oil painting *Sun Up 1960* by Gillian Ayres RA, supported by the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund (£12,000), the Art Fund (£10,500) and the Friends of the Victoria Art Gallery (£5,000). Donated items included *Diacross*, a screenprint by Richard Allen (1933-99) and eight paintings by Leslie Atkinson (1911-2004) including four views of Bath. The Gallery was chosen by The Art Fund as the permanent home for the Derek Manning Bequest, a stunning group of 270 coloured Victorian drinking glasses.

The Adopt-a-Picture Scheme saw 30 businesses and individuals adopt works of art in exchange for a 12-month loan of the restored artwork up. These included *Portrait of Anna Bilinska* by Emmeline Deane, *Ruins of the Church at Oude Stuyvenkerte* by Albert Lemaître and *Portrait of Jerom Murch*, Mayor of Bath, by Solomon J Solomon.

Jon Benington, Victoria Art Gallery Manager



Clockwise from right: 'Sun Up' 1960 by Gillian Ayres RA. Queen Victoria by Elizabeth Cambridge Harbutt 1887: ceramic plate from the 'Life in Victorian Bath' exhibition. Some of the 270 coloured Victorian drinking glasses from the Derek Manning Bequest. Investment from the Council's access fund has transformed accessibility at the Gallery. Visitors enjoying the mosaic objects in the 50/50 Cleo Mussi exhibition.

Heritage Services Financial and Business Review 2010/11

Key aspects of performance in the year 2010/11:

- £12 million income
- Net income per Bath & North East Somerset resident: £20
- Net income per Bath & North East Somerset Council Tax payer: £46
- Net income per staff member: £30,700

Financial performance

	2010/11 £000	+ / - %	2009/10 £000
Annual income			
Admissions	8,604	11%	7,780
Retail and other sales	1,877	13%	1,663
Room hire	568	-4%	589
Catering	527	18%	447
Other income	495	-5%	524
Total	12,071	+10%	11,003
Annual expenditure			
Staff costs	3,012		2,972
Premises and transport	885		747
Merchandise for re-sale	877		777
Supplies and services	806		889
Revenue re-investment	551		700
Building maintenance	618		520
Agency & contracted services	404		395
Voluntary sector support	22		39
Finance & debt charges	285		150
Insurance	211		59
Contribution to capital	312		0
Total:	7,983	10%	7,248
Overheads			
Internal overheads (expenditure)	-1,847		-1,933
Internal income (recharges)	1,266		1,381
Net internal overheads	-581	5%	-552
Net Surplus	3,507	10%	3,201
Net Surplus before internal overheads	4,088	9%	3,753
Capital expenditure:	£000		£000
Roman Baths Development	259		2,029
Infrastructure / conservation	101		0
Roman Baths Café development	406		0
Total	766		2,029

Heritage Services operates as a business unit within the Council and prepares its accounts on a full absorption basis, including a full allocation of overhead. In 2010/11 we returned a net profit of £3.5 Million to the Council, up 10% on 2009/10. Turnover was also up by 10% due to strong growth in both admission and secondary spend, driven by increased visitor numbers at both the Roman Baths and Fashion Museum.

The completion of the Roman Baths Development in 2010/11 marked a step-change in the quality of visitor experience and facilities. The project was central to the rolling 5-year business plan that included medium-term investment in the Council's heritage assets to ensure the sustained delivery of key income streams. Further investment, both capital and revenue, was made in the historic fabric and infrastructure of the Roman Baths complex, and in the development of the new Roman Baths Café.

The increases in revenues and profit have been achieved as part of an integrated Business Plan to improve the Roman Baths visitor offer and provide a quality of experience consistent with income expectations that are amongst the highest in the country. The Plan has financed the significant increases in debt charges and the repair, renewal and maintenance costs that result from this increased investment.

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Visitor Numbers and Admission Income

	2010/2011	% +/-	2009/2010
Roman Baths	918,955	+ 4%	881,757
Fashion Museum	124,655	+ 37%	90,859
Victoria Art Gallery	115,974	+ 4%	111,383

Two thirds of the income generated by Heritage Services comes from Roman Baths visitor admission charges. Variations in its visitor numbers and in the average spend by each visitor are the key measures of financial performance for the Service.

Roman Baths visitors in 2010/11 totalled 919,000 and were at their highest levels since 2000/01. This was up 4% on 2009/10, which had itself been the highest for almost 10 years. Visitor numbers in the previous seven years had totalled c.830-850,000 p.a., influenced primarily by a series of national and international events, starting with the 9/11 attacks in 2001.

Roman Baths admission revenue grew by 9% on 2009/10, and has grown by 27% in the last three financial years. This has been achieved by a combination of increased visitor volumes, by above-inflation price rises that increased the average spend per

visitor by 15% over the same period and by new marketing to promote the Roman Baths Development improvements. The number of both individuals and visitors in groups (largely arriving on coaches) increased by 4% on 2009/10. The growth in individual visitors was most noticeable during the high season and was consistent with the continued increase in domestic holidays taken by UK residents. Group customers continued to form 32% of the visitor base, generating admissions revenue of £2.1 Million and secondary spend of c.£500k.

Fashion Museum visitor numbers grew dramatically due to the highly successful Diana's Dresses exhibition and were the highest since the *Jubilee!* exhibition of H.M. The Queen's dresses in 2002/03. The 37% increase in visitor volumes produced a year-on-year increase of £148,000 in admissions revenue.

Grant awards secured for 2010/11

Learning & Programmes	Museums Libraries & Archives Council (MLA)	Heritage Events Co-ordinator + resources	£20,000
	MLA	Learning links	£1,000
Roman Baths	MLA	Conservation materials	£500
	MLA + Museums Association Diversity Fund	Heritage apprenticeships	£5,000
	Future Jobs Fund	Heritage apprenticeships	£24,300
Victoria Art Gallery	The Art Fund	Acquisitions	£10,500
	V&A Purchase Grant Fund	Acquisitions	£12,000
	Friends of the Victoria Art Gallery	Acquisitions	£5,000
	Friends of the Victoria Art Gallery	New display cases	£20,000
Bath Record Office	National Cataloguing Grants Programme for Archives	Cataloguing Langton family papers	£4,500
Total:			£102,800

Performance measurement

Heritage Services measures its business performance against comparable large visitor attractions nationwide through financial benchmarking organized by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA).

In 2010 the Roman Baths again performed in the top 25% for 5 of the 6 key indicators of profitability, demonstrating a level of return amongst the highest in the country, together with labour costs amongst the lowest of all ALVA attractions. The site also performed in the top quartile for admission income per visit (average admission price) and, for the third time in four years, retail sales per m² of shop floor were the highest of all ALVA members.

Heritage Services as a whole again performed well above the median of ALVA attractions in all areas of visitor revenue and activity other than secondary spend (retail and catering). The Service was again in the top quartile for net contribution per member of staff, retail spend per m² and corporate entertainment income as a percentage of turnover, whilst labour costs overall were still amongst the lowest of all ALVA attractions.

Market Research

The Roman Baths and Fashion Museum have conducted regular exit surveys on 'quality of visit' since 1998, benchmarked against visitor attractions nationally. Visitor expectations have risen since then and most attractions have improved their exhibitions, facilities and in particular their café and shop offers. Recent investment at the Roman Baths and Fashion Museum is reflected in better 'quality of visit' scores in a number of areas. New surveys measuring the effectiveness of marketing campaigns will help inform future campaigns.

Heritage Services gathers and analyses visitor feedback in all areas to improve its service. Thousands of visitor comments, the vast majority very positive, are supplemented by regular mystery visitor reports.

Developing the business

An out-of-home regional publicity campaign on buses, trains and railway stations promoted the new family-friendly visitor experience at the Roman Baths. The campaign was particularly good value because of competitive prices as a result of judicious purchasing during the recession. Following the RIBA poll awarding the Roman Baths the status of "most romantic building in Britain", an on-street campaign promoted romantic torch-lit evening visits in July and August.

The Fashion Museum's magnificent *Diana Dresses* exhibition was exceptionally popular, following widespread promotion to international and domestic audiences. An extra magazine campaign during the autumn was supplemented by on-street posters and shop window displays, resulting in visitor figures that were at times 50% up on the previous year.

The Season Ticket was widely promoted through publications distributed through schools and read by parents of primary school children. This campaign doubled the take-up of Season Tickets and encouraged repeat visits to the Roman Baths and Fashion Museum during the school holidays.

China

We have continued our ongoing promotion to China, investing in website translation and the support of our agent in China, Dr Adam Wu of the China Business Network, at key trade events there. In 2010 the Roman Baths received a staggering 57,000 Mandarin-speaking visitors, almost the same number as French-speakers. This success was recognised at the 2010 China Outbound Travel and Tourism Market where the Roman Baths won a 'Welcoming Chinese Tourists Award', the only visitor attraction in the world to do so. The growing Chinese interest in the Roman Baths saw by numerous official visits, including museum and heritage professionals from Hangzhou, a delegation from the British Museum - Bristol Museums China link, Professor Ruan Yisan, China's leading authority on urban conservation, Vice Chairman Zhu of the China National Tourism Administration, and a delegation from the Council's Friendship Partner City Jingdezhen.

Social Media

This has become an essential part of the marketing mix and staff have set up quirky and interesting blogs. The Fashion Museum has a 'Fans Club' on Facebook and all the museums are linked in to Twitter. A Fashion Photography competition in 2010 attracted quality entries from all over the world and was followed by an exhibition of black and white photographs during the Don McCullin exhibition at the Victoria Art Gallery, and a Wedding Photography competition to support the What Will She Wear? exhibition at the Fashion Museum. E-newsletters for each museum, for Heritage Hospitality and for Discovery Card users continued to be sent out to our databases of more than 21,000 subscribers.

The Spas Ancient and Modern package has gone from strength to strength. More than 4,000 were sold in 2010/11, up from 2,000 in 2009/10. In 2010 we co-operated with Thermae Bath Spa on a TV advertising campaign in the Thames Valley area, but awareness of this campaign was lower than expected and it was not repeated in 2011.

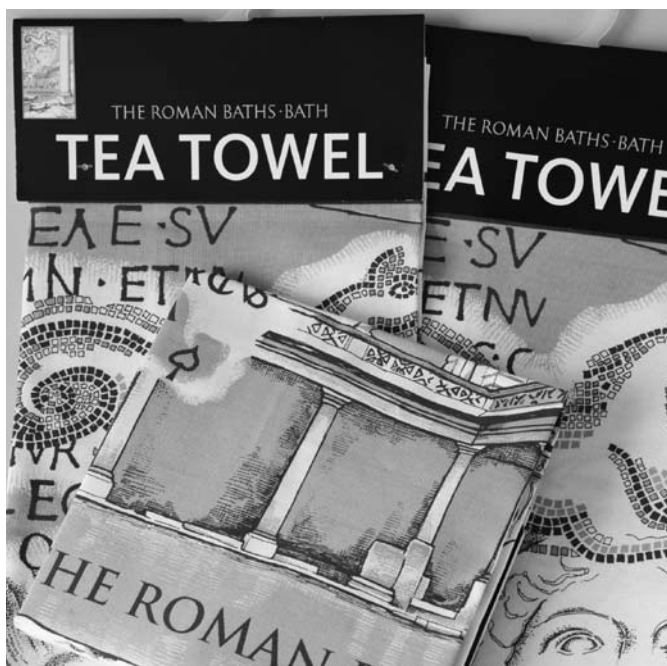
Museum Shops

Retail Services saw record turnover during 2010/11, with sales £211,000 (+13%) higher than in 2009/10. Gross margins were maintained and the net return on sales improved by over 50%.

The enlargement of the main Roman Baths shop paid dividends, showing the greatest increase in sales and ending the year 18% up on 2009/10. Customer numbers increased by 14% over 2009/10; average spend per customer increased on the Roman Baths site by 5% and sales per visitor was up 9% on 2009/10. Mindful of the tight economic times, a series of special promotions with key suppliers was negotiated. In particular the ever-popular bathing product ranges saw a significant increase in turnover. A special money-off offer was agreed with a leading publisher of children's books and was promoted to visitors during the Children's Literature Festival and half-term holiday.

Product Development for the year included commissioning branded ranges of biscuits, preserves and confectionery as well as a range of pick-up products for children based on the Roman Baths cartoon characters. New photography, commissioned following the cleaning and conservation of the Roman Baths, was included in the guide book and the postcard collection was updated and refreshed.

The Fashion Museum shop ended the year 9% up on 2009/10. Merchandise relating to the Diana Dresses exhibition proved popular. The Victoria Art Gallery shop achieved very strong sales during the Don McCullin: Shaped by War exhibition, including selling 338 copies of the exhibition book at £25.



New tea towel product developed for the Roman Baths.

Heritage Hospitality

The ongoing tough economic climate and resulting financial uncertainty made it a challenging year for both private and corporate events. Total room hire income generated was £568,000 c.3.5% down on 2009/10.

Whilst private hire bookings such as weddings were relatively buoyant, there was considerable pressure on budgets with clients often reducing the number of guests or seeking additional value. Pressures on corporate hire were similar but businesses also changed the nature of their events or cancelled them altogether. Instead of traditional company conferences, there have been more but smaller, shorter and more regionally-based roadshows. Fewer large companies have paid for Christmas parties in recent years, with individuals often funding their own celebrations.

Joint marketing with Searcy's continued, through the joint-funded post of Sales Manager. Initiatives such as familiarisation visits and targeted promotions helped to counter the economic downturn. A new collaboration, 'Unique Venues of Bath', was formed in 2010 to share stand space at regional exhibitions with other key Bath venues and raise the profile of Bath for corporate events.

The final banquet of the BBC's 'Great British Menu' series was filmed at the Assembly Rooms, attended by HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. The Duchess also attended two other events: a reception for the National Osteoporosis Society at the Pump Room and a reception in the Roman Baths celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Bath Chronicle. Other notable events included a spectacular operatic production of 'Israel in Egypt' in the Roman Baths, the 100th anniversary of the World Girl Guide Association and a high profile dealer event for Mercedes Benz.

Catering

The return from Catering has exceeded £500k p.a. for the first time ever.

2010 was the first year of a new contract for catering in the Pump Room and Assembly Rooms, which was won by Searcy's Restaurants Limited against strong competition. Searcy's produced new menus and in January 2011 invested in refurbishing the Pump Room servery kitchen.

Searcy's are working with Heritage Services to develop the new Roman Baths Café opposite the main Roman Baths entrance. The need for a family friendly café has long been recognised from visitor feedback and benchmarking data. The Council has retaken possession of the property which has been gutted and surveyed prior to substantial works on the new restaurant which will open during 2011/12.

Bath Record Office

Visitor numbers in 2010/11 were at their highest for five years, largely due to an increase in student users from local universities. Particularly in demand was the extensive collection of building plans used to study Bath's buildings and landscape.

An award of £4,500 from The National Cataloguing Grant Fund for Archives enabled the Langton family and business papers to be made available to researchers through employment of a bilingual cataloguer. This unique archive, partly in Spanish, comprises records made in Bath and Cadiz around 1810 and provides an insight into life at home and abroad during the Peninsular War.

Other significant archive collections donated include the business records of Frank Keevil & Son, cabinet-makers, 1920-1950, records of Bath Art Secondary School 1942-1973, papers of Major Aubrey Jackman, Director of Bath Military Tattoo 1940s – 1990s, and research notes of Dr K E James for his thesis Concert Life in 18th Century Bath.

Public awareness of the Record Office resources was raised through lectures and teaching sessions to many local community groups, secondary school and further education students. For some students this was preparatory to their starting work placements in the Record Office. Archive displays were taken to a local history fair and family history fair, and forty one items including posters and prisoners' portraits were loaned for exhibition at the Victoria Art Gallery's Life in Victorian Bath.

A new venture this year was the archivists' workshop held with Big Issue vendors, and new services for customers include the production for sale of historic maps on CD. At present two series of large-scale 19th century maps of the city are available, also maps showing the Bath Blitz damage of 1942.

Yet again the archives of the former Wansdyke and Bath City councils were successfully used by this Council's financial analysts as evidence to reclaim VAT overpayments from HM Revenue & Customs. A further £500k was reclaimed this year, bringing the total over recent years to £6.5 million.

To improve collections care and make more of the uncatalogued records available to researchers, we have introduced monthly 'Collections Weeks', when the public search room is closed and all staff work behind the scenes to carry out this essential work. As a result, new detailed lists of Bath City Police, two local schools, the city's Burial Boards and post-war planning reports are available online at www.batharchives.co.uk/online_catalogues-1.aspx.

Colin Johnston, Principal Archivist

Visitor numbers in 2010/11
were at their highest for
five years



Rosemary Boyns, Assistant Archivist, in one of the Record Office stores.



Coat of arms used by a Spanish branch of the Langton family of Bath and Cadiz.

Learning and Programmes

The team continued to devise and deliver formal and informal learning activities on all sites. Our core activity is providing learning resources and opportunities for groups visiting groups our museums and Record Office. Downloadable resources are regularly updated and new resources developed to keep abreast of curriculum changes and schools' requirements. We also plan and deliver a wide range of community-focused heritage learning programmes and events and 29,376 people took part in community activities at our museums. In December 2010 the Victoria Art Gallery gained the Government's 'Learning Outside the Classroom' quality badge that combines the essential elements of provision – learning and safety.

A lot of work is done with independent local museums and other Council services, part-funded by a £20,000 grant from the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council. Work with Adult Health, Social Care & Housing Partnership on the 'Give us a Break' project included other museums and offered guided tours and object handling sessions for local carers throughout 2010. Work with the Council's School Improvement Team on the Apex (Able Pupils Extending Opportunities) took the form of a varied activities programme based on the temporary exhibitions at the Victoria Art Gallery and the Fashion Museum.

World Heritage Day in April 2010 was organized with the Council's World Heritage Manager and Bath Preservation Trust. Highlights included special tours of the upper town by the Mayor's Honorary Guides, costumed interpreters in No.1 Royal Crescent and demonstrations of drill and weaponry by the Ermine Street Guard in Royal Victoria Park.

Museums at Night in May 2010 was a great success and attracted national interest. Demonstrators at the Roman Baths included a stone carver, tile maker and a Roman scribe. We held the first ever sleep-over at the Roman Baths when thirty eight Brownies and eight Guiders from Saltford bedded down for the night. The Brownies had a short night's sleep (like the staff!) and the next morning enjoyed object-handling activities and a tour through the tunnels.

In July with Planning's Built Heritage Team we organised Englishcombe Explorers, a family event linked to the Festival of British Archaeology. Participants explored the village and medieval tithe barn, tried their hand at threshing and making a corn dolly and investigated archaeological surveying along the ancient Wansdyke. The event included an evening with our local Finds Liaison Officer from the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

The Ermine Street Guard at World Heritage Day, April 2010.



Teaching sessions, workshops and community projects
in 2010/11 engaged c.60,000 mostly local people

Heritage Open Week attracted nearly 20,000 visitors to local museums. Family activities took place at all our sites and a series of talks Bath Past, Present and Future was arranged in collaboration with Bath Spa University.

Three lunchtime talks were held in November, linked to the Victoria Art Gallery's exhibition Life in Victorian Bath. In addition three evening talks on a mosaic theme took place in March 2011 to link to the popular 50 50: Harris & Mussi exhibition. Speakers included Cleo Mussi herself, Heike Zech from the Victoria & Albert Museum on micro-mosaics from the Gilbert Collection and Stephen Cosh on his work to document and illustrate the mosaics of Roman Britain.

As part of the Bath Year of the Museum 2011, the Roman Baths hosted two special events. On 1 January hot dates were offered to visitors as a special Roman treat and in February half-term the Museum Late event drew over 400 local people to a variety of activities based on Roman food – olive oil tasting, making herb bags, exploring culinary artefacts and tasting dishes from a cookery book by the Roman writer Apicius.

Lindsey Braidley, Learning & Programmes Co-ordinator

'Museums at Half-Term' activity at the Victoria Art Gallery.



'Museums at Night' object-handling at the Museum of Bath at Work.



Lectures and presentations

Heritage Services staff gave around 50 talks during 2010/11. These covered a wide variety of subjects to do with our museum and archive collections as well as history, archaeology, conservation, interpretation, heritage management, marketing and business planning.

Audiences included students at the City of Bath College, Bath Spa University and the University of Bath, as well as Brighton, Cardiff and Leicester universities, visiting American universities from North Carolina and Tennessee and the Joint Association of Classics Teachers' summer school.

Locally we contributed speakers to the West of England Costume Society, 'Bath in Fashion' Festival, Bath Royal Literary & Scientific Institution, University of the Third Age, King Edward's School, Keynsham & Salford Local History Society, Bath Ladies Probus, Weston Local History Society, Oldfield Park History Society, Friends of the Victoria Art Gallery, Foxhill Community Group and Bitton WI.

Invitations to speak took staff out of the district to Bristol, Wells, Usk, Warwick, Henley-on-Thames, North Down (NI) and the international knitting conference in Shetland.

Customer Care

Heritage Services successfully retained the Customer Service Excellence Standard. The assessor wrote:

"This application . . . was thoroughly prepared, well presented and supported by observations and discussions with customers, staff and partners during the visit. The evidence shows that this is a well managed organisation with staff that are focused on providing services that not only meet but exceed customers' expectations.

"There is a clear commitment throughout the Service to ensure that customers are at the heart of everything it does.

"You provide an excellent range of information at all your locations and on your website and are continuously improving upon this, to the considerable benefit of your customers and the enhancement of the customer experience. You make every effort to ensure that all your customer groups have access to your services and your outreach to the disabled and disadvantaged is commendable."

Visitor feedback to the access improvements at the Roman Baths has been overwhelmingly positive. Written feedback from disabled visitors has included:

- Thanks for the accessibility, so much appreciated, "Wheelies Round The World" Rod Gothe (Australia)
- Very well done with lifts and ramps – brilliant to finally be able to see it all! Skina and Maya
- Fantastic visit – I didn't expect to be able to access so much in my wheelchair. Barbara Houston, England
- Words cannot describe. Excellent for disabled. Andy, Wellington
- Thanks for the help with the wheelchair. So worth seeing. Dorothy, Australia
- Disabled access was really good. Mel, England.

Training:

This year the mid-week staff training programme focused on delivering the best customer service, including improved induction, dealing with difficult behaviour, equalities and customer care. Front-of-house and operations staff also made study visits to Caerleon and Caerwent to appreciate the visitor experience at other Roman sites.

Apprenticeships:

Two apprentices joined the Visitor Services team for six months to work alongside the regular team. This has now been rolled out into three Heritage Apprenticeships and we have new apprentices taking an active role in Visitor Services, Facilities, Retail and Events, with regular support from Wiltshire College.

Katie Smith, Visitor Services Manager



The Government Standard



Katie Smith and Stephen Clews collecting the 'Access Excellence' award at the Meetings & Incentives Travel Industry Awards 2011.

Behind the Scenes

The Facilities Team

Often unseen by visitors is a team of some 20 'Operations' staff. This team works in shifts, keeping the buildings safe and secure, clean and tidy and doing minor maintenance to ensure that we remain operational on a 24/7 basis. Much of this work can only be done out-of-hours and when the buildings are not in use for evening functions.

A typical day starts at 7am when the 'early' shift cleans the buildings before opening, arranges access for deliveries and assists contractors who need to work before public opening. The 'late' shift starts in the early afternoon and, as well as the continual cleaning, regularly transforms rooms from daytime mode into an evening function venue. Finally, the night shift starts at 10pm, providing support to functions and subsequently resetting the rooms and cleaning them for the following day. Occasionally the team empties – and collects the coins from – the Circular Bath, and empties and cleans the Great Bath. The team also undertakes some security duties although routine perimeter security is provided under contract by an external company.

The Facilities Team uses the Heritage Services van to support other activities. They take merchandise from our retail warehouse to the Assembly Rooms and Victoria Art Gallery shops, remove rubbish to waste sites, update posters in the Heritage Services poster boxes throughout the city, set up events such as World Heritage Day and transfer furniture between buildings for the functions in them. The van is also used to assist with external requests such as delivering polling station booths and ballot boxes around the district.

Finally, the Facilities Team includes a Workshop whose skilled staff undertake repairs to furniture and equipment as well as minor repair, plumbing and decoration work.

Iain Johnston, Facilities Manager

The Business Support Team

The small, dedicated Business Support team works on many levels behind the scenes to support the smooth running of the business. This includes the management and development of robust business systems, extracting and analyzing financial and visitor data to support decision making.

The team provides an on-site point of contact for managers and staff on all business and financial issues, and regularly meets with both to quickly resolve problems and queries.

The team also maintains the purchase and sales ledgers on a daily basis and gets involved in developing new systems to analyse and understand their financial implications.

Richard Hartill, Finance & Business Manager



Above: Members of the 'Ops' team staffing an information point at World Heritage Day, April 2010.

Left: Overnight cleaning of the Great Bath.



How to contact us with enquiries about this Annual Review 2010/11

Head of Heritage Services

Pump Room, Stall Street, Bath BA1 1LZ
01225 477760

Roman Baths

Stall Street, Bath BA1 1LZ
01225 477774 romanbaths_enquiries@bathnes.gov.uk

Fashion Museum

Bennett Street, Bath BA1 2QH
01225 477754 fashion_enquiries@bathnes.gov.uk

Victoria Art Gallery

Bridge Street, Bath BA2 4AT
01225 477232 victoria_enquiries@bathnes.gov.uk

Bath Record Office

High Street, Guildhall BA1 5AW
01225 477421 archives@bathnes.gov.uk

Learning and Programmes

Pump Room, Stall Street, Bath BA1 1LZ
01225 477757 museum_education@bathnes.gov.uk

Museum Shops

Pump Room, Stall Street, Bath BA1 1LZ
01225 477796/95 museumshop_enquiries@bathnes.gov.uk

Pump Room Restaurant

Pump Room, Stall Street, Bath BA1 1LZ
01225 444477 pumproom@searcys.co.uk

Heritage Hospitality

Pump Room, Stall Street, Bath BA1 1LZ
01225 477786/82 historic_venuehire@bathnes.gov.uk



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To receive regular information on events, exhibitions and new developments, log on to one or more of these websites and subscribe to our e-newsletters:

www.romanbaths.co.uk
www.fashionmuseum.co.uk
www.victoriagal.org.uk

This Annual Review can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats.

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14		

Front cover photographs:

- 1 Special shop merchandise to accompany The *Diana Dresses* exhibition at the Fashion Museum
- 2 Last portrait from life by Dan Llewellyn Hall of WWI veteran and local boy Harry Patch, acquired by the Victoria Art Gallery
- 3 Lace wedding dress in the *What Will She Wear?* display at the Fashion Museum
- 4 BBC broadcaster Kate Adie at the opening of the *Don McCullin: Shaped by War* exhibition, Victoria Art Gallery
- 5 Colin Johnston, Principal Archivist, with exhibits loaned by Bath Record Office to the *Life in Victoria Bath* exhibition, Victoria Art Gallery
- 6 Detail of *Caravan (no place like home)* by Edwina Bridgeman, exhibited at the Victoria Art Gallery
- 7 Mayor of Bath Councillor Shaun McCall with Heritage Services' Chinese agent Dr Adam Wu of the China Business Network
- 8 Liz Johnson from the University of Bath, UK gold medal paralympic swimmer at Beijing, at the London 2012 Challenge in the Roman Baths
- 9 1840s bonnet, displayed on historic wax mannequin in the *Behind the Scenes* display, Fashion Museum
- 10 Children examining Roman pottery during *Night at the Roman Baths*, February 2011
- 11 The first dance at a wedding reception in the Roman Baths Reception Hall
- 12 Young participant in the *Bits & Pieces* collage workshop during Museums @ Half Term activity, Victoria Art Gallery
- 13 Clive Mason of the BBC signing in the Roman Baths' British Sign Language tour
- 14 *Festival Spirit* catwalk exhibit at the Fashion Museum, styled with 1930s floral print summer dress and paste head-dress, and 1890s ostrich feather cape

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