

The National Trust's work in towns and cities



The National Trust



National Trust

500+ historic sites

One fifth of coastline

250k hectares land

50k volunteers

5.4m Members

2m scones

Our goal is to deliver benefit to the nation through restoring nature, ending unequal access to nature, history and beauty, and inspiring millions to care and take action

Our strategy

Our **three goals for 2050** and a fourth showing how we will serve them in the next decade.



Restore nature: not just on National Trust land, but everywhere



End unequal access to nature, beauty and history



Inspire millions more people to care and take action

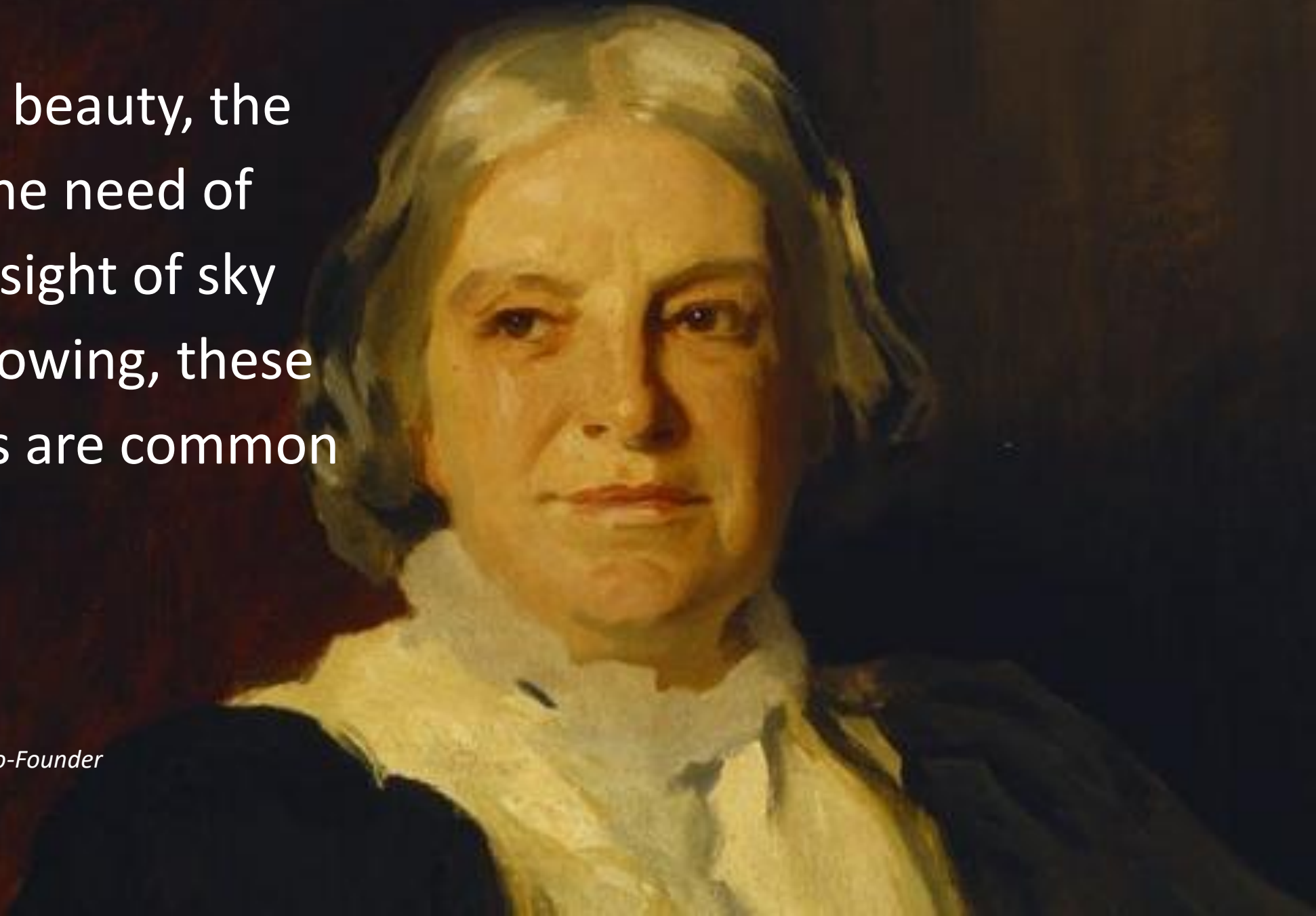


To achieve our goals, we'll need to renew our ways of working, in a world that's changing fast

Our urban work primarily sits under our Ending Unequal Access goal

“The need of beauty, the need of air, the need of exercise, the sight of sky and things growing, these human needs are common to all.”

Octavia Hill, National Trust Co-Founder



Our Urban Work

More than 90% of the UK population will live in urban areas by 2030. Yet access to nature, beauty, and history remains deeply unequal.

Over the next ten years, we will dedicate our resources and collaborate with others to break down barriers and provide access for **10 million people** currently excluded.



How do we do it?

Working across towns and cities, we collaborate with partners and local communities to find out what is relevant for them.

We want to reach, connect with, and engage as many people as possible, and work with others to reach into parts of the community that might not typically engage with our cause. We have a focus on place-making and place-keeping, working with communities to meet their needs, and create sustainable legacies.

We bring together communities, Councils and other national and local organisations to help deliver a range of activities such as Blossom Trails, Community Gardens and Green Corridors.



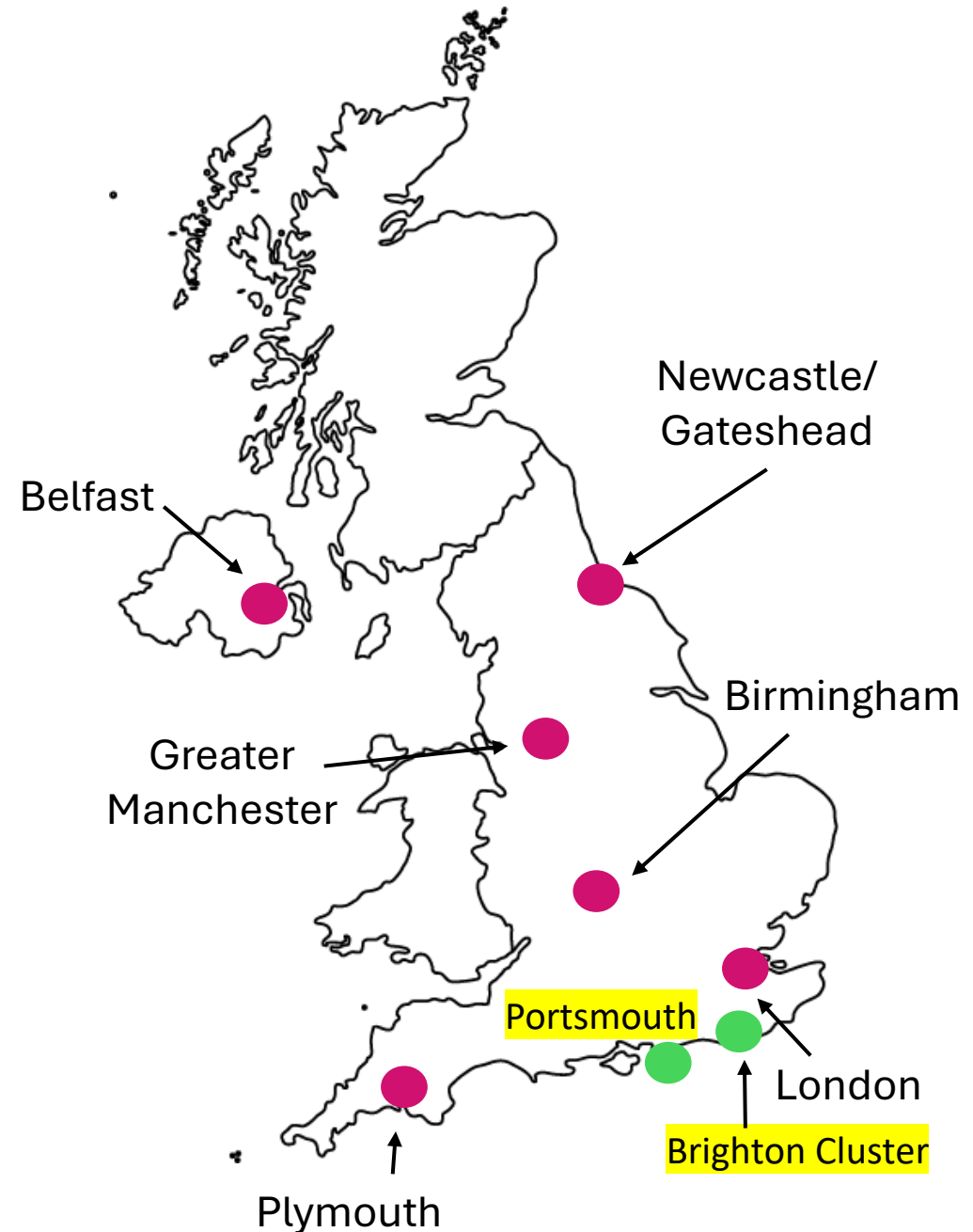
Initial focus

While we work all over England, Wales and Northern Ireland, we have focused our urban work on six priority areas – Manchester, Plymouth, Newcastle and Gateshead, London, Birmingham and Belfast.

In each location, we've developed urban plans that respond to the uniqueness of each place. These plans have been developed with local partners and communities to improve access to nature, history and beauty in each place.

Next steps

To achieve our goal of ending unequal access to nature, beauty and history, we have expanded our remit to include Brighton and Portsmouth and we have started exploring opportunities to support nature, culture and heritage



Themes of our urban work

Urban Nature



Culture and creativity



Equity and
Access

Heritage Connection



Supporting Health & Wellbeing



National Trust modes of working



Scale of Delivery

Tactical interventions on the ground

- Single site
- Often capital projects
- One-off, place-specific



Innovation projects and engagement

- Trying something different
- Testing & Learning
- Scalable



National programmes

- Delivery sites across the nation
- Learning and scaling across the programme



Large Scale Systems Change

- Working at a policy level
- Advocacy and influencing



When nature lives nearer, we all live better

Tactical Interventions and Capital Projects

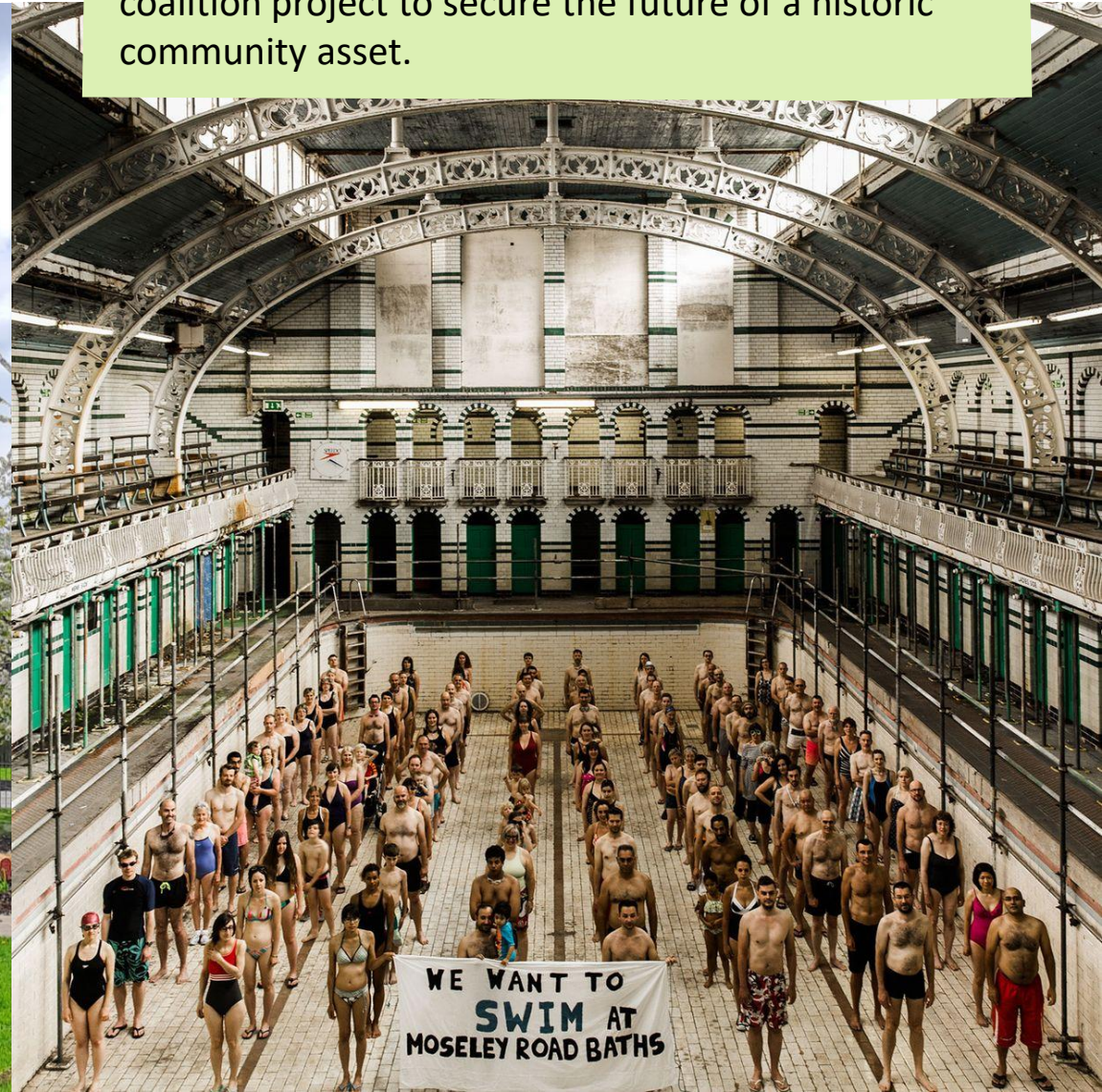
Castlefield Viaduct began as a temporary pilot, and is now entering its 2nd phase to extend and become a permanent feature of the Manchester skyline. It has been a catalyst for engagement with the city, with 97% of residents saying they'd like to see it remain.



East Birmingham Pocket Parks was a collaboration between NT, Birmingham City Council (BCC) and local communities, transforming underutilised land into 8 new green spaces created, cared for and enjoyed by local people.



Moseley Road Baths is a £32m NLHF-funded coalition project to secure the future of a historic community asset.



Innovation projects and engagement

Bloomtown in Manchester is entering its 4th year of programming, including a digital map of blossom 'hotspots', viewed over 180,000 times in 2025, and over 1500 people attending events.



Blossoming Balsall Heath engaged 6,000 people over 18 months, taking a hyper-local approach through a high-street pop-up branch, schools engagement and street tree planting in front gardens.



Sky Gardening Challenge began as a pilot to green balconies in Manchester, and is now scaling nationally.

National programmes

By 2030, over 1.5 million people will live within 15 minutes of a green corridor

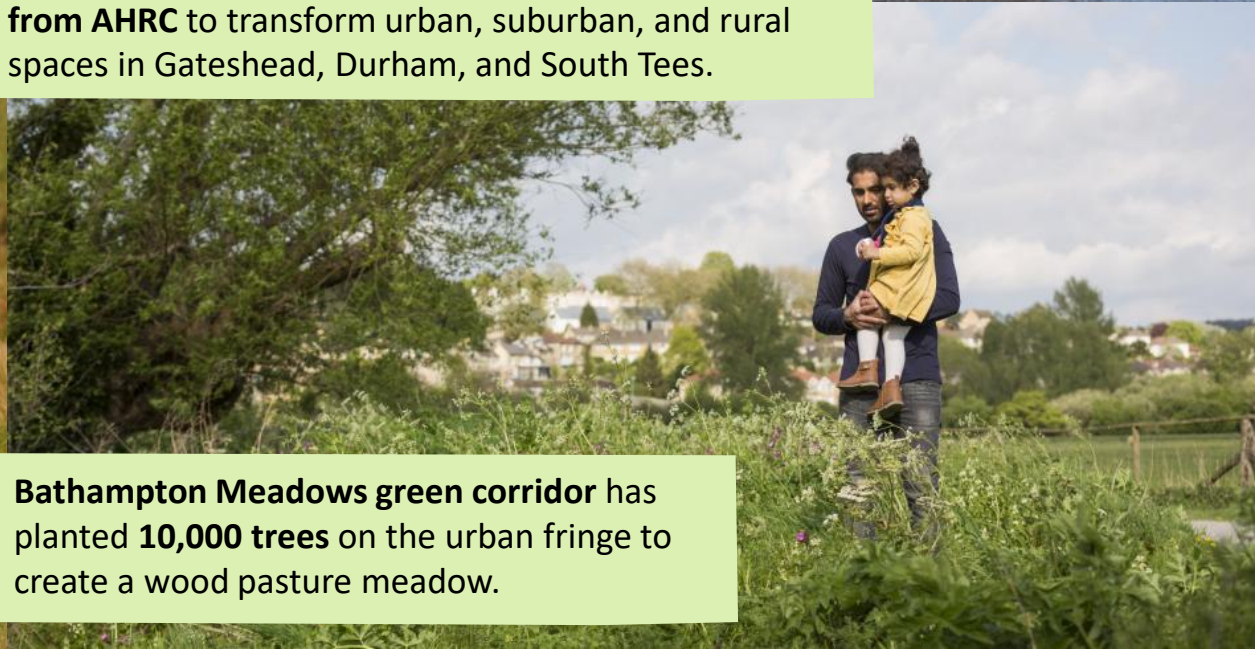
Our national Green Corridor programme will establish 20 green corridors in partnership by 2030 that will connect nature to urban areas, supporting nature and people, delivering carbon sequestration and climate adaptation, and enhancing placemaking.



The **Changing Chalk** green corridor partnership project has directly engaged **25,000 people**.



Our **North East Green Corridors** have received **£3m from AHRC** to transform urban, suburban, and rural spaces in Gateshead, Durham, and South Tees.



Bathampton Meadows green corridor has planted **10,000 trees** on the urban fringe to create a wood pasture meadow.

Large-scale Systems Change



Nature
Towns and
Cities

When nature lives nearer, we
all live better

Nature Towns and Cities is a major national partnership programme with The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Natural England on a new mission to support local authorities and community organisations in more than 100 UK places to bring nature home to every neighbourhood, for everyone to enjoy.

The programme offers practical guidance, events and training, and an accreditation scheme designed to help places attract funding, by showing that they have all the right building blocks in place to make long-term, large-scale change happen.

“It’s fantastic to see our ambitions and innovation recognised at a national level – particularly as we continue to invest in improving access to nature for all our residents. And receiving this recognition will help us to do just that.”

Cllr Andy Hadley, portfolio holder for climate response, energy and environment
at BCP Council





Thank You