

Guides Information

Thermae Bath Spa has involved the restoration of five historic buildings and the creation of one new building of striking, contemporary architecture, the New Royal Bath. Alongside the New Royal Bath, the Hot Bath, the Cross Bath and the Hetling Pump Room combine modern facilities with a tradition of well-being which dates back over 2,000 years.

Visitors will find four natural thermal baths - one in the Cross Bath, one in the Hot Bath and two in the New Royal Bath including the stunning open-air rooftop pool with skyline views of the City. In addition there are four state-of-the-art steam rooms infused with aromatherapy oils, 20 treatment rooms offering a range of over 40 complementary therapies, as well as the Springs Restaurant, the Thermae Bath Spa and No. 8 Shops, the Source function room and the Spa Visitor Centre.

The Cross Bath is an 18th century open-air bathing pool and allows individuals and small groups to enjoy the natural thermal waters fed by its own spring in a more intimate environment. The stand-alone Cross Bath with its own changing facilities can be hired exclusively for a special event.

Thermae Bath Spa is normally open every day, except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. The New Royal Bath is open from 9am to 9.30pm - (pools and steam rooms close at 9pm). The Cross Bath is open from 10am to 8pm - last full entry at 6pm.

Visitors to the New Royal Bath can choose from 2-hour, 4-hour and Full Day spa sessions. For visitors to the Cross Bath, 1 ½ hour spa sessions are available.



THE RMAE
BATH SPA



In addition to bathing in the natural thermal waters, Thermae Bath Spa has developed a range of spa treatments and packages which can be grouped under the following:

Watsu - this takes advantage of the natural thermal waters in the historic Hot Bath

Vichy Shower - the power of pure water is used to cleanse, stimulate and soothe

Body Wraps - a 'mask' is applied all over the body before being wrapped in a thermal blanket, allowing the absorption of the natural ingredients

Massage - includes aroma massage, bamboo massage and couples massage

Hot Stones Spa Therapy - the heat of the volcanic basalt stones are used to stimulate warm relief and relaxation

Body Care & Facials - a full range of botanically-based treatments

Swimming costumes should be worn in all public areas. You are welcome to bring your own towels, robes & slippers or they are available for hire.

The time allocated for all treatments and spa packages is in addition to the normal spa sessions and include use of towel, robe & slippers.

There is good access for visitors with disabilities inside the buildings with special assistance chairs providing access into the pools. There are a limited number of spaces for disabled parking nearby. An access statement is available on the Thermae Bath Spa website.

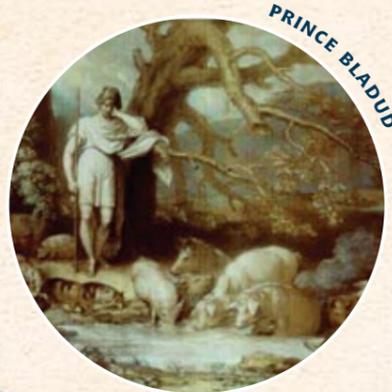
www.thermaebathspa.com

History Of The Spa

There is archaeological evidence that there was human activity around the hot springs on which the City of Bath is built at least 8,000 years BC; but probably the place was too mysterious, with steam emerging from a hot, lushly vegetated swampy area for any settlement to take place here. According to legend, Prince Bladud, who had contracted leprosy, was cured after bathing in the hot muddy waters. In gratitude, Bladud founded the City of Bath around the springs in 863BC. As documented by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his 12th century 'History of the Kings of Briton', Bladud proceeded to become the 9th King of the Britons and supposed father of King Lear.

In AD 43 the Romans started the development of 'Aqua Sulis' as a sanctuary of rest and relaxation, not a garrison town like most Roman settlements - despite Tacitus in AD 80 describing the taking of the waters as 'one of the those luxuries that stimulate to vice.' In AD 70, the Romans built a reservoir around the hot springs, and then a sophisticated series of baths and a temple dedicated to the goddess Sulis Minerva.

Archaeology carried out prior to construction suggests the baths at Aqua Sulis would have been nearly twice as large as previously thought and amongst the largest (and possibly the largest) outside Rome. This helps to explain why so many civilians from mainland Europe made the trip to Aqua Sulis for a health-improving holiday.



PRINCE BLADUD

After the withdrawal of Roman 'protection' in 410, Aqua Sulis fell into decline, although the use of the baths continued. In 675 the name Hat Bathu first appears. The Cross Bath may possibly be named thus because the body of St Aldhelm rested there on its journey from Doulling to Malmesbury in 709. An 8th century poem in the 'Exeter Book' describes how "a stream gushed forth in rippling floods of hot water. The wall enfolded within its bright bosom the whole place which contained the hot flood of the baths." It also describes how the roofless ruins of the Roman town remained standing around the bath, dramatic and mysterious. Alsi's Bath, later the Hot Bath, was probably named after St Aelfsig, who was perhaps responsible for building a Saxon bath to replace the Roman one.

The appointment of John of Villula as Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1088, after the destruction of much of Bath during a rebellion against William Rufus, was a significant development. A keen physician, he soon purchased from the King the royal property in the city and organised a substantial re-shaping of the street plan. The baths were almost certainly rebuilt over the Temple Precinct, and in 1138 the 'Gesta Stephani' described how "Through hidden pipes, springs supply waters, heated not by human skill or art, from deep in the bowels of the earth to a reservoir in the midst of arched chambers, splendidly arranged, providing in the centre of the town baths which are pleasantly warm, healthy, and a pleasure to see... From all over England sick people come to wash away their infirmities in the healing waters, and the healthy gaze at the remarkable bubbling up of the hot springs."

The founding of St John's Hospice by Bishop Reginald in 1174 confirms the extensive use of the waters and accommodation was provided for visitors to the Cross Bath.

The three baths attracted visitors from considerable distances, especially from the 16th century (note the publication in 1562 of the first medical treatise by William Turner on the use of the waters). A religious exile during Queen Mary's reign, he had travelled in Italy and Germany and observed many spas in operation. He suggested the need for substantial improvements to the drainage system as well as the behaviour of the visitors, and many were carried out over the next few years: a new drainage system, segregated bathing (this did not last!), and a separate Lepers' Bath (near the Hot Bath - before this, people with skin complaints had used the Cross Bath).



SULIS MINERVA



ST JOHN'S HOSPICE

However, there were still complaints about the absence of covering over the baths and the lack of changing rooms. Despite this, Bath was now starting to attract visitors from mainland Europe. Many doctors set up house in the 'Bimbery' area (the area between Beau Street, Bath Street, Hot Bath Street and Bilbury Lane, often providing lodging rooms for visiting patients. From 1609, Bellott's Hospital provided accommodation to enable poor visitors to obtain water treatments.

Royal visits in the 16th and 17th centuries increased the fame and fortune of Bath. In 1590, Queen Elizabeth 1 granted a Charter incorporating Bath as a City, including the instruction that 'the thermal waters should be accessible to the public in perpetuity'.

Princess/Queen Anne visited Bath regularly to take the waters seeking a cure for her gout and dropsy, which prompted the renaming of the New Bath to the Queen's Bath. These visits and aristocratic patronage set in motion a period of development in which Bath became 'the premier resort of frivolity and fashion' and led to the great rebuilding of the city to produce the 18th century layout and architecture of today's UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Bath water's reputation for being 'wonderful and most excellent against all diseases of the body' was compounded by the visit in 1687 of King James II's wife, Mary of Modena. After a period of being unable to conceive an heir, she was recommended by her royal physician to take the waters in the Cross Bath which resulted in her giving birth soon afterwards to a son, the 'Old Pretender'. To celebrate this event, the elaborate Melfort Cross was erected in the Cross Bath, which reinforced its position as the most fashionable bath where bathers drank chocolate to the accompaniment of musicians.

The publication in 1707 of Dr William Oliver's 'Practical Dissertation on Bath Water', with its emphasis on drinking as well as the more inconvenient bathing and a long list of diseases suitable for cure by these methods, helped to increase the attraction of Bath.

While the beneficial and healing properties of the water have always been acknowledged, modesty and decency have not always been inherent in Bath's 'spa culture'. John Wood the Elder writes at this time: 'The Baths were like so many Bear Gardens, and Modesty was entirely shut out of them; people of both sexes bathing by day and night naked.'

The arrival in Bath in 1705 of the socialite and gambler, Richard 'Beau' Nash, heralded a new heyday and he introduced a code of manners in the Assembly Rooms and Pump Rooms, creating for himself the lofty position of master of ceremonies.

In 1777, the Hot Bath was rebuilt to the design of John Wood the Younger. From 1783 the Cross Bath was rebuilt by Thomas Baldwin. When he was sacked by the Corporation, John Palmer took over and seems ingeniously to have moved



ROYAL CHARTER

Baldwin's north-facing serpentine front to face east along the newly created Bath Street in the 1790s. (Baldwin's plan for this street, together with Beau, Hot Bath and Union Streets, required the destruction of several existing medieval streets & houses, and much archaeological evidence.)

In the 1790s, the Great Pump Room was built to replace the now inadequate 1706 Room. While excavating the foundations for this, many of the first finds relating to the Roman Temple were made. Also at this time the Museum of Antiquities was created (now next to the entrance to Thermae), decorated in the niches outside with statues of Kings Edgar and Coel.

In the 1870 and 80s the Roman remains of the King's Bath were excavated by Major Charles Davis, while during the 1900s, Bath spa water was bottled and sold as Sulis Water, promising relief from rheumatism, gout, lumbago, sciatica and neuritis. After the First World War, thousands of wounded soldiers were rehabilitated in spa towns such as Bath. The public swimming pool at Beau Street was constructed in 1923 and the Cross Bath declined in status to become the 'Tuppenny Hot'.

In 1948, following the establishment of the National Health Service, the health authorities of Bath made arrangements to provide water-cure treatments on prescription but the Hot Bath finally closed in 1976 when the Royal Mineral Water Hospital ceased to use the facility, having built a new pool in the hospital. The Tepid Bath, and the Beau Street Swimming Bath, which replaced it in 1926 survived only until 1978 when the new public swimming baths opened in North Parade. The Council, as owner, was reluctant to invest in both facilities and the NHS as user had little further interest in the old baths. The death in October 1978 of a young girl from a rare strain of meningitis possibly contracted from the natural bacteria in the earth's strata through which the spa water passed, after she had swum in the water, was a further contributor to the lack of interest in investment.

Bath was the third from last of the 8 great hydropathic centres in England to close; the last, Buxton, closed in 2000. However, the Roman Baths and Pump Room were soon to become one of the UK's leading tourist attractions and this helped to establish a demand for the reopening of the spa facilities.

Delays in the opening of Thermae Bath Spa were caused in large part by the complex nature of the project and the difficulty of working with Grade I listed buildings in a very restricted site. The consultant engineers for the Spa believe this to be one of the most highly engineered and serviced structures they have ever come across. Other factors for the original delay included the extended period of time dedicated to archaeology and the necessity of going through planning three times, once in order to increase the amount of space for the facilities (the building is 20% larger than first designed).

Using the hot, mineral rich waters from the Kings Spring, the Hetling Spring and the Cross Spring, Thermae Bath Spa offers a genuinely unique experience in the UK - residents and visitors to Bath can once again bathe in Britain's original natural thermal Spa.



The Spa Project Buildings

The Bath Spa Project is a combination of new building and restoration. The centrepiece is the state-of-the-art New Royal Bath, designed by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners. A number of important listed buildings, such as the Cross Bath and the Hot Bath have been restored and the mix of existing Georgian buildings and contemporary design is what makes this such an intriguing attraction. The brief to the architects was that the new building should be of its time to celebrate the third millennium. Over 140 practices originally submitted ideas for the scheme, but Grimshaws were selected because of their innovative use of materials. They acknowledged they were not specialists in the restoration of old buildings and brought in Donald Insall Associates for this work.

Throughout the buildings, there is a clever interplay between circles and curves and the rectilinear lines of the cube. This more structured form complements the Georgian architecture of Bath and so relates the new building to its surroundings. In addition, the choice to clad the cube in natural Bath stone gave an opportunity to tie it in with the neighbouring buildings. While the New Royal Bath is very contemporary, it sits well with the surrounding buildings.

The materials include extremely sophisticated glass technology, especially in the new building. Glass is the most notable feature and over £1m was spent, which includes the glass envelope and the glass inside such as the frosted glass steam rooms. Other materials used include Bath stone (mined at Limpley Stoke), steel and naturally split Kashmir granite, which is used for the floors. Also of note is the lighting, which is of a very high specification. Much of it is fibre optic so that the lighting can be controlled and used to enhance the atmosphere of the Spa. The large areas of glass reflect the spa building and other buildings in Beau Street and Bilbury Lane and the sophisticated lighting and rippling effects transform the New Royal Bath between night and day.

Thermae Bath Spa comprises of six individual buildings of the following dimensions and listing status:

Building	Listed Status	Area sq. metres
New Royal Bath	-	2313
7, 7a Bath Street	1	734
8 Bath Street	1	incl. in 7/7a
Hot Bath	2*	451
Cross Bath	1	136
Hetling	2	345
Total		3979

New Royal Bath

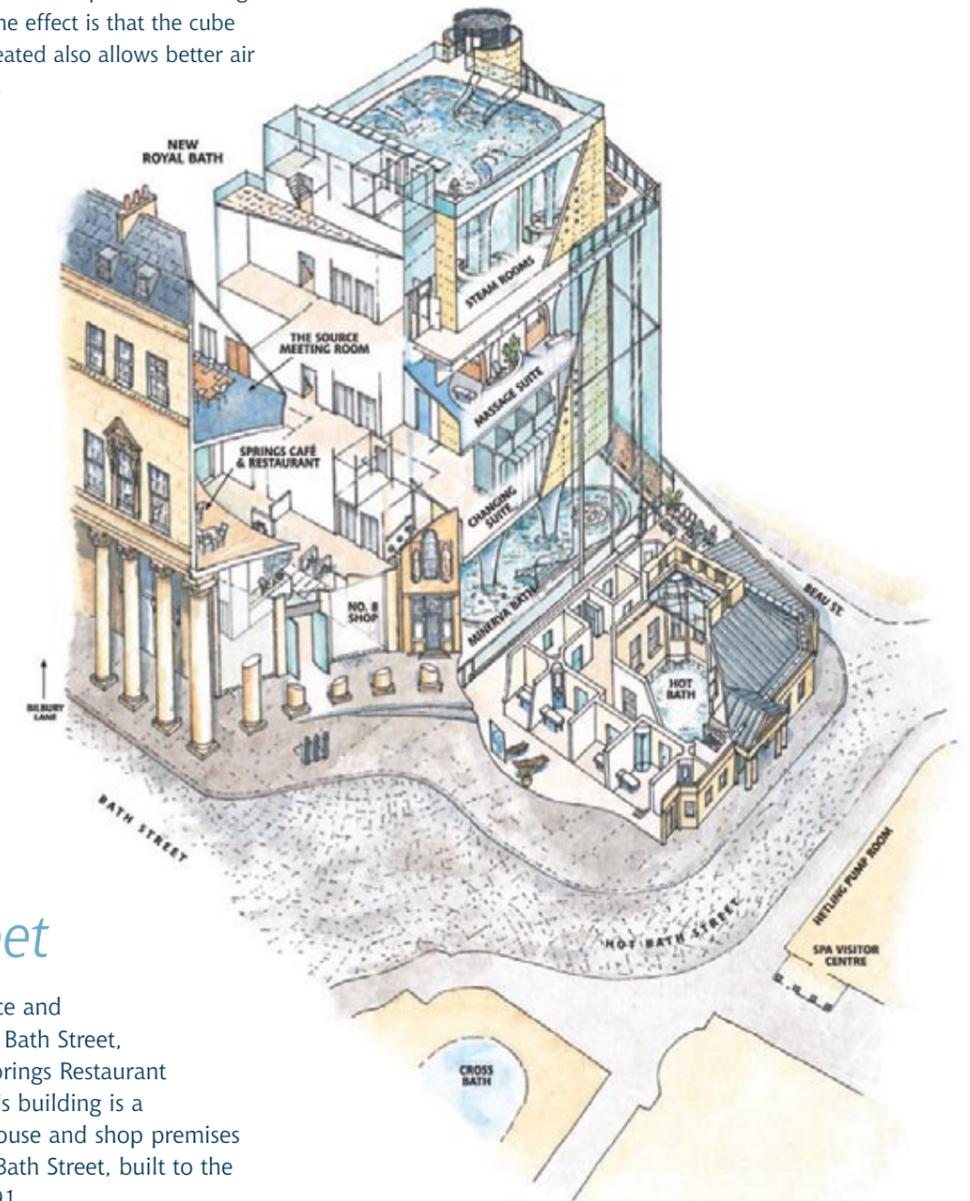
The new spa building is included in the new Pevsner Guide to Bath and has been built on the site of the 1920s Beau Street swimming baths, which was originally constructed by GP Manners in 1831 to house a Tepid Spa pool. Little of Manners' original building remained and the demolition of the Beau Street Baths in summer 1998 allowed archaeological excavations to take place.

Named the New Royal Bath, it houses the main spa complex. The concept of the design is a free-standing building including a Bath stone cube, which reflects Wood's Hot Bath building. The idea was to detach the solidity of the new structure from the existing older buildings but to link all the buildings in a very transparent way by enclosing the cube in a translucent envelope and by using glass walls and bridges between the buildings.

The New Royal Bath, with its cube resting on four great pillars gave an opportunity to create a large indoor pool, the Minerva Bath, in a free-form shape that contradicts the cube. The glass envelope gives a light airy feel to the indoor pool even though looming over it is the stone cube. The effect is that the cube is not dominant. The open space created also allows better air convection through the indoor pool.

The interplay between circles, curves and the cube are seen in particular where the top of the pillars meet the base of the cube. This shape is also seen in the circular steam rooms, the portholes in the cube and the shape of the rooftop pool where the circles make up the whirlpools. Architectural structure has significantly influenced the internal layout. The detached stair tower, the Rotunda, clad in Bath stone forms another circle. It is a vital part of the building as it houses the services and water circulation system.

From the open-air rooftop pool and terrace, bathers can enjoy views across Bath's skyline to the city's green horizon. Both the Minerva Bath and the open-air rooftop pool feature a combination of whirlpools, neck-massage jets and air-benches. Other facilities in the New Royal Bath include an innovative series of four steam rooms with a central 'Waterfall' shower and 8 purpose-built treatment rooms.



7/7a Bath Street

Strictly speaking, the main entrance and reception area are located at 7/7a Bath Street, the upstairs of which house the Springs Restaurant and the Source function room. This building is a four-storey, Grade 1 listed town house and shop premises forming the south west corner of Bath Street, built to the designs of Thomas Baldwin in 1791.



The Spa Building Project

8 Bath Street

8 Bath Street is a three-storey, Grade 1 listed town house designed by John Palmer in 1797. Known as the 'House of Antiquities', it was built to store archaeological findings uncovered during the 18th century. The statues above the front door are of King Edgar and King Coel and originally formed part of the 17th century Guildhall. The third niche has stood empty since the early 1980s, its occupant unaccounted for.

The Hot Bath

The Hot (sometimes known as the Old Royal) Bath is a Grade II* listed building designed by John Wood the Younger dating from 1777 and adapted by GP Manners in 1831. It contains a central thermal bath, complete with an aqua sound system, surrounded by a series of 12 treatment rooms. The thermal bath was sensitively roofed over and is now used for one of Thermae's signature treatments, Watsu or water shiatsu. Fully linked to the New Royal Bath, the simplicity of the layout has been recreated in the new scheme.

The 12 treatment rooms in the Hot Bath offer a range of spa treatments and house a 'Kraxen Stove' or traditional Alpine Hay Chamber.



SPRINGS RESTAURANT



WATSU



STEAM ROOMS

The Cross Bath

The stand-alone Cross Bath, which is recognised as a sacred site within the World Wildlife Fund for Nature's Sacred Land Project, has been restored as a working spa for bathing. The Cross Bath is a Grade 1 listed Georgian building partly attributed to Thomas Baldwin and John Palmer, erected on the site of an earlier medieval bath and standing on the original 2,000 year old Roman cistern. The Cross Spring feeds the bath today with its own supply of thermal water.

The discovery in 1998 of architectural plans of the historic Cross Bath enabled Donald Insall Associates, the conservation architects working on its restoration, to understand the building's true heritage. The newly-found drawings by John Palmer, architect to the City of Bath, form the missing link between the building as it is today and the Cross Bath as conceived by both Palmer and his predecessor, Thomas Baldwin, at the end of the 18th Century. This new evidence informed and guided the architects in designing an acceptable degree of intervention within the existing structure.

The design for the restoration of the Cross Bath involves re-introducing the oval form of John Palmer's Pump Room as the main entrance from the north side under the existing portico. The new pool also takes an oval form and overlaps the boundary of the pump room. The resulting intersection forms a pool to surround the natural Spring as it emerges untreated from its natural source. This acts as a focus, symbolically, geometrically and actually for the whole building.

A sculpture by renowned artist, William Pye and funded by a substantial donation from a Bath resident celebrates the emergence of the Cross Spring. A work of art made of burnished stainless steel is inscribed with the evocative words of the poet Ted Hughes: *Water is the ultimate life, pure as crystal, the divine influx.* This feature allows the water to rise naturally but the water is channelled off separately so none of this untreated water can enter the bath.

Hetling Pump Room

The Hetling Pump Room houses a small visitor centre plus administrative facilities. Established in 1718, the Hetling (named after Ernst von Hetling, who owned it during the mid-18th century) was one of a number of pump rooms in the city where people could drink spring water. It was closed in the 19th Century when the Pump Room moved to the Hot Bath.



SPA VISITOR CENTRE

The Re-Opening Of The Spa

During the 1980s, five bids led by commercial consortia (including Peter de Savery, Blakeney Hotels, First Leisure, and Champneys) hoping to re-open the spas for bathing failed due to the huge capital cost of restoration. None could be financed privately, and the Council did not wish to get financially involved.

Throughout this period of almost 30 years, local opinion supported efforts to restore Bath's historic spas and visitors to the city remained puzzled by the lack of bathing facilities and the subsequent waste of a valuable, natural resource. Also, an area of the city, rich in culture, architecture and history - just a few hundred yards from the famous Roman Baths and Pump Room - steadily degenerated.

In 1995, the new Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES), the owners of the spa buildings and guardians of the thermal water, was encouraged to apply to the National Lottery for funding for a new project. This happened in 1996 and on 13th November 1997, the Millennium Commission announced that the Bath Spa Project was one of around 70 successful applicants for grant funding from an original total of 2,000 applicants. £7.78 million was granted.

To qualify for Millennium Commission lottery funding, the Bath Spa Project had to:

- Enjoy public support
- Make a substantial contribution to the life of the community it is designed to serve
- Look back over this millennium and/or forward into the new one
- Be seen by future generations as marking a significant moment in national or local history
- Include partnership contributions to demonstrate the real support of the local community
- Not be possible without Millennium Commission funding and not normally be supportable from public funds nor fall within the scope of another Lottery distributor
- Be of a high architectural design and environmental quality

Three themes were emphasised in the application:

- The thermal waters are a natural phenomenon, which should be used and enjoyed
- Five listed buildings should be restored with genuine economic purpose and good provision of jobs
- And, with tourism trends changing, to consolidate and develop Bath's position as a leading tourism destination by adding health tourism to the heritage and cultural attractions.



THE THREE TENORS

The main partners in the scheme are B&NES, the Millennium Commission and the operating company, Thermae Development Company (TDC). The cost of the project is believed to be circa £40 million, with the Millennium Commission contributing almost £8 million, TDC £6 million and B&NES £21 million. (A legal battle and out of court settlement means that the final figure has not been revealed.) A further £500,000 came from the Bath Spa Trust, local fundraising and some other grants (e.g. KONVER).

A major celebration to mark the revival of the Spa at Bath took place on 6th & 7th August 2003 when The Three Tenors, Luciano Pavarotti, José Carreras and Plácido Domingo, visited Thermae Bath Spa and performed a spectacular open-air concert at the Royal Crescent (courtesy of YTL Utilities, owners of Wessex Water).

Thermae Bath Spa opened its doors to the public on 7th August 2006.

The success of the application means that spa culture will thrive once again, not only in Bath, but also throughout the UK, led by the example of Bath and the British Spas Federation.



The Waters Of Bath

The hot springs in Bath, from which the City derives its name, are a wonderful, natural resource which deliver over one million litres of mineral-rich water every day. Uniquely in the UK, the mineral water is hot.

The water fell as rain around 10,000 years ago and then sank to a depth of about 2kms below the earth's surface. Here it is heated by high temperature rocks to an estimated 69° Centigrade (156° Fahrenheit) before rising back up through one of the three springs in the centre of the City, namely the Cross Spring, the Hetling Spring and the King's Spring which supplies the Roman Baths. Once they reach the surface, the spring waters are on average 45° Centigrade (113° Fahrenheit). The waters then cool down to the optimum bathing temperature of approximately 34° Centigrade (93° Fahrenheit).

The Thermal Resource Project, an integral part of the original Bath Spa Project, carried out extensive drilling in and around Bath in an attempt to discover more about the actual source of Bath's thermal waters. In the past, guidebooks have indicated that the source may have lain in the Mendip Hills, 30 miles or so to the south of Bath. Whilst the source still remains a mystery, the most recent findings suggest that the rainwater probably enters the ground through areas of carboniferous limestone to the north, west and south of Bath. The water contains over 42 minerals and trace elements. The most concentrated minerals contained within Bath's Hot Springs are as follows:

Mineral	Expressed as	Concentration (Hetling Spring)
Sulphate	Mg/l	1015
Calcium	Mg/l	358
Chloride	Mg/l	340
Sodium	Mg/l	195
Bicarbonate	Mg/l	193



The temperature and flow of the springs has been monitored for many years by the local authority and this data is used for monitoring the potential impact on the springs of any development within or outside the City of Bath. The flow and temperature of the hot springs are known to be relatively constant.

Between 1983 and 1985, the drilling of boreholes beneath the King's and Cross Springs (68 and 32 metres deep respectively) ensured the supply of clean water. Thermae Bath Spa draws water from the three springs - the King's Spring (from under Stall Street), the Cross Bath (with some water rising directly to the surface of the Cross Bath in order to honour the desires of the Spring Foundation to let an unadulterated source of the water rise from Mother Earth into the atmosphere) and the Hetling Spring (a new bore hole sunk in 1998 and 2011).

The water is tested weekly and has been consistently biologically hygienic. There is now an online computerised monitoring system so that flow and temperature information can be assessed.

Bath and its waters have a long association with well-being and the word SPA is related to the Latin phrase 'Salus Per Aquam' or 'health through water'.

From the 1970s until the restoration of the Spa was completed in 2006, this natural resource went down the drain and ended up in the river Avon. Today, the natural thermal waters feed all the four baths at Thermae Bath Spa; the Cross Bath, the Hot Bath, the Minerva Bath and the open-air rooftop pool.



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