

	BATH ABBEY Timeline
Iron Age c750 BC	The history of Bath is intrinsically linked with the natural hot springs that the city is founded upon. The first shrine at the site was built by an iron age tribe called the Dobonni who dedicated it to the goddess Sulis, who they believed possessed healing powers.
60 AD	During the Roman occupation of 43AD, they came across the thermal spring and built a modest temple over it, also believing the hot spring to have healing powers. Later in the second century a suite of Roman baths were built, and the settlement now named Aquae Sulis grew in size as people came for health cures and recreation. After the Romans departed in c400 AD the buildings became ruined through neglect.
675 AD	The King of the Hwicce granted Abbess Berta 100 hides to establish a monastery under the patronage of the Bishop of Worcester. A hundred years later King Offa of Mercia paid for the rebuilding of the monastic church (presumably in stone).
973 AD	King Edgar was crowned King of all England in Bath Abbey attended by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. He encouraged the Abbot to adopt the Rule of St Benedict, monks could no longer be married. The Abbot Alphege (later to become Archbishop of Canterbury) was martyred in 1012 by Viking raiders and later canonised as St Alphege.
1088-1155	After the Norman conquest John of Tours was made Bishop of Wells and Abbot of Bath. He purchased from King William the monastic land in Bath and further land to enlarge the town and 2 years later he followed the norman practice of moving the bishopric from Wells (a smaller settlement) to Bath which was much more prosperous and set about fortifying the town with a castle. A new Cathedral Priory on a grand scale was founded in 1090, but building work moved slowly. By 1122 only the Ambulatory was completed, and in 1137 the east end was complete, but a fire devastated the cathedral. In 1155 it was finally completed under Bishop Robert.
1197-1245	Bishop Fitz Geldwin moved the bishopric from Bath to Glastonbury, but the monks and abbot of Glastonbury did not accept this move and in 1219 the bishopric (now under Jocelyn of Wells) was returned to Bath. Pope Innocent 4 th now allowed the next Bishop (Roger of Salisbury) to relocate the bishopric to Wells, becoming the first Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1245. Wells was founded as a Dean and Chapter Cathedral (like Salisbury) and was now to embark on a major rebuild in the second half of the 13 th century, tripling its size, whereas Bath Cathedral returned to Abbey status and slow decline.
1495-1535	Bishop Oliver King was dismayed at the decline of Bath Abbey, its leaking roof and worse its reputation of having succumbed to the temptations of the flesh. He directed the Prior to undertake a major programme of rebuilding the Abbey, on a smaller scale to the existing buildings. Master masons Robert and John Vertue were employed and

	<p>their design in the perpendicular style is the one we see today (although many enhancements were made in the 19th century by GG Scott who completed the fan vaulting in the nave in 1860s). The Abbey was completely rebuilt in the late perpendicular style.</p>
1539-1616	<p>At the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Prior Holloway surrendered the Priory to the King's Commissioners, who sold the Abbey to Humphrey Colles of Taunton who promptly stripped the abbey of its lead roof, ironwork and stained glass, to sell on to the highest bidder. The stone shell was then sold to Matthew Coldhurst of Wardour Castle in 1543 who gave the ruins to Bath Corporation in 1572.</p> <p>Queen Elizabeth 1st promoted the restoration of the building as the Grand Parish Church of Bath and set up a national fund for its restoration. It was accepted as the parish Church in 1583 and in 1608-16 was given a new lead roof by Bishop Montague. Being a parish church (no longer an Abbey) it largely escaped the depredations of the Civil War period. The claustral buildings were mostly removed during this period and later in the 18th century, to allow for radical changes to be made in the centre of the town.</p>
1750-1890	<p>In the mid 17th century the City of Bath attracted great prosperity as wealthy people came to 'take the waters' hoping for relief from many and various health ailments. The town attracted royalty, the aristocracy, the upper middle classes, and artists such as Gainsborough and Reynolds fed the demand for fine portraits. The architect John Wood created the new town with its crescents and terraces, mostly in the Palladian style. The former Abbey now filled with plaques and monuments to the wealthy and famous (over 600 wall memorials and 847 floor memorials).</p> <p>A major scheme of restoration began in 1820-30 when the City Architect G.F. Manners added flying buttresses and pinnacles to the upper walls externally. He also demolished remnants of the claustral buildings to give a better setting for the church in its central position, next door to the Pump House.</p> <p>From 1860-90, G.G. Scott was engaged to complete the internal fan vaulting in the nave and aisles in Bath stone, to exactly the same design as in the 16th century, replacing flat ceilings. Scott also removed the stone pulpitum from the crossing to give a more open central space.</p>