



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS1-2

KS3

KS4+

TEACHERS' KIT

Beeston Castle and Woodland Park

This kit helps teachers plan a visit to Beeston Castle, one of the most dramatically sited medieval castles in England. It is built onto a rocky crag and incorporates the banks and ditches of an Iron Age hillfort. Use these resources before, during and after your visit to help students get the most out of their learning.



GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EDUCATION BOOKINGS TEAM:

☎ 0370 333 0606

✉ bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk

📄 bookings.english-heritage.org.uk/education

Share your visit with us on Twitter @EHEducation



Step into England's story

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Beeston Castle and Woodland Park has been designed for teachers and group leaders to support a free self-led visit to the site. It includes a variety of materials suited to teaching a wide range of subjects and key stages, with practical information, activities for use on site and ideas to support follow-up learning.

We know that each class and study group is different, so we have collated our resources into one kit allowing you to decide which materials are best suited to your needs. Please use the contents page, which has been colour-coded to help you easily locate what you need and view individual sections. All our activities have clear guidance on the intended use for study, so you can adapt them for your desired learning outcomes.

To further aid your planning, we have created Hazard Information guidance, which you can download from the Beeston Castle **Schools page**. Here you can also find information on our expert-led Discovery Visits and an overview of what your class can experience. You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Beeston Castle and Woodland Park in the Education Visit Permit and the Site Information Pack which have been sent to you.

We hope you enjoy your visit and find this Teachers' Kit useful. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch with a member of our team either via bookeducation@english-heritage.org.uk or on 0370 333 0606.

English Heritage Learning Team

ICON KEY

The icons below will help you quickly identify the types of activities and information presented. Any resource in the kit without a flag can be adapted for any key stage.

 KSI-2	 KS3								
									
SPEAKING	HANDS ON	LOOK	LISTEN	CHALLENGE	DID YOU KNOW?	SMELL	WRITE	READ	
									
MAP	QUOTE	EXAMINE	MATHS	GROUP ACTIVITY	CUT OUT	ROLE PLAY	ART	INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY	

CONTENTS

KSI-2

KS3

PRE-VISIT

Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.

Site Plan	5
Historical Information	6–12
Glossary	13–14
Timeline	15–19
Construct a Crag! ■ ■	20–24

AT THE CASTLE AND WOODLAND PARK

Activities for students to do at Beeston Castle to help them get the most out of their learning.

History Detectives ■	26–31
Woodland Walk ■	32–33
Inspiration Trail ■ ■	34–36

POST-VISIT

Information to help extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

Sources	38–46
Build a Prehistoric Roundhouse ■ ■	47–53
A Great Fete! ■	54–56

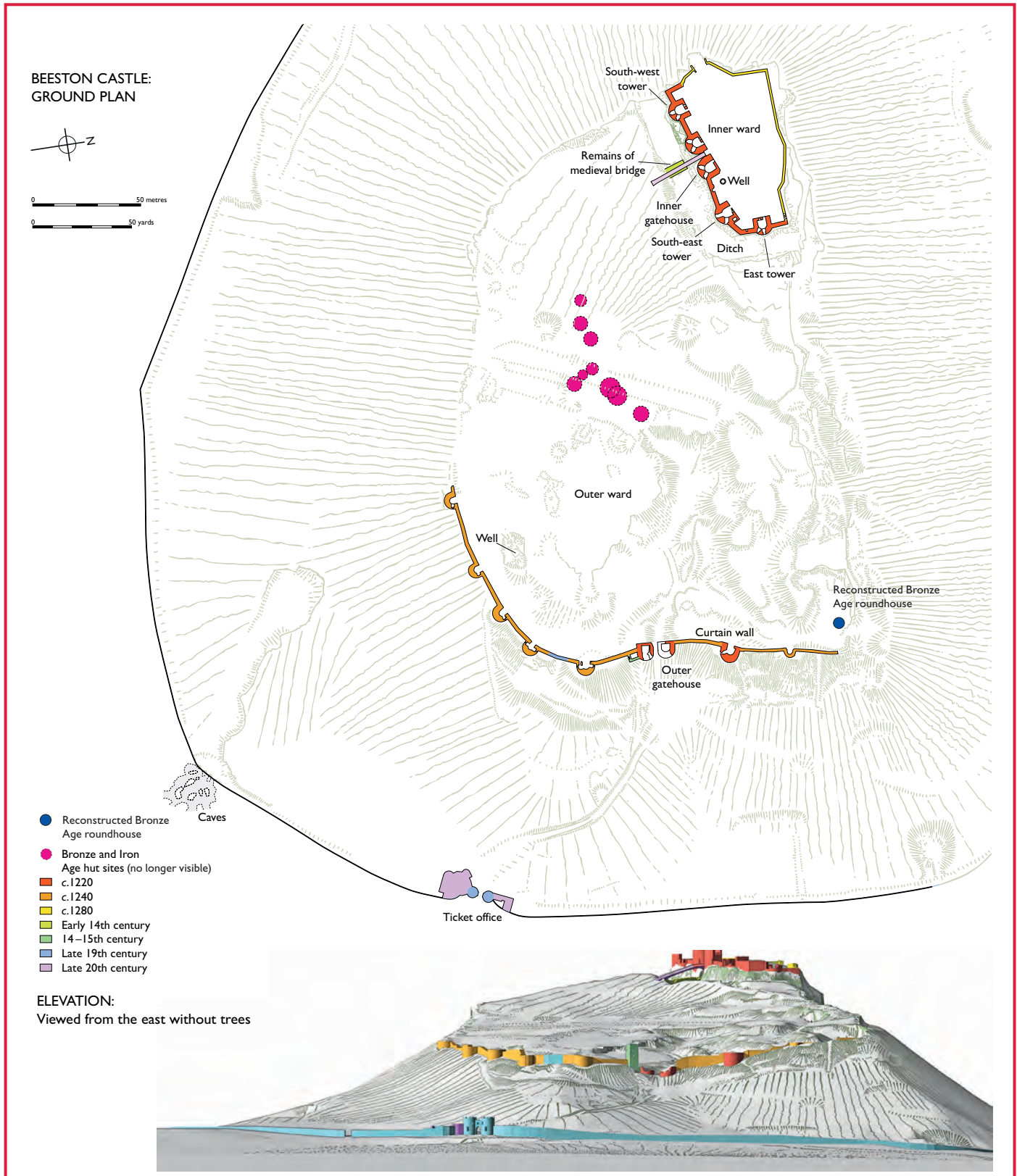


PRE-VISIT

Information and activities you can use in the classroom before your visit.

BEESTON CASTLE AND WOODLAND PARK

SITE PLAN



HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER THE STORY OF
BEESTON CASTLE AND
WOODLAND PARK

Below is a short history of Beeston Castle and Woodland Park. Use this information to learn how the site has changed over time. You'll find the definitions of the key words in the Glossary.

PREHISTORIC BEESTON

The site was first fortified in the Bronze Age, about 1000 BC, when an earthwork bank was built. Beeston became a regional centre for bronze metalworking between about 800 and 700 BC. Archaeologists found a number of artefacts at the site, including bronze spears and axes, and the **crucibles** used to heat and cast the bronze.



These Bronze Age axe heads were discovered at Beeston.

This earthwork bank was gradually developed into a **hillfort** during the Iron Age. During the early part of this period (c.650–450 BC), the existing bank was made bigger and an external ditch was built. The entrance was located on the site of the later outer gatehouse. The defences were expanded again in the late Iron Age (c.450 BC–AD 40) when a huge earthwork bank, strengthened with stone rubble and topped with a wooden **palisade**, was built along the line of the existing defences. The Iron Age also saw improvements to the way crops were stored and processed on-site. Finds of pottery, used in the transportation of salt, suggest the site may have also been part of a wider regional trading network at this time. (See Source 3 on page 39, a reconstruction drawing showing Beeston **crag** as it may have looked in the Iron Age.)

After the Iron Age, the hillfort was abandoned. Remains of Roman pottery at the base of the crag suggest there may have been some kind of settlement in the area but there's no other evidence for Roman occupation. (See Source 5 on page 40, a Romano-British enamelled brooch found during excavations at Beeston.)



An 18th century engraving of Ranulf's seal impression, showing him as a knight on horseback.

BUILDING BEESTON CASTLE c.1220

Construction of the medieval castle at Beeston was begun around 1220 by Ranulf, 6th earl of Chester who had just returned from the fifth **crusade**. Ranulf had been a staunch supporter of **King John** (r.1199–1216), and his loyalty during the civil war of John's reign had earned him land, goods and offices. While it was useful to have strong supporters in a time of crisis, following John's death and the peace after 1217, these gains became a threat to royal authority. In an attempt to recover royal lands and offices, Hubert

de Burgh, **justiciar** (senior royal minister) to the new king, **Henry III** (r.1216–1272), moved decisively against his opponents. Ranulf's building work therefore was a clear political gesture and had intended to show his potential strength. As well as the castle at Beeston, in his principal earldom of Cheshire, Ranulf built a castle at Chartley in Staffordshire and also Bolingbroke Castle in Lincolnshire. Despite Hubert's moves, Ranulf succeeded in securing his lands and possessions and he was able to pass them on to his heirs following his death in 1232. Beeston and the earldom of Chester were granted to Ranulf's nephew, John le Scot.

BEESTON – A ROYAL CASTLE

After le Scot's death in 1237, Henry III seized the earl's lands and appointed John de Lacy (c.1192–1240), Earl of Lincoln as **custodian** of the county, including Beeston and Chester castles. Significant sums were then spent by the Crown on Beeston which suggests that, before the 1240s, much of the castle was incomplete. For the king, Beeston was always subordinate to the castle at Chester but he did maintain it as the residence of a lord.

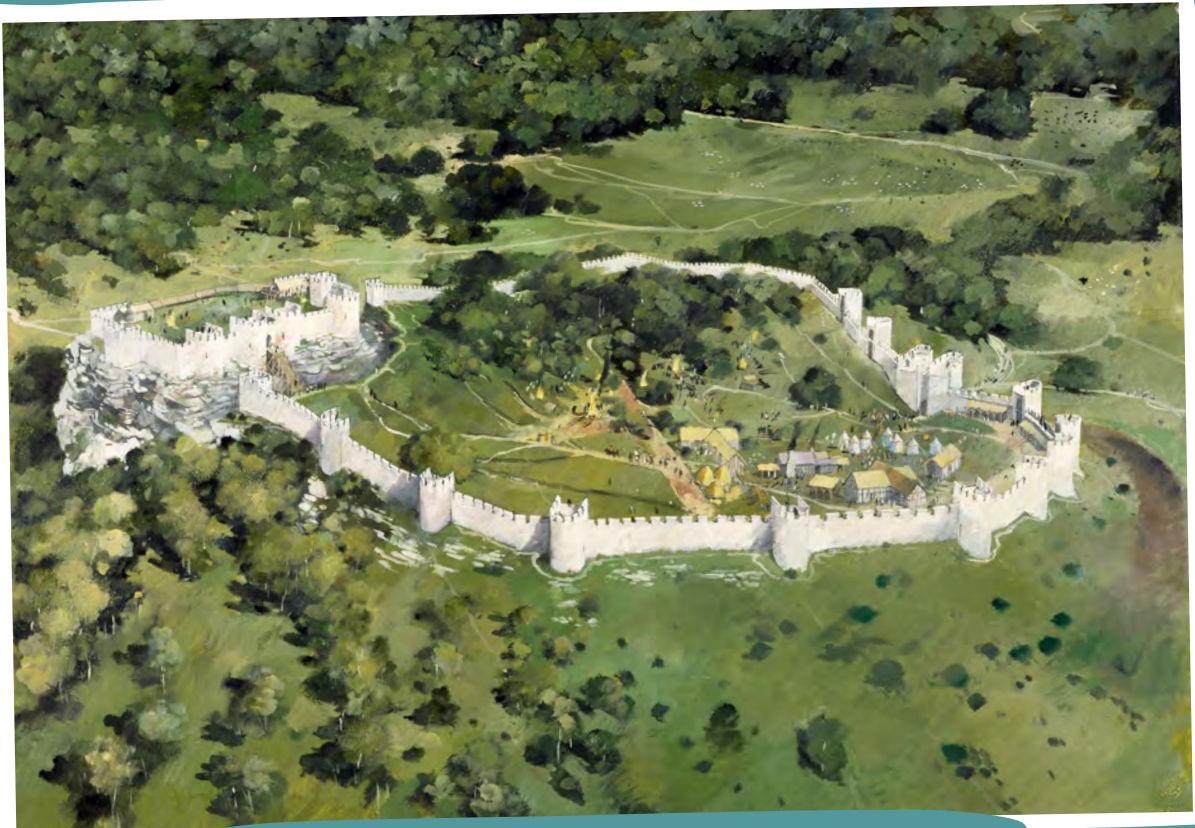
A request to keep birds of prey at the castle shows he probably favoured the area around Beeston for hunting. The castle also appears to have been used as a secure place within which to house prisoners: in 1245, hostages of the king held at Chester Castle were transferred to Beeston.



A medieval hunting scene. Henry III may have favoured the lands around Beeston for hunting.

BEESTON – A ROYAL CASTLE CONTINUED

In the 1240s, with Henry III's campaign against the Welsh, Beeston was subject to repairs and additional **fortification** in another major programme of building work. In 1253 or 1254, Henry III granted Beeston and the earldom of Chester to his son, the future King Edward I (r.1272–1307). The royal grant extended to the earl's heirs and so, from this date, Cheshire became part of the lands that the Crown retained for itself. Edward came to Beeston in 1264 and his conquest of Wales at the end of the 13th century made Beeston redundant.



An aerial view of Beeston Castle in the 1260s, as seen from the south-west.

BEESTON FROM THE LATER MIDDLE AGES TO THE CIVIL WAR



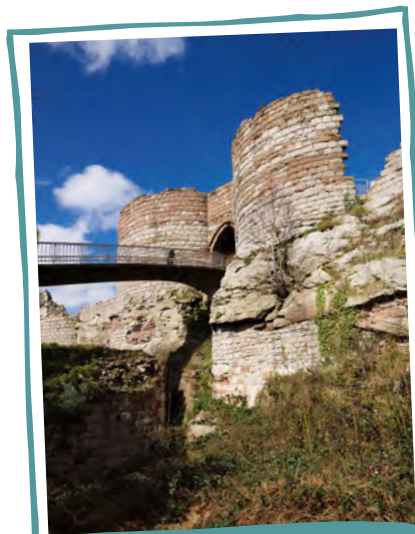
A reconstruction drawing by Liam Wales showing an aerial view of Beeston and how it may have looked during the building work documented in 1303–4. For a larger version, see page 42.

Between September 1303 and September 1304, a considerable sum was again spent on building work at Beeston. In the **inner ward**, three towers were raised and **crenellated** 'because they formerly had high wooden surfaces, and now they are made level'. This useful detail indicates that, despite the construction work of the previous century, not all of the defences were completely finished in stone by this point. In addition to this, a new bridge was built, along with a supporting stone wall, 34ft high, 7ft thick and 20ft long. Lead sheets were also fixed to the roofs of the three towers.

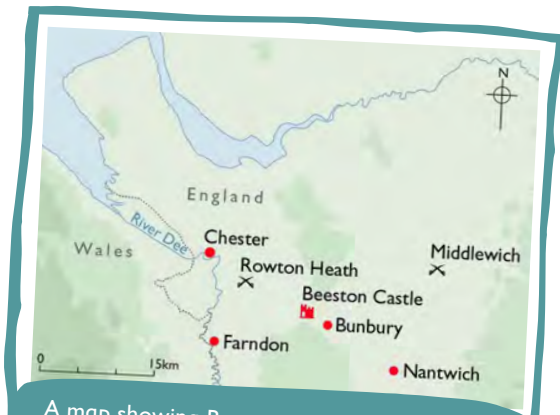
Further work and maintenance was recorded at the castle

in subsequent years too. In 1398, Cheshire was made a principality by King Richard II (r.1377–1399). Before heading to Ireland on a military expedition, he is said to have hidden royal treasure somewhere in Beeston Castle. Attempts to recover the treasure have been unsuccessful. Despite making for an enduring legend, it's likely that any treasure was recovered by Henry Bolingbroke, the future King Henry IV (r.1399–1413), who captured Richard on his return from Ireland, later assuming the throne.

After 1400, Beeston appears to have been neglected. In 1602, the manor of Peckforton, which included Beeston Castle, was sold to Sir Hugh Beeston for £2,500. There seems to have been some occupation of the outer ward into the early 17th century but the general impression is that, on the outbreak of the **Civil War**, the most of the castle was in ruins.



The modern bridge to the inner gatehouse, below which can be seen the remains of the supporting structure that was built alongside the old bridge in the early 14th century.



A map showing Beeston Castle and the key locations in its Civil War history (1642–1646).

BEESTON IN THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

Following the outbreak of civil war in 1642, the **Royalists** established a base at Chester, using the port for men and supplies from north Wales and Ireland. The **Parliamentarians** were slower to organise themselves but had established headquarters at Nantwich by January 1643. Beeston Castle, sited in the centre of the county, was of interest to both

sides. On 20 February 1643, the Parliamentary commander - Sir William Brereton (1604–61) installed a **garrison** of between 200 and 300 men in the castle together with 'much wealth and other goods of the gentry and other neighbours brought thither for safety'.

By November 1643, Beeston's garrison had been reduced to about 60 men and was under the command of Captain Thomas Steele. In the early hours of 13 December 1643, eight Royalist soldiers led by Captain Thomas Sandford got into the castle and took control of the inner ward. Steele (who has been criticised for having little courage) dined with Sandford and sent beer to his men, before agreeing to surrender. He probably didn't have a choice and his men got to leave on honourable terms – departing the following day 'with their colours and arms'. However, they had to leave the stored goods, material and equipment behind and despite the honourable terms achieved by Steele, he was tried and shot at Nantwich for his failure to offer a defence. (See Edward Burghall, Schoolmaster of Bunbury's account of this on page 44).

The castle was then garrisoned by the Royalists and their presence was maintained for nearly a year without incident. But in November 1644, Brereton besieged Chester and the custody of Beeston became important to attempts to take Chester and establish control in the county. Essentially, as long as the Royalists remained, they were a threat to plans.



A drawing of a 'jack of plates' jacket, a style of padded armour for the torso, possibly worn by soldiers garrisoned at Beeston Castle during the Civil War. Artist unknown, c.1987.



A pewter dish or porringer, used for eating soup or stew. It was found during excavations at Beeston and probably belonged to troops stationed at the castle during the Civil War.

BEESTON IN THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR CONTINUED

As a first attempt to remove the Royalists, Brereton's men seized cattle from around the area of the castle. They fought off the Royalists' attempt to recover the cattle and billeted

themselves in local farmhouses to maintain a blockade. On 7 December, the Royalists raided a nearby house where 26 Parliamentarian soldiers were lodging. They burned the house to the ground, killing all but two of the occupants.

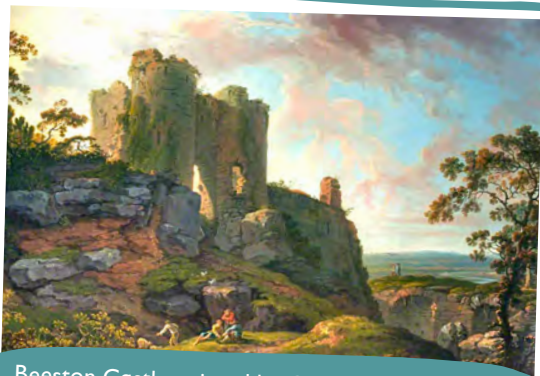
To make their blockade more effective, Brereton's men then built fortifications in the outer ward at Beeston. These fortifications, consisting of a mound and deep trench before the castle gates, were completed in May 1645. Brereton's aim was to stop the Royalists coming out from the castle in large groups and also to prevent them from getting provisions in. In the summer, the fortifications were destroyed by the Royalists, forcing the Parliamentarians to rebuild them. This time, though, they added a fort within **musket** shot of the gate; the fort held 100 men and their supplies.

The ongoing attempts by the Parliamentarians to take the castle, along with the Royalists' equally determined efforts to break the **siege** at Chester, nearly led to a confrontation between the two armies in 1645, although a pitched battle never occurred. The defeat of King **Charles I** (r.1625–49) at the battle of Rowton Heath on 24 September 1645 finally decided the outcome at Beeston. With the king defeated there was no point in the royalists continuing and the castle was surrendered on 15th November. The Royalist commander, Captain Vallett and his 56 men were allowed to leave with two carts and their colours flying. Twenty of the men surrendered immediately. The Royalist surrender of Beeston was perhaps unsurprising as conditions were extremely bad. Vallett's horse was so weak it could barely carry him and the men had apparently had to eat their cats. Page 44 gives a description of conditions inside Beeston Castle by a victorious Parliamentarian following the Royalists' surrender.)



Detail from a stained-glass window in Farnon parish church, near Beeston, which was commissioned in 1662 to commemorate the Royalist forces who defended Chester.

BEESTON IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES



Beeston Castle painted by George Barret around 1770. It shows the inner gatehouse and the ditch already partly filled. A larger version can be found in source 14 on page 45.

After the surrender of Chester on 3 February 1646, the Civil War in Cheshire was over and Beeston, along with neighbouring castles, was **slighted**. The castle was then allowed to decay. In its **ruinous** state the castle became something of a tourist attraction, providing inspiration for local folk tales and numerous artists.

In the 17th century ownership of the castle had passed to Sir Thomas Mostyn (1651–c.1700). In 1840, the Peckforton estate, of

which Beeston formed a part, was brought by John Tollemache (1805–90) who repaired and rebuilt parts of the castle. Tollemache also commissioned the **architect** Anthony Salvin to build Peckforton Castle. Costing £52,000 the new Peckforton Castle included the picturesque ruins of Beeston Castle in its grounds. Indeed Peckforton seems to have been an attempt to re-create a medieval fortress and it was commented at the time that it could have withstood an attack by a medieval army.

At this time, fir trees were planted in the outer ward and in 1868 fruit trees near the castle gate. Deer and, more curiously, kangaroos were allowed to run around over the outer ward. Tourists began to visit the crag in greater numbers, helped by the development of the railway and the opening of a station at Beeston.

The first Beeston festival was held at the castle in 1844, organised by the Independent Order of Oddfellows to raise money for the Widows' and Orphans' Fund. After successfully turning in a profit of £94, the festival became an annual two-day event attended by thousands of people. This

increase in visitors led to the construction of the gatehouse (now the ticket office) in 1846, with access being controlled by a stone wall running around the base of the crag. In 1897, an event was held at Beeston to celebrate Queen Victoria's (r.1837–1901) jubilee and in 1902 a fete marked the coronation of King Edward VII (r.1901–10). The **Ministry of Works** took the site into guardianship in 1959 and it passed to English Heritage in 1984.



An early photograph of the inner gatehouse at Beeston showing visitors at the castle. The overgrown condition of the inner ward can be seen.

GLOSSARY

TRICKY TERMS AND
WHAT THEY MEAN

Below is a list of words you might come across while exploring Beeston Castle and Woodland Park. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.

architect – a person who designs buildings

Charles I – king of England, Scotland and Ireland from 1625. From 1642, Charles fought against Parliament in the English Civil War. After his defeat in 1646, he refused to accept a parliamentary monarchy and was executed for high treason in 1649.

crag – a steep, rugged rock, or the projecting part of a rock

crenellations – the battlements of a castle or other building

crucible – a container in which metals or other substances may be melted or subjected to very high temperatures

crusades – a series of medieval military expeditions made by Europeans to the Holy Land in the eastern Mediterranean

custodian – a person who has responsibility for taking care of or protecting something

English Civil War (1642–51) – a series of armed conflicts between the Parliamentarians and the Royalists. They were disputing the way in which England was governed. The Parliamentarians believed the monarchy was corrupt and England should be ruled by Parliament instead.

fortification – reinforcement built to strengthen a place against attack

garrison – a group of soldiers stationed in a particular place to defend it

Henry III – inherited the throne as a young boy during a time of conflict between the barons and the monarchy. In 1225, Magna Carta was re-issued in Henry's name, with clauses (extra articles) to satisfy the rebellious barons.



Civil War cannon.

hillfort – a fort built on a hill, often enclosed by a system of defensive banks and ditches

inner ward – a strongly fortified enclosure at the heart of a medieval castle

justiciar – a high-ranking medieval judge

King John – lost most of his French lands to King Philip II of France, resulting in the collapse of the Angevin Empire



King John (r.1199-1216)

Ministry of Works – the 20th-century government department responsible for managing state property and heritage sites

musket – a heavy smoothbore gun for infantry soldiers, introduced in the 16th century

palisade – a defensive wooden fence that wraps around a castle or enclosure

Parliamentarians – a group of people who fought on the side of Parliament in the Civil War. They believed the king was corrupt, that he should be removed from the throne and that England should be ruled by Parliament instead.

Royalists – a group of people who fought on the side of the monarchy in the Civil War. They believed the king, Charles I, should remain on the throne and keep his lawmaking power.



King Charles I (r.1625-1649)

ruinous – in a state of ruin

siege – a military tactic in which an army surrounds a place in order to cut off essential supplies (e.g. food and weapons) and force the people inside to surrender

slighted – to destroy a fortification in order to make it indefensible

STONE AGE TO IRON AGE

ROMANS

c.4000 BC

The start of the Neolithic period, with the arrival of the first domestic animals and first pottery in Britain.

2200 BC

Bronze metal is used in Britain for the first time.

c.800 BC–AD 43

The discovery of iron changes how people live their lives. Big hillforts are built to claim land and protect tribes of people inside them.

AD 122–128

Emperor Hadrian builds a wall to defend northern Roman-occupied Britain from invasion by Pictish tribes.



BC 2200



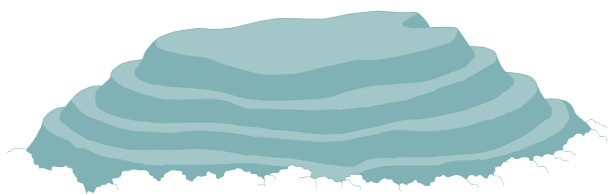
AD 1

c.1000 BC to c.700 BC

The hilltop is defended by earthen banks and bronze tools are made on the site.

c.700 BC–AD 43

The Bronze Age enclosure is developed into a hillfort.



Did you know?

Although Roman pottery has been discovered at the base of the crag, no other evidence for Roman occupation has been found at Beeston.



PREHISTORY

1ST–4TH
CENTURY



ANGLO-SAXONS, VIKINGS & BRITONS

NORMANS
1066–1154

AD 410

The Romans leave Britain.

AD 410

Anglo-Saxon people begin to settle.

AD 450

Britain is divided up into the Seven Kingdoms: Northumbria, Mercia, Anglia, Wessex, Essex, Sussex and Kent.

1066

William the Conqueror is victorious at the Battle of Hastings. The Norman Conquest of England begins.

1086

Domesday Book is completed.



1087

William dies. His son, William Rufus, is crowned King William II.

AD 400

1000

AD 410+

Woodland covers the area later occupied by the castle.



5TH
CENTURY



11TH
CENTURY

PLANTAGENETS

1154–1485

TUDORS

1485–1603

1215

King John signs Magna Carta at Runnymede. Soon afterwards the barons revolt against the king, aligning with Alexander, king of Scotland and Prince Louis of France, to try to remove King John.

1216

King John dies. His son, Henry III, is crowned at nine years old.

1237

The Treaty of York means that the Scots abandon their rule of northern England. The Anglo-Scottish border line is drawn.

1200

1220

Ranulf, 6th earl of Chester, begins constructing Beeston Castle.

1222

Ranulf's nephew and heir, John le Scot, marries Helen, daughter of the Welsh prince Llywelyn the Great. Scot inherits Beeston and the earldom of Cheshire in 1232.

1237

Beeston Castle is seized by Henry III (r.1216–72)

13TH
CENTURY

1534

The Acts of Supremacy recognise Henry VIII as head of the church in England. Pope Clement excommunicates Henry.

1585

England, ruled by Elizabeth I (r.1558–1603), declares war on Spain.

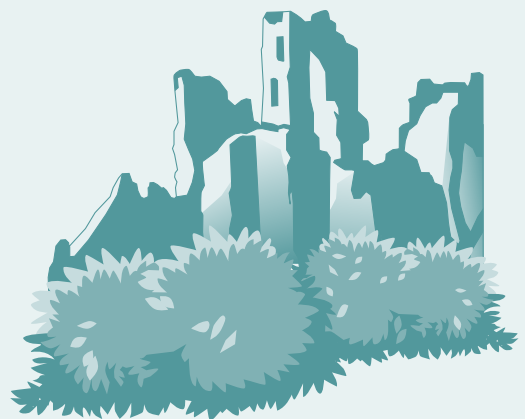
1588

English ships defeat the Spanish Armada.

1500

1540

The antiquarian John Leland writes that Beeston Castle is ruinous.



16TH
CENTURY

STUARTS
1603-1714

1603

England makes peace with France and Spain following the union of English and Scottish Crowns under King James I (r.1603-25).

1642-51

The English Civil War between the king, Charles I (r.1625-49) and Parliament.

1646

15 March: the Royalist army surrenders to the Parliamentary commander Lord Fairfax at Truro.

1649

Charles is tried, convicted and executed for high treason. The monarchy is abolished and the Commonwealth of England is declared.

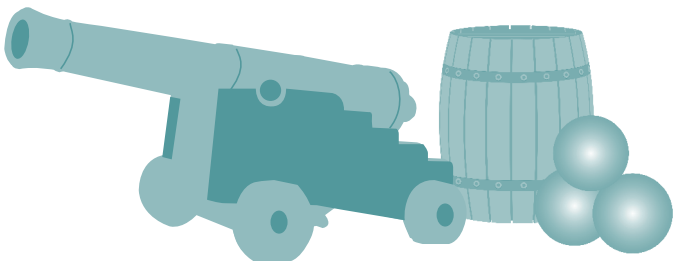
1600

1602

Beeston is sold to Sir Hugh Beeston for £2,500.

1643-45

Royalist and Parliamentarian forces battle over the custody of Beeston Castle.



17TH
CENTURY

GEORGIANS
1714-1837

1775-83

The American War of Independence between Britain and its American colonies.

1789-99

The French Revolution leads to the end of the monarchy. Napoleon Bonaparte (r.1804-14) takes power and begins France's aggressive campaign to become a world power.

1815

The Duke of Wellington defeats Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.

1830-37

Reign of William IV.

1700

1797

A commemorative halfpenny is minted with Beeston Castle fancifully re-created on it.



18TH
CENTURY

POST-MEDIEVAL BRITAIN
c.1500–1901

20TH CENTURY
1900–1999

VICTORIANS
1837–1901

WW1
1914–18

WW2
1939–45

MODERN DAY

1837–1901

Reign of Queen Victoria.



1910–36

Reign of George V.

1914–1918

First World War



1939–45

Second World War

1800

1900

1840

John Tollemache (1805–90)
buys the Peckforton estate.

1902

A special fete marks
the coronation of
King Edward VII.

1844–52

Peckforton Castle is built.

1959

The castle is taken
into guardianship by
the Ministry of Works.

1844

The first Beeston festival.

1975

The bridge leading
into the inner
court is built.

1846

The lower gatehouse is built.

1897

Queen Victoria's
Jubilee is celebrated
with a bonfire.

1984

Guardianship of
the castle passes to
English Heritage.

19TH
CENTURY

20TH
CENTURY

BEESTON CASTLE TIMELINE

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

CONSTRUCT A CRAG!



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 and KS3 (Geography)

Learning objectives

- Use digital Ordnance Survey maps to develop geography skills, including compass directions, locational and directional language and map symbols.
- Understand the topography of Beeston crag and why it was a good location for a hillfort and later a castle.

Time to complete

60–90 minutes

Map feature Symbol

Car park



Picnic site



Woodland



(can you name the particular type of trees?)

Well



Cave



The map symbols students will need to identify for question 5.

SUMMARY

Type 'OS maps' into a search engine and select OS maps from 'ordnancesurvey.co.uk'. Type 'Beeston Castle' into the 'Search for Location' box. Your class can then explore Beeston Castle and its surrounding area using the worksheet provided (on pages 21 and 22).

For question 5 it might be helpful for students to have access to some hard copy OS maps and their symbol guide; alternatively, they're searchable online. OS has some useful map symbol flashcards for identification in its 'education resources for teachers' section.

When they've finished the worksheet, students can construct a simplified version of Beeston crag based on its contour lines, adding details such as the woodland and the picnic area, using their knowledge of the map symbols from the first activity.

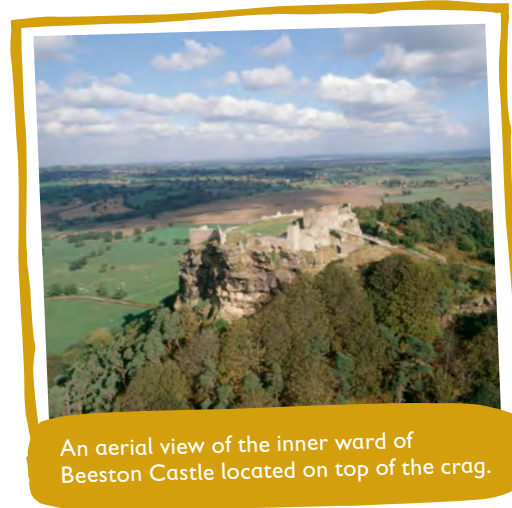
TEACHER ANSWERS

1. The OS grid reference for Beeston Castle is: SJ 53669 59274.
2. The city which sits north-west of Beeston is Chester and the city which sits south-east is Stoke-on-Trent.
3. The castle that sits on the hill top opposite Beeston to the south-west is Peckforton Castle.
4. Farm buildings surround the base of Beeston crag.
5. The symbols are shown in the left-hand column.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Students could select another English Heritage site and write some questions for a partner to answer using location information, compass directions and map symbols. They might like to write a story using map symbols or find out about the history of Peckforton Castle.

CONSTRUCT A CRAG!



An aerial view of the inner ward of Beeston Castle located on top of the crag.

Type 'OS maps' into your search engine.

When you have the correct website and have searched for 'Beeston Castle' (top left by the magnifying glass icon), complete these activities.

1 Click on the pink pin and write the OS grid reference for Beeston Castle here:

2 Zoom out until the scale (bottom right) reads 2km:1mi.
With Beeston roughly in the middle of your screen, which city sits:

- North-west: C
- South-east: S o T

3 Zoom in until the scale reads 200m:1000ft.

With Beeston at the top and middle of your screen:

Notice the green hilly areas to the south-west of Beeston.

Name the castle that sits on the hill top opposite from Beeston to the south-west: P

4 Zoom in until the scale reads 100m:200ft.

What types of buildings (or 'industry') surround the base of the crag that Beeston Castle is built on? F

5 Zoom in until the scale reads 50m:100ft

- a) With Beeston at the centre of your screen, find the 5 things listed in the left-hand column of the table:
- b) When you've found them, use the guide to map symbols in the back of an Ordnance Survey map and draw the symbol for each feature.

Map feature		Symbol
Car park	FOUND IT? <input type="checkbox"/>	
Picnic site	FOUND IT? <input type="checkbox"/>	
Woodland	FOUND IT? <input type="checkbox"/>	(can you name the particular type of trees?)
Well	FOUND IT? <input type="checkbox"/>	
Cave	FOUND IT? <input type="checkbox"/>	

Discuss: why are symbols on maps helpful?

HINT

You may like to switch to the aerial view (the icon that looks like a stack of papers at the bottom right) to get an alternative view of the area at each scale.

6 Contour lines are lines drawn on maps that join places of the same height. They are usually orange or brown in colour. They might have their height above or below sea level written on them.

We can use contour lines to see the shape of land. If they are close together the slope is steep; if they are far apart the slope is gentle.

On the next page is a simplified version of some of the contour lines of Beeston crag. Use this to construct your own crag to get an impression of the shape of the land there.

- a) **Cut** around the lowest height contour line: 60m.
- b) **Trace** around the shape onto another piece of paper to create a template for that contour height level.
- c) **Do** the same for the rest of the lines, from lowest height to highest in order (70m, 80m, 100m, 125m, 130m). Don't forget to create a template for the castle remains at the top of the crag too.

Hint: You might want to do this on paper of different colours to show each layer clearly. Make a little mark to note how they fit together for when you stick them together later.

- d) **Stick** each paper template onto thick card (corrugated gives the best effect) and cut them out.

Hint: At this stage you may want to colour each 'level' (if you haven't used different coloured paper already)

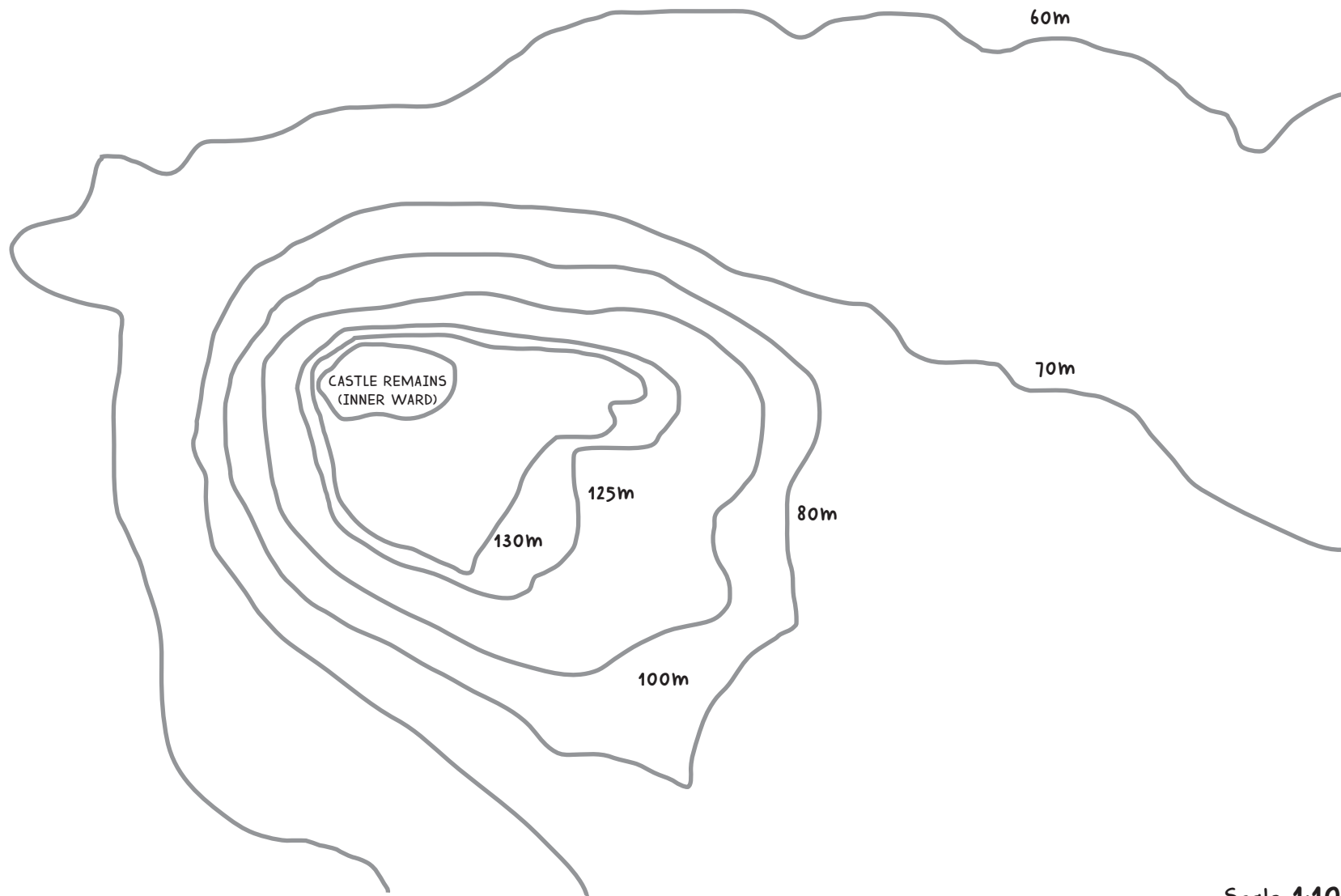
- (c) and complete the key, or you can leave decoration until the end.
- e) **Stick** each of the layers on top of each other, lowest height to highest to re-create the crag. Don't forget your castle remains on top.
- f) **Decorate** each level by colouring in (if you haven't already) and make sure you have a key.
- g) **Add** details such as the castle's outer curtain wall, trees, the picnic area etc. Try to use the map symbols you learnt earlier to do this.
- h) Stand back and admire your great work. Well done! **Discuss** with a partner what you notice about the shape of the land.

CONSTRUCT A CRAG



KEY

60m
70m
80m
100m
125m
130m



Scale 1:100m



AT THE CASTLE AND WOODLAND PARK

Activities for students to do at Beeston Castle and Woodland Park, to help them get the most out of their learning.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

HISTORY DETECTIVES



Recommended for

KS2 (History)

Learning objectives

- Explore some key features of Beeston Castle and learn about the buildings from the physical evidence.
- Draw conclusions about what the buildings at Beeston Castle used to look like.
- Understand how the castle has changed over time.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes



Students should look closely at the physical evidence at Beeston to develop their skills of observation and inference.



Students exploring the outer curtain wall at Beeston.

SUMMARY

Gather on the grassy area outside of the visitor centre. Tell students that the entry way they've just walked through is Victorian, the remains of the castle they'll see is medieval but that the crag has been fortified since early prehistoric times. They're going to be history detectives today, using the physical evidence at the site as clues to Beeston's past.

If you'd like to learn more, you might be interested in our Fortress Castle Discovery Visit, an expert-led session which focuses on the medieval remains of the castle, explored through Earl Ranulf who began building to castle around 1220. **Search** 'Discovery Visits at Beeston Castle' for more information and to book.

Use the teachers' notes (on pages 27–29) to guide students around the site, encouraging them with the 'challenge' at each location. Photocopy enough checklists (on page 30) and site plans (on page 31) for your class. Students should record their progress by ticking off each thing as they find it.

You might also find it helpful to print off the Sources section in this kit to use as additional points of reference as you move around the site.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS




Compare Beeston Castle to other castles, looking for similarities and differences in terms of design and layout. Consider how this is influenced by the location of the castle and the natural defensive advantages there may be in the surrounding landscape. In particular, you might want to look at Dover Castle or Scarborough Castle. Earl Ranulf was inspired by the design of these royal castles, showing his status as one of the leading magnates in England.

Please be aware of other visitors as you do the activities. Supervise students closely at all times and take care going up and down paths and stairs.

HISTORY DETECTIVES

TEACHERS' NOTES

LOCATION	DID YOU KNOW?	CHALLENGE
<p>1. Outer gatehouse</p> 	<p>The entrance to the medieval castle was enclosed within a gatehouse. Beneath the medieval gatehouse archaeologists have found the entrance to a prehistoric fortification which suggests that the medieval builders took advantage of existing features in the landscape. The medieval entrance passage was framed by two rounded towers and could have been closed by at least one set of gates and further strengthened by a portcullis. The front of the northern tower isn't original – the medieval arrangement was re-laid in 1989 using the original stones.</p>	<p>Look closely at the gatehouse wall. On the left as you walk through – can you see the vertical groove for the portcullis in the stone?</p>
<p>2. Outer curtain wall</p> 	<p>There are eight towers projecting from the curtain wall. All but one are D-shaped and all but one were open-backed. The towers and curtain wall were built at different times: towers first (c.1220–40) and then linked by walls in the mid to late 1240s. We don't know if there was a complete circuit of walls around the outer ward but, based on the intervals, there might have been five more towers along the curtain wall.</p>	<p>How many towers can you count in the curtain wall?</p> <p>Can you spot the only square tower?</p> <p>Why do you think it's called a curtain wall?</p>
<p>3. Outer ward</p> 	<p>Although now mostly covered in scrub and trees, for much of Beeston's history this area was open ground. (At this point you may like to make reference to the locations of the Bronze and Iron Age huts that are shown on the site plan but for which no visible evidence remains.) The well, the location of which you can see, although now almost entirely filled, was used throughout the castle's history. In 1304, payments are recorded to women for carrying water to the inner ward. Why they didn't use the well there for water at this time isn't known. In 1623, its depth was recorded as 239.5ft (73m).</p>	<p>Can you find the spot of one of the medieval castle's wells? (In a hollow diagonally opposite the square tower.)</p> <p>How deep do you think it was?</p> <p>Why was a good water supply important in a castle?</p> <p>Suggested answer: in case of siege.</p>

LOCATION	DID YOU KNOW?	CHALLENGE
<p>4. Rock-cut ditch</p> 	<p>The outer ward and inner ward are separated by a great rock-cut ditch. The ditch was entirely man-made and was part of the early construction work in the 1220s. The stone quarried from the ditch was used for the castle buildings. The modern bridge was built in the 1970s but the remains of the medieval access to the inner ward can be seen below it.</p>	<p>Look at the rock-cut ditch. Imagine how hard it must have been to dig that out by hand without modern equipment.</p>
<p>5. Inner gatehouse</p> 	<p>The inner gatehouse is a better surviving version of the outer gatehouse. Like that one it has two towers which enclose the entrance. The defensive arrow slits on the towers are clearer. There were two ground-floor chambers on either side of the entrance passage with a single room at first-floor level running the length of the building. It's likely that the constable who ran the castle on behalf of the lord or king lived here, so it was the most important building at the castle.</p>	<p>What are the similarities and differences between the inner gatehouse and the outer gatehouse you saw at the start?</p> <p>Can you see the sockets for the hinges for the two sets of gates either side of the passage and the vertical groove for the portcullis?</p>
<p>6. Inner ward</p> 	<p>Despite considerable archaeological investigation, hardly any evidence has been found for any major buildings such as a great hall or kitchens in the inner ward. So if they were planned, it doesn't appear that they were built. This and the fact that the interior of the inner ward is rocky and uneven suggest that the castle was never finished.</p>	<p>Look out at the view and discuss what made Beeston crag a good location for building a castle.</p> <p>Suggested answer: high ground, natural defence, panoramic view of any attackers.</p>

LOCATION	DID YOU KNOW?	CHALLENGE
<p>7. Inner ward curtain wall (best seen from the outer ward)</p> 	<p>The best indication of the original appearance of the curtain wall is to the east of the inner gatehouse, where five battlements survive. Beneath the parapet are six square holes for the wooden beams of the hoarding – a gallery that stuck out from the wall and allowed missiles to be dropped onto attackers in the ditch below.</p>	<p>How many holes can you see in the inner ward curtain wall? What do you think went here? Why don't features such as hoardings survive?</p> <p>Suggested answer: made of wood; wood rots.</p>
<p>8. Pathway</p> 	<p>A key activity on the crag during the 18th century was quarrying. There was a stone quarry in the outer ward from which stone was taken to build cottages in the area. Sandstone was used in shipyards to clean the hulls of boats. A 'horse causeway' was used to transport the stone and is probably the main path visitors use today. (You could walk over to the caves to see where sandstone was quarried. You can look in but access is prohibited for safety.)</p>	<p>What properties does sandstone have? Why would it be a good thing for cleaning the bottom of boats?</p>
<p>9. Victorian ticket office</p> 	<p>The ticket office, which resembles the medieval gatehouse, and the stone wall running around the base of the crag, were built in 1846 by Lord Tollemache. Tollemache owned Beeston and the neighbouring estate of Peckforton at that time, and had his new residence of Peckforton Castle also designed in a medieval style.</p>	<p>Can you see Peckforton Castle over on the opposite crag?</p> <p>What design features would you include from Beeston Castle in your own home if you had the chance?</p>



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

KS2

HISTORY DETECTIVES

EXPLORE
BEESTON CASTLE AND
WOODLAND PARK

See if you can find all these things.
Tick off each one as you find it.



1 OUTER GATEHOUSE

Portcullis groove



2 OUTER CURTAIN WALL

Square tower



3 OUTER WARD

Well



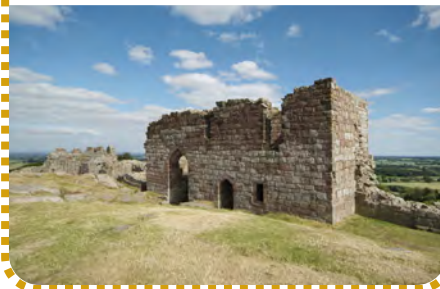
4 ROCK-CUT DITCH

Medieval access way



5 INNER GATEHOUSE

Gate hinges Portcullis groove



6 INNER WARD

Uneven ground



7 INNER WARD CURTAIN WALL

Hoarding holes



8 PATHWAY



9 VICTORIAN TICKET OFFICE

Peckforton Castle

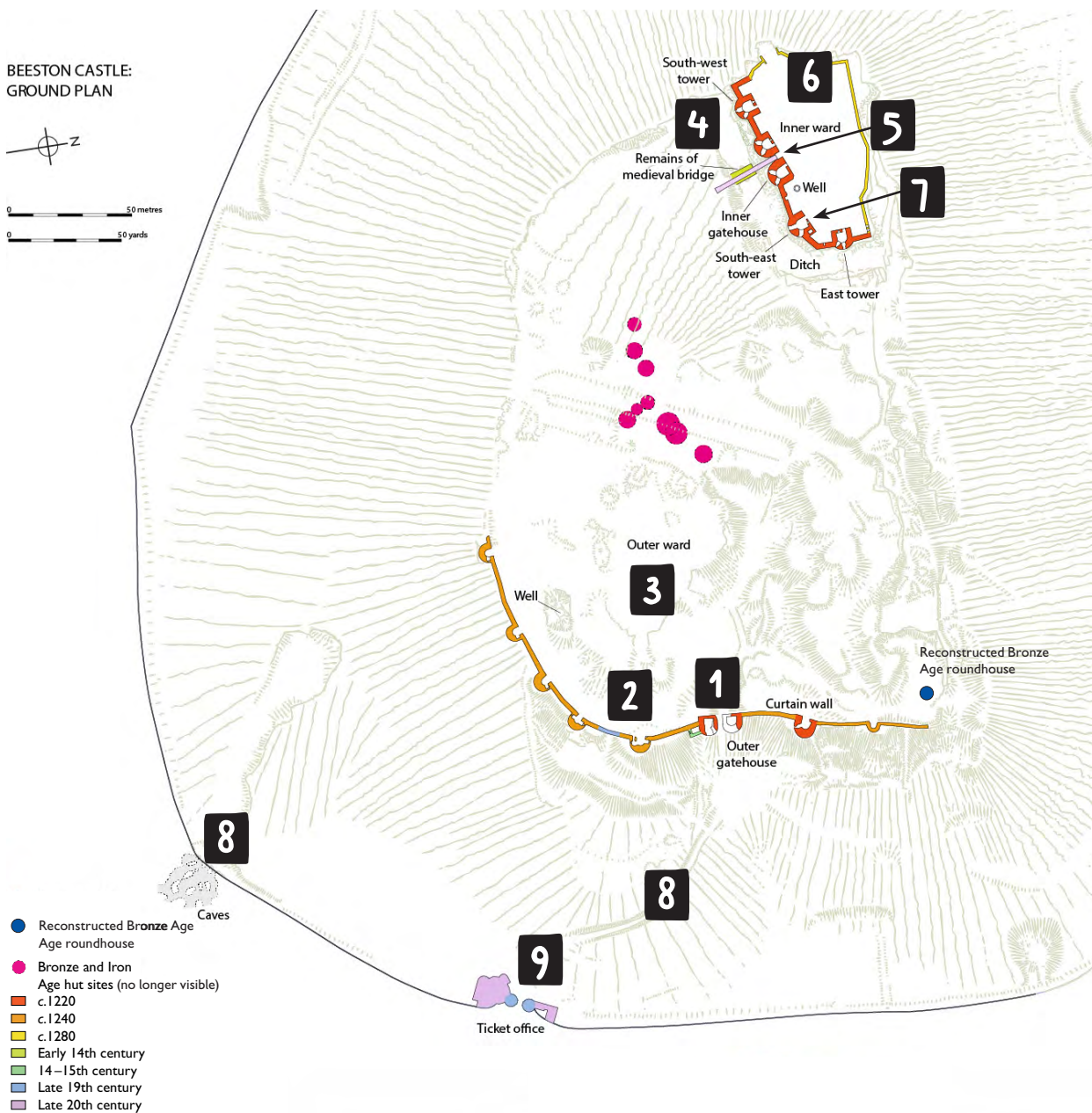




BEESTON CASTLE:
GROUND PLAN



0 50 metres
0 50 yards



ELEVATION:
Viewed from the east without trees

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 OUTER GATEHOUSE | 4 ROCK-CUT DITCH | 8 PATHWAY |
| 2 OUTER CURTAIN WALL | 5 INNER GATEHOUSE | 9 VICTORIAN TICKET OFFICE |
| 3 OUTER WARD | 6 INNER WARD | |
| | 7 INNER WARD CURTAIN WALL | |

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

WOODLAND WALK



KSI-2

Recommended for

KSI-2 (Science, PSHE)

Learning objectives

- Observe and experience nature within the woodland at Beeston.
- Notice and ask questions about the natural environment.
- Identify and reflect on observations, making comparisons and deductions.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes



A student on the Woodland Walk at Beeston Castle and Woodland Park.

SUMMARY

This activity gives students the chance to engage with the woodland through their senses, encouraging them to appreciate the wonder of the nature around them. The Woodland Walk is clearly signposted. Before starting along the path, tell students that Beeston has fantastic woodland that is home to a wide variety of trees, flowers and wildlife.

Please wear appropriate footwear and move carefully through the woodland. The path is clear but muddy and can be uneven. Remind students they can look and sniff, but mustn't lick or pick!

You can walk a full circuit of the crag; this will take around an hour. For a shorter walk, follow the path as it descends to road level by the outer wall. Where the path narrows, turn around at this point and go back the way you came up into the site.

Make sure you've printed the Woodland Walk sheet (on page 33). Photocopy enough sheets for your class.

TEACHERS' NOTES

Print the Woodland Walk (on page 33). Make sure you have enough photocopies for the whole class. To get the most out of this resource, each student will need a pen or pencil. A clipboard might also be helpful to lean or to rest the paper on while jotting down answers.

The Woodland Walk is clearly signposted. There are several points where the path opens up into small clearings which are ideal for bringing your students together.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Repeat this walk in an urban environment. What similarities and differences are there in the 'answers' you get? Compare the results – did you hear more birds in the woodland? Or was it easier to hear without the distraction of other sounds? Were the plants and trees you found the same or different? What did you notice about a more managed natural environment? Anything you couldn't find? What might you look for instead? Which walk did you prefer?



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

WOODLAND WALK

EXPLORE
BEESTON CASTLE'S
WONDERFUL WOODLAND

The woodland at Beeston is home to a wide variety of trees, flowers and wildlife. See how many of these things you can do as you make your way along the path.



HINT: You can look and sniff, but don't lick or pick! This keeps you safe and protects the woodland.

1 STOP, STAND, LISTEN

How many different bird calls can you hear? Tally here:

2 FIND A LEAF

Draw it here. Observe its shape and texture.

3 RUB A BARK

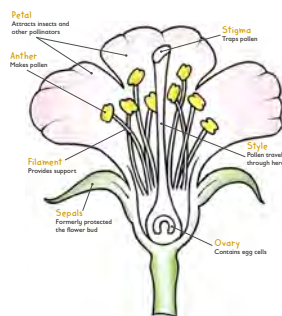
Write what you notice about this protective layer:

4 STOP, STAND, SNIFF

What smells can you smell? Nice or nasty?! Note them here:

5 FIND A FLOWER

Can you identify these parts?

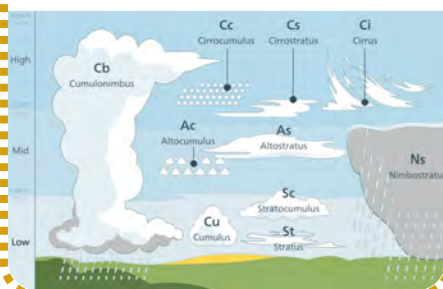


6 MUDDY FOOTPRINTS?

What can you work out about the animal that made them?

7 STOP, STAND, LOOK

What types of clouds can you see? Tick the ones you spot



8 FIND A FUNGUS

Draw it here. What do you notice?

9 TALK TOGETHER

How does the woodland make you feel? Write your descriptive words here:

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

INSPIRATION TRAIL



Recommended for

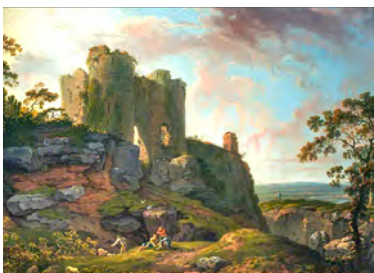
KS2 and KS3 (History, English, Art, Drama)

Learning objectives

- Understand that Beeston Castle and Woodland Park have been, and still are, inspiring places for artists.
- Use the setting at Beeston as a stimulus for creative activities.
- Develop reading, writing and drawing skills.

Time to complete

45–60 minutes



View of the inner gatehouse by George Barret c.1760.



Beeston crag offers fantastic panoramic views across the landscape.

SUMMARY

This trail encourages students to follow a route around the castle and undertake creative activities along the way. Print the trail (on pages 35–36) as an A4 or A3, double-sided resource and fold along the dotted lines to make it more practical for students to work from on-site. Photocopy enough trails for your class.

To get the most out of this resource, it would be helpful for each student to have: a pen or a pencil and a notebook or sketch pad to record their responses. We don't recommend using loose paper as it can be windy.

Before your visit, you could practise tuning in to the sounds of a particular environment and building a bank of adjectives to describe it. For 'Draw a view' you could discuss view points, horizon lines and vanishing points.

ACTIVITY	WHERE?
1. DESCRIBE THE SITE	On the grassy area outside the visitor centre. We suggest you start and end here, comparing first and departing impressions.
2. MAKE AN OFFERING	On the area to the right, in front of the outer gatehouse, as you walk up the path from the visitor centre.
3. DRAW A VIEW	In the outer ward, looking either north towards the inner gatehouse or south across the surrounding farmland.
4. CONSTRUCT A CLUE	In the inner ward, by the well. If busy, please move to a quieter spot while seeking inspiration.
5. CREATE A SOUNDSCAPE	In the inner ward, looking out northwards across the Cheshire plain.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Back in the classroom, students can turn the notes and sketches they made at Beeston into a longer piece of creative writing, artwork or recorded soundscape. Share your work with us on Twitter [@EHEducation](#).

INSPIRATION TRAIL

FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF
CREATIVES AT BEESTON CASTLE
AND WOODLAND PARK

You will need: a pen or pencil and
a notebook or sketch pad.

1 DESCRIBE THE SITE

Read this description of Beeston by the historian
William Camden (1551–1623):

‘a place well-guarded by walls of a great
compass, by a great number of its towers, and
by a mountain of very steep ascent.’

How would you **describe** Beeston?

You might like to do this at the start of your
visit and again at the end. How do your first
impressions **compare** with your departing ones?

2 MAKE AN OFFERING

Two Bronze Age axes have been found buried
under the rampart at Beeston. They seem to
have been buried on purpose, perhaps as part
of a ritual to show how important the site was
for metalworking.



One of the Bronze Age axe heads
found at Beeston.

A ritual is a ceremony with actions and words
performed in a sequence.

Role play a ritual ceremony in celebration
of something special to you. What would
you bury?

3 DRAW A VIEW

Beeston Castle’s ruins have inspired many artists.



View of the inner gatehouse by
George Barret c.1760.

Choose a view that inspires you and make an
outline sketch. **Add** notes on colour, light and details
to include such as trees or animals.

4 CONSTRUCT A CLUE

King Richard II (r.1377–99) is said to have hidden
part of the royal treasure somewhere at the castle.

Beyond the
Eastern
Entry way
Seek the well.
There find
Ornate boxes with
Nuggets of gold.

An example of an acrostic using the word Beeston.

Write an acrostic (a poem in which the first
letter of each line spells out a word or message),
as a ‘clue’ to its possible location.

5 CREATE A SOUNDSCAPE

Stand in the inner ward looking out at the view.



HINT

Try to separate continuous
sounds (www) from
intermittent ones (.)

Write down the sounds
you hear in the surrounding landscape.

Create a soundscape – an acoustic piece based
on the sounds you’ve heard in the environment.

INSPIRATION TRAIL MAP



KEY

- 1** DESCRIBE THE SITE
- 2** MAKE AN OFFERING
- 3** DRAW A VIEW
- 4** CONSTRUCT A CLUE
- 5** CREATE A SOUNDSCAPE



POST-VISIT

Activities and information to help you extend your students' learning back in the classroom.

SOURCES

PEER INTO THE PAST

A historical source is something that tells us about life in the past, such as a document, a picture or an object. It may be a primary source, from the time, or a secondary source, created later. Our experts have chosen these sources to help you learn about Beeston Castle and Woodland Park's history.

SOURCE 1

SOCKETED BRONZE AGE AXE HEADS

Socketed Bronze Age axe heads and a knife found during excavations at Beeston. The axe head in the middle is one of two that seem to have been placed beneath the Bronze Age rampart deliberately. Why these objects were so carefully placed isn't known but they were possibly a ritual offering intended to mark the special significance of the metalworking site.

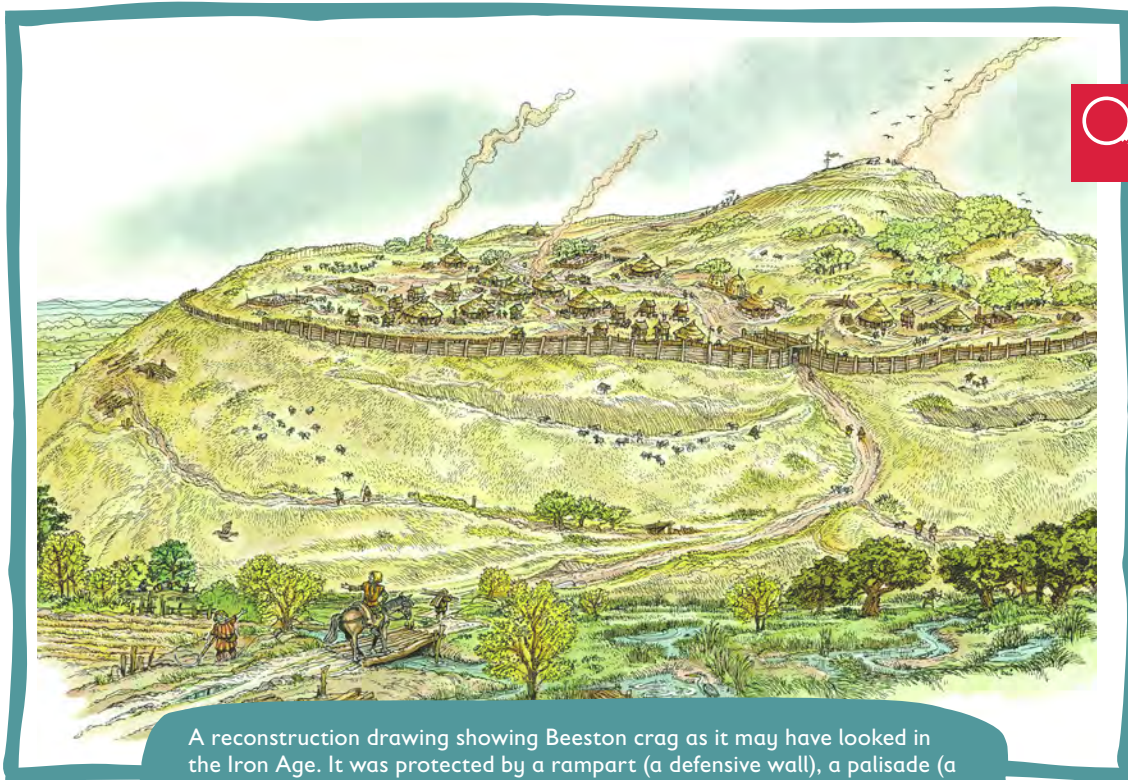


SOURCE 2



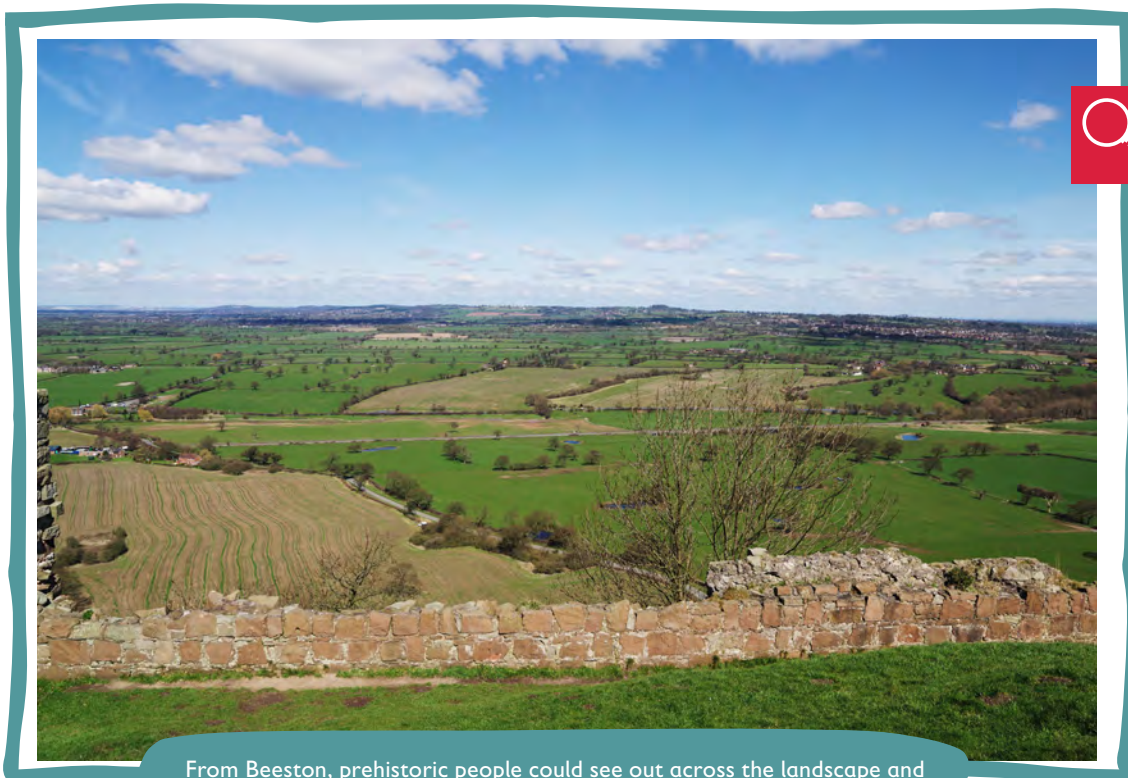
Old Oswestry Iron Age hillfort, situated 20 miles away from Beeston Castle. Beeston once had similar defences, although probably not as big.

SOURCE 3



A reconstruction drawing showing Beeston Crag as it may have looked in the Iron Age. It was protected by a rampart (a defensive wall), a palisade (a defensive tall fence made of wooden or iron stakes fixed into the ground) and a gateway. © Sandstone Ridge and Cheshire West & Chester Council 2011.

SOURCE 4



From Beeston, prehistoric people could see out across the landscape and possibly communicate with other hillforts along the sandstone ridge.

SOURCE 5

ROMANO-BRITISH ENAMELLED BROOCH

A Romano-British enamelled brooch found during excavations at Beeston. Roman pottery discovered at the base of the crag suggests that there was some kind of settlement in the vicinity, but no other evidence of Roman occupation has been found at the site.



SOURCE 6



An aerial view of the inner ward situated on top of the crag. The advantage of the location is evident, enabling a panoramic view across the landscape.

SOURCE 7

‘To Master Hugh de Dymoke, carpenter assigned together with divers other carpenters to scapple timber [plane the timber smooth] in Delamere Forest for repairing the three towers in the inner bailey of Beeston Castle, and for making a scaffold in place of the bridge which was between the inner and outer bailey of the said castle and for making machines thereon for drawing and raising great timber within the said inner bailey, and for making steps, galleries, doors, windows and one new bridge – for their wages and divers carpenters working with them... between 15th Aug in the 31st year and the feast of St Michael in the 32nd year... £28l 8s. 9d. [£281.43p] To Master Warin, mason, assigned by Sir W de Bliburg to do the masonry work and 24 masons sometimes more sometimes less work about the masonry of the gate of the Dungon [inner bailey] for having a drawbridge there and for crenellating the said three towers and for making one great massive stone wall before the said bridge for receiving the said bridge, 34 feet high, 7 feet thick, and 20 feet long, and for raising the walls of the said three towers and crenellating them, because they formerly had high wooden surfaces, and now they are made level, and for the masonry work done by them in the same castle within the time aforesaid... and for the wages of women carrying water, which they sought in a place distant by 1 furlong from the said castle, and for the wages of lthel the smith and his assistant working in the said castle... and for making a forge for him in the said castle £38l 7s. 1d. [£381.35p] To Jordan de Bradeford and Benedict de Staundon for 15 carats [possibly cart loads] and 10 fothers [loads] of lead brought for them for the roofing of the said three towers, and for weighing the said lead... wages and stipend of brother Thomas le Plumer [plumber?], monk of Cumbermere, founding the said lead and putting on the said towers for 145 days within the said time... £34 4s. 6 ³/₄d. [£34. 26p]’

This document illustrates how many professions were involved in the repairs of the castle and what materials were needed. It also shows how the castle underwent changes to increase and improve its fortifications.

SOURCE 8



A reconstruction drawing by Liam Wales showing an aerial view of the castle from the north-west and how it might have looked during the building works documented in 1303–4.

SOURCE 9

‘To Sir Ralph de Vernon, knight, with two esquires, that is to say Roger de Stoke and Robert Stretch, and six bowmen, that is to say William de Prestlond, Hugh Brayne, Kenrick Rayeboun, William de Beeston, John de Wyggwolond, and William, son of John de Eccleston, dwelling in the same castle, for garrisoning the same from 20th May to 20th July next following, viz., for sixty-two days, the said Ralph taking for himself and his two esquires 3s. a day and each of the said bowmen taking 4d. a day within the said account... £15 10s... To the said Ralph, Constable of Beeston Castle, for his wages for the whole year £10.’

The bowmen’s wages were the same as wages paid to masons at that time – 4d (2p) a day. This extract shows how many men were expected to staff the castle. This source reveals that nine people guarded the castle in 1312–13.

SOURCE 10



A cut-away reconstruction painting by Ivan Lapper showing archers and soldiers at a fighting post in a wall tower at Beeston Castle.

SOURCE 11



‘December 13th. A little before day, Captain Sandford who came out of Ireland with eight of his firelocks [soldiers armed with muskets], crept up the steep hill of Beeston castle and got into the upper ward, and took possession there. It must be done by treachery, for the place was most impregnable. Capt Steele, who kept it for Parliament, was accused and suffered for it; but it was verily thought he had not betrayed it wilfully; but some of his men proving false, he had not courage enough to withstand Sandford, to try it out with him. What made much against Steele was, he took Sandford down into his chamber, where they dined together, and much beer was sent up to Sandford’s men; and the castle after a short parley, was delivered up... There was much wealth and goods in the castle, belonging to gentlemen and neighbours, who had brought it thither for safety, besides ammuniton and provisions for half a year at least; all which the enemy got.’

Diary of Edward Burghall, Schoolmaster of Bunbury. It was likely that a sympathiser let the Royalists into the inner bailey.

SOURCE 12



‘Theire was neither meate, Ale nor Beere found in the Castle, save only a peece of Turkey pye, Twoe Bisketts, a lyve Peacock and a peahen.’

A description of conditions inside Beeston Castle by a victorious Parliamentarian following the Royalist surrender on 15th November 1645. (This text uses the original spelling.)

SOURCE 13



SOURCE 14



SOURCE 15



‘The second day – well, everyone who has been to Beeston Festival knows that the company is not so ‘select’ and for that matter it is not to be expected that it should be. It embraces a class to whom a holiday like that, which costs, if they are rigidly economical, only a shilling, is really a treat. The servant lads and lasses for miles around will walk to Beeston, while trains convey thither a fair proportion of working people from the towns, to whom the saving of a shilling is an object, if only to expend in a different way. This was no doubt the view taken by many of the 3,570 who were admitted to the Castle grounds on Tuesday, for long before the brass band played the National Anthem some had sunk to the ground exhausted... There was no serious breach of behaviour even on the second day, so far as the tea tent was concerned. There, everything passed off quietly and orderly. Upwards of 1,800 persons partook of tea, and to supply them 1,148lbs. of plain and currant bread, 135lbs of butter, 128lbs of sugar, 21lbs of tea, and 138 quarts [276 pints] of milk were used.’

An extract from the *Chester Chronicle*, 25 June 1870. There is a condescending feel to the article, which reveals much about the attitude at the time of the professional classes towards servants and manual workers. The fete was one of the few opportunities servants and other workers would have had for a day trip, probably taking advantage of an excursion fare offered by the local railway company.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

BUILD A PREHISTORIC ROUNDHOUSE



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2 and KS3 (History, Design and Technology, Maths)

Learning objectives

- Understand the stages involved in the construction of the Bronze Age roundhouse at Beeston.
- Follow instructions to build a model roundhouse.
- Consider some of the strengths and limitations of a roundhouse building.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes



The reconstructed Bronze Age roundhouse at Beeston Castle and Woodland Park.

SUMMARY

The volunteer-led construction of the Bronze Age roundhouse at Beeston has been a wonderful piece of experimental archaeology. Using traditional tools and techniques, a core band of volunteers have built an experimental version of a Bronze Age hut, similar to those that would have been found on the site.

If you'd like to learn more about Beeston's prehistoric past, you might be interested in our Prehistoric Settlers Discovery Visit. This expert-led session based in the reconstructed roundhouse allows students to learn through hands-on activities including prehistoric-style crafts and using traditional tools in an authentic setting. **Search** 'Discovery Visits at Beeston Castle' for more information and to book.

TEACHERS' NOTES

The student sheet on pages 48–53, acts as a guide for each stage in building the roundhouse.

The activity gives students the chance to build their own model roundhouse in 10 steps. We've kept the basic approach simple but have made suggestions for a bit more challenge should students want or require that.

Materials needed:

Corrugated card, scissors, glue, sellotape, string or wool, paper straws, straw, clay (optional).

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

If your students have felt inspired by this roundhouse build, challenge them to try it with different materials. How about an edible roundhouse for example?! For a savoury version try a rice cake base with breadstick posts and Shredded Wheat roof. A sweet version could have chocolate fingers in sponge cake, topped with strawberry laces and a chocolate buttercream daub!

BUILD A PREHISTORIC ROUNDHOUSE

BE INSPIRED BY BEESTON

Follow these 10 steps to build your own model of a prehistoric roundhouse, inspired by the one at Beeston Castle and Woodland Park.

Need some help? Ask your teacher or a friend.



1 THE BASE

Cut out a base for your roundhouse. At least 10cm in diameter should give a good size.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Corrugated card.



The circular space and ground preparations ready for building the roundhouse at Beeston.

CHALLENGE TIME!



For a more realistic base, try **dry Oasis** – a foam-like block that is normally used for arranging artificial flowers!

DID YOU KNOW?



The roundhouse design is based on **archaeological evidence** of Bronze Age and Iron Age huts that have been found at Beeston.



The wall line and central posts being prepared ready to go into the ground.

2 THE WALL LINE

Create a wall line by inserting your 'posts' into your base. You'll probably need to carefully cut a hole before putting the posts in. Secure with a little (non-authentic) tape or glue. 7 to 11 posts, each around 8cm long, should be fine with approximately 3cm spacing between them (or 30 degrees if you're using a protractor). Don't forget to leave a bigger space on the south side for a main door.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Corrugated card or lolly sticks, glue or sellotape.

CHALLENGE TIME!



For a stronger wall line, try using **dowel** or for a more natural look use some straight **twigs** from outdoors.

DID YOU KNOW?



In the roundhouse at Beeston, the wall posts are responsible for taking two-thirds of the roof weight!

3 THE CENTRAL POSTS

The three central posts need to be inserted into your base, just like the wall posts. They should be around 20cm long. To do this mark the central point of your base and draw one vertical and one horizontal line, each around 3cm in length, through the central point to make a cross. If this were a compass, your posts should then be placed in holes north, south and west.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Corrugated card or lolly sticks, glue or sellotape.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Make sure that your central posts are bigger than your wall posts. This will give height to the roundhouse roof.

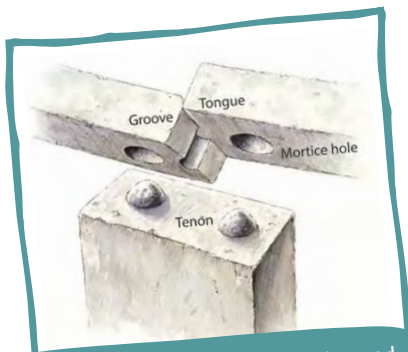
DID YOU KNOW?



Most of the material used to build the roundhouse at Beeston (such as the timber for the posts) came straight from the site!



A picture, looking south, of Beeston's roundhouse at this stage of its construction.



A diagram showing how mortise and tenon joints were used at Stonehenge.

4 THE PURLIN RING

The purlin ring joins the wall posts together and supports the middle of the rafters that make up the roof. Use some more lengths of card to add a purlin ring sitting on top of and joining your wall posts together (like the top of a T). At Beeston there is a small triangular purlin joining the central posts together. You might like to add one of those to your roundhouse too.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Corrugated card or lolly sticks, string or wool.

CHALLENGE TIME!

Mortise and tenon joints join the wall posts with the purlin ring. These were used at Stonehenge too! See if you can get one of these joints into your roundhouse build.



DID YOU KNOW?

Although not something prehistoric people had to do, English Heritage asked a **structural engineer** to check the roundhouse at Beeston to make sure it's safe.



5 THE WOVEN WATTLE

A tightly woven wattle wall will help make your roundhouse a strong structure. Using string or wool, start on one of your door posts and weave in and out around your roundhouse covering the sides completely, starting from the bottom up to the top of the wall posts. Don't forget to leave a gap for the door.



The wattle wall of the reconstructed roundhouse at Beeston. Note the window that was added to the design!

CHALLENGE TIME!

Take care to do this as neatly as possible. You could use lengths of willow or hazel but be sure to soak them overnight to make sure they're flexible.



DID YOU KNOW?

In the Beeston roundhouse, this woven wall directly takes one-third of the roof weight.



MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED
String or wool.



The rafters lying over the purlin ring (and triangular purlin) on the Beeston roundhouse.

6 THE RAFTERS

Next you need to lay long rafters over the top of the purlin ring (and triangular purlin if you've included it) so they come together at the top. Try to tie them together with string or wool (or else use a little glue or sellotape) at the top and where they touch the purlin ring too. Once secure, you can cut the length of the rafters so they overhang the purlin ring.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Corrugated card or paper straws, string or wool.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Try to position and shape the rafters carefully over your doorway so that it's easier for entering and exiting the roundhouse.

DID YOU KNOW?



There are 32 rafters on the roundhouse at Beeston. The roof pitch is set at 45–55 degrees to ensure there is enough 'run off' for rain hitting the thatch.

7 THE RING BEAMS

Ring beams lie horizontally in a circle around the rafters and make up a ladder that runs up the roof. The beams provide a point for tying off the thatching. Aim to add 3–5 beams on each section of roof.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Corrugated card or lolly sticks.



The ring beams making a ladder up the rafters, ready for the thatch roof to be added.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Try to tie these ring beams on but if you get stuck a little sellotape is fine!

DID YOU KNOW?



Ring beams can be woven, nailed or lashed (fastened securely with a cord) into position.



The layered thatch bundles on the roof of the Beeston roundhouse.

8 THE ROOF

The Beeston roundhouse uses thatch bundles, attached in thin layers to avoid putting too much weight on the frame. Create your own bundles of thatch using straw and tie them on using string or wool, moving up the ring beams.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED Straw, string or wool or glue.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Thatching a roundhouse involves working at height. Think about how challenging this would have been for people in prehistory without modern equipment.

DID YOU KNOW?



The Beeston roundhouse has around 1,000 thatch bundles forming its roof.

9 THE DAUB (OPTIONAL)

Daub is a mixture of soil with fibrous material to bind it together, such as straw. It's used to give a waterproof coating to the woven wattle framework. You may want to try mixing your own daub or for a (slightly) less messy option, you could use clay. Stick it carefully on top of the woven wattle.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED Clay or home-made daub.



Students working outside the Beeston roundhouse. Note the first stages of daubing around the door behind them and the uneven floor still to be completed.

CHALLENGE TIME!



To prevent shrinkage and cracks, daubing should be done by being pushed from both sides of the wall at the same time – see if you can get a friend to help you for this bit.

DID YOU KNOW?



The ratios of earth to fibre and water in daub are dependent on the type of soil in each particular place.

10 THE FLOOR

To finish your roundhouse, check it has a smooth floor by applying a layer of coloured paper or thin card.

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED

Coloured paper or thin card.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Once you've finished your roundhouse, do some research to find out what might have been inside.

DID YOU KNOW?



A good roundhouse needs a hard-wearing floor with an even surface that isn't easily damaged.



A school group having a great time at the Beeston roundhouse.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

A GREAT FETE!



KS3

Recommended for

KS3 (English, Art and Design, Maths)

Learning objectives

- Communicate ideas and work successfully with others to plan an event.
- Plan, revise and edit work following feedback.
- Create pieces for specific audiences.

Time to complete

Approx. 180 minutes



Stalls at the annual fair held at Beeston Castle and Woodland Park.

SUMMARY

Beeston Castle has long hosted events and celebratory occasions. The first festival held at the castle was in 1844. This was organised by the branch of the Independent Order of Oddfellows from nearby Bunbury, a charitable organisation that used the occasion to raise money for the Widows' and Orphans' Fund. It was a success, making a £94 profit, and went on to become an annual two-day event known as the Bunbury Fair, attended by thousands of people.

In 1897, Queen Victoria's Jubilee was celebrated with a bonfire; and in 1902 a special fete marked the coronation of King Edward VII. After 1945, the current Beeston Castle fete was established, which continues to be held every year.

This activity gives students the chance to take on the role of English Heritage event planners, offering their own take on a fun family day out. We've suggested this works over three sessions but you may wish to adapt as best suits your students. You'll need to provide paper, card, colouring pens, as well as IT access as desired.

SESSION	FOCUS
One	Planning and initial ideas
Two	Development; building on feedback
Three	Pitching and scoring

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

A class of excellent event planners? Can you turn their entrepreneurial skills to a fund-raising event at your school? The scoring criteria could work with a range of projects.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TEACHERS' NOTES

SESSION ONE

Tell students they'll be working in small groups to plan the annual fete for English Heritage, held at Beeston Castle. You might like to start by reading Source 15 (page 47) which gives an impression of the fete in 1870. While students should try to be more inclusive throughout their planning, it may be helpful to start by thinking about their audiences and what they might expect from their day out.

Give students a copy of the site plan (page 5) and explain their fete will be based around five stalls, located on the flatter area of land in the outer ward. Share the following success criteria so they're clear about what they need to achieve.

Success criteria:

- Something for all the family
- Appealing and engaging
- Appropriate for the site
- Cost effective.

Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. As a group, they'll need to agree their target audience and what stalls they want at their fete bearing in mind that they must be able to justify their choices. Tell them that they will need to show they have considered the costs as well as operational concerns, such as the impact of stalls on the historic site. They also need to think of the practical implications: for example, it's not a good idea to locate a dog show near the refreshments stall!

They should decide what they want to charge by way of entry fee(s) (adult, child, concessions, family ticket... they could look at the English Heritage website to see our current admission fees for guidance). They should also start thinking about how they will market and promote their fete. For example, they could produce a piece of print marketing for a local magazine or mock up a social media post.

At the end of the session, students could share their initial ideas with their peers with each group giving and receiving feedback ahead of developing their ideas further in the next session.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TEACHERS' NOTES

SESSION TWO:

Students should use this session to develop their plans from session one. They should act on any feedback received and use the success criteria to develop their 'products' for the event.

For an extra layer of challenge you could ask your students to create a 'project management' type schedule. Get them to plot their planned activity across each month or week.

SESSION THREE:

This session should be used to allow each group to 'pitch' their plans for the fete to the rest of the group.

Students may like to score each other out of 10 on the following:

- Meeting the success criteria
- Ideas and rationale
- Pitch and clarity of communication
- Strength of promotional material and messaging
- Evidence of teamwork.

At the end, the scores could be tallied and the winning group awarded the 'contract' for the fete.

Some ideas for stalls:

- Refreshments
- Bouncy castle
- Dog show
- Balloon making
- Name the cuddly toy
- Beat the goalie
- Silent disco
- Face painting
- Fashion parade
- Hoopla
- Raffle
- Pre-loved clothing.