

Bath Record Office holds a wide range of maps and plans that have been created for the Council or acquired in the course of their operations. Although the core of the mapping is Ordnance Survey, there are many maps that come from other sources.

As these maps are held in many locations throughout the Record Office stores, and are not yet catalogued, please ask staff for assistance in locating anything of interest.

Some maps have been digitised (as indicated below) and are available for sale through the shop on our website. You can also access selected maps – such as the OS maps – through the [National Library of Scotland's digital mapping project](#), and [Know Your Place](#).

Ordnance Survey maps

The first OS map issued that included north east Somerset was the first edition 1" map of 1815. This ran to several editions and shows little fine detail. The push towards improvement in public health with the growth of towns led to the OS producing much larger scale maps, useful for planning purposes, from the 1880s: 25" (c.1:2500) and especially the 125" (1:500) large scale town mapping of 1885/6.

The 25" County Series maps were produced in c.1883, 1902 and 1930 for north east Somerset, with an additional sheet in 1936 covering Bath. From the 1950s OS maps were surveyed based on the National Grid network, and these maps were issued from c.1950, being updated or reissued in metric from 1969.

The OS transferred to completely digital mapping by the end of 1997, meaning that the mapping databases are continually updated, and map sheets are printed on demand, rather than being issued in date-defined editions.

Holdings

As yet, the collections of the Archives and the Local Studies services have not been combined or catalogued, meaning it is difficult to give an accurate report of the holdings at present. Please ask staff for assistance in finding maps. Many of these series are available to view digitally on the [National Library of Scotland's website](#).

The collections include:

- 1" County Series 1st editions and later
- 6" County Series and 1:10,000 post-war series to 2013
- 25" County Series 1880s to 1936, and 1:2500 post-war series to 2013 [rural areas]
- 1:1250 1950s to 2013 [towns only]

- 125” 1885 town plan for Bath (digital copies of these are for sale from the [Bath Record Office Shop](#))

Plans based on OS mapping

There are maps that use OS maps to record information. Some of these were produced directly in conjunction with the OS, some of them were produced for Bath City Council by annotating a standard OS map.

- Geological maps – originally produced by a department of the OS, they are now produced by the British Geological Survey. We have a selection of geological sheets, mainly at 1” for the local area and beyond.
- Land use/agricultural use surveys at 1”
- Radford sewerage maps of Bath based on 25” (1:2500) sheets (c.1910)
- Bath Blitz – war damage and bomb site maps based on 25” (1:2500) sheets. (digital copies of these are available to buy from [Bath Record Office Shop](#)).

Non-Ordnance Survey maps

We hold a large range of maps that were created for many different purposes and at different scales that are not related to OS mapping.

General maps

City of Bath

The city has been well represented cartographically since its first appearance on a map in 1588. Large scale maps showing details of a town were expensive to produce, so it is indicative of Bath’s importance that so many were published in the centuries leading up to the introduction of OS mapping. NB The area of the city that is covered depends upon its size and boundaries at the time, so it may not cover the same area as the present city.

The most important city maps are:

- Speed (c.1610 – originally included in his map of Somerset)
- Savile (c.1610)
- Gilmore (1694 – including images of buildings around the border)
- Wood (1736 –an oval map surrounded by a description of the city)
- Harcourt Masters (c.1785, c.1800 & c.1808)
- Cotterell (1852 – including the original large-scale sheets used for planning and annotated for several years after their original production. Digital copies of these are available to buy from [Bath Record Office Shop](#).)

Although many maps were produced for tourists, particularly from the 1770s onwards, these are quite general in detail and often reprinted over a number of

years, reducing their use as historical documents. We have a significant collection of these and continue to add to the collection with modern tourist and informational maps.

Outside Bath

Maps of the County of Somerset have been produced since Christopher Saxton's map of the late 16th century and are interesting for tracing the varying importance of locations through history, but show little detail. Saxton's survey was used as the basis of county maps well into the 18th century with varying amounts of detail shown.

The last great independent county surveys were conducted by Day & Masters in 1782 and Greenwood in 1829 before OS mapping became the standard. We have copies of both these maps in the collections.

In 1742 the surveyor Thomas Thorpe produced *An actual survey of the city of Bath in the County of Somerset and of five miles round*. A very important survey, covering nine sheets, it shows much detail missing from the smaller-scale county maps. It also started a fashion for such maps and many single-sheet, simpler, versions were produced in the following decades.

Subject-specific maps and plans.

Maps were often produced for very specific reasons, rather than just general use.

Council Planning – The city council has produced plans relating to street improvements (see BC/22) since the 18th century. There is a large range of maps connected with various planning schemes regarding streets, boundaries, development areas, housing, war damage, and major projects such as the Buchanan Plan for reconstruction in 1945.

Infrastructure – Cotterell's map of 1852 was principally produced to aid the Corporation in planning the new water and sewerage requirements of the city. The collections include maps relating to the development of roads (including turnpikes), trams, railways, canals, waterworks (see BC/7/1), sewerage and electricity supply.

Goad Fire Insurance Maps

Chas. E. Goad Co. produced maps with details of the purpose and construction of buildings in city centres as an aid to fire insurance companies from the 1880s. The 'Goad Maps' of Bath began in 1902 and continue to the 2010s, creating a detailed sequence of maps showing occupants of buildings with basic information on their layout and structure. They only cover the city centre.

Cemetery Plans

In the late 1850s parishes created burial boards to set up new burial grounds to increase capacity. Many of the original cemetery plans survive within the Burial Board papers BC/16.

Tithe Maps ([Research Guide available](#))

Tithe maps were produced in the mid-19th century as part of a country-wide process of updating the tithing system in England and Wales. Detailed plans of each parish were produced with written apportionments detailing the quality and size of each parcel of land, as well as ownership and occupation. Whilst we do not own the originals of these maps and documents, we have digital copies of the maps and transcripts of the apportionments for the parishes within Bath & North East Somerset (digital copies of the maps can be bought through the [Bath Record Office Shop](#)).

Estate Plans

Outside town centres, only estate plans provide early large-scale mapping not associated with government or military maps. In the city of Bath there were three estates that produced such plans:

- Ralph Allen's estate from Claverton, over Bathampton Down to the River Avon at Widcombe (Digital copies of this are available to buy from Bath Record Office – please ask)
- Rivers-Gay estate that covered much of Walcot from the city centre to Charlcombe
- Duke of Kingston's estate that was concentrated in the south-east corner of the city centre, and had been part of the Abbey precincts

We also have copies of plans relating to the Earl of Warwick's estates around Clutton. There are more estate plans available in [Somerset Heritage Centre](#) relating to estates outside Bath.