

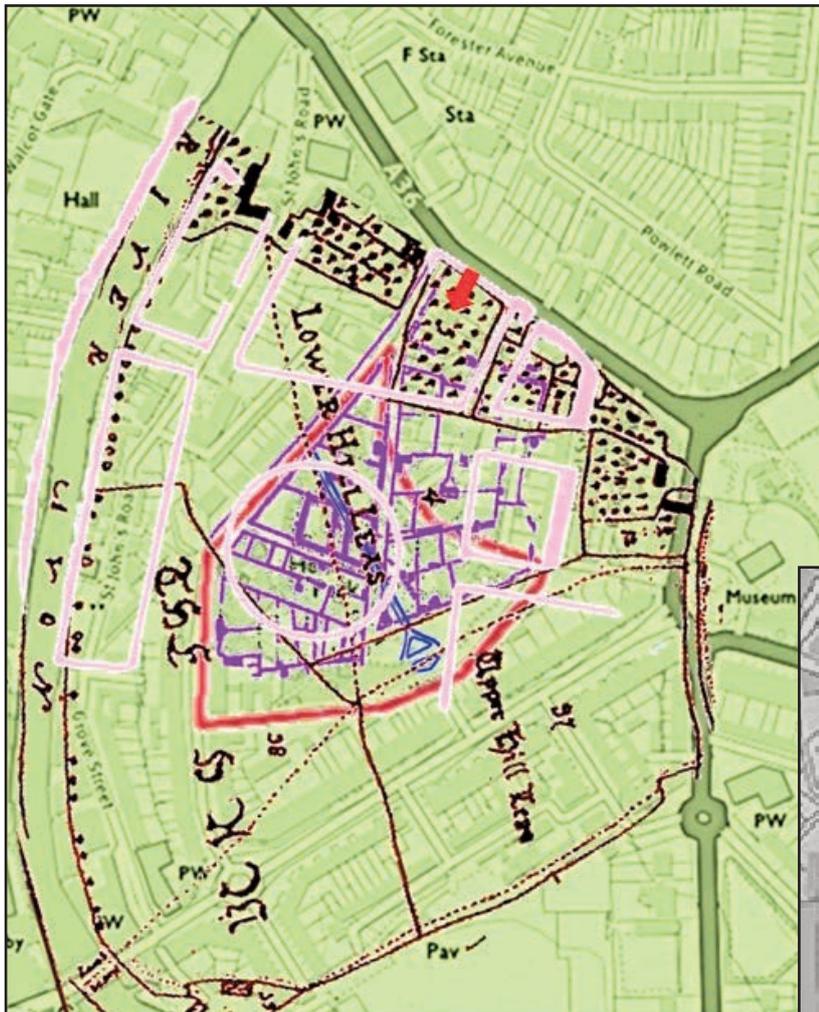
# Henrietta Park in Bathwick - Bath

## A geophysics investigation for a possible extension of the Roman developments by Bathwick Street

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Over recent years our information about the Roman history of Bathwick (e.g. Davenport 2000) has been added to by a series of excavations on the site of developments, most lately one next to Bathwick Street in 2013 by Context One Archaeological Services (Green and McConnell *forthcoming*). This included the uncovering of complex Roman building developments and a Roman road at approximately right angles to Bathwick Street. The course of this road (indicated by a red arrow in Figure 1a) points southwards towards the area of Henrietta Park. We decided to use geophysics to survey the Park area to see if we could obtain any evidence for the continuation of this road or for any of the developments extending into this area (Pryke, Knapper and Oswin 2016). We are very grateful to The Bathwick Local History Society (Bathwick LHS) for their publication of information about the area (Bathwick LHS 2004, 2008) that has given us good background for our work and to *Bath In Time: Images of Bath Online* (<http://www.bathintime.co.uk/>) for access to the collection of images of Bath.

Henrietta Park is situated in the river valley to the east of the River Avon. The area has been described as resting “on a bed of gravel that in turn rests in a kind of saucer of blue clay” (Bathwick LHS 2008a). This is a structure that holds water and is at risk of ground water flooding, and over many years when there was a significant rise in the river water table, water collected in the area was unable to escape. Drainage was provided when the current park was made by means of several catch (cess)-pits each six foot by three [1.83m x 0.91m] (Bath Corporation Pleasure Gardens Committee 1896). The attractive tree-filled park nowadays floods only occasionally.



**Figure 1a**  
Indicates previous developments over the area.  
•Henrietta Park is marked in red, as is the course of the Roman road revealed by Bathwick Street in the excavations in 2013.  
•In brown is the field layout in the first map known from the area, the Bathwick Estate 1727.  
•In pink, the layout of Frances Square, planned in the 1700s.  
•In purple the arrangement of kitchen gardens present in the early 1800s.  
•In blue the straight way wide enough for carriages across the open park-type area seen in maps and images in the mid-late 1800s.  
Figure 1b below  
Shows the park area and the current pathways.



Before the formation of the Park as it is now, there has been a series of stages in the historical developments in the history of the area over the many years. These are summarised in Figure 1a, alongside an image of the park itself, Figure 1b, showing its pathway arrangement. The current arrangement of Henrietta Park has remained relatively unchanged since it was opened in 1897 at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations. The land was gifted to the city by Captain F.W. Forester (Bathwick LHS 2008b). Most of the large trees now present were planted at that time and their progress can be followed in the images over the years from the *Bath In Time* collection.

For most of the earlier 1800s, Henrietta Park had been a more open area with a straight path/carriage way which ran across from Sutherland Street, shown in blue in Figure 1a, and featured in images and maps of the time (Rock & Co. 1860, Meyler 1846). In the previous century there had been a plan by William Pulteney to develop Frances Square (pink) covering the area down to the river (Taylor and Meyler 1799), to follow the building of nearby Great Pulteney Street and Bathwick Street, which was completed by the 1790s (Bathwick LHS 2008c). This development was not carried out due to a time of war and financial collapse. There was also a slump in development with the change to a preference for sea bathing. So in the interim, around the turn of the century this area was used as kitchen gardens (purple), as described in a plan from the Pulteney Estate papers (Rowe, *personal communication*). Before this the area had been open fields and the field boundaries and paths (marked brown) as shown in the earliest map of the area, of the Bathwick Estate from 1727 (Bathwick LHS 2004a). The names of these fields are Upper and Lower Hill Leas and the Ham, names which show the agricultural use of the fields: Lea signifying grassland and Ham an area of pasture by the river. The village of Bathwick to the north was described for the Hearth Tax of 1664, as having just twelve dwellings (Bathwick LHS 2008d) so, for some part of its history, it was only a very small settlement. However, it did have a grand house, Bathwick House, the core of which dates from the 17th Century (Bathwick LHS 2004b). The village and Bathwick Mill are both mentioned in Domesday. How much further back its activity during earlier periods can be traced is difficult to determine given the development during the 18th Century, nevertheless the accumulation of results from observations and excavations in the area is continually adding to the picture.

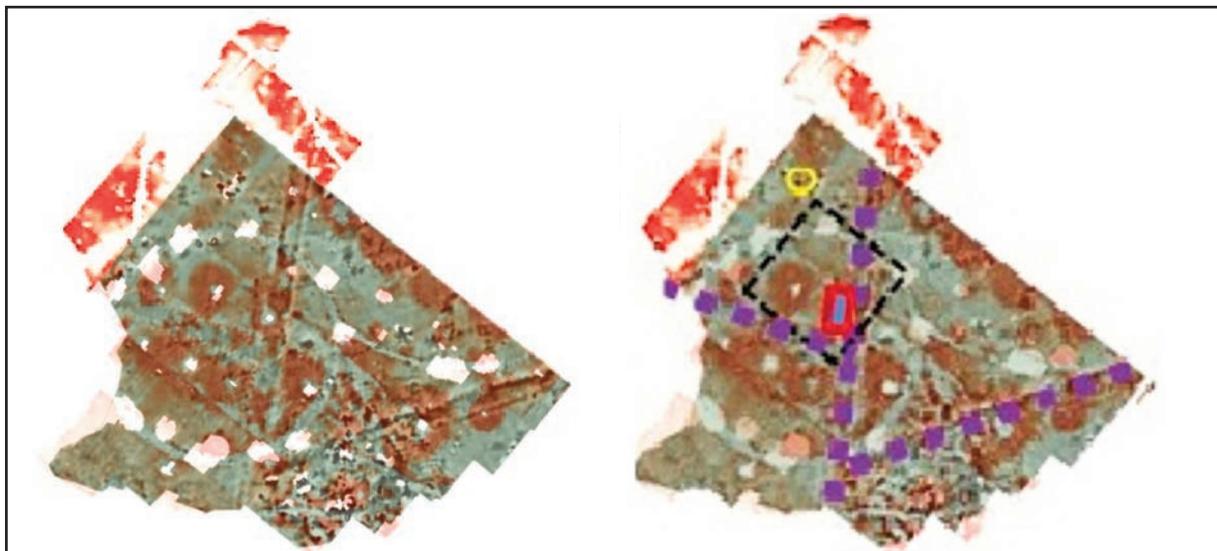
Our geophysics investigation over the Park area has also added to these results. Some of these are shown in Figure 2a and 2b. Figure 2a shows the image of the resistance results combined with the magnetometry results with an interpretation of some of these in Figure 2b. Several of the developments described in Figure 1a are shown in these results and these are discussed in fuller detail in our report. At first examination of the resistance survey results the pattern of the tree roots is a most prominent feature, their rounded areas showing their withdrawal of water from the soil, but several other indications can be seen around them.

**Figure 2a left**

**Image of the resistance (red) and magnetometry (green) results superimposed.**

**Figure 2b right**

**An interpretation of some of the major features from Figure 2a, and one of the areas we investigated in more detail marked in black.**



In these results we can see no indications of any pre-development of Frances Square and little evidence for the linear pathway across the area from the mid-1800s. The lack of remains from the latter result from the requirement for its complete removal as described in the design for the development of the current park (Bath Corporation Pleasure Gardens Committee 1896): there had been discussion while the Park was built about it being a right of way (Bathwick LHS 2008e). The course of this pathway is however just still visible across the Park in LIDAR images of the area.

A very clear result from our work is the linear pattern indicating the existence of connecting approximately 5 m-wide trackways, shown in purple in Figure 2b. These coincide with the pathways shown in the kitchen gardens plan in Figure 1b. These trackway images appear very pronounced for temporary kitchen gardens and profiling across one of them indicated higher resistance edging extending to 1 m below ground. There is evidence that at least some of these trackways may have been present before the development of these temporary gardens, for example, a 1760 picture shows a path crossing the open area (Bathwick LHS 2004c). However, none of the trackways we observed continue the line of the Roman road marked in Figure 1a. If these were to follow the kitchen garden track plan (purple in Figure 1a), they would progress via Henrietta Road to Bathwick Street, which is about 15m away from the excavated Roman road (Green and McConnell *forthcoming*).

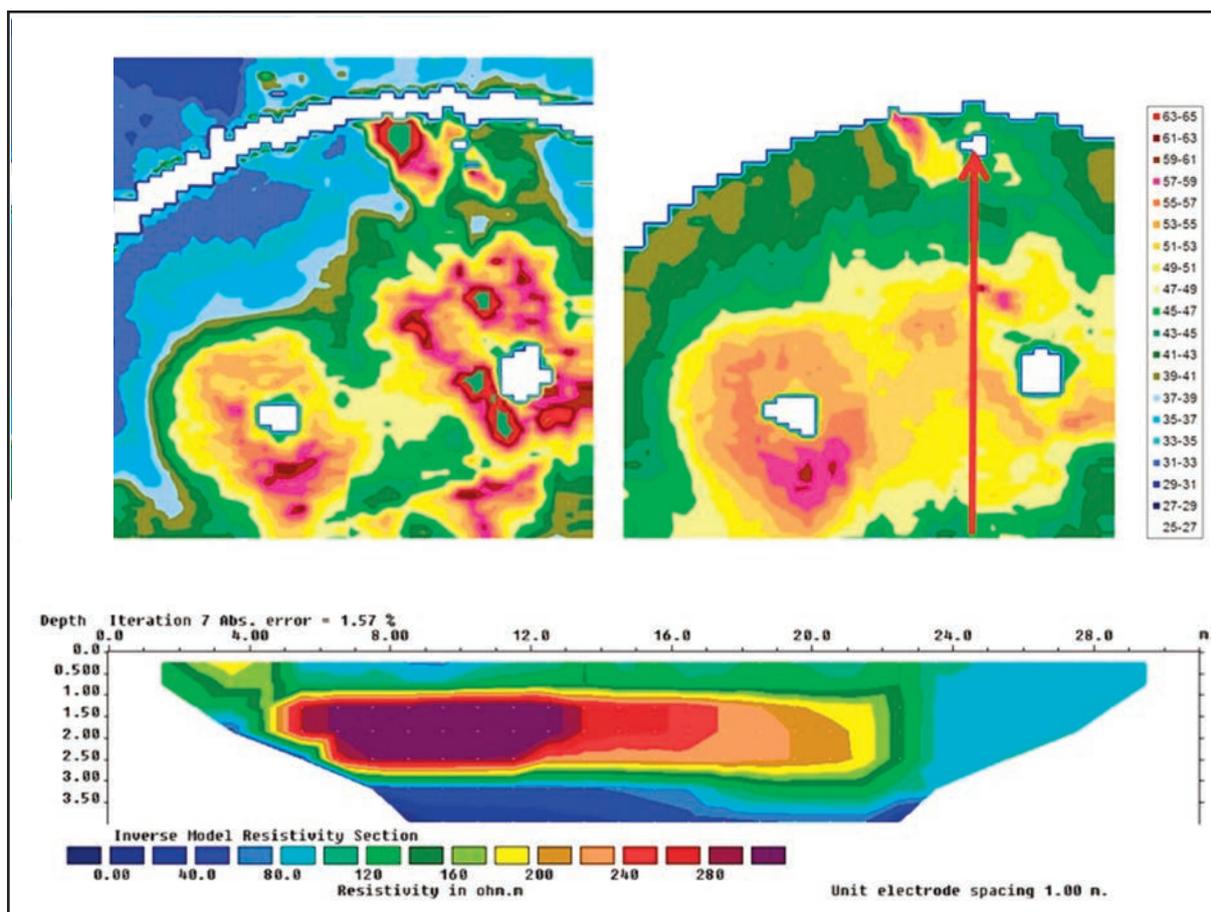
There are also results indicating other possible structural developments within the Park, and the most obvious one is in the high resistance response in an area parallel to one of the trackway lines, part of which is an approximately 10m by 15m rectangular pattern (outlined red in Figure 2b). This rectangle and the surrounding area is shown more clearly in a detailed comparison of two resistance surveys in this area at two different depths (outlined black in Figure 2b and presented in Figure 3a). Profiling across this area shows that part of it is underlain by a 2m thick, much higher resistivity layer, at 1.5m underground (Figure 3b). The results show this layer is at a shallower level than the high resistivity layer, assumed to be the natural gravel, which is seen elsewhere in profiles in the Park. The pattern shown in Figure 3 is complicated as our profile in this area Figure 3c, indicated that the high resistivity results are not coincident with the larger rectangular area indicated in Figure 3a and b. We also know that this picture may be affected by higher resistant areas under the two large trees, thus leading to lack of differentiation of the higher resistance between the root areas and any possible archaeological remains. In future other investigations may be able to tell us more about this area.

Some results are indicative of known features from the history of the park. The area shown in the magnetometry as yellow in Figure 1b – this is the site of the small meteorological station on the 1902 OS map. Stonework, evident on late 19th Century photographs could be the area marked by high resistance in Figure 2a, this is east of the black area in Figure 2b (Dutton c.1865).

There are other features not consistent with the known history: existing bank-work curves from the banking leading to higher Henrietta Road and Street buildings' ground level, this is not related to any known development. We know from *Bath In Time* that that there had been garden beds in earlier times in the Park, so there is always the possibility that such results may be related to past developments.

## **Summary**

The results we obtained show evidence indicative of the known history of the Park, as well as raising other queries. However, evidence for the continued course of the Roman road excavated in Bathwick Street is not indicated by our geophysics results. This roadway may therefore have ended above the Park or, if it did cross it, may have been removed historically. The many indications of trackways in the survey are consistent with pathways present in the early 19th Century. One followed the course of Henrietta Road to join Bathwick Street, west of the line of the Roman road. Whether or not these trackways are indicative of earlier route ways which reference an extant Roman route is conjectural and could only be clarified by further archaeological intervention in the area. Our results have therefore added to and confirmed aspects of the history of Henrietta Park. Hopefully further investigations in the area will add to these and continue to show the significance of Bathwick in the history of the Bath area.



**Figure 3a/b top**

**Comparison of two different depths of resistance surveying in the area marked in Figure 2b. (a top left) 0.5m probe separations, and (b top right) 1.0m separation – the results indicating resistance at a similar distance under the ground.**

**Figure 3c (bottom) shows a resistivity profile taken across the red arrow line in Figure 3b, showing a high resistant layer below 1.5m depth in this area.**

### Acknowledgements

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