

No. 1 Royal Crescent Interpretation Strategy

1. Executive summary

The House that uncovers Georgian Bath.

No. 1 Royal Crescent is a contemporary showcase for the life and times of Georgian people, set in a late 18th century Bath Town House it is a museum attraction with both national and international scale of appeal.

This will be conveyed to visitors using a multi-layered approach that considers our vision for the house and audience needs.

The interpretation will be throughout the house and features include the furnished rooms, multi-functional spaces that allow for museum displays, private dining and hire, retail, catering, learning, the welcome function.

Each layer will provide a different level of engagement:

- Welcome, introduction and orientation
 - A new, engaging and lively interpretation of the house
 - A vibrant programme of events and activities both cultural and commercial
 - Staffed locations to provide information and help to visitors
 - Provision for organised learning
- Interpretive focal points explore the following themes:
 - The story of Georgian Bath
 - The House and its History: how it was built and the contrasting lives of those who lived there
 - Political climate: War, rebellion, colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade
 - Famous lives: Henry Fielding, Thomas Sheridan, Hannah Moore, Jane Austen and other Bath personalities.
 - Transformation: Enlightenment thinking, innovation and the emerging Industrial Revolution
 - The House up close: Explore the paintings, furniture and objects in detail

2. Context: The importance of the house and its use to date

No.1 Royal Crescent is a Grade I listed building set on the eastern end of The Royal Crescent, Bath.

The Royal Crescent, built by John Wood the Younger between 1767-1774, is one of the most significant architectural features of Bath and among the finest examples of 18th century architecture and Palladian design in Europe.

As such it is a major contributory factor in Bath's designation by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. It is also a site that has an emotional resonance for people in many different ways because of the beauty of its exceptional setting.

The House was a domestic setting from its inception, undergoing modernisation in keeping with the times until it was gifted to Bath Preservation Trust.

The House opened as a museum in 1970 and underwent a significant restoration, extension and re-display in 2013. This project united two parts of the building, restored several rooms to convey their original use, provided a new contemporary area for retail, exhibitions and visitor welcome as well as creating a new flexible learning space. Many of the rooms that had been originally open to the public did not undergo any significant alterations during this project.





3. Background - what is the driver for change?

This strategy has been preceded by a rolling Museum Strategy that historically, has focussed on incremental change at No. 1.

Covid-19 led to the closure of the House and the loss of 90% of Bath Preservation Trust's income. A Culture Recovery Grant will cover our core costs until April 2021 and enable new investment in the museum.

Our traditional interpretive approach has lacked viability for several years, with reliance on volunteer room guides for interpretation proving to be under resourced and limiting in its appeal and interpretive reach. We are now able to respond to that challenge by creating a new, exciting and modern experience that is viable, responds to social distancing restrictions and moves away from the traditional room guide model, to connect with broader audiences whilst providing a rich connection to narratives.

Since the first lockdown we have installed CCTV and basic interpretation and have noticed a different audience visiting.

This is driven by the lack of visitor attractions that have been open, a lack of overseas tourists and foreign travel for UK residents, and a drop in traditional audiences who are generally in the more vulnerable groups in terms of Covid-19.

The grant we have received provides an opportunity to build new audiences whilst still engaging with existing audiences when they return. It presents an opportunity for real change through a more contemporary, exciting and accessible interpretive approach.

4. Method

The strategy looks at how the stories of the house can be told to the visitor, utilising a range of interpretive methods, both in the dressed rooms and other interpretive focal points.

The strategy has been created by:

- Examining the context of the house in its historical, local, national and international context
- Identifying the key significance of the house that should be retained and communicated to maintain its importance (this has informed the interpretive themes)
- Analysing the target audience groups that will visit the house, establishing what their needs and requirements are in order to understand how best to engage them with the key narratives
- Using this knowledge of audiences to inform the interpretative approach and design of interpretive features
- Establishing how the interpretation can be developed and managed for the medium and longer term

5. Conclusions:

- The house is a valuable heritage asset to be cared for and interpreted as such
- The current interpretation is lacking and needs updating, with links to the wider Georgian Bath story
- The house is a valued asset and destination for visitors looking to explore Georgian Bath
- Overtly commercial development is inappropriate but a sustainable public attraction is essential and scope for catering and retail is evident
- The house has great potential as a venue for events, learning and private hire if managed and marketed well, and in keeping with the vision for the house
- The audience has been and will be local, regional, national and international. It must serve both as a local heritage attraction and an international visitor destination.

6. Local Context

The location of the house at the top end of Bath presents both challenges and opportunities.

Bath as a World Heritage City has relied heavily on UK and International tourism and we recognise this will not return for some years.

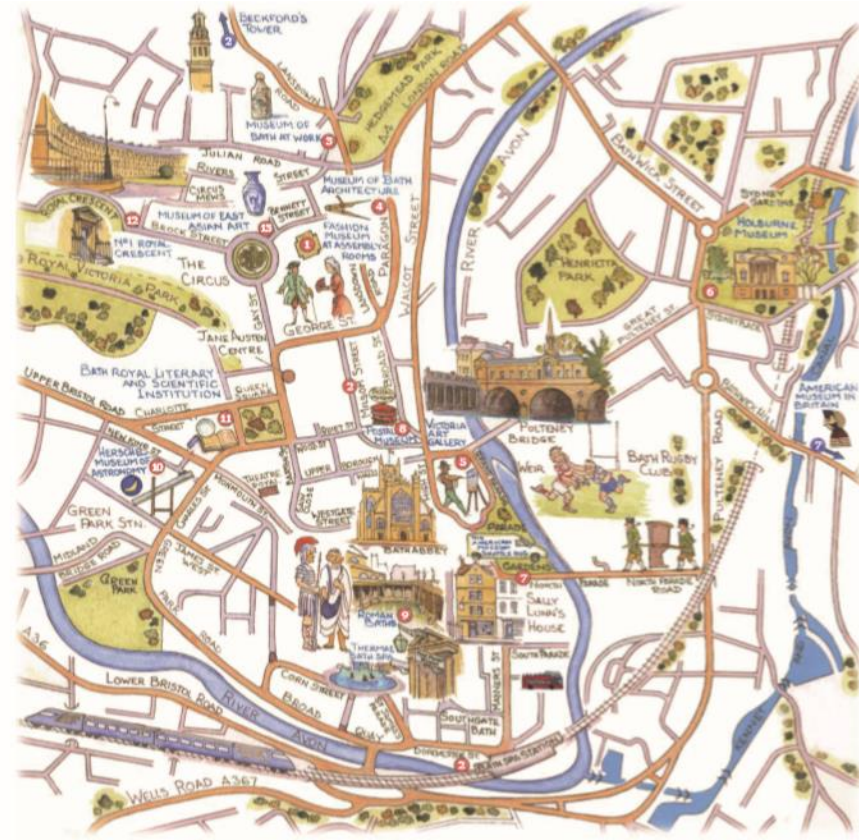
Even before Covid-19, the house was in a quieter part of the town and visitors to the main City Centre did not always make it to the house or Royal Crescent.

Since Covid-19 the Tourist Information Centre has closed and other nearby heritage venues including the Fashion Museum, Assembly Rooms and Museum of East Asian Art have not re-opened.

Looking ahead to the re-opening of the house in April 2021, it is more likely that more of these venues will be open and it will be important that our marketing strategy draws audiences up to this area of the City and encourages local audiences to visit regularly.

We also recognise the significant number of high-end hotels and guest houses within our location, with which we could work with more closely with joint offers. We similarly recognise the need to consider the interests of local residents and nearby communities.

It is arguable that an outstanding interpretive offer that appeals to current audiences will also appeal to wider groups when they return to the city.



7. Current status of the house and its interpretation

Strengths

- Physical significance of the Royal Crescent, a Bath icon and a must-see destination.
- No. 1A has had a negative impact but does provide a facility for processing and handling visitors without impacting on the historic house experience. It also houses the kitchen and scullery and a gallery that meets government indemnity standards.
- A strong base in terms of collection and interiors that would require significant investment for others to compete with.
- No. 1 RC is well established as the place to go to see a restored Georgian property. It is a home before it is a museum.
- The Withdrawing Room and Kitchen are both genuinely spectacular and fascinating, with integrity in terms of collections and the ability to really animate visitors.
- BPT is an authority and well placed to tell stories with integrity and conviction.

Weaknesses

- The human narrative associated with the house is weak - Henry Sandford is an authentic figure with relevance to some key narratives as will be drawn out, but is an unknown personality with limited public interest.
- No. 1A has created a negative aspect to the visit, proving to be a literal barrier to entry that removes any sense of a warm welcome or excited anticipation in advance of going into the house, which it is critical to address.
- The collections are aesthetically appropriate but, while some objects are related to Bath, the majority are not indigenous to the house.
- While No. 1 RC currently leads, it is part of a quintessentially Georgian town and would always be vulnerable to another more central attraction stealing its Georgian thunder.
- There are no servants living quarters and the naming of the 'Servants' hall' creates disappointment if it is closed to visitors. Apart from the kitchen, this service aspect of the house is over-promised at present, which could be addressed by splitting the current space as suggested later in this paper, as well as longer-term investment in new spaces.
- The interpretive style is limiting and appeals to a narrow audience.

Opportunities

- The size and condition of the house, together with 1A's facilities, makes it well placed to tell any story layered over the polished interiors
- There is a high level of salience for the 'Georgian splendour' and Jane Austen narratives, as well as the upstairs/downstairs theme, and Bath will continue to supply a visitor population aware of and interested in these themes
- The house will always be an architectural icon of Bath's Georgian period and the most accessible part of the Royal Crescent, a feature inseparable from all accounts of Georgian Bath
- The lack of an indigenous collection allows for more flexibility in display and interpretation than most historic houses can achieve
- There is scope for longer term development and expansion of the interpretive experience, including the top floor, where servants' bedrooms could be revealed

Threats

- An attractive interior is no longer enough for visitors. Even the National Trust, the definitive provider of the wander-round-a-period-house experience, now seeks to offer more at its properties.
- The National Trust's interest in the Assembly Rooms has temporarily receded but will return in the near future to compete on the Georgian splendour/society season/Austen themes
- Other Bath heritage sites are indicating an interest in showcasing the Jane Austen theme
- International audiences may take several years to return; No. 1 RC needs to live without them, but be ready and responsive in the event of their revival

8. Interpretive themes

The house presents the opportunity to explore a variety of themes where layers of narrative can interweave and overlap.

Stemming from the central theme of **The Story of Georgian Bath**, there are several sub-themes that are prominent and offer the opportunity to place the house into the wider context of the Georgian period and engage visitors with the history of the long eighteenth century.

We have recognised some of these key sub-themes as a starting point for interpreting the house, with the intention that they can be enhanced and added to in the future.

There is also the need to consider these themes within the context of the museum calendar that responds to seasonality, anniversaries, local events and other noteworthy activity throughout the year and as part of 3, 5 and 10 year plans.



Elegance&Inequality
Image&Reality
Profits&Products
Trade&Travel Gossip&Greed
Gender&Government
Façade&Fact
Pleasure&Poverty Status&Service
Politics&Politeness Public&Private
Money&Marriage
Writers&Rebels Leisure&Learning
Comfort&Commodity

Central Theme:

The Story of Georgian Bath

This presents an opportunity to convey life in Bath for the Georgians, in particular the role of a Bath town house, the concept of the Bath season, the contrast between early and late Georgian periods (Harlots versus Jane Austen!) and the shift from Bath as the destination for the elite to the last resort for the genteel poor.

We aim to set the scene in each room, enabling visitors to experience how it would have been used and serviced, who in the household would have been there throughout the day, what they would have done and discussed, as well as how they would have interacted with each other, either as residents or servants.

We will step away from visitors being ‘told’ about the house and instead, take this opportunity to enable them to experience it as a home, encouraging them to make connections to the people who lived and worked there.



Sub Themes:

1. The House

How it was built and the contrasting lives of those who lived there

This theme will explore the story of John Wood the Younger and how the Royal Crescent was designed, and the skill it took to build it. This can extend beyond the facade and also look at furnishing a house in Georgian Bath.

A broader context of how this connects to the wider story of the development of Georgian Bath could also be included.

There is scope to convey what we know about the house, historical evidence of how it has been used and changed over time, and introduce those who have lived it in since it was first made a home in the 1770s.

We can also showcase the work of Bath Preservation Trust through the restoration of the house, telling the story of how this was done, what we discovered along the way and what we still don't know. We can connect visitors with why the house is presented in the way that it is.

There could be scope within this theme to connect directly with the Building of Bath Collection at The Huntington Chapel and utilise the gallery space.

Learning through play will also have potential, for younger audiences.





Sub Themes:

2. Political climate

War, rebellion, colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade

Much of the Georgian period was hugely turbulent. England was almost continually at war with France, colonialism was at its height, and the transatlantic slave trade increasingly dominated economy and commerce. Acts of Union were passed, Jacobite rebellions planned and the American War of Independence was the hot topic of coffee house conversations.

The domestic lives of Bath residents would have been impacted.

There would have been soldiers on leave in the City and political alliances made, Field Marshall Wade resided in the town and Pitt the Elder retreated to Bath from the cut throat world of London politics. Transported goods including furniture and sugar were luxury items seen in all significant town houses, and many of those house themselves were paid for through the profits of slavery.

Collections in the house lend themselves to these challenging narratives. Mahogany furniture in the Dining Room, the globe, travel books and newspapers in the Gentleman's Retreat as well as the sugar in the Kitchen and tea in the Housekeeper's Room.

Sub Themes:

3. Famous lives

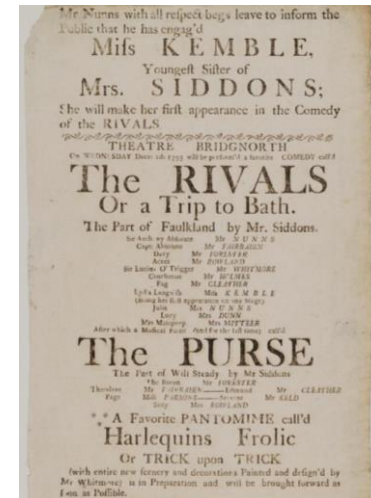
Henry Fielding, Thomas Sheridan, Hannah Moore, Jane Austen and other Bath personalities.

Many famous figures lived in, or visited, the city of Bath during the Georgian period.

Henry Fielding wrote part of *Tom Jones* whilst staying in the city, basing characters on well-known Bathonians such as Ralph Allen, whose portrait is on display in the staircase. Thomas Sheridan based *The Rivals* in Bath where he lived with wife the musician Elizabeth Linley, who eloped from her family home at 11 Royal Crescent.

Elizabeth Montagu, founder of the Bluestocking Society lived on the Royal Crescent, and along with actress Sarah Siddons, philanthropist Hannah Moore and historian Catherine Macaulay offer key Bath personalities through which the lives of Georgian women can be explored.

And of course Jane Austen lived in Bath during its period of change from social elite hot spot to middle class gentility and based two of her novels in the city. She writes about promenading on the Royal Crescent, and our house is typical of the interior settings of her novels, the rooms lending themselves to present certain well-known scenes.





Sub Themes:

4. Transformation

Enlightenment thinking, innovation and the emerging Industrial Revolution

The Georgian period was one of significant advancement in science and technology, as well as being an important time for cultural developments such as travel, art, literature and music.

Manufacturing and trade were at the heart of Bath's economy, and as enlightenment thinking moved into the innovations of the early industrial revolution, how the house was managed and maintained changed. The lives of all those who lived in typical Georgian townhouses were affected.

The house lends itself to this narrative, from the scientific interests of a Gentleman to the mechanics of servicing the house. The ways in which food would have been stored, laundry done and cooking techniques evolved, to how decorative items such as porcelain were produced can be explored.

This theme would also form important topics of discussion for those living in the house as these changes were introduced.

Sub Themes:

5. The house up close

Explore the paintings, furniture and objects in detail

No.1 Royal Crescent is rich with collections that, whilst not original to the house, are original to the Georgian period and significant in their own right.

We recognise that amongst the many visitors we welcome, there are those who are well informed about our subjects and themes and are looking for a deeper level of engagement.

A focus on the paintings, decorative art, furnishings, books and other items on display will be important, to provide a more in-depth exploration not just of the objects, but also those who designed, made and produced them.

Broader themes can also be brought in to this kind of experience. For example, porcelain forms part of a larger story about the introduction of high street shops and a retail economy, for which the contemporary relevance in Bath is clear.



9. Interpretive Threads

These conceptual threads will run throughout the interpretive themes and be made relevant to all audiences of all ages and backgrounds:

Innovation: The house showcases the invention and advancement that was a testament to the Georgian period, using examples such as the electrical machine, mechanised spit wheel and the very architectural techniques used to build the Royal Crescent. Our contemporary interpretative techniques will maintain that Georgian tradition of cutting-edge technology and sustainable practice.

Authenticity: The house has its own story rooted in historical and archaeological evidence. We aim to step behind the façade, bursting the bubble of popular misconception but still delivering meaningful impact for visitors. We aim to build an emotional experience based on historical example, with every dramatic fact coming from an evidenced source, to create an authentic story.

Creativity: The house sits within a city that is packed with cultural activity, inspiring creativity and providing an outlet for the arts. Our interpretation and programming will demonstrate a long-term commitment to creative outputs including physical installation and performance.

Learning: The house is a place of provocation, discovery, exploration and information - it challenges the perceptions of its visitors, inviting them to participate on their own educational journeys. Challenging the Georgian façade, the house offers both formal and informal learning opportunities on a range of topics: history, science, art, civic and local studies as well as environmental sustainability.

Enjoyment: The house will always be a place of engagement and learning with a sense of enjoyment and fun. The Georgian period was one of indulgence, entertainment and ridiculousness. Visitor enjoyment will always be at the heart of the house: its displays, interpretation and programme. It is a house that uncovers Georgian Bath for the people who visit.

10. Current Audiences:

- Drive time of at least 90 minutes
- Interested in culture and heritage
- Use disposable income for trips
- Over 45 or in a family group
- White, British and from the UK
- First time visitors on holiday
- In Bath anyway and staying overnight
- Visiting other heritage sites

11. Target Audiences:

Whilst we do not wish to alienate our existing audiences and traditional visitors, we are focussed on broadening the appeal of our offer to reach:

- Younger adults with disposable income
- Individuals and families from more diverse backgrounds
- Local residents and those within 1 hour of travel time
- Audiences with more diverse interests including the arts, leisure, popular culture, visitor attractions

We recognise that a new marketing strategy will be required that whilst reaching our traditional audiences, also aligns with our target new audience ambitions. Our commitment to ongoing investment in renewing the offer will require continual reinvestment in promotion.

12. Implications for Interpretation

There are some general practices that will help to meet the requirements of these audiences:

- Inviting entrances and welcome
- Accessible site - physically, visually and psychologically
- Easy to use self-led navigation around the house
- A range of depths of information to satisfy wide variety of audience groups
- Child-friendly facilities and interpretation, with activities for children, interactive interpretive displays, experiences that adults and children can enjoy together, family friendly catering, baby change facilities, etc.
- A number of different experiences on offer, to enable visitors to make choices about their visit and encourage repeat visits
- A lively programme of activities and events to bring the house to life and encourage year-round use
- Flexible use of spaces to enable public access, commercial activity and high-level income generation
- Knowledgeable and friendly staff



In addition, each audience has its own particular needs and requirements. These have been broken down below.

Target Audience	Implications for Interpretation
<p>Local residents,</p> <p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Individuals coming to the house with a specific purpose e.g. to visit the shop, communicate with BPT or visit the free museum in the current gallery space ■ Family groups with children ■ Local community groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sense of ownership and involvement that encourage repeat visits ■ Changing and varied programme of events connecting the house's stories with the interests of local groups, to encourage repeat visits and break down barriers to engagement ■ Creation of physical and intellectual connections between the city and the house ■ Promotion of events programme to local residents ■ Community hire space for lectures, parties, concerts and workshops ■ Volunteering opportunities ■ Targeted audience development initiatives to draw in non-users

Target Audience	Implications for Interpretation
<p>Organised learning groups, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schools ■ Higher and Further Education institutions ■ Lifelong Learning groups ■ Informal education groups and organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Built-in educational elements ■ Equipped facilities for learning ■ Resources and information available to educators, for use before, during and after visits ■ Educational programme on offer that responds to the curriculum ■ Easy and safe access routes for groups, especially the more vulnerable, children, older people, and those with disabilities ■ Group meeting points, storage, eating areas and toilets ■ Flexibility to cater to differing needs and requirements ■ Trained, friendly education staff

Target Audience	Implications for Interpretation
<p>Destination audiences, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adults with special interests related to the house ■ Visitors staying with friends and relatives ■ Regional, national and international tourists ■ Day-trippers ■ Visitors coming to events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prominent marketing campaign ■ High quality experience to rival other significant attractions ■ Links created between the house, its offer and stories, and the events programme ■ Sufficient visitor services to extend the visit, including entertainment, stimulation, enjoyment and facilities ■ Information available in a range of languages ■ Connecting with the visitors' existing knowledge by identifying links with other prominent sites around the world and international historical events ■ Collaboration with other local destinations sites of interest
<p>Virtual Visitors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Researchers and academics ■ Enthusiasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Informative and exciting website ■ Virtual tours ■ Information on research materials and repositories of archival material ■ Connections to other sites of interest



13. Interpretation Objectives

The following objectives have been set for the interpretation with the overall vision for the house and its audiences both current and potential

- To inspire, enthuse and engage all visitors to the house with its rich heritage and significance, past, present and future
- For the house to be accessible to all
- To enable a connection between the house and local residents
- To build on the potential of the house as a learning resource for all ages and abilities
- For the house to increase income generation through:
 - increased admissions from a broader audience
 - commercial activity
 - repeat visits
 - event programme
- To be sustainable in the long term - socially, economically and environmentally.

14. Design Principles

Understanding the objectives of the interpretation, the following principles will need to underpin its design.

The design should:

- Be visionary, high quality, sustainable and cutting edge - communicating a sense of place, of great worth, and imaginatively embracing the house for 21st century users
- Reflect the iconic status of the house whilst not overly intruding on the room settings - suitable for a site that is both of great significance and also an accredited museum committed to authenticity
- Appeal to first time visitors whilst also satisfying local audiences and those with specialist interests by using a multi-layered palette of approaches that offers a range of narratives and a vibrant changing programme of experiences
- Be accessible, comply with best practice DDA guidelines and be available to all
- Minimise impact on future capacity by making spaces multifunctional and linking experiences
- Be sustainable, and able to be built upon, adapted or added to



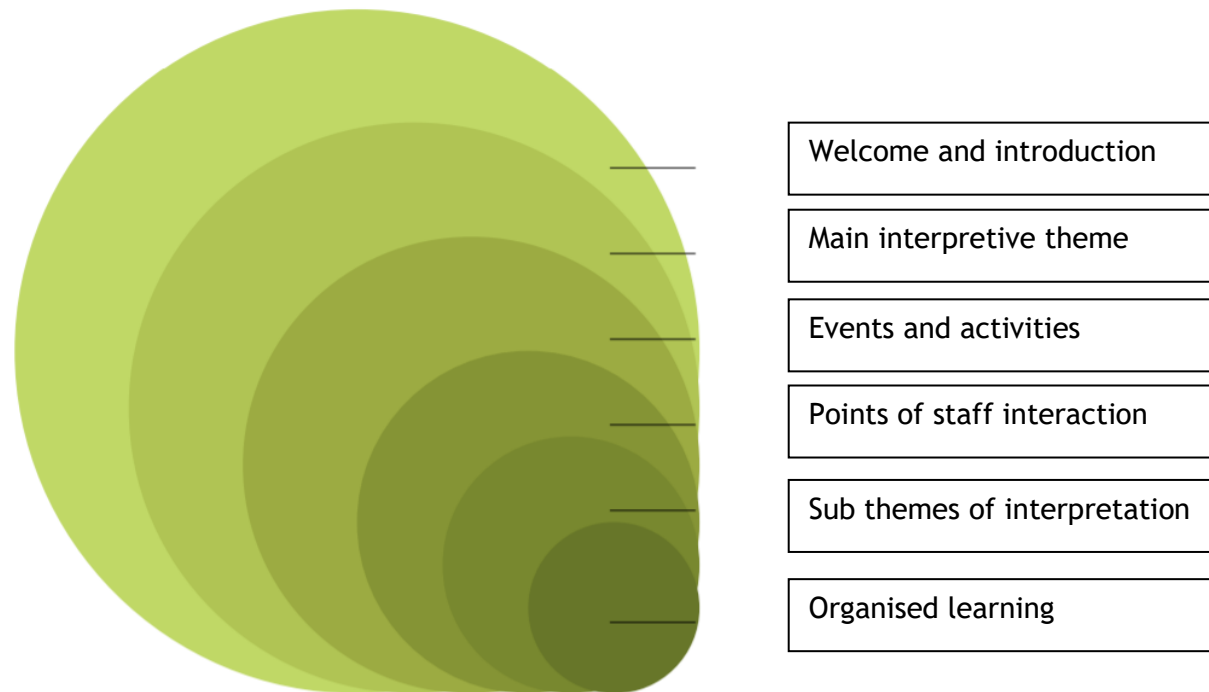
15. Interpretive strategy

The interpretive strategy can be represented as a series of concentric circles, illustrating the depths of information available to visitors.

It's important that they are all made aware of its value and are equipped with the knowledge of where to go to discover more if they wish to.

For this reason, at the lightest level, every visitor to the house should experience a clear welcome and good introduction, so they realise that it is an important place within the context of Georgian Bath.

At its deepest level, the house has a great amount to offer to organised-learning groups, both formal and informal, and therefore it should have the services required to function as an educational resource.



Each of the levels within the approach is expanded upon below

Welcome and Introduction

All visitors will know the house is important in the context of Georgian Bath. Through a clear welcome, visitors will be informed about the range of experiences on offer so that they can make choices about their visit. High quality self-led interpretive experiences will enable visitors to navigate the house and access the many opportunities on offer.

Deliverables:

Pre-visit information and marketing materials including an accessible and informative website, containing:

- advice for visiting, including information for families with children and those with limited mobility, for example transport and parking information
- promotion of forthcoming events and ticket purchasing
- downloadable content to support visiting



Prominent and accessible information to inform visitors:

- that this is a Georgian Town House
- options for visiting: interpretive experiences, events, facilities
- a clear route and ticket process that avoids cross over points and queueing
- about events in the near future
- where to go for more information

Clear orientation techniques throughout the house, for example:

- Audio-visual technology that brings each room to life and navigates visitors around the house for a timed experience that also manages social distancing
- In situ interpretation to ensure a high-quality visit for those not interacting with the technology
- clear indicators to items of interest
- defined routes where appropriate

Narrative highlights - Parlour

- *Georgian Bath*
Houses 'taken' for the Bath season by families (only children who are 'out' in society), couples, individuals. The Parlour is less formal room where breakfast is served and plans for the coming day discussed. Servant opens up the room, lays the fires. Male resident breakfasts first (before or after taking the waters perhaps), female residents breakfast in bed if they have been out late to a ball the night before, or come down to breakfast a little later. What are their plans for the day? Business correspondence and a visit to the coffee house or the pump rooms and shopping? Will they be 'at home' to visitors?
- *The house*
First house to be built on the RC, unoccupied at the start, 1A possibly acted as site-office for John Wood. Along with No.30 it is different internally than all the rest (actually smallest house on the RC). Although most were let for the season, ours was actually lived in for 20 years by retired Irish MP Henry Sandford - RC on the cusp of social change as Bath becomes a little less fashionable. Modern carpet produced for us from never before woven C18 pattern.
- *Political climate*
Morning news social announcements, who has recently arrived in the city, engagement, deaths - contrast to news discussed in Gentleman's Retreat which would be more political (more masculine). Tea/coffee/chocolate consumed at the table.



- *Famous lives*
Alexander Pope (above fireplace) stayed with Ralph Allen in Bath - Breakfast depicted in literature in Bath- Smollett (early C18), Austen (early C19).
- *Transformation*
Shops selling new products such as fabrics and porcelain. Wall to wall carpet as a result of manufacturing advances.
- *Up-close*
Alexander Pope painting and Ralph Allen engraving (with the other engravings as well are there too many men in the room? Why?) Bookcase bureau - male/female correspondence.

Narrative highlights - Gentleman's Retreat

- *Georgian Bath*
An entirely male environment, where the Gentleman of the house would conduct business, meet friends and study, served by Butler/footman, cleaned by female servants. An informal space for male company and relaxation.
- *The house*
First room to be built behind the courtyard curtain wall connecting No.1 with 1A service wing. Stairs discovered during reunification of the two buildings originally lead into courtyard. Room listed on Henry Sandford inventory, including an electrical machine.
- *Political climate*
Newspaper discussions on recent votes in parliament, the position of the Bath MP and Gentleman's home constituency/political friends, recent trade news, updates on war (France or America) and towards end of the period abolition, in stark contrast to the Parlour discussions of Bath gossip, (although horse racing/sport gossip would get a mention). Gender inequality in education, property ownership, money.
- *Famous lives*
William Pitt and politics, Elizabeth Montagu and the Bluestockings, Catherine Macaulay's History of England, William Smith, pioneer of geology, Jane Austen, her life and characters reflected in the room.



- *Transformation*
The Gentleman of the house is an educated man of the Enlightenment, who has been on the Grand Tour and is interested in natural sciences, philosophy, exploration, and technology (or pretends to be). Bookcases, and the objects within them, show these interests
- *Up-close*
Comforts of Bath prints - satirical story of life in Georgian Bath. Ironbridge fire grate - rare example showing the Ironbridge, the first bridge of its type. Dublin painting - connection to Ireland, land ownership and Henry Sandford in particular.

Narrative highlights - Dining Room

- *Georgian Bath*
A room where both genders mix, but is ultimately still dominated by men. Residents dined early in evening before going out to entertainments in the city. If not attending a ball or concert they might invite guests to dinner. What did they eat? Who were the guests? Who sat where due to social rank? What was ‘acceptable’ conversation at the table? Which servants attend the table? Is the food cold by the time it gets there? What happens when the women withdraw upstairs and the men remain at the table?
- *The house*
Bath houses rented as lodgings could come fully furnished, part-furnished or empty. Furniture and objects might be brought from ‘home’ (country estate or London town house) or leased from within the city. Our house was actually lived in for 20 years so contents would have been purchased from agents or sales in the city.
- *Political climate*
This is the room to show conspicuous consumption of wealth and products from the transatlantic slave trade. Sugar in particular, but also the furniture. Table talk of the men will turn to politics, war and sport.
- *Famous lives*
Gainsborough, Bath and the portrait painting market. Dining room scenes in Bath literature, especially Austen.



- *Transformation*
Bath was built around the healing hot waters, and an economy of health and medicine grew up around it, with advances in science at its core. The over indulgence seen at dining tables like this one was the source of much of that health industry.
- *Up-close*
Dessert Service and sugar sculptures on the dining table. Screen for Gentleman to relieve themselves behind (servants have to clear it up). Thomas Barker self-portrait - art market in Bath and portrait painting, Miss Evelyn portrait by Allen Ramsey - one of the best pictures in the house.

Narrative highlights - Ground Floor Hall, staircase and first floor landing

- *Georgian Bath*
The entrance to a house had to make an impression on anyone who visited, illustrating the wealth and status of the residents who lived there. Visitors handed their calling cards to the servant on the door, would be asked to wait in the parlour or led upstairs if expected/accepted. If you were not that important you would have to wait on the hall chairs. Who visits? Who is good enough to be admitted upstairs into the Withdrawing Room rather than wait downstairs? Who actually gets to use the main staircase in the house?
- *The house*
Hallways in townhouses copied in part the country house hallways, designed to be masculine and imposing. Ours is not the typical arrangement for a town house as the staircase would normally run the depth of the ground floor not the width, but we have advantage of the top lighting which is unusual for a house of this size. Nature of Speculative development meant that most of the houses in the RC are very different internally, but location of staircase is often the exception to that.
- *Political climate*
Collections in the cabinet of Curiosities - links to trade and exploration/exploitation. George III at top of stairs - the Hanoverians and Jacobites, American war of independence.



- *Famous lives*
George III at top of stairs (again) introduction to the Regency and the time of Austen. Sarah Siddons engravings - theatre/what was acceptable 'work' for women.
- *Transformation*
Japanned cabinet - new techniques in making being learnt and copied from objects imported through trade.
- *Up-close*
Cabinet of Curiosities and its contents. Allen Ramsey portraits on wall up to first floor. Architectural detailing of the mouldings and frieze.

Narrative highlights - Lady's Bedroom

- *Georgian Bath*

A private space for the lady of the house, but could often in Georgian houses be a semi-public space as women invited acquaintances to join them in their chambers or watch them being dressed for a ball. Role of the lady's maid, often taken into a lady's confidence. Preparing for a ball, what do you wear? Who will be there? What will they be wearing? Who do you want to meet? Who does your husband/father want you to meet?

- *The house*

Women could own property when widows especially in the middling class. This was vital to Bath's development with widows as owners of land - such as Margaret Gerrard who owned the land the RC is built upon. What other women lived in this house in its history?

- *Political climate*

Women and their place in Georgian society. Their ownership of property, their 'value' in a marriage. Marie Antoinette bust - fashion icon and French Revolution.

- *Famous lives*

Ann Damer portrait - women artists and friendship with Horace Walpole. Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire - female celebrity in Georgian England.



- *Transformation*

Women excluded from the Grand Tour - how did they learn about the world and contribute to enlightenment thinking? Elizabeth Montague and Catherine Macaulay (again)

- *Up-close*

Sewing table - female 'accomplishments' and education leisure activity for residents, way to earn a living for servants. Barbara Countess of Coventry portrait by Coates. Silhouettes - pastime but also domestic homemade image capture of family.

Narrative highlights - Withdrawing Room

- *Georgian Bath*

The most formal and elaborate room in the house, ruled over by the Lady of the house and far more feminine in its use and decoration. Ladies would be 'at home' to callers at times during the day and receive them here, and would withdraw after dinner leaving the men downstairs. Servants were called to attend them not stationed in the room (like in dining room). Tea, conversation and performance (social performing as well as musical) were the essential roles of this space. What did they talk about? Who did they talk about? What music would be played? How did it change when men joined them?

- *The house*

First floor of the house, the *piano nobile* in C18 Palladian design, was the most important in the building. The decorative finishing and furnishing would be the most sumptuous and designed to illustrate the resident's wealth and social status. What happened to this house when Bath fell out of fashion? What condition was it in pre-1969 restoration?

- *Political climate*

Conspicuous consumption at its height, tea, sugar luxury goods and materials, all came through the transatlantic slave trade. French fashions even when at war with France and the increase in French tastes and makers following revolution.



- *Famous lives*

Hannah Moore - Bath resident, Bluestocking, campaigner for women's education and abolitionist. Richard Sheridan and Elizabeth Linley - Theatre and music in Bath.

- *Transformation*

Music and the arts a key part of the Enlightenment as it moves into the rise of Romanticism.

- *Up-close*

Mary Delaney portrait and frame. Harpsichord - rare and still playable. Tea caddy and service.

Narrative highlights - Staircase to second floor and top landing

- *Georgian Bath*
The final stage of the main staircase ascends to the main bedchamber floor. More private space in the house, where non-residents would be unlikely to visit, with exception of a doctor, tailor or dressmaker (but they would have taken the servants stairs to get there). Less public, more comfortable. How would residents behaviour change the further up they climb?
- *The house*
The healing waters of the hot springs was one of the main attractions that brought people to Bath and 'taking the water' involved bathing regularly at the public baths. The design of some houses even included the provision of wider staircases to allow a full sedan chair to be carried (with a person inside) all the way up to a bedchamber.
- *Political climate*
Field Marshall Wade portrait - Jacobite rebellion and military presence in city. Ralph Allen MP for Bath - self-made man and rise of the 'middling sort' into positions of power. Satire and cartoons commentary on society.



- *Famous Lives*
Ralph Allen basis for Squire Allworthy in *Tom Jones*. Long minuet cartoon - satirical illustration capturing Bath characters - real life people, but also examples of characters in literature in Bath.
- *Transformation*
Sedan chair - Bath chair - wheelchair
- *Up-close*
Ralph and Elizabeth Allen portraits on wall so stairs. Wade on wall of stairs. The Long minuet engraving on landing.

Narrative highlights - Gentleman's Bedroom

- *Georgian Bath*

A purely male space where, with the exception of a servant to clean and lay fires, women would rarely enter (he would 'visit' his wife in her chamber). Attended by his valet a Gentleman would rise early, perhaps go to the Baths, and later return from a night out, at a Ball (probably left before the women did), a card party or dinner. Does he converse with his servant? What would he say? Is he taking medicines for his health?

- *The house*

Offers some of the best views of the Royal Crescent. Up close view of the capitals of the Giant Ionic columns - shows skill of the builders. Some of the features in the room were actually rescued during Sack of Bath from other houses that are no longer demolished.

- *Political climate*

Property ownership and power - When will he return to London or the country estate? Is there a bill due in parliament he is interested in? Comments on the 'new money' that are increasingly present at the Assembly Rooms?

- *Famous lives*

Dr Oliver and his biscuits. Contrast male characters living in Bath in Smollett with those in Jane Austen



- *Transformation*

Science - Medical advancements in the treatment of ailments that affected the visitors and residents in Bath - hot/cold water treatments, books on sea bathing starting to be published.

- *Up-close*

Panoramas and views of Bath on the walls

Narrative highlights - Servants' staircase

- *Georgian Bath*
Leads up to the attic floor where the servants sleeping quarters would be found. Highly unlikely any of the main residents of the house would ever go up there. The occupants of the attic would be using these stairs constantly throughout the day, lifting and carrying, clearing tea from the Withdrawing room, taking hot water up to the bedrooms, carrying full chamber pots down. First to get up, last to go to bed.
- The house
Design of the house had to accommodate the two-route flow of the two sides of the household. Lower rate houses (eg Herschel's house in New King Street) that accommodated less wealthy families, would not have the 'luxury' of a servants' staircase.
- *Political climate*
Entering service in the city would have been an advancement in status for many people, especially those moving into the city from rural outskirts of Bath.
- *Famous lives*
Servants depicted in literature? Who in Georgian England raised themselves up out of the servant class?



- *Transformation*
Can't wait for the dumb waiter to be invented!
- *Up-close*
Nothing - that's the point, functional, basic.

Narrative highlights - Kitchen and Scullery

- *Georgian Bath*
Noise, smells, heat, light - the engine room of the house would have been in constant use as cooking, cleaning and washing was undertaken. Extremely unlikely any of the 'upstairs' would ever enter here so it is utterly the servants' domain. What are they making? How long does it take? Where did the produce come from?
- *The house*
One of the best preserved Georgian town house kitchens in England. Original features survived through neglect and escaped the fate of most in the conversion of Bath houses into flats. Working kitchen - oven and hobs are operational.
- *Political climate*
Produce and products - where does the sugar and spice come from? How much does it cost? Brass items in the kitchen made at Saltford Mill? Similar items sent to Africa to be traded for human lives.
- *Famous lives*
Many of the lives already looked at musicians, playwrights, and actresses, would have blurred the lines between hierarchies in the house, and would have known more about these service spaces. Might even have had to cook for themselves at times.



- *Transformation*
Kitchen technology in the Georgian period advanced significantly, as cooking moved from hearth to bar grate. Rise of industrialisation so increased mass production of items in the kitchen, and in how the mechanics of cooking changed - dog wheel moved to mechanised turn spit.
- *Up-close*
So much! Sugar cone and nippers. Brass pestle and mortar. Original copper. Stothert oven door. Bread proving trough. Well under the floor.

Narrative highlights - Housekeeper's Room

- *Georgian Bath*
Social hierarchy of the working classes as ruthless and important as the hierarchies of the upper class. 'Taking' a house in Bath sometimes meant that the housekeeper/cook came with it. Some household brought their own staff from London/country house, others were hired in. What household management books does she have? What accounts is she working on? How does she go about hiring (or firing) staff?
- *The house*
Division of male/female staff in the house meant that the women probably slept upstairs in the attic, including the housekeeper, and the male staff slept in the basements.
- *Political climate*
'Honest' work for women - what other work was available?
- *Famous lives*
Austen a good example of where Bath was at start of C19 - genteel poor households where they probably had only 1 or 2 staff.
- *Transformation*
Education for women in the lower classes - what was available in Bath?
- *Up-close*
Candle box, sticks and tapers, tea and sugar.



Narrative highlights - Servants' Hall

- *Georgian Bath*
Households brought their own servant's or hired in. Personal servants (lady's maid, valet) travelled with them. Wealthy would have had whole staff from other permanent properties, less wealthy hired in. Some servants lived in the house, others came in daily from the outskirts of Bath.
- *The house*
Service areas of the house vital to not just its use, but its structure - they are the foundations that help keep the house standing. Designed to be damp - impact on use today.
- *Political climate*
Rights of the working class and poor. Only those who owned property could vote - limited power. What 'good works' would have been happening in the city to help the poor?
- *Famous lives*
Servants in literature
- *Transformation*
Migration of servants from rural occupations to working in urban settings - increases as cities grow through urbanisation and industrialisation.
- *Up-close*
Dresser, servants' pewter plates and glasses - contrast to what is used upstairs. Servants' rules.



Narrative highlights - Butler's room (potential)

- *Georgian Bath*
A butler was the principal male servant in a household equal too (although not always in their eyes) the housekeeper. Would come with a family from London or country house, but smaller households might have a butler/head footman. While the housekeeper would buy the food, the butler would buy the alcohol and keep it under lock and key away from the other servants. What would a footman have to do to advance to being a butler?
- *The house*
Potential to be made by dividing current Servants' hall as it would have originally been.
- *Political climate*
Visits a pub and sees the flyers on the wall, eg. Brooks slave ship.
- *Famous lives*
What secrets of these famous lives could a Butler tell us?
- *Transformation*
On days off could venture to tavern or coffee house, where discussion and debates of the day take place.
- *Up-close*
Wine inventories, decanting brandy, livery and boots, weapons?



Narrative highlights - Museum gallery

- *Georgian Bath*
Story of the Royal Crescent and its place in Bath's development and history. How has Bath and the RC have been captured in images through to its use in modern and representation in modern popular culture. Objects in focus. Learning and programming space - get further behind the façade. Connect with calendar of events, seasonality, etc.
- *The house*
Use of 1A as the possible 'site office' for the construction of the RC, originally intended to one on side of Church Street but never completed. History of the house and its restorations.
- *Political climate*
- *Famous lives*
- *Transformation*
Any of the themes could be explored in more detail through display and objects.
- *Up-close*
Blocked up window & flying flue outside
- *Potential to explore use of technology including VAR to create an experiential space, even if temporary in line with an event calendar*



16. Events

The house will continue to form part of the city's programme of festivals and events. It is recognised that ticket sales are successful when this is done in collaboration with wider events due to the limited marketing budget.

It is in this role that the house can best tell stories to its audiences, continually offering something 'new' to local and regional repeat visitors.

The event programme will be used to draw out the interpretive themes and link in with commemorative events, anniversaries and national initiatives. They will also tie in with seasonal and new interpretive experiences in the house, lectures, workshops, etc.

A programming strategy covering events will need to be developed to balance collection care with audience needs and commercial opportunities.



Deliverables

Spaces will be specifically designed to accommodate the following types of events:

- Entrance Hall - some functionality will be required to check tickets and provide technology to support the visit
- Dining Room - Georgian dining experiences and weddings
- Withdrawing Room - Jane Austen themed weddings
- Kitchen - Cookery courses
- Current servants' hall - there is a need to agree whether this will be split into two new interpretive spaces or used as a café and this will be subject to a commercial review
- Shop - current space could expand into the introduction room and form a new shop/café
- Gallery - this need to be a multi-functional interpretation, learning and private hire space
- The entire house lends itself to the display of temporary art installations

17. Points of staff interaction

The Museum Assistants currently play a very important role in the visitor experience of the house. Their role is twofold - on the one hand they provide much needed help and assistance to visitors, on the other they are a recognised point of information, offering insight into its rich heritage and informing visitors about up and coming events as well as the wider work of BPT. This role would be maintained and developed to support the new experience.

Deliverables

Information Points

- Visitors will be assisted through three staffed elements:
 - the desk in the shop area
 - the entrance hall to the house
 - one roaming member of the team.

These points have been located taking into account the ways in which visitors access and use the house, both currently and as predicted in the new offer, ensuring that the majority of visitors can easily access staffed points at the start of their visit.

Professional Development

- Training and professional development will be offered to museum assistants so they can fulfil their dual roles

Resource Development

- Resources will be developed, such as pre-visit content, self-led visitor experiences and family activity trails, linked into the in-situ interpretation, for visitors to pick up and to enhance their experience of the house



18. Organised Learning

The house has great potential to serve the community as a learning resource on a number of different Curriculum related themes for all ages.

The learning team offers a range of formal and informal educational activities on the site. However these are limited due to the lack of adequate facilities and support.

For this reason, we propose use of the current gallery as a much needed flexible learning space to support the continuation and development of our learning programme.

This will work alongside the creation of a cohesive learning strategy for the organisation covering all aspects of BPTs offer, involving Huntingdon Chapel, Beckford's Tower and the Herschel Museum of Astronomy, as well as a wide range of onsite volunteering, work experience, placement and training opportunities.

The physical facilities will be complemented by virtual resources available via the website. These will help educationists to prepare for their visit, whilst also enabling researchers, academics and enthusiasts, who are unable to physically visit the site, to be able to engage with its stories and discover where to go to find out more.

Deliverables

The creation of a new learning space in the gallery containing:

- space for 30 children to participate in a workshop and eat lunch
- adaptable for private hire for meetings, parties and events and within the space, host museum displays about the house
- It is our ambition to identify storage areas for groups

Information and Resources available to download from the website:

- Information for educators and guides to visiting
- Risk Assessments and other legal prerequisites for outings
- Identification of links to the National Curriculum
- Pre and post-visit materials and activities for in the classroom
- During visit activity trails and workshop suggestions
- Online portal for archival sources

Centralised strategic coordination of:

- Volunteering opportunities
- Learning and educational activities
- Training and experience placements

19. Interpretation management

The new interpretive experience must:

- Meet the needs of our current and potential audiences
- Adopt sustainable methods that will last for at least the next 5 years in terms of relevance, environmental responsibility, appeal and maintenance
- Consider our stakeholders including:
 - Visitors
 - Staff
 - Volunteers
 - Trustees
 - Local residents
 - Funders
 - The local authority including the World Heritage Committee
- Protect the reputation of Bath Preservation Trust and its role to preserve for the benefit of the public the historic character and amenities of the City of Bath and its surroundings
- Understand the needs of our current and potential partners including:
 - Universities in Bath
 - Community groups
 - Bath Museums Partnership members

20. Project Management

The budget:

£300,000 is allocated to the re-display of the house, including VAT and all costs and fees.

income streams

The museum will cover its costs and provide surplus income on re-opening via:

- admissions and gift aid
- retail and catering
- events
- film production fees
- weddings and private hire
- learning

The timescales:

The house will re-open for the Easter bank holiday weekend

The project timetable must allow for:

- Brief/Tender process
- Research/Procurement
- Installation
- Training
- Marketing
- Launch

The interpretation method must allow for:

- Longer term development/investment in the experience to allow for:
 - changing displays
 - seasonal narratives
 - new experiences