



Pittville Pump Room – Cheltenham’s heritage focal point

Our **vision** is for Pittville Pump Room to be **Cheltenham’s heritage focal point**, where spa culture and the Regency period are celebrated. The visitor experience should be of the highest quality, reflecting the Pump Room’s Grade I listed status.

1. Celebrating the mineral water

1. Preserve and celebrate the mineral water which is central to Cheltenham’s heritage.
2. Provide an opportunity to “take the waters” as part of the visitor experience. This is, after all, why the Pump Room exists.
3. Bottle the mineral water for purchase – either as a souvenir or for consumption – at the Pump Room and other retail outlets.

2. What enhancements could be made to the spa water experience?

1. Move the fountain and tap back to their original position on the other side of the apse, rather than hiding them away.
2. Recreate the statues which once decorated the area around the fountain.
3. Renovate and display the original large cast iron hand-cranked pump, which is still intact in the basement.
4. Introduce period costumes for staff and volunteer guides to serve visitors and provide information.
5. Invite schools to sample the Pump Room experience.

3. What else should the Pump Room offer?

1. Install a multimedia display celebrating the Regency period, with a focus on the spa culture of the 18th and 19th centuries and its importance for Cheltenham.
2. Promote the use of the building for other displays and exhibitions.
3. Encourage greater use of the Pump Room by the various festivals.
4. Provide a high quality interior tea room/coffee shop (see below).
5. Provide a gift shop on site selling high quality products.
6. Sell local products and host live demonstrations.
7. Provide a dedicated space for community use, for example in one of the upstairs rooms.
8. Make full use of the outside space and its park setting for music, dance, theatre and live events of all kinds.

4. **A first-class tea room and coffee shop**

1. Offer a first-class interior tea room/coffee shop as a central (but optional) part of the Pump Room experience.
2. Include a more casual alfresco option within the outside portico, similar to the popular Heritage Cafe opened in 2020.
3. Open the balcony with its spectacular views in the summer for daytime and evening events.

5. **What other enhancements could be made to the Pump Room?**

1. Reinstate the statues that were removed from the niches in the main hall during the 1960s refurbishment and never replaced.
2. Display appropriate works of art and other items from council and private collections.
3. Make the main entrance more welcoming and support the planned restoration of the area in front of the Pump Room.

6. **Integration with the town**

1. Add Pittville Pump Room as a defined stop for existing bus services.
2. Manage the car park to better cater for both park and Pump Room visitors.
3. Establish a fully integrated walking and cycling route connecting the Pump Room to the town via the Holst Museum, Pittville Gates and Pittville Park.
4. Provide a new dedicated transport service linking the Suffolks and Montpellier to the Promenade, and then to the Pump Room and the Racecourse Park and Ride.

7. **What are the costs and profit opportunities?**

1. The wider economic benefits to the area of a heritage-based approach need to be taken into account; see the most recent Historic England report on *Heritage and the Economy* at <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy>.
2. A vibrant, accessible and stimulating heritage experience will be a vital ingredient in bids for heritage sector funding streams.
3. Non-intrusive commercial sponsorship should be explored at every opportunity and donations/legacies actively encouraged.
4. A catering contract at such an iconic venue would attract tenders from first class organisations and this contract alone is likely to be worth over £250,000 p.a.
5. Private hire such as weddings should still be a significant source of income, but this should not override all other considerations and should be balanced against the needs of visitors and the local community.

We believe this vision can only be achieved when the Pump Room is run by an organisation which can provide the dedicated and professional focus which it deserves. This could be a public sector, voluntary sector, private sector or partnership arrangement - but its mandate needs to acknowledge the Pump Room's status as Cheltenham's most important heritage building, and enable it to thrive as a major asset to Cheltenham and the region.