



KSI-2

KS3

TEACHERS' KIT

Witley Court and Gardens

This kit will help teachers to plan a visit to Witley Court and Gardens. Explore nature, find out about fountain engineering and discover the people who lived, worked and partied in one of England's grandest country houses. 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](https://twitter.com/EHEducation)

Step into England's story

WELCOME

This Teachers' Kit for Witley Court and Gardens 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.

You can find more practical information about your booked visit to Witley Court and Gardens on your Education Visit Permit and on the Witley Court **Schools page**.

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.



HANDS ON



LISTEN



SCIENCE



SMELL



ROLE PLAY



CHALLENGE



MAP



QUOTE



EXAMINE



MATHS



ART



DID YOU KNOW?

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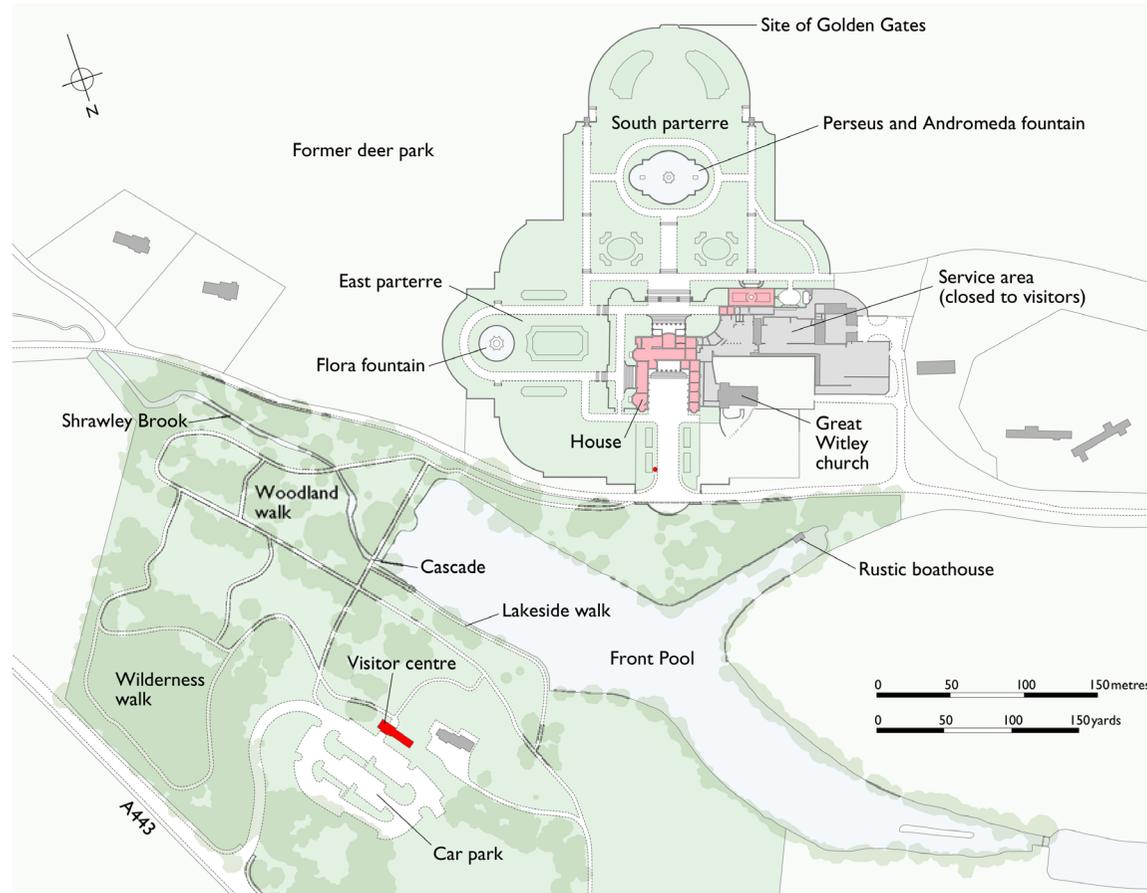


PRE-VISIT

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

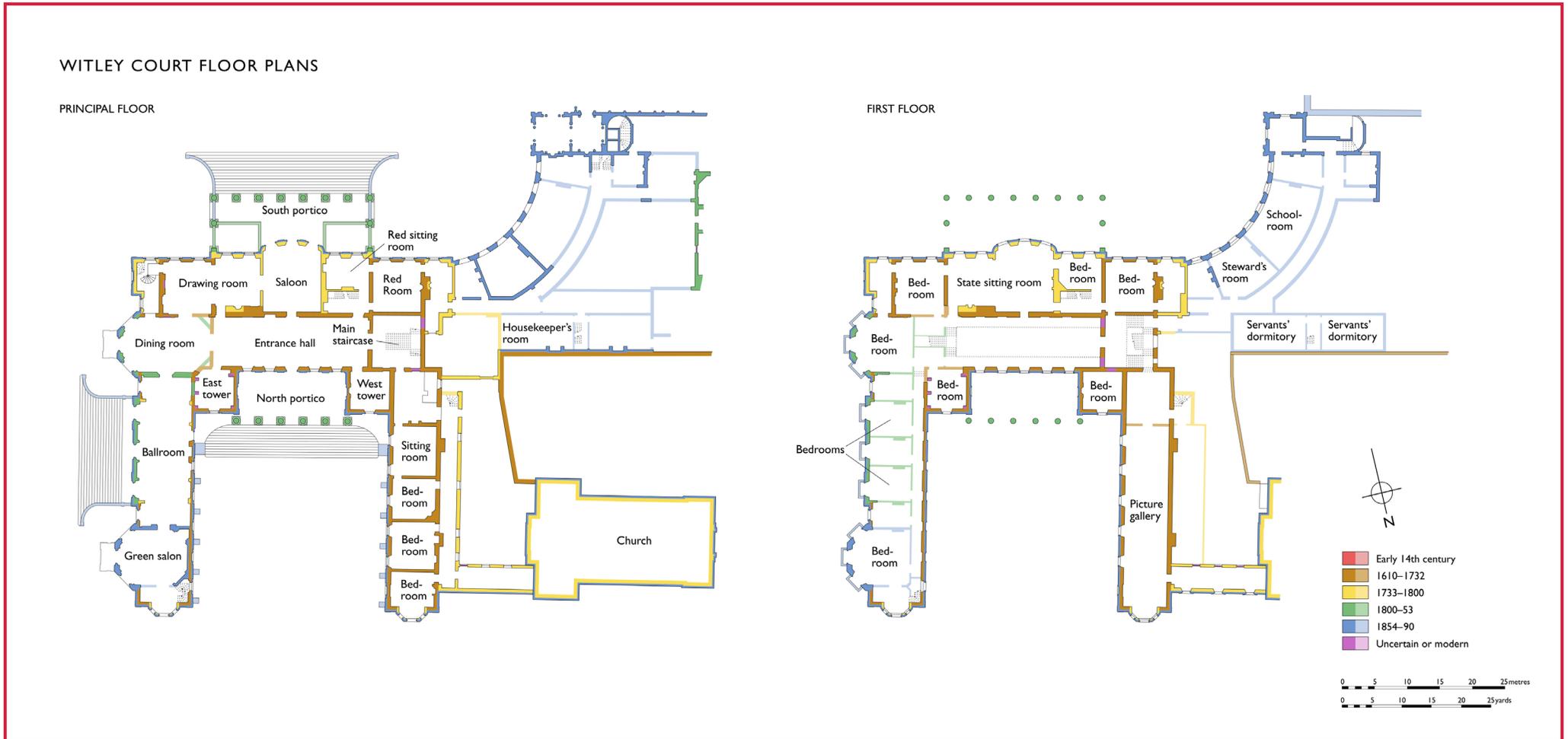
WITLEY COURT AND GARDENS

SITE PLANS



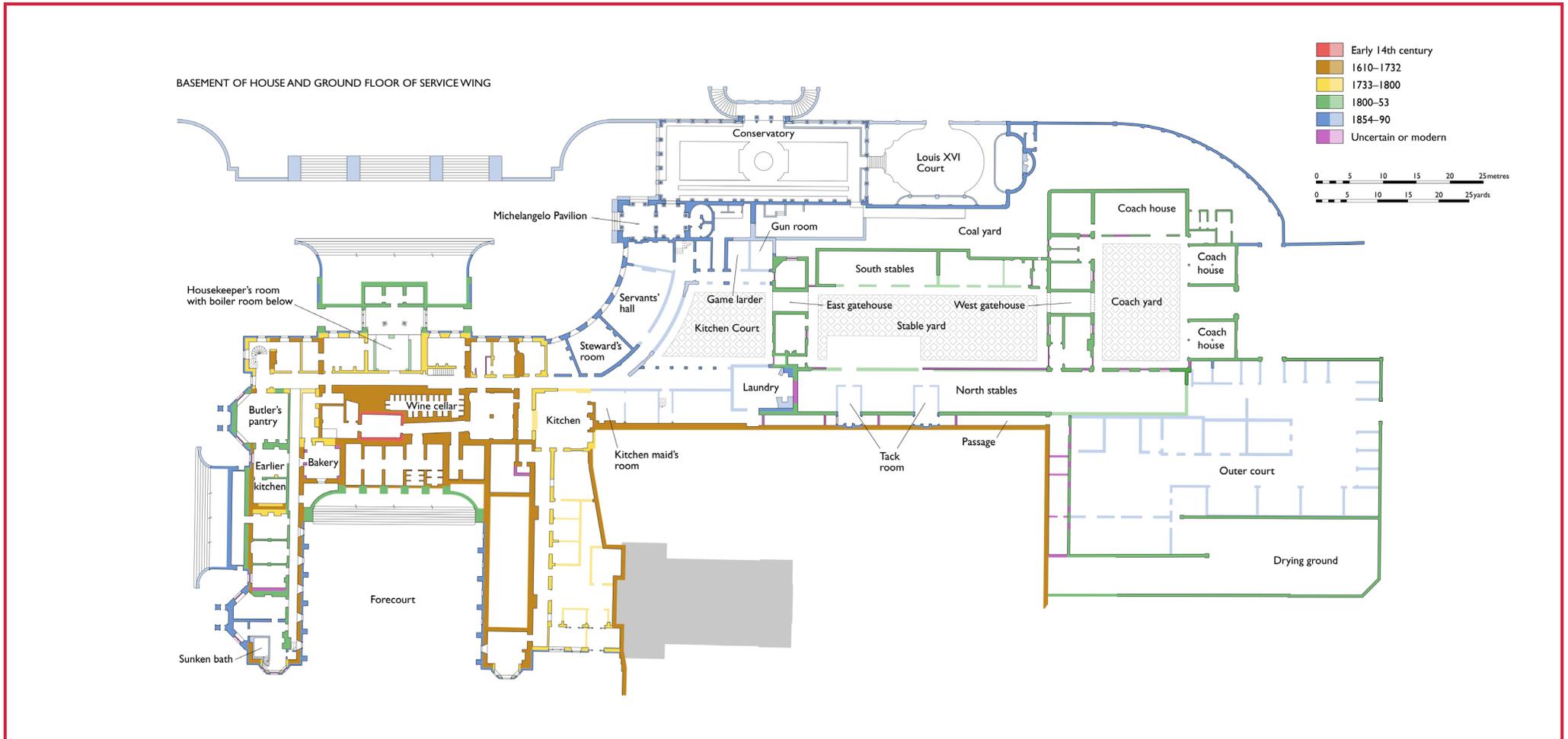
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SITE PLANS



WITLEY COURT AND GARDENS

SITE PLANS



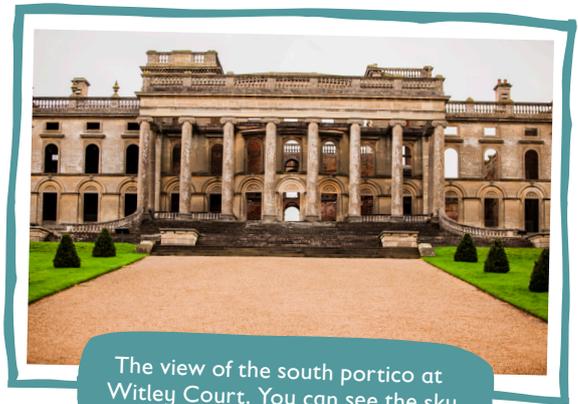
HISTORICAL INFORMATION

DISCOVER THE STORY OF WITLEY COURT AND GARDENS

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

AN ATMOSPHERIC RUIN

When you visit Witley Court and Gardens today you will see the shell of a building that was once one of the grandest country houses in England. Glamorous parties attended by members of the royal family were hosted here. A large workforce of servants kept the household running. However, all this came to an end in 1937 when the house was devastated by fire. It was never rebuilt. Instead, it was stripped of belongings and left to become the atmospheric ruin you see today.



The view of the south portico at Witley Court. You can see the sky through some of the windows.



An artist's illustration of William the Conqueror.

MEDIEVAL MANOR

Witley Court can be dated back to **Domesday Book** of 1086. At this time, it was a **manor** house owned by William the Conqueror's cousin, Urso d'Abetot. Manor houses were lived in by a **lord** and **lady**. The lord and lady were in charge of an area of land known as a manor. The manor usually had a church and a village. The people who lived in the village owed **loyalty** to the lord and lady, and they often worked in their fields. By the 13th century, the manor was owned by the Cooksey family. Remains of their 14th-century home still exist in the cellars underneath the entrance hall.

THE RUSSELL FAMILY

In 1498 Robert Russell **inherited** the **estate** from his cousin Thomas Cooksey. Russell built a new house on the site and enclosed the deer park in the early 16th century. This created a more private estate for the owners to hunt deer in. The house was rebuilt in about 1620. Today you can see the remains of the two staircase towers on either side of the north front. The last Russell to own Witley Court was Thomas Russell. He had been given the house as a wedding present from his father in 1654, but just a year later he sold it to Thomas Foley.



This window frame dates from the 17th century, when the house was owned by the Russell family. It was blocked up when the house was made bigger by Thomas Foley III.

THE FOLEY FAMILY BUSINESS

Thomas Foley's family made their fortune by **manufacturing** nails. Thomas's father, Richard Foley, is said to have travelled to Sweden to spy on a business that used machines to make nails. When he got home, he copied the machine for his own business. Other nail manufacturers in Britain made nails by hand. Using machines gave the Foleys an advantage. They could make more nails for a lower price. Richard Foley went on to become a respected member of the local area and was even elected as **mayor** of Dudley at the age of 36 in 1615.

Thomas developed his father's business further by supplying cannons during the English Civil War (1642–51). He married Anne Browne, the daughter of a wealthy gun manufacturer, and inherited a half-share of the family business which earned him £5,000 a year, approximately £1 million in today's money. All of this helped him to buy Witley Court from Thomas Russell in 1655.

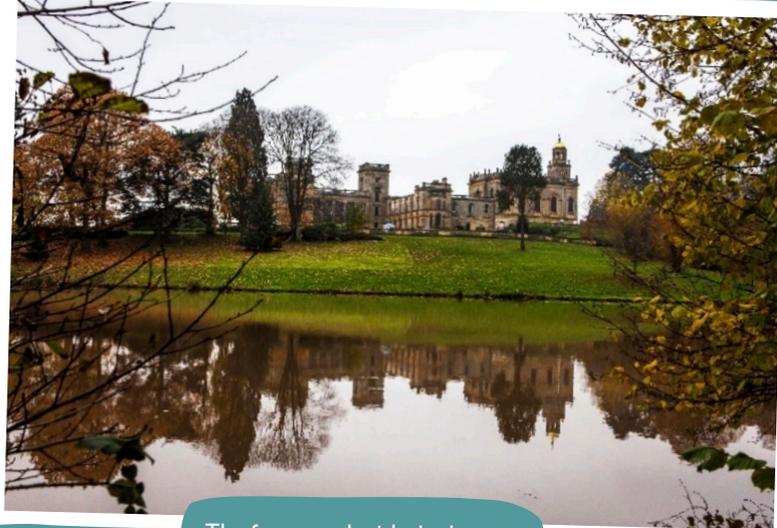


An artist's illustration of a cannon from the 17th century.

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

The Foley family called their eldest sons Thomas. Eight Thomas Foleys in succession inherited Witley Court in the 17th and 18th centuries. They expanded and updated the house and gardens. The Foleys took over neighbouring manors and even moved the village of Great Witley to improve their view. They created the front pool by **damming** a stream and added a **causeway** to bring visitors in from the north.

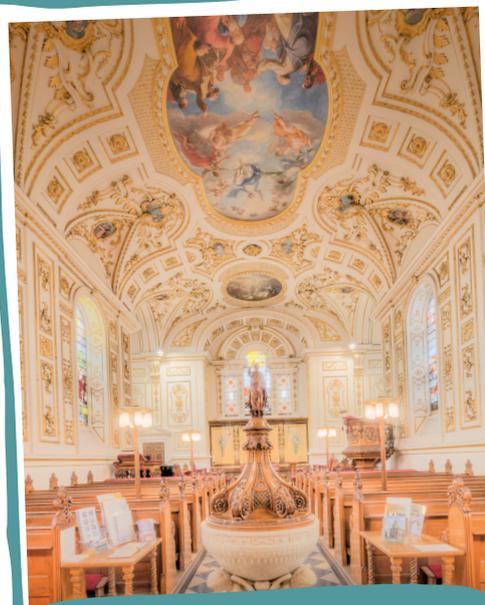
Thomas III added more rooms on the garden side of the house and added another floor too. Over time, the family moved away from their industrial roots and became **landed aristocracy** and **politicians**. Thomas III was the first of the Foleys to become a lord.



The front pool with the house and church in the background.

AN UNUSUAL CHURCH

By the 17th century, the local parish church on the Witley estate was falling down. Thomas III decided to build a new one. He died before it could be finished, so his widow, Mary, finished the project. The church was refurbished 12 years later by their son, Thomas IV (2nd Lord Foley). Ten windows were painted with scenes from Christ's life. Paintings taken from a demolished chapel in Middlesex were installed, such as the large oval depiction of the **Ascension** (Jesus going to heaven) by Antonio Bellucci. The **gilded** decoration on this spectacular ceiling was made from a brand-new invention, **papier mâché**. Have a go at making a papier mâché picture frame in the activity on pages 58–59.



The interior of Great Witley parish church that sits next to Witley Court. The church is not owned or managed by English Heritage so it may not be open on the day you visit. In the public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

EXPENSIVE RENOVATIONS

When Thomas IV died without an heir, Witley Court went to his second cousin, Thomas V, Baron Foley. It next went to Baron Foley's 13-year-old grandson, Thomas VII, because his father (Thomas VI) had large **debts**. Thomas VII later married into a wealthy Irish family. This gave him enough money to **commission** the leading architect and family friend, John Nash to renovate Witley Court. He added **porticos** to the north and south, raised the roof to match the porticos and added **Tuscan-style eaves** that stick out from the edge of the building. Nash also built a new **service** wing around two courtyards. Inside the house, he updated the interiors using fashionable materials including bronze and marble. Unfortunately, Thomas VII didn't have enough money to pay for it all. He took out a **£24,000 loan** from Nash, but his money troubles continued. He sold the estate in 1837 for **£900,000** (£99 million in today's money) to 16-year-old William Ward, 11th Lord Ward.



The south portico at Witley Court is eight columns wide, and two deep, each one topped with a scroll decoration in the Ionic style of classical architecture.

WEALTHY WARD

As William Ward was still only a boy, his money, businesses and properties were taken care of by a group of **trustees** until he reached the age of 28. He inherited his wealth from a distant relative, John William Ward, 9th Lord Ward and 1st Earl of Dudley. The Wards had made their fortune from exploiting reserves of iron, coal and lime on their estates. John William Ward owned over two hundred mines, a railway construction company, factories and 25,000 acres of land. As a **Member of Parliament**, he helped to get the Stourbridge and Dudley Canals constructed. This linked Birmingham to the River Severn, making it easier to transport heavy goods, including coal from his **colliery**. His income was over **£100,000** a year in an age when servants might only earn 10 shillings (50p) a week.

RICHES FROM SLAVERY

John William Ward also owned **plantations** in Jamaica where **enslaved** people grew coffee, sugar cane, bananas and cocoa. Although slavery was **abolished** by the time William Ward inherited the plantations, he still benefited financially through **compensation** payments. Parliamentary papers show that Ward's trustees were paid compensation for loss of earnings after 665 enslaved people were freed.

WARD'S WITLEY COURT

Between 1843 and 1846, Queen Adelaide, the widow of King William IV, **rented** Witley Court. When she moved out, Ward moved in. In 1851 he married Selina Constance de Burgh. She sadly died in childbirth in the same year. Soon after, he began **renovating** the house and gardens, perhaps as a way to cope with his grief.

He employed the architect Samuel Daukes who designed Osborne House on the Isle of Wight for Queen Victoria. Daukes covered the whole house in Bath stone, which matched Nash's porticos better. He used a style of **architecture** inspired by Italian buildings from the 16th century. Key features include **columns**, **pedimented** windows (with triangles on top) and arches. A curved **wing** was added to lead people to a new, and much bigger, glass-roofed conservatory.

Inside, rooms were decorated using **plaster** and **lime putty** to create panels with decorative borders. The putty leaf design in the image below was moulded into shape and then pinned onto the plasterwork.

You can still see surviving examples inside Witley Court today. Complete the Top Things to See trail on pages 38–47 to find out more. In the ballroom white and gold decorations inspired by French designs from the reigns of Louis XIV and XV were put in. A 'fireproof' floor made of steel and concrete was installed, but the fire of 1937 proved it was not really fireproof.



Osborne House on the Isle of Wight was designed by Daukes for Queen Victoria.



A section of plaster work decoration that survived the fire.

GORGEOUS GARDENS

Ward also employed William Andrews Nesfield to update the gardens. Nesfield was an experienced garden designer who created **formal gardens** for the wealthy. He added gravel walkways, clipped evergreen plants and **tazzas** (large stone vases) full of flowers.

Parterre gardens were also planted.

Flowers were laid out in a pattern and separated by gravel paths and **box** hedging. The east parterre had flower beds separated by a red gravel made of crushed brick tiles, a white gravel made of **Derbyshire spar** and a blue gravel made of **Westmorland slate**. This style of garden is inspired by embroidery, so it is known as 'parterre de broderie' or 'on the ground embroidery'. Have a go at designing your own parterre garden using our activity on pages 60–63.



The east parterre garden and Flora fountain viewed from above. Although parterre was out of fashion by the 1870s, some archaeological remains survived. English Heritage used these remains to reconstruct the east parterre.

FABULOUS FOUNTAINS

Beyond the east parterre garden Nesfield added a fountain. At its centre was a sculpture of **Flora**, the goddess of spring and flowers, which is now missing. She held a **cornucopia** (horn) which had a water **jet** inside and was surrounded by four people with fish tails.



The Flora fountain in the east parterre garden. The statue of Flora was broken in the 1950s and has been missing since.

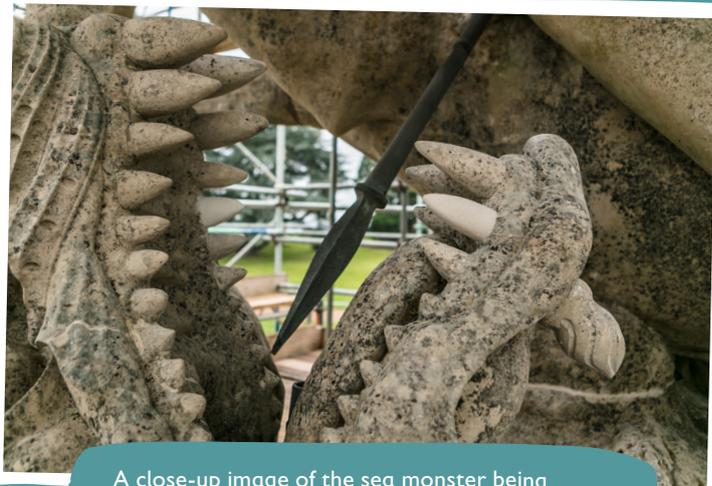
SUPER SCULPTURE

In the south parterre garden there is another impressive fountain. The **Perseus and Andromeda** fountain shows a scene from a **classical myth**. In this ancient Greek story, the Ethiopian queen, Cassiopeia, claimed that her daughter, Andromeda, was more beautiful than the female spirits of the water, known as **sea nymphs**. Cassiopeia's boasting angered **Poseidon**, the god of the sea. In revenge, he flooded the kingdom and sent Cetus, a sea monster, to terrify its people. The Ethiopian king, Cepheus, went to an advisor known as an **oracle**, to ask how to end the terror. The oracle said he had to **sacrifice** Andromeda. Cepheus decided to chain his daughter to a rock, so she couldn't escape when the monster came for her.

Meanwhile, Perseus, who was half-human and half-god, was on his way back from killing the terrifying gorgon, **Medusa**. The **gorgons** were three beautiful sisters that had been cursed by the gods. Their hair was turned into snakes and anyone who looked into their eyes would turn to stone. To cut off her head, he made sure he only looked at her reflection in his shield. He was returning from this when he passed by Andromeda and instantly fell in love with her. He speared the monster, Cetus, and rescued Andromeda. The sculpture shows Perseus spearing the sea monster while seated on a winged horse. Andromeda is shown to the side watching on. The scene is surrounded by alternating dolphins and shells. Find out more about this fascinating sculpture in the activity on pages 34–36.



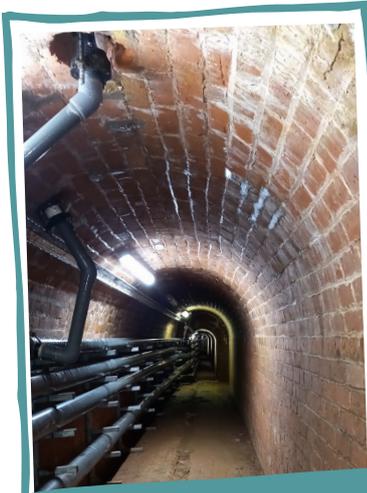
The Perseus and Andromeda fountain at Witley Court depicting Perseus spearing Cetus, the sea monster.



A close-up image of the sea monster being speared on the Perseus and Andromeda fountain.

AMAZING ENGINEERING

The sculpture was not the only impressive feature of this fountain. It required some amazing **engineering** to power its many jets. A hidden network of underground tunnels was built to transport water to the fountain. There were 18,000 litres of water pumped from a nearby pool into a **reservoir** half



The tunnels (underneath the gardens) that bring water to the fountain. Although the pipework in this image is modern, the tunnel is the same one that was used when the fountain was first installed.

a mile away. The reservoir was built 30 metres above the level of the house to harness the power of gravity. By using much narrower pipes nearer the fountain, it increased the flow of the

water. This all helped the main jet from the sea monster's mouth to reach an impressive 36 metres into

the air, further than the length of three double-decker buses end to end. You can experiment with water pressure and flow in our activity on pages 64–65.



The Perseus and Andromeda fountain working on a sunny day at Witley Court.

CLEVER CONSERVATION

Exposure to water and weather damages stonework. So, in 2016, the fountain was cleaned and restored. This was a huge job involving many people, from **stonemasons** to **conservators**, engineers to **scaffolding contractors**.

First, steam was used to get the stonework clean. This removed **algae** without using harsh chemicals that could damage the sculpture further. Cleaning revealed lots of cracks that needed filling. Cracks in stonework can be a big problem. If water gets in and freezes, the cracks can expand.

The weather had damaged Andromeda's right arm. Some of her fingers had even fallen off. To replace the damaged arm, conservators researched how hands were shown in other artworks from the same period. Then a new arm was made from matching Portland stone.



Andromeda's old hand and new hand side by side.

FASHIONABLE FLOWERS

The wilderness garden was added somewhere between 1772 and 1794. It's a woodland area with walks along the banks of the lake and brook. It includes **deciduous** trees such as oak, sweet chestnut and beech. However, fashions in garden design and flower choice change over time. Between the 1830s and 1870s exotic plants such as **rhododendrons** were added to the wilderness. They were very fashionable flowers and demand was high.

The first rhododendrons came to Britain from North America and the **Caucasus** and **Himalaya** mountains. **Nurseries** in Britain **cross-pollinated** them with other plants to create hybrids that were hardier and showier. Later in the 19th century, new rhododendrons were **imported** from China and the Himalayas and more **hybrids** were created that eventually replaced the earlier ones.

However, at Witley Court, the older hybrids remained. They are rare and unusual, so the gardeners at Witley are dating, identifying and labelling them. This will help us to learn more about them and ensure their survival. They may even be able to **restore** them at other gardens where they have been lost. Use the 'Nature Spotters for All Seasons' activity on pages 48–52 to explore the wilderness and look out for the striking pink and purple rhododendron flowers in May or June.



An example of a rhododendron in the wilderness garden at Witley Court.



Georgina, Countess of Dudley, by Richard Buckner. © Historic England Archive, courtesy of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

FROM WARDS TO DUDLEYS

In 1860, Ward became the 1st **Earl** of Dudley. In 1865 he married Georgina Elizabeth Moncrieffe who became the 1st **Countess** of Dudley. It was said that she was one of the most beautiful and charming women in England. Two thousand people came to the wedding. Georgina received gifts including the finest silk and velvet dresses, expensive jewellery, a writing desk, vases and a clock. People from Great Witley gave her a bible and a prayer book. The couple went on to have six sons and a daughter.

PARTY PEOPLE

When the earl died in 1885 Georgina took over the management of the estate. Three years later, her eldest son, the 2nd Earl of Dudley, turned 21. He hosted a three-day 21st birthday party. Flags and bunting decorated the grounds. On day one, 214 people attended a ball in a large **marquee**. Another marquee was needed to house all the coachmen and a huge temporary stable had to be set up for all their horses. The next day, tradesmen came to celebrate with Dudley in the picture gallery. On day three an even larger marquee, over 60 metres long, was used to host a dinner for 900 male **tenants** (who lived on Dudley's lands). 427 women and 416 children were also invited to a tea. People could ride boats on the front pool or go on a merry-go-round in the funfair. Two bands provided music to dance to and the fountains were lit up in the evening. There was even a **Punch and Judy** show and a spectacular fireworks display.

This wasn't the only **lavish** party held at Witley Court. By the 1890s there were shooting parties attended by the Prince of Wales (who later became King Edward VII). The marriage of Dudley to Rachel Anne Gurney (2nd Countess of Dudley) in 1891 was also accompanied with a big party. One Christmas, a large party was held in the ballroom. This enormous room had previously been a library. It had eight **chandeliers** and gold leaf decoration on the walls. They even had a Christmas tree decorated with precious jewellery. Each female guest chose a piece to take with them at the end of the party.



The 2nd Earl of Dudley and 2nd Countess of Dudley with the Prince of Wales © The Museum of Royal Worcester.



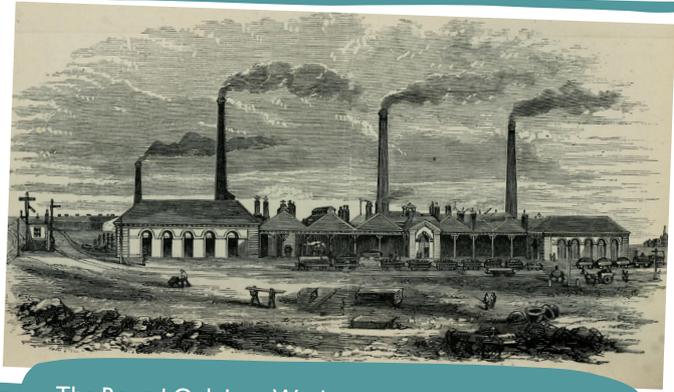
A photograph of a shooting party at Witley Court. The Prince of Wales is standing in the centre and Rachel, the 2nd Countess of Dudley, is seated to his left.

BEHIND THE SCENES

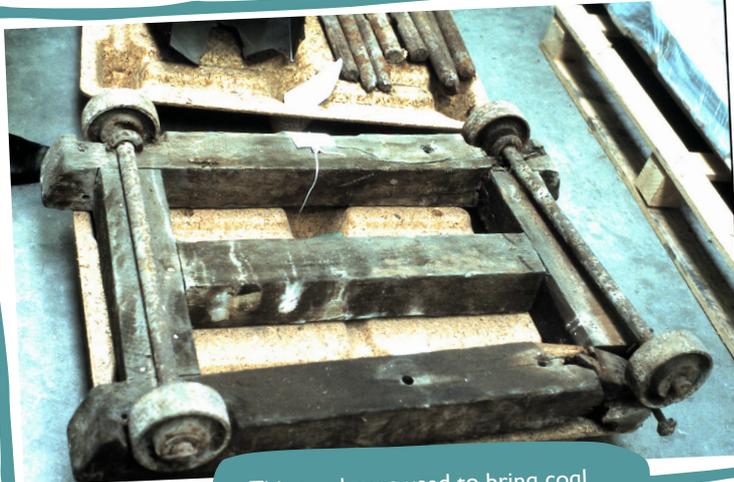
Running a large estate and hosting lavish parties was no small task. It required a lot of work behind the scenes and lots of money. By 1883, the Dudleys made £123,000 a year from coal mining (about £14.7 million in today's money). The family also owned businesses and property across Britain, France, Italy, Austria and Jamaica. All of this made Dudley the seventh richest man in Britain.

Dudley's businesses helped him to maintain a luxurious lifestyle. For example, 30 tonnes of coal a day was used to warm up Witley Court. To get the coal on site it travelled from one of Dudley's mines by barge along the River Severn, then by horse and cart. The coal was piled up on a 1,500-tonne coal stack out of sight of guests, next to the stable yard.

Men were employed to sort the coal. Higher grade coal was for fireplaces and lower grade coal was used for the five hot water boilers. To get the coal into the house there was a rail track that went through a tunnel and into the cellar.



The Round Oak Iron Works was one of the businesses that helped to pay for the Dudley's lavish lifestyle.



This truck was used to bring coal into the cellar from the coal stack.

In the 1860s and 1870s there were over a hundred servants at Witley Court. This included 25 gamekeepers who ensured there were **partridges**, **pheasants** and deer for guests to shoot. In addition, each guest might bring along their own set of servants with them. Guests changed their clothes a few times each day and it was the **valet** (for men) and the personal **maid** (for women) who

made sure each outfit was ready to wear. Some even brought their own cooks. However, the most important servants at Witley Court were the **butler**, the head gardener, the **housekeeper** and the head cook.

THE BUTLER

The butler managed the male **domestic** servants. He ensured the house ran smoothly and oversaw food and drink. It was vital that dinners were on time and presented to a high standard. Large dinners took place in the ballroom. Tables, chairs, cutlery and candles all needed to be set up. Afterwards, the room was transformed back into a ballroom while the guests might walk through gardens lit with lanterns.

THE HEAD GARDENER

The gardens were looked after by a team of 24 men led by the head gardener. One of their jobs was to cut the grass. In the late 19th century, they had a horse-drawn lawn mower that was pulled along by a pony called Kitty. Kitty had to wear leather shoes over her hooves so that she didn't make any marks on the perfect lawns.

THE HOUSEKEEPER

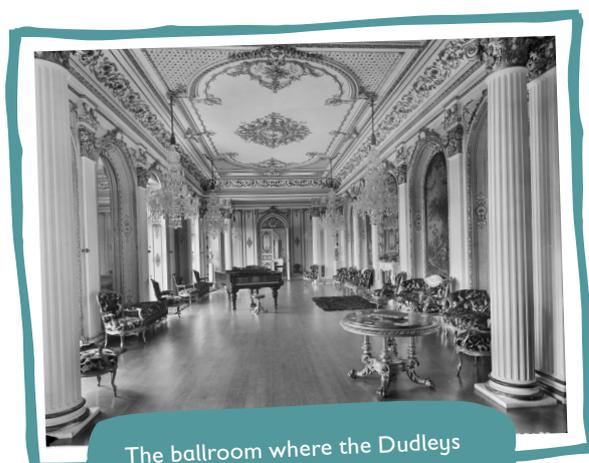
The housekeeper managed the female domestic servants. She had a team of young women working for her as housemaids doing the cleaning, and laundry maids doing the washing. Laundry maids were often teenagers. A raised and covered walkway led them out to a garden where they could hang out the washing. The walkway ran along a courtyard and stables where grooms worked. It was designed to separate the laundry maids from the young male grooms in the courtyard below as it was considered **unrespectable** for them to **socialise**. In 1861 the housekeeper was Ann Carpenter. She had 13 maids to manage.

THE HEAD COOK

The head cook was in charge of cooking all the meals. They had a team of **scullery** maids who did the washing-up. This included scrubbing all the pots and pans, cutlery and crockery. There were also staff to chop and prepare ingredients. The head cook kept an eye on the supplies, as running out of ingredients was not an option. In 1861 William Baker was the cook. He was supported by four kitchen maids and a dairymaid.



Today, these stairs are known as the Butler's stairs. Although they connected the service wing and the main house, the surviving decorative interiors suggest they were not designed for servants.



The ballroom where the Dudleys hosted lavish parties.

SEPARATE LIVES

Dudley became increasingly powerful, taking on roles such as governor-general of Australia in 1908. However, his marriage was increasingly unhappy. The couple separated. The countess continued living at Witley. She developed a clipped **topiary** garden known as 'My Lady's Garden'. It is now the garden of the church tearoom. She continued her charity work, loved to sing and designed jewellery. Every Sunday she led her staff in a **procession** to church. When the First World War (1914–1918) broke out, she was one of

the first ladies of the aristocracy to volunteer. She established the Australian Voluntary Hospital and Club. She was appointed CBE in 1918 and was awarded a Royal Red Cross medal in 1919.

At the same time, Dudley was running out of money. A pile of unpaid bills was found hidden in two wooden **urns** at the bottom of the staircase. He took out loans and sold pictures. During the First World War many of the staff at Witley Court left to fight in the war. Then in 1920, the countess died in a swimming accident in County Galway. This led Dudley to sell the estate.



Rachel, the 2nd Countess of Dudley, and her children in 1898.

WITLEY'S LAST RESIDENT

Sir Herbert Smith was a wealthy carpet manufacturer and the last person to live in Witley Court. He installed electricity at Witley. He was unpopular locally because he didn't employ as many servants as the Dudleys.

Geoff Beeston grew up in Great Witley. He remembered Smith giving out Christmas presents to the local children. He received an orange and a toy from Woolworths (a shop). He also worked on the estate as a beater, earning 2 shillings a day (about £5 in modern money). The beaters made noise and beat the ground to get pheasants to fly into the sky for hunters to shoot.

THE FIRE

On 7 September 1937 a fire broke out. Sir Herbert was not at home and there were only a handful of staff present.

It may have started in the bakery. Strong winds spread the flames across the house.

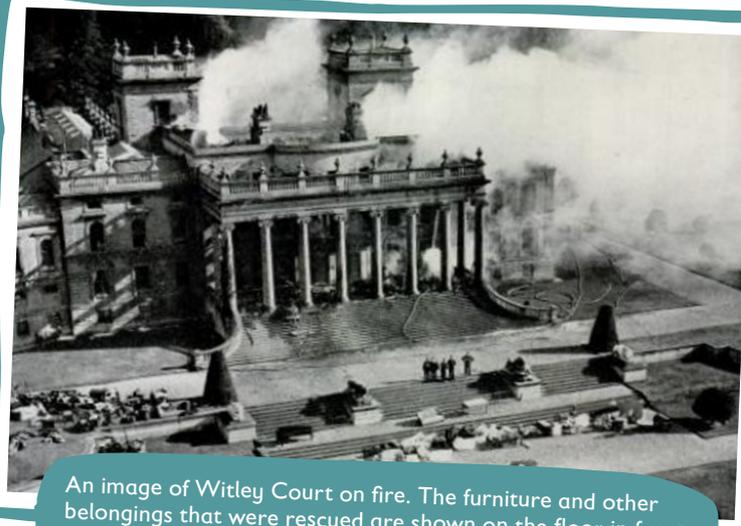
To make matters worse, the fire hydrants connected to the fountain reservoir were no longer maintained. This

meant the firefighters couldn't get

water to extinguish the fire. Villagers came to rescue belongings, piling them up on the gardens. Edna Bakewell lived locally and was ten years old when the fire broke out. She remembered the roads being thick with people watching the fire.

The cost of rebuilding Witley Court was too much, so an auction of its contents took place in 1938. Edna Bakewell remembered the sale because she came on a school trip to watch it. The house was also sold for a bargain price in 1939.

The golden gates that once sat between the south parterre and the deer park were removed and sold to a buyer in [Arizona](#). There were also offers from Billy Butlin (who set up the Butlin's holiday camps) and Bing Crosby (a famous American singer) to buy the Perseus and Andromeda fountain.



An image of Witley Court on fire. The furniture and other belongings that were rescued are shown on the floor in front of the building. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

THE RUIN

Local children used the ruins as a bit of a playground. Edna Bakewell remembered exploring a tunnel behind the waterfall at the end of the lake. The house was eventually sold again in 1954 to Mr Wigington. He stripped the house of anything of value that he could find. He took out marble [chimneypieces](#), glass from the conservatory, and timber, lead and slate from the roof. As soon as the roof was removed, the house quickly [deteriorated](#). In the 1950s and 1960s there were calls to demolish the house to build a racing circuit, a caravan park and a housing estate. None of these ideas happened and in 1964 a Building Preservation Order was put in place to stop any further damage to the house. English Heritage took over looking after the estate in 1984.

GLOSSARY

TRICKY TERMS AND
WHAT THEY MEAN

Below is a list of words you might come across while exploring Witley Court and Gardens. Use this Glossary to find out what they mean.

abolish – to put an end to something

algae – a diverse group of simple plants or plant-like organisms that live in water or on damp surfaces including seaweeds

Andromeda – a princess in Greek mythology. She was the daughter of the Egyptian king and queen.

architecture – the design of buildings

aristocracy – a class of people who have been born into their positions of privilege. Land and titles (such as earl) are passed down through the family.

Arizona – a state in the south west of the United States of America

Ascension – Christians believe that this was the moment when Jesus rose up to heaven

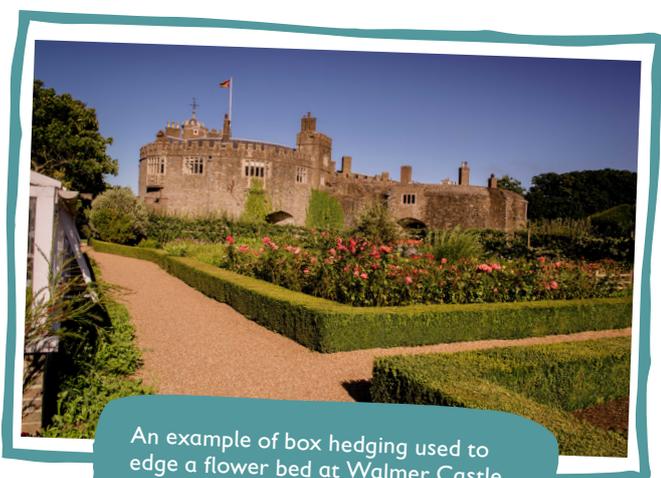


The Perseus and Andromeda fountain during restoration when algae was cleaned off the stonework.

box – a kind of evergreen plant used in hedging

butler – the most important male servant in a household. He is in charge of other male servants and making sure dinners and drinks were served correctly.

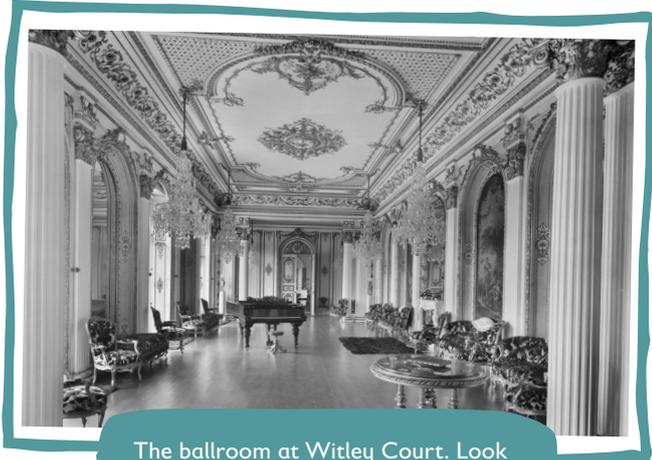
Caucasus – a range of mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas. It runs along the southern border of Russia and into Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.



An example of box hedging used to edge a flower bed at Walmer Castle and Gardens.

causeway – a raised walkway, track or road over wet land

chandelier – a decorative light fitting with several branches to hold a number of candles or light bulbs. They are usually large and are often decorated, sometimes with lots of small pieces of cut glass that hang and catch the light to create a glittering effect.



The ballroom at Witley Court. Look closely to spot the chandeliers.

chimneypiece – a decoration that sits above a fireplace and is often in the form of a shelf. It is also known as a mantelpiece.

classical myth – a traditional story that was told by the ancient Greeks or Romans to explain the world around them

colliery – a coal mine and the buildings around it



Two of the columns on the south portico at Witley Court and Gardens.

column – a tall stone post that can be decorative or be a support for a building. It is usually rounded in shape with a decorative capital on top and a base at the bottom.

commission – the act of choosing someone to carry out a task or piece of work for you

compensation – a payment given to someone to make up for the loss of something else

conservator – a person who looks after important objects, artworks or buildings by preventing damage or carrying out repairs

cornucopia – a goat's horn that is shown overflowing with fruits, flowers and corn to represent the idea of plenty

countess – the wife or widow of a count or an earl

cross-pollination – the act of pollinating a flower using pollen from a different kind of plant. This creates a whole new plant known as a hybrid.

dam – a barrier that is built across a stream or river to stop the flow of water

debt – an amount of money owed to someone

deciduous – a tree or plant that sheds its leaves in the autumn rather than evergreen plants that keep their leaves all year round



Leaves that have fallen from deciduous trees in the wilderness garden at Witley Court and Gardens.

Derbyshire spar – a stone found in the Derbyshire area that can range in colour. The white spar was highly prized as a gravel in gardens.

deteriorate – the process of getting worse over time

Domesday Book – a set of records that lists who owned the land across England and how much it was worth. It was the result of a huge survey carried out between 1086 and 1090 by William the Conqueror's men to find out how much tax he could charge people now he was king of England.

domestic – a term that is used to describe servants that work in a household rather than out in the gardens or wider estate

earl – a high ranking male member of the nobility. This is one of five titles that go from duke at the top to marquess, then earl, viscount and finally baron. These titles can be passed from father to eldest son.

eaves – the lower part of the roof that often sticks out from the walls

engineering – the use of science and maths to solve problems and design machines or structures

enslave – the act of forcing people to live and work as slaves and denying them their freedom

estate – a piece of land, usually with a large house on it, owned by one person or family

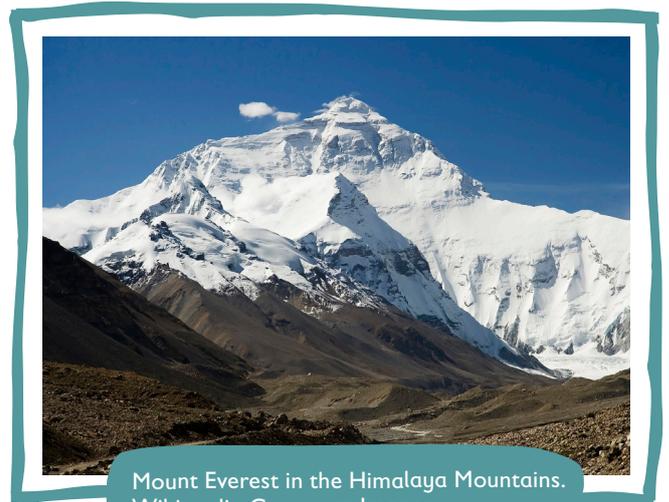
Flora – the ancient Roman goddess of spring and flowers

formal garden – a style of garden that is laid out using straight lines and geometric shapes. They are usually symmetrical and often include fountains or statues as focal points.

gilded – the state of being covered in a thin layer of gold

gorgon – one of three sisters in Greek mythology that had snakes instead of hair and could turn people to stone by looking into their eyes

Himalayas – a mountain range that runs along the border between India and Tibet



housekeeper – the most important female servant in a household. She is in charge of all the maids and makes sure the house is kept clean and the clothes are washed.

hybrid – a new variety of plant that is made using cross-pollination. It is the combination of two different types of plant.

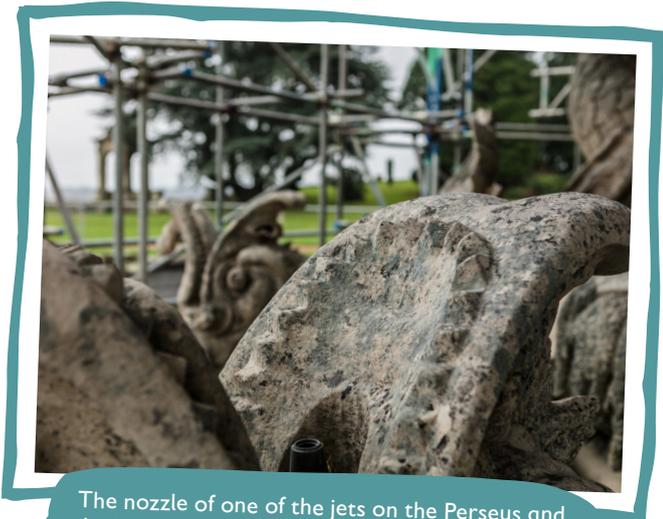
hydrant – a pipe with a nozzle for a hose to be attached to access water

import – the act of bringing something into a country from elsewhere

inherit – the process of gaining titles, money, land or property when someone dies

jet – a narrow opening or nozzle used in fountains to shoot water out of

lady – a high ranking woman and head of a household



The nozzle of one of the jets on the Perseus and Andromeda fountain is visible at the bottom of this image in the mouth of one of the dolphins.

landed – the state of owning land, especially when it has been passed down through the family

lavish – an extravagant, luxurious or expensive thing

lime – a white powder that is made by heating limestone

loan – an amount of money given to someone for a short time with the expectation that they will pay it back in the future, probably with additional payments added on top, which are known as interest

lord – a high ranking man and head of a household

loyalty – a strong feeling of support or duty towards someone

maid – a low status female servant who works in a house

manor – a large house with land around it that was a way of dividing up the country during the medieval period. A lord and/or lady would be in charge of the manor and everyone who lived on their land would owe them loyalty.

manufacturing – the process of making or producing things in large numbers, often using machines

marquee – a large tent

mayor – a person in a position of power in a town, city or borough

Medusa – one of the three gorgons in Greek mythology, she was a human-like creature with snakes on her head instead of hair. Anyone who looked directly into her eyes could be turned to stone.



A sculpture of Medusa's head by Bernini. Photograph by Debra Heaphy, CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons Images.

Member of Parliament – a person who has been elected by people in a particular area to represent them in the House of Commons

nursery – a place where young plants are grown

oracle – a woman in ancient Greece that had been chosen by the gods to speak on their behalf. They could give advice and predict the future.

papier mâché – a material made by either layering paper and glue or pulping paper and mixing it with glue. This creates a material that can be moulded into a variety of shapes. It hardens when the glue dries and then can be painted or decorated.

parterre – a style of garden that is best viewed from above as it creates a pattern on the ground using flower beds, gravel and hedging.

partridge – a short-tailed, round bodied brown bird that is hunted for sport or food. They live in nests at ground level. Landowners maintained them on their land, so that they could be hunted. They are scared from their hiding places by ‘beaters’. This causes them to rise into the air providing a challenging moving target. This is why they are called game birds (just like pheasants).



pediment – a triangular feature on the front of a building above a doorway, portico or window

Perseus – the half-god, half-human hero in Greek mythology who killed Medusa and rescued Andromeda



A pair of pheasants – the female is on the left and the male is on the right. Photo by ChrisO, CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons Images.

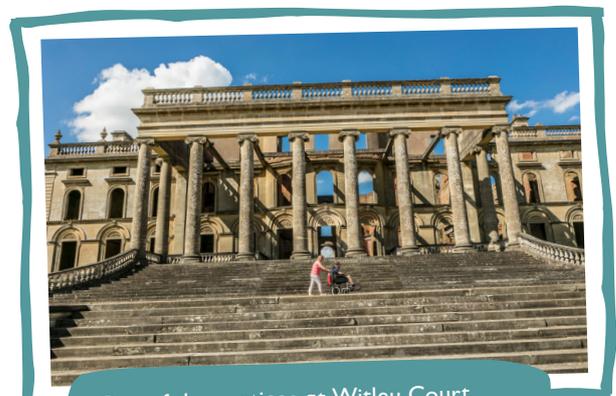
pheasant – a long-tailed bird that was brought to Britain from Asia. It spends most of its time on the ground. The male is much brighter in colour and has patches of red on its face.

plantation – a large farm or estate. It is often used for the farms on the Caribbean islands or in the southern United States owned by American, British and other European people where crops such as sugar, tobacco, cotton and corn were grown by enslaved people in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

plaster – a dry powder often made of lime and horsehair or cement. At Witley Court it was used to create decorative panels on the walls.

politician – a person whose job is in politics, such as a member of parliament

portico – a large covered entrance to a building that is made up of a roof supported by columns



One of the porticos at Witley Court.

Poseidon – the ancient Greek god of the sea

procession – a group of people walking one after another in a line, often as part of a ceremony

Punch and Judy – a traditional puppet show that involves the character of Mr Punch and his wife Judy. Sometimes there is also a baby, a crocodile, a policeman and a string of sausages. The Punch and Judy show probably came to Britain from Italy in the 17th century and continues to exist today at seaside resorts and summer fetes.



A Punch and Judy show at Swanage on the south coast of England. Photograph is in the public domain via Wikimedia Commons Images.

putty – a dough-like material made of lime. Limestone is heated to create a substance called quicklime. It is then mixed with sand and water to create the putty. At Witley Court it was used to create the more detailed decorations on the plasterwork, such as leaves and twisted rope.

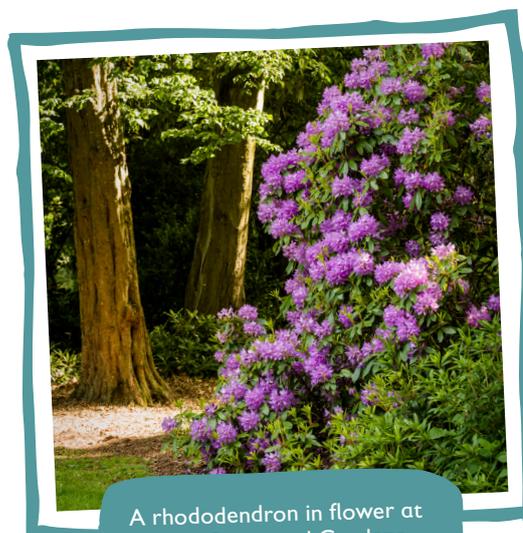
renovate – the act of restoring, improving or making a building as good as new again

rent – the act of paying to use something, such as paying the owner of a house to live in it

reservoir – a lake where water is collected and stored for later use. The lake is often man-made.

restore – the bringing back of something to its original condition

rhododendron – a large plant with woody stems like a tree, thick evergreen leaves and clusters of bell-shaped flowers in a variety of colours but most commonly in shades of pink and purple



A rhododendron in flower at Witley Court and Gardens.

sacrifice – the giving up of something or someone for the sake of something else. For example, in some ancient religions an animal or person might be killed as a sacrifice and given as an offering to a god in the hope that this will result in good luck for the people making the sacrifice.

scaffolding contractor – a person or company that is in charge of putting up and taking down scaffolding, which is a structure that builders use to reach the upper levels of a building when carrying out building work.



A view from above looking down on the scaffolding that was used during the restoration of the Perseus and Andromeda fountain. Scaffolding is constructed from metal poles and wooden boards to create platforms that are high enough to access all of the fountain.

scullery – a small kitchen where the washing-up takes place. It is also where ingredients can be cleaned and prepared for cooking.

sea nymphs – beautiful female spirits that lived in the sea

service – the work done by servants. The service wing is the part of the house where the servants carry out their work.

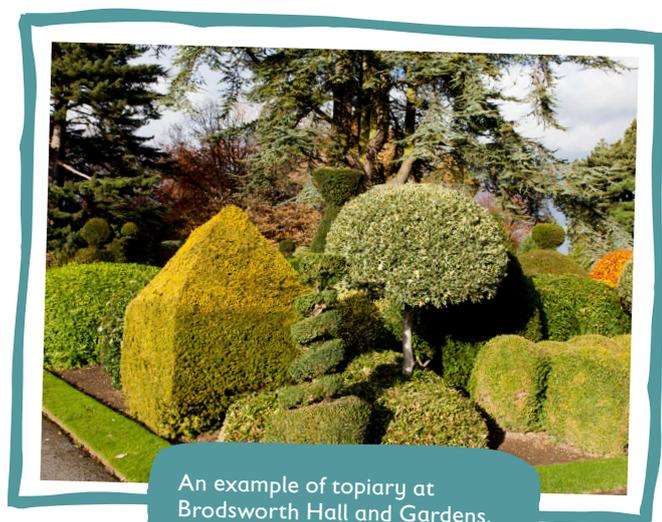
socialise – the coming together of people outside of work for fun

stonemason – a person who cuts, prepares and builds using stone

tazza – a wide, shallow cup-shaped urn that has a stem and a foot, a bit like a wine glass. The tazzas in the gardens at Witley Court were made of stone and contained flowers.

tenant – a person who rents land or property

topiary – the art of clipping plants into shapes



trustee – a person who has been given legal power to look after something for someone else. For example, if a child inherits property, a trustee would be appointed to look after it for them until they reached adulthood.

Tuscan – a term to describe something that has been made in a style that is typical for an area of Italy called Tuscany.

unrespectable – a word used to describe someone's behaviour and reputation when they have done something that is considered to be bad, improper or incorrect

urn – a large vase with a stem and a base, sometimes with a cover

valet – a man's personal servant, responsible in particular for his clothes

Westmorland slate – a green/grey coloured stone found in the Lake District in northern England and used at Witley Court as a gravel in the garden

wing – a bit of a building that extends out and away from the main part of it

1066

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

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.

1509

Henry VIII becomes king. This is the start of what we now call the Tudor period.



1000

1500

1086–90

Witley Court first appears in the historical record in Domesday Book.

Mid-13th century

The Cooksey family now own Witley Court.

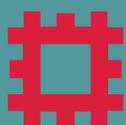


1498

Robert Russell inherits Witley Court from his cousin, Thomas Cooksey.

11TH–15TH CENTURIES

16TH CENTURY



STUARTS

1603–1714

1603

James VI of Scotland becomes the first King James of England. This is the start of what we now call the Stuart period.

1642–49

The English Civil War between the king (Charles I r.1625–51) and Parliament. This results in a period known as the Commonwealth.

1660

The end of the Commonwealth and restoration of the monarchy.

1600

1610–20

Witley Court is rebuilt.

1654

Thomas Russell is given Witley Court as a wedding present from his father.

1655

Thomas Russell sells Witley Court to Thomas Foley.

1689

Thomas Foley II acquires six manors in the local area in addition to Witley Court.

17TH CENTURY

GEORGIANS

1714–1837

1714–27

The reign of George I. This is the start of what we now call the Georgian period.

1807

The abolition of the slave trade.

1700

c.1720–30

John Nash is commissioned to update Witley Court. He adds the north and south porticos. New rooms are also added onto the south side of the house, such as the Red Room.

1747

The ceiling paintings are installed in the church.

1772–94

The wilderness garden and front pool are added.



18TH CENTURY



VICTORIANS

1837–1901

FIRST WORLD WAR

1914–1918

1837–1901

Reign of Queen Victoria.



1910–36

Reign of George V.



1800

1900

1850s

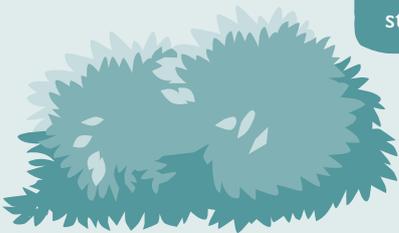
Samuel Daukes is commissioned to renovate the house. Amongst other things, he covers its exterior in Bath stone and transforms the old library into a ballroom. William Andrews Nesfield redesigns the gardens, adding the Perseus and Andromeda fountain and parterre gardens.

c.1870–80

Rhododendrons, American ornamental trees and spring bulbs are added to the gardens.

1880s

The parterre gardens are replaced with newer styles of planting.



1902–5

Lord Dudley is Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

1908

Lord and Lady Dudley agree to legally separate. Lady Dudley continues to live at Witley Court.

1908–11

Lord Dudley is governor-general of Australia.

19TH CENTURY

20TH CENTURY

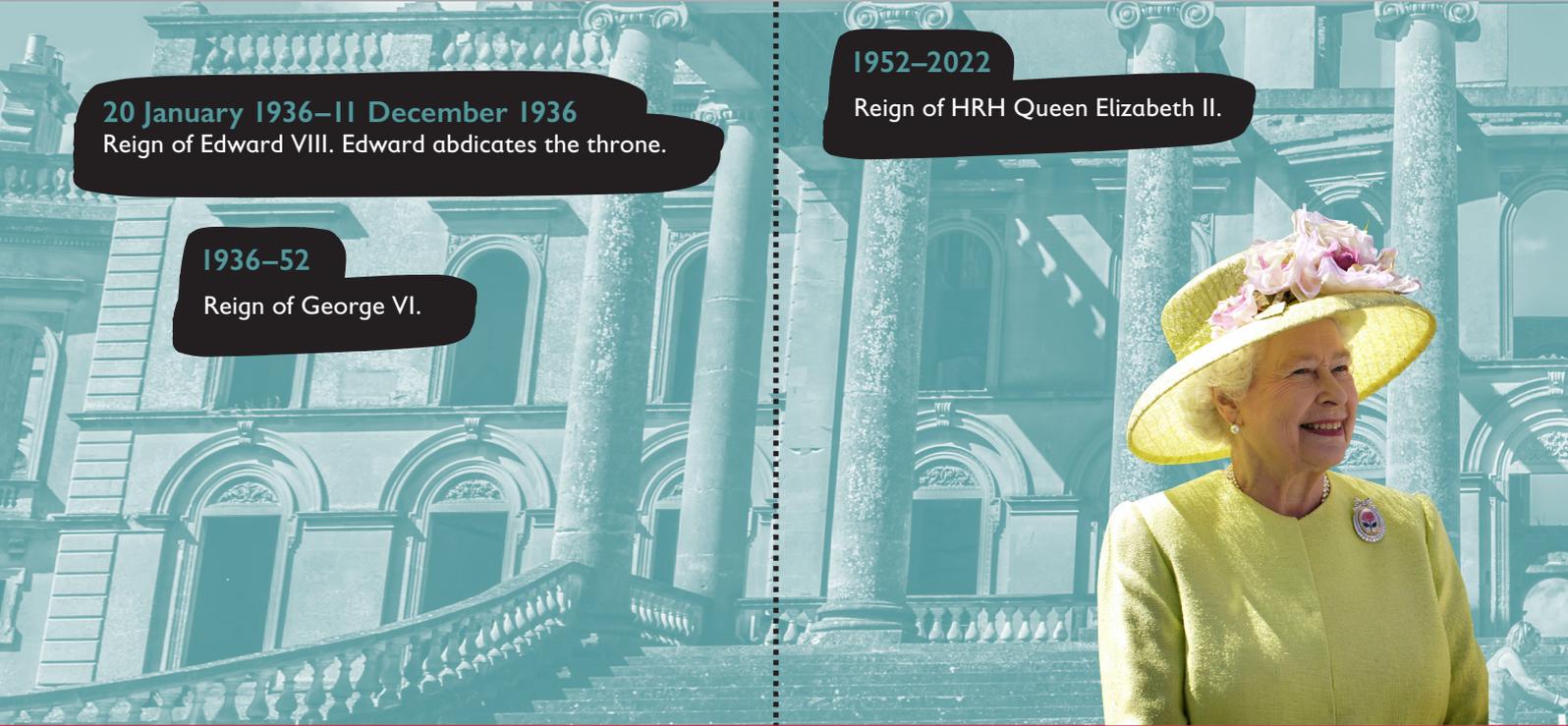
SECOND WORLD WAR
1939–1945

MODERN DAY

20 January 1936–11 December 1936
Reign of Edward VIII. Edward abdicates the throne.

1936–52
Reign of George VI.

1952–2022
Reign of HRH Queen Elizabeth II.



1920
Lady Dudley dies in a swimming accident in County Galway and Lord Dudley sells Witley Court to Sir Herbert Smith (known locally as 'Piggy').

1937
On 7 September Witley Court is devastated by fire.

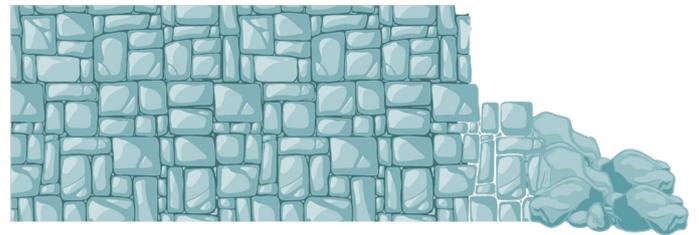
1938
An auction of furniture and other belongings takes place at Witley Court. Local school children attend the auction as a school trip.

1939
Witley Court is sold for a bargain price.



1954
Mr Wigington buys Witley Court and begins dismantling it. He sells anything of value such as marble fireplaces.

1964
A Building Preservation Order is brought in to protect Witley Court from further damage.



1952–2022

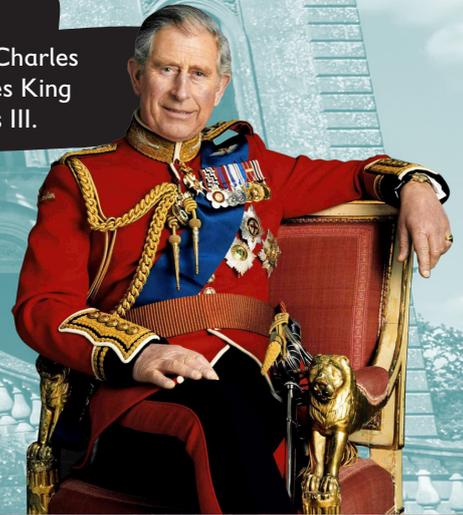
Reign of HRH Queen Elizabeth II.

2020

Britain leaves the European Union.

2022

Prince Charles becomes King Charles III.



2000

1970

Witley Court becomes an Ancient Scheduled Monument and two years later it is placed under guardianship, and work starts to protect the building and gardens.

2002

The Perseus and Andromeda fountain is switched on by HRH Prince of Wales (now King Charles III).

1984

English Heritage takes over the guardianship of Witley Court and Gardens.

2005

The restoration of the south parterre garden is completed.

2009

The restoration of the east parterre garden is completed.

20TH CENTURY

21ST CENTURY

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

ARTY EMOTIONS



Recommended for

KS2–KS3 (Art, Drama, History)

Learning objectives

- Know who Perseus and Andromeda are.
- Understand how artworks can convey emotions.
- Analyse the Perseus and Andromeda fountain to prepare for a visit to Witley Court.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes



The Perseus and Andromeda fountain at Witley Court and Gardens.

SUMMARY

The Perseus and Andromeda fountain has a huge sculpture featuring three characters from an ancient Greek myth. The characters are sculpted in such a way as to convey drama, movement and emotion. In this activity, students learn about the story of Perseus and Andromeda and analyse how the story is told through the sculpture.

THE STORY OF PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA

Introduce the story using the historical information on page 14. Get students to think about the emotions the characters might be feeling at different points in the story. You could create a mind-map of these emotions then get students to strike a pose for each one. This will get them thinking about how we express emotions through our bodies and how emotions can be conveyed through art and drama.

EXAMINING THE ARTWORK

Get students to study the image of the fountain on page 36 and use the Teachers' Notes on page 35 to support their analysis. They should identify the characters, and how the artist, James Forsyth has conveyed emotion.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Students could create a series of tableaux (still scenes without speech or movement) for different scenes in the story. They should try to convey the emotions each character is feeling through their facial expressions and body language.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Explore other examples of artworks that focus on the story of Perseus and Andromeda to compare with the fountain. Have the characters been portrayed in the same way? Are some portrayals more successful than others? Students could also explore different materials (such as oil paint) or mediums (such as drawing) and discuss how this impacts the story-telling.

ARTY EMOTIONS

TEACHERS' NOTES

EXAMINING THE ARTWORK

Students should use the clues in the sculpture to identify the characters from the story. They might notice:

- Andromeda's shackles
- Perseus's spear
- the monster's ugly face and dangerous teeth.

Encourage students to describe each character and think about how the artist has conveyed emotion through facial expressions and body language. They might notice that:

Andromeda:

- is backing away from the monster, her body is leaning back and her back knee is bent, perhaps through fear
- appears to be putting her hands up, perhaps in defence
- is shackled, making her vulnerable

Perseus:

- is in a heroic position at the top of the sculpture
- is in an action pose, spearing the monster
- looks determined and he is looking right into the eye of the monster
- he looks strong and fearless

Cetus (sea monster):

- looks aggressive with his open mouth, bulging eyes and strong eyebrows
- looks threatening and dangerous
- he hasn't given up, even though it is clear that Perseus is about to defeat him.

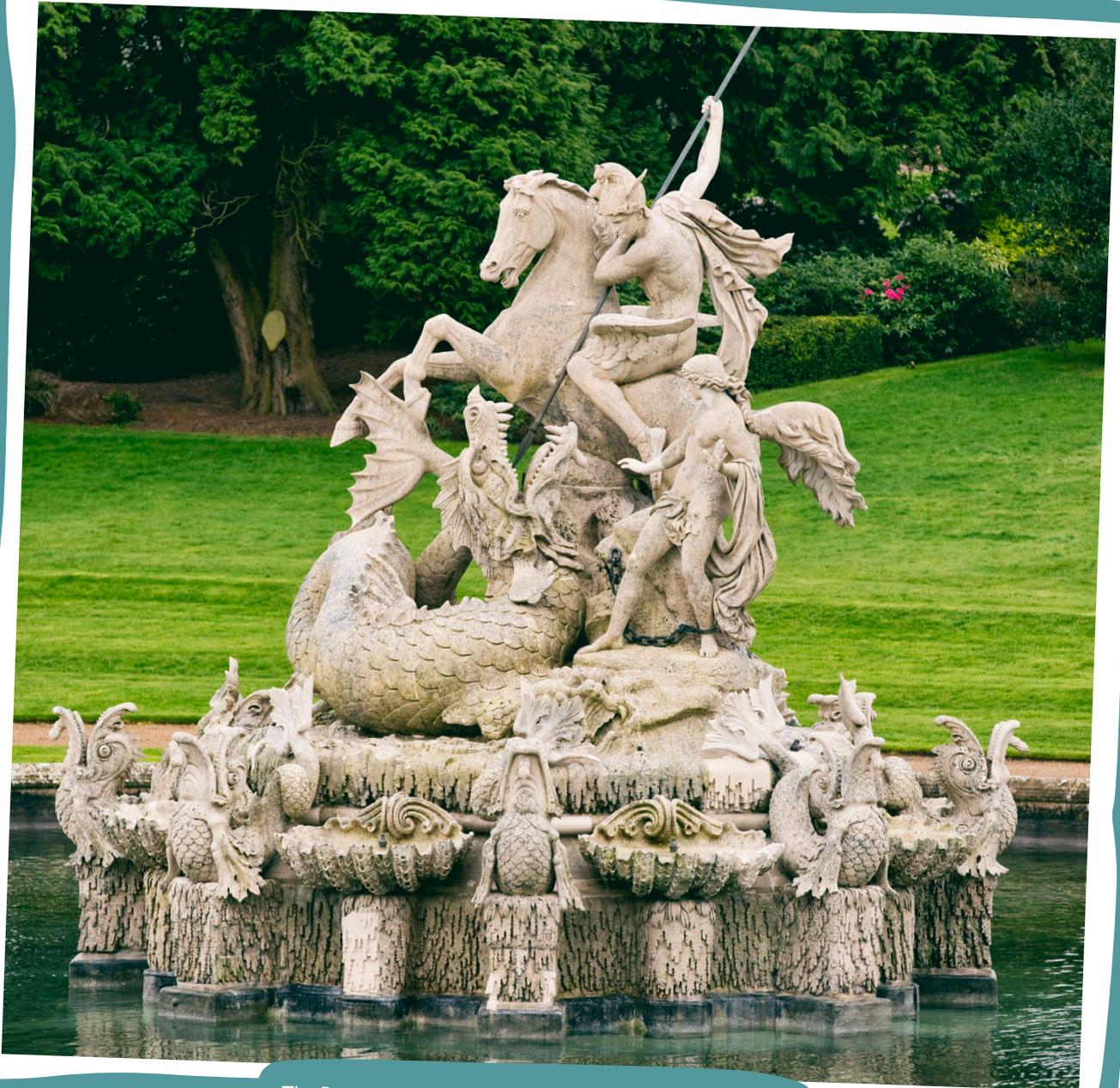
ARTY EMOTIONS



Examine the image of the Perseus and Andromeda fountain.

Use your knowledge of the story to **identify** the main characters.

Discuss how the emotions of the characters have been expressed in the sculpture.



The Perseus and Andromeda fountain at Witley Court.



AT WITLEY COURT AND GARDENS

Activities for students to do at Witley Court and Gardens to help them get the most out of their learning.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

TOP THINGS TO SEE



KSI-2
KS3

Recommended for

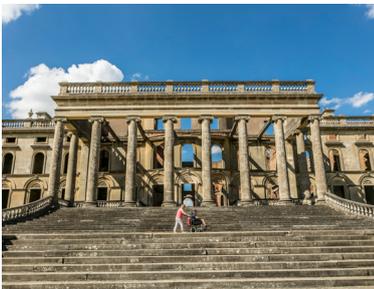
KSI-2 & KS3 (History)

Learning objectives

- Spot the top things to see.
- Understand some of Witley Court's history.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes



Visitors outside the south portico at Witley Court.

SUMMARY

The fire in 1937 marked the end of Witley Court as one of England's grandest country houses. In the mid 20th century any valuable materials were also removed and sold. This left Witley Court and Gardens in ruins and makes for an atmospheric visit. In this activity, students explore the architecture of Witley Court and look out for evidence of both its glamorous past and its sad destruction.

PRE-VISIT

It is recommended that you introduce students to the site using the historical information on pages 8–21. This will help them get the most out of their visit. The pre-visit activity helps them to understand the story behind the Perseus and Andromeda fountain.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

KSI students can use the tick sheet on page 44 as they are guided round by a teacher. KS2–3 students may want to lead their own learning in small groups supervised by an adult. The basement and service areas are not currently accessible and so they are not included in this tour. A map of the basement is provided on page 46 to add context but students will not need it to navigate round the trail. There are a significant number of stairs to go into the house, so this tour isn't accessible for everyone. The grounds, though, are fully accessible so the Nature Spotter Sheets for All Seasons on pages 49–52 might be more suitable for some groups.

AFTER THE TRAIL

There is also more to see in the education room near the visitor centre, where objects relating to Witley Court are on display.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Think about the work servants did such as lighting fires, preparing meals and gardening. Use the map of the basement on page 46 to support discussions.

TOP THINGS TO SEE

EXPLORE THE ARCHITECTURE AT WITLEY COURT

See if you can find all of these things and complete each challenge. The first six are in the house. The rest are in the grounds.

Can't find your way?
Use the site plans at the back to help.



1 TWO TOWERS

Before you enter Witley Court you will see two towers. These contained staircases and were built in about 1620. Stone archways led people from the entrance hall to the stairs. You can see the remains of one of these in the west tower.

WHERE IS IT? The north front

DID YOU FIND IT?



CHALLENGE TIME! 

You are standing on the north front, facing south. To your left and right are two wings. **Identify** which one is the east wing, and which one is the west wing.

DID YOU KNOW? 

The tower staircases were removed in the 1850s. They were replaced with one main staircase, where you can still see plasterwork going diagonally up the wall.

2 PLASTERWORK

Look on the walls to spot patches of surviving plasterwork. This once covered the walls in this room, creating a grand entrance.



CHALLENGE TIME!



Find the upper floor level by spotting the doorways and the metal supports that held up a balcony running around the room.

DID YOU KNOW?



The leaf decoration on this plasterwork was made separately from the panels. Tiny metal pins were used to hold each leaf in place.

WHERE IS IT?
The entrance hall

DID YOU FIND IT?



3 BLOCKED UP WINDOW

This 17th-century window was blocked up when the Foley family made the house bigger. It shows us where the outer wall of the house used to be. On the other side of the wall you may be able to spot a hole in the wall where the old window sill is visible.

WHERE IS IT?
The entrance hall

DID YOU FIND IT?

CHALLENGE TIME!



Look carefully at the walls in the entrance hall. How do they differ from the exterior walls?

Clue: **examine** the colour and texture of the walls.

DID YOU KNOW?



The 17th-century house was built from red brick. The outside was covered over in the 1850s using the more fashionable Bath stone. This explains why the walls look so different.

4 FIRE DAMAGE

In 1937 Witley Court was devastated by fire. In the ballroom you will see burnt timbers in the walls and a piece of metal bent out of shape in the heat of the fire.



CHALLENGE TIME!



Walk to the end of the ballroom and into the green room. **Look up** to spot a wooden shutter on a window that survived the fire.

DID YOU KNOW?



The ballroom replaced a library in the 1850s. It was lit by eight chandeliers and heated by pumping warm air through vents at the bottom of the walls.

WHERE IS IT?
The ballroom

DID YOU FIND IT?



5 RED SITTING ROOM

The walls of this room were decorated in the 1850s using a red silk fabric known as damask. It was pinned onto wooden batons with a backing fabric behind it, to protect the damask from damp.

WHERE IS IT?
The red sitting room

DID YOU FIND IT?

CHALLENGE TIME!



Examine the arches in this room carefully. **Spot** the wooden batons, small pieces of backing fabric and pins.

DID YOU KNOW?



The red sitting room was originally green. We know this from the remains of the wallpaper in the arches. They date from around 1815, but were covered over in red damask in the 1850s.



6 DAMAGED COLUMN

Head out to the south portico. The damage to this column was made by chains. Mr Wigington, who owned Witley Court in the 1950s, used these to pull the columns down to sell the stone.

WHERE IS IT?
south portico

DID YOU
FIND IT?

CHALLENGE TIME!



Look carefully at the door frame behind you. Can you **spot** any wood that was not damaged by fire?

DID YOU KNOW?



The fire started in the bakery underneath the ballroom. A strong wind made it spread fast, but most of the west wing survived intact.

7 PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA FOUNTAIN

This fountain was designed to impress. Its jets sprayed water as high as 36 metres into the air. It depicts the ancient Greek story of Perseus and Andromeda.



CHALLENGE TIME!



Spot these in the sculpture:

- dolphin
- seaweed
- sea monster
- shell

DID YOU KNOW?



Underground tunnels containing water pipes go from the reservoir (on the raised ground behind the trees) to an underground room full of pumps that power the jets.

WHERE IS IT? In
the south parterre
garden

DID YOU
FIND IT?



8 CONSERVATORY

Rich Victorians took advantage of Britain's empire by buying plants from around the world and housing them in conservatories like this one. It was built in the late 1850s. It had panes of glass in each archway, a domed glass roof and marble floors.

CHALLENGE TIME!



This was one of the largest conservatories in England. **Count** how many arched windows it has. **Spot** (but don't touch) the remains of the glass set into the stonework of the columns.

DID YOU KNOW?



The conservatory had its own coal-powered heating system to keep imported plants like palms alive.

WHERE IS IT?

West of the main house and connected by a curved walkway

DID YOU FIND IT?

9 CROSS-SECTION DRAWING

Walk back towards the south portico. A panel near the stairs has a cross-section illustration of Witley Court. It shows some of the jobs servants had to do here.



CHALLENGE TIME!



Examine the image on the panel. **List** the jobs you can see the servants doing. The servants ate their meals in the servants' hall, which was in the curved wing to your left.

DID YOU KNOW?



It took a lot of servants to run a large household like this. Plus, they used 30 tonnes of coal a day to heat up the house and conservatory, wash the laundry and power the steam engines for the fountain.

WHERE IS IT?

West of the south portico steps

DID YOU FIND IT?

TOP THINGS TO SEE

EXPLORE WITLEY COURT AND GARDENS

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



1 TWO TOWERS



2 PLASTERWORK



3 BLOCKED UP WINDOW



4 FIRE DAMAGE



5 RED SITTING ROOM



6 DAMAGED COLUMN



7 FOUNTAIN



8 CONSERVATORY



9 CROSS-SECTION DRAWING



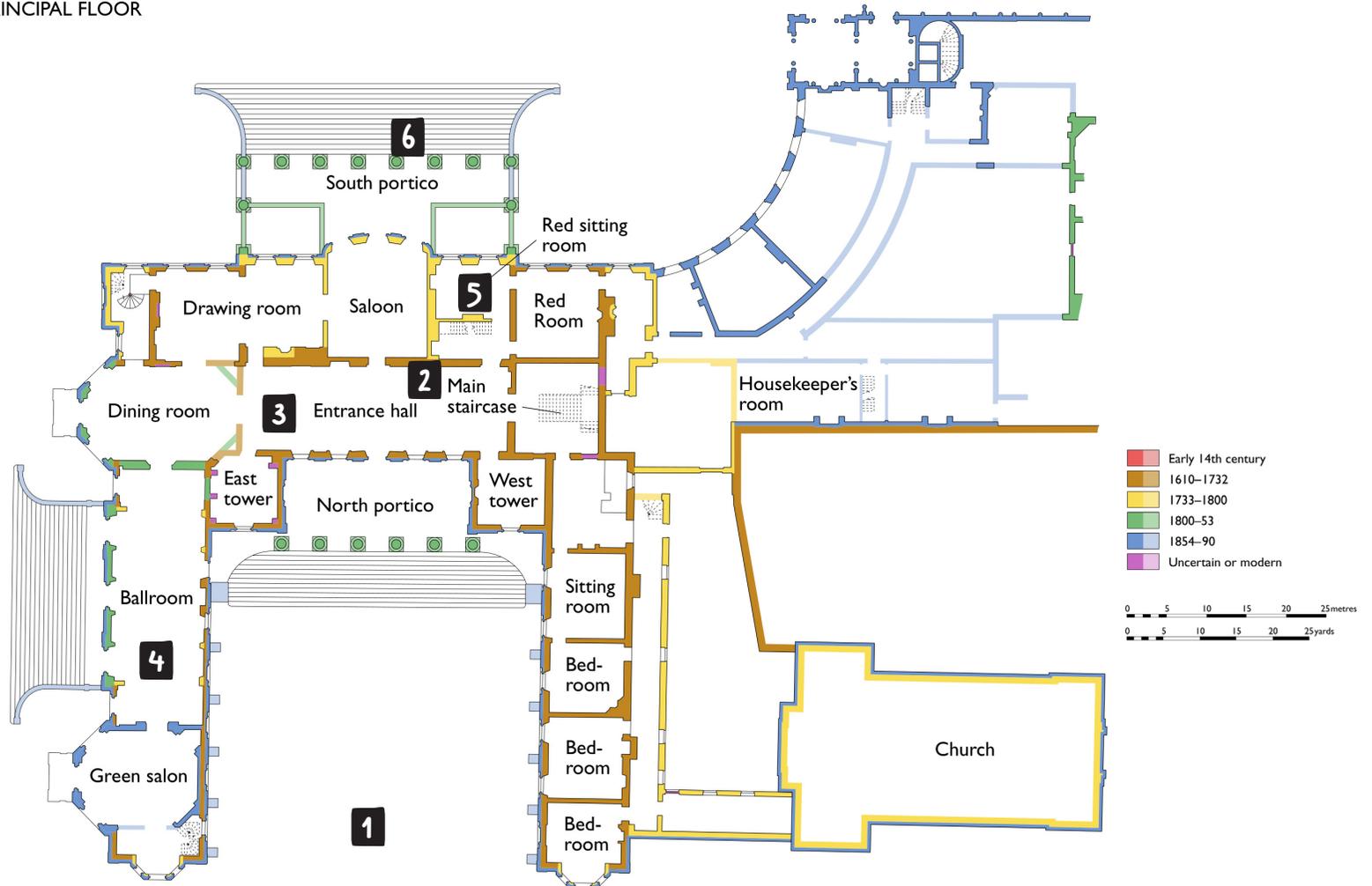
WITLEY COURT TOP THINGS TO SEE MAP



KEY

- 1** TWO TOWERS
- 2** PLASTERWORK
- 3** BLOCKED UP WINDOW
- 4** FIRE DAMAGE
- 5** RED SITTING ROOM
- 6** DAMAGED COLUMN

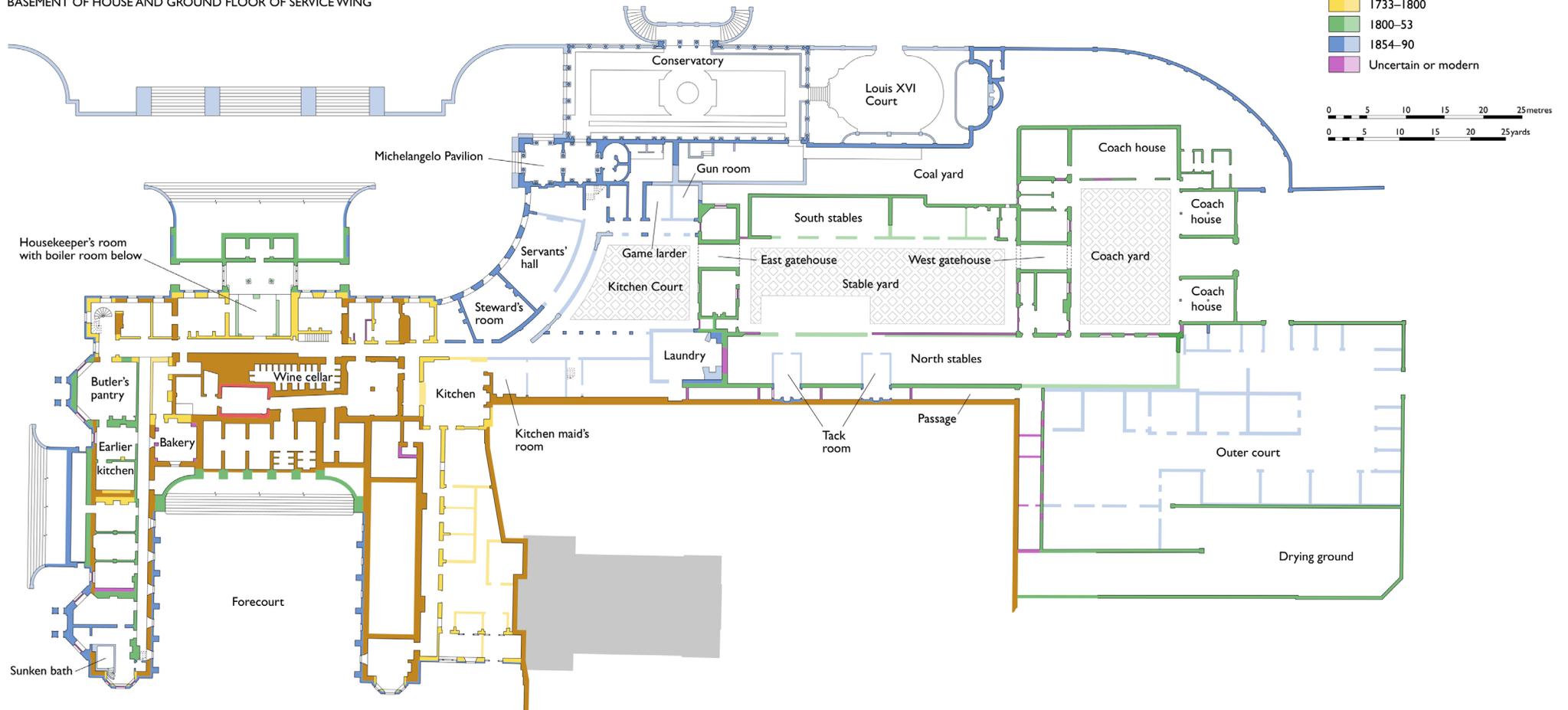
PRINCIPAL FLOOR



WITLEY COURT TOP THINGS TO SEE MAP



BASEMENT OF HOUSE AND GROUND FLOOR OF SERVICE WING



WITLEY COURT TOP THINGS TO SEE MAP

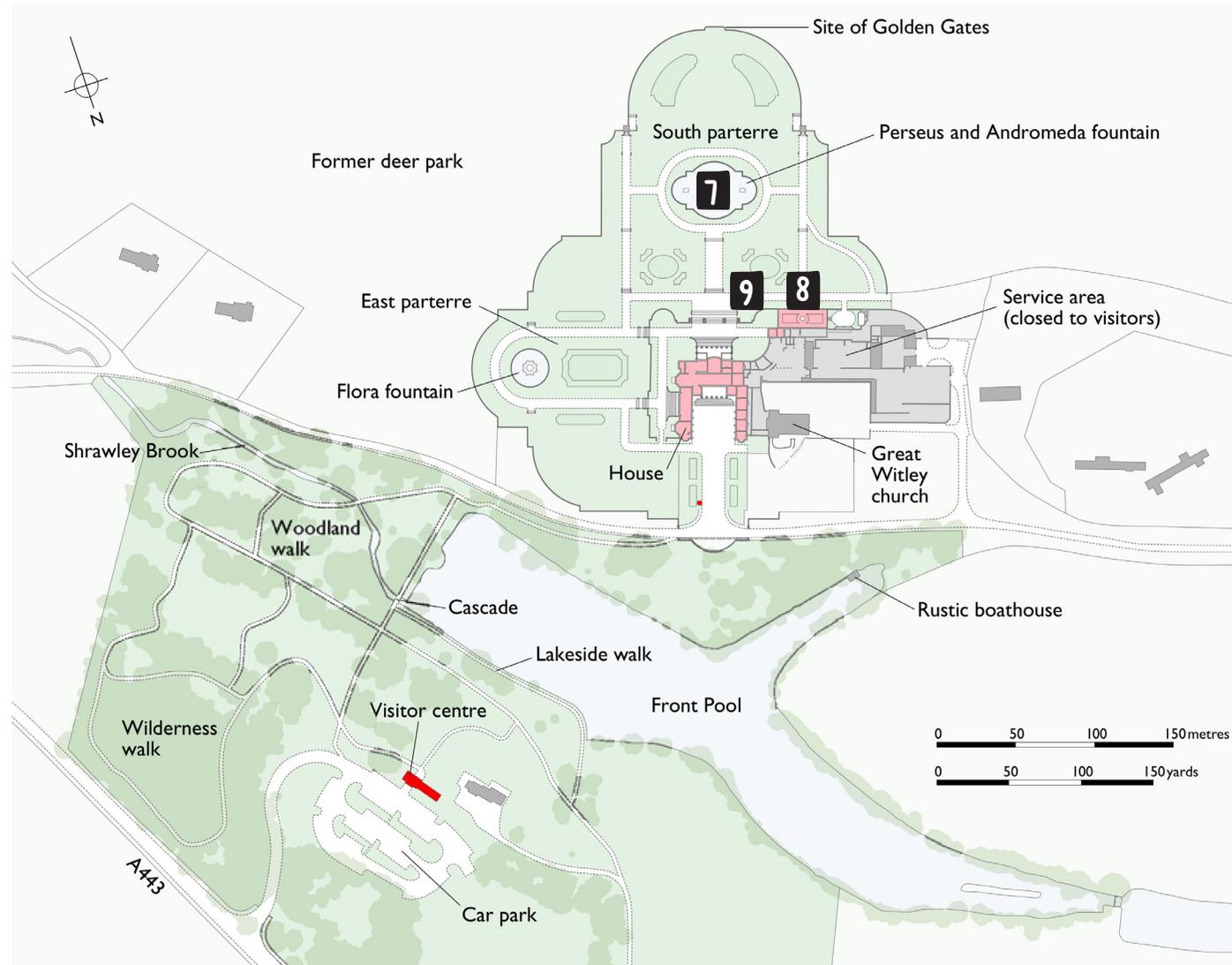


KEY

7 PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA FOUNTAIN

8 CONSERVATORY

9 CROSS-SECTION DRAWING



SELF-LED ACTIVITY

NATURE SPOTTERS FOR ALL SEASONS



Recommended for

KSI-2 (Science, Art)

Learning objectives

- Explore the changing seasons at Witley Court and Gardens.
- Identify species and engage senses to connect with nature.
- Use adjectives to describe their experiences, which can be used to write poetry back in the classroom.

Time to complete

Approx. 30 minutes for each spotter sheet



Rhododendron flowers that can be seen at Witley Court and Gardens in the late spring and early summer.

SUMMARY

There are a variety of habitats to explore at Witley Court and Gardens from the formal to the wild. In each part of the gardens different species of insects, plants and animals can be spotted. This activity focuses on the woodland walk and wilderness garden. Students can witness seasonal changes through repeat visits and use their senses to understand the natural world better.

SPOTTING SPECIES

Print off and photocopy enough seasonal spotter sheets from pages 49–52 for your group. The sheet you will need depends on the season you are visiting. Students will also need a pencil, some paper and a clipboard.

The activity focuses on the woodland walk and wilderness garden, where there is also a playground. There is no set route. There are hard standing paths, areas of low lighting and lots of sensory experiences. Some of the flowers and fungi that students will come across are poisonous. Students will need supervision to ensure they do not lick or pick any of the things they find.

ENGAGING THE SENSES

Encourage students to spend time listening, touching and smelling as well as spotting any of the species on their sheet. Getting students to close their eyes can heighten their other senses.

TAKING IT FURTHER WITH POETRY

Taking one sense at a time, get students to write down adjectives to describe their surroundings. Use these to write sensory seasonal poetry back in the classroom.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Encourage biodiversity at school by setting up a nature garden. It does not have to be big. Students could plant insect-friendly plants in pots and monitor which species visit the garden and how it changes with the seasons.

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

MAGNOLIA BUDS



The furry buds on the magnolia trees start to burst into flower in late spring. Their flowers range from white to deep pink. **Touch** one gently to find out how it feels.

RHODODENDRON



In May, the rhododendrons burst into flower. **Look** out for clusters of purple or pink trumpet-shaped flowers. **Sketch** a flower.

DAFFODILS



Spring bulbs like daffodils were planted here in the 19th century. **Find out** whether they have a scent.

COMMON GREEN SHIELD BUG



This bug has a hard, flat back that looks a bit like a shield. It loves to eat the sap of deciduous trees. If you find one, **touch** its back gently to see how it feels.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

SPRING SPOTTER SHEET

FOR THE WILDERNESS
GARDEN AND
WOODLAND WALK

KSI-2

HAZEL LEAVES



In spring, hazel trees stop flowering and grow new leaves. **Find** the tiny hairs on the underside of their leaves. These may be to stop animals eating the leaves. Then **listen**. Can you hear the wind blowing the leaves?

WOODLOUSE



Woodlice are crustaceans. They have a hard, outer shell, a bit like a crab. In fact, their closest relatives are shrimps! **Ask** an adult to help you **find** one under a log or rock. **Draw** its hard shell.

GREEN HAIRSTREAK



This is Britain's only green butterfly. It can live in a variety of habitats, including woodland clearings and grasslands. **Spot** it from March onwards.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are lots of signs of spring to look out for. Trees have buds and new leaves growing and insects start to emerge.

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

MAGNOLIA



By late summer, magnolias drop their pink and white flowers to the floor, creating a carpet of petals. **Find** a freshly fallen petal, or a new shiny leaf. **Describe** how it feels. Does it have a scent?

RHODODENDRON



By June, the rhododendrons are full of flowers. But many will lose them later in the summer. **Touch** the bark of a rhododendron. How does it feel?

OXEYE DAISY



The bright yellow centre is actually lots of small flowers. Insects love their nectar. **Stand** quietly near one and listen for the buzzing sound of insects.

COMMON GREEN SHIELD BUG



In early summer females lay pale green barrel-shaped eggs on the underside of leaves. It takes six weeks for the nymphs to grow wings and become adults. If you **find** eggs, **draw** them.

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

SUMMER SPOTTER SHEET

FOR THE WILDERNESS GARDEN AND WOODLAND WALK

KSI-2

SPECKLED WOOD



This butterfly can be spotted at this time of year doing its favourite activity – sunning itself. They can live in a variety of habitats, including woodland, and like damp conditions. If you spot one, stay still and **sketch** it.

WOODLOUSE



Woodlice hide during the day. Get an adult to help you lift rocks or logs to see if you can find any underneath. Can you **spot** tiny, young woodlice that have recently hatched?

GREAT CRESTED GREBE



This bird has bright orange feathers in the summer. It dives for its dinner and can be hard to spot. **Listen** for its barking call.

DID YOU KNOW?

The great crested grebe was hunted almost to extinction for its summer feathers.

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

MAGNOLIA



Most magnolias are deciduous, so they lose their leaves in the autumn. **Find** a leaf that has dropped. **Hold** it on your paper and **draw** around it.

WITCH HAZEL



In the autumn, the leaves of this deciduous tree turn yellow and orange before falling off. **Find** fallen leaves. **Walk** through them and **listen** to the sounds you make.

ACORNS



At this time of year the oak trees drop their acorns and their leaves change colour. **Find** an acorn in its cup and **sketch** it.

COMMON GREEN SHIELD BUG



Nymphs that were hatched in the summer have reached adulthood. Adult shield bugs turn a bronze-brown colour before hibernation. **Count** how many you spot. Are they green or brown?

ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

AUTUMN SPOTTER SHEET

FOR THE WILDERNESS
GARDEN AND
WOODLAND WALK

KSI-2

WHITE LIPPED SNAIL



These common snails love wet conditions, so look out for them on rainy days. If you find one, **touch** its shell and **describe** how it feels.

HAZELNUTS



Find hazelnuts. These are a vital food source for lots of animals from dormice to woodpeckers. Dormice eat them to help them fatten up ready for winter hibernation.

WOODLOUSE



The autumn provides woodlice with a new source of food as leaves fall to the ground. This is known as leaf litter. How does the leaf litter **smell**?

DID YOU KNOW?

At this time of year there are lots of species of fungi growing in our woodlands. Do not touch them as many are very poisonous.

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

MAGNOLIA



Most magnolias are deciduous, so by winter they have lost their leaves. **Look** closely to spot furry buds that will flower in the spring. Carefully **touch** a bud to feel how furry it is.

WITCH HAZEL



Although this tree is deciduous, in winter it has strong smelling flowers that look a bit like spiders. If you find them, **smell** their flowers. Some people say they are sweet and spicy.

SNOWDROPS



Snow drops are the first of the bulbs to flower in the new year. **Look** out for their delicate white flowers. They like being near deciduous trees, in partial shade and not too wet.

COMMON GREEN SHIELD BUG



You are less likely to see shield bugs in winter because they hibernate under leaf mulch or in thick grass. **Find** somewhere that could be a good place for a shield bug to hibernate.



ENGLISH HERITAGE
EDUCATION

WINTER SPOTTER SHEET

FOR THE WILDERNESS
GARDEN AND
WOODLAND WALK

KSI-2

CATKINS



Look out for these dangling from hazel trees from February. They are the flowers. If you find one, **look** closely at it. **Touch** it carefully. **Describe** its texture.

WOODLOUSE



Woodlice do not urinate. Instead they release a smelly gas. You can find woodlice all year round hiding under fallen logs or rocks. **Ask** an adult to help you lift them. **Watch** them curl into a ball if they are startled.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE



This water bird looks different in the winter. Its feathers are more likely to be grey, white and cream. **Count** how many birds you spot at Witley Court.

DID YOU KNOW?

Woodland trees have narrower crowns (the top part) because they have less space to spread out than trees growing by themselves.



POST-VISIT

Information and activities 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 Witley Court's history.

SOURCE 1



The entrance hall as it looked in around 1920. Look closely to spot the sculptures lined up on both sides of the room and the plaster and putty decoration on the walls. The gallery around the room was destroyed in the fire.

SOURCE 2



Some of the remaining plasterwork in the entrance hall at Witley Court. The upper level gallery was destroyed in the fire, but the doorway and beams in the middle of the wall show you where it once was.

SOURCE 3



A photograph of housemaids and one male servant at Witley Court. They are having tea in the entrance hall. The furniture in the background is covered in dust sheets, suggesting that the photo was taken when the owners were away.

SOURCE 4

LIVERY BUTTON

This button was once part of a uniform worn by a servant at Witley Court. It has an elephant and a squirrel on it.



SOURCE 5

‘At the gates of Witley Court a triumphal arch had been erected by Mr Arthur Young, the head-gardener, bearing the motto “Welcome to Witley.”... The façade of the Court was lit up by hundreds of fairy lights. Many coloured fireworks were also lighted, and as the vehicle turned up to the front, followed by hundreds of torches, the scene was picturesque in the extreme ... On the left were ranged the school children, and on the right the tenants of the estate were assembled ... the band again struck up “The Soldiers of the Queen.” To the surprise and delight of all who stood near, the youthful Lord Ednam, who is only five years old ... at once commenced singing, in correct tune, the song, thus demonstrating that he was endowed with his mother’s powers of vocalisation ... all present were invited to have supper in a marquee ... Another large tent was provided for dancing, which was kept up to a late hour. Considering that no one in Witley had received any intimation of the visit until Monday morning, it was remarkable that the arrangements were carried out so admirably.’

This is an extract from an article in the *Worcestershire Chronicle* on Saturday 18 November 1899. Lord Ednam was the eldest son of the 2nd Earl of Dudley and his wife, Rachel. This article describes the celebration when the 2nd Earl of Dudley’s brother and new wife came to visit them at Witley Court. They travelled from London by train to Worcester and then horse-drawn carriage to the estate.

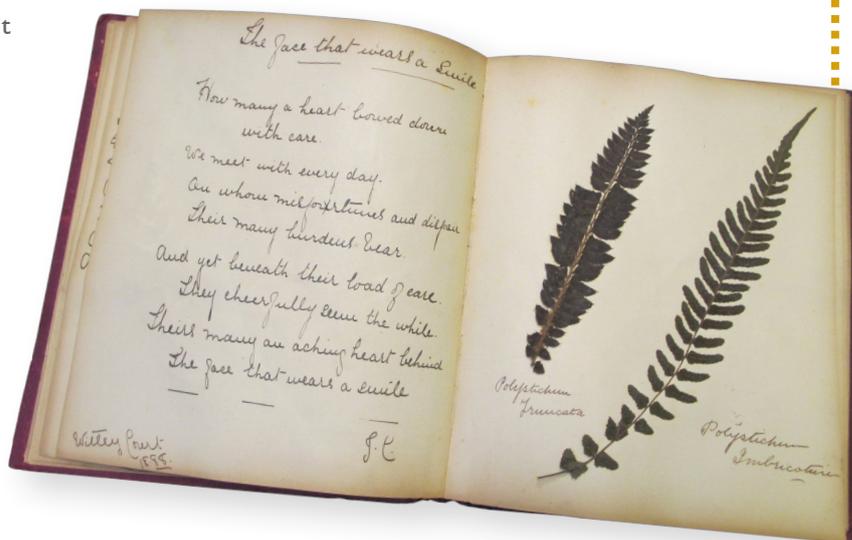


SOURCE 6

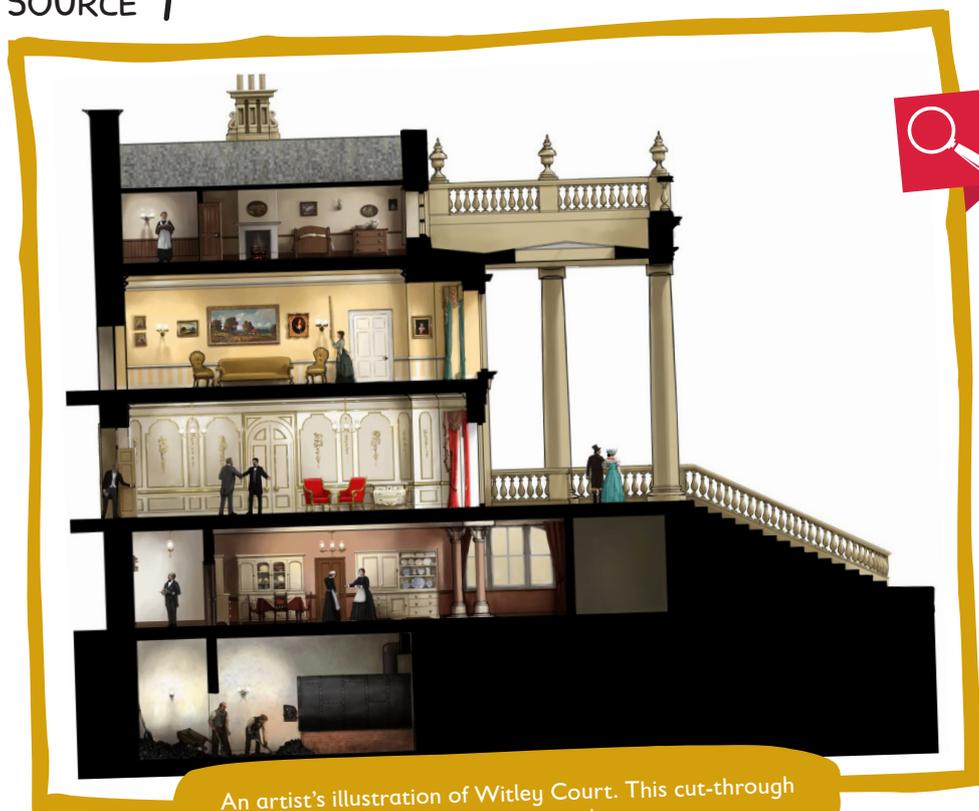
ALBUM FOR PRESSING FERNS

This album was used by a woman called Jeanie Campbell between 1884 and 1893. In it she has pressed ferns collected from country houses. It also includes poetry she wrote. She started her collection at Witley Court, but the album also includes examples from Scotland and Northern Ireland. Ferns were particularly fashionable amongst British people at this time and they appeared as a decorative motif on objects in people's homes. The poem on this page reads:

The Face That Wears a Smile
How many a heart bowed down
with care.
We meet with every day.
On whose misfortunes and despair
Their many burdens bear.
And yet beneath their load of ease.
They cheerfully seem the while
Theirs many an aching heart behind
The face that wears a smile



SOURCE 7



An artist's illustration of Witley Court. This cut-through shows the boiler house and rooms above.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

PAPIER MÂCHÉ PICTURE FRAMES



Recommended for

KS2–3 (Art, Maths)

Learning objectives

- Know how to make papier mâché.
- Design papier mâché picture frames inspired by designs at Witley Court.

Time to complete

Approx. 120 minutes spread over three sessions (making the frame, papier mâché decoration, finishing touches)



A section of plaster and putty decoration dating from the 1850s that survived the fire.

SUMMARY

Papier mâché was used inside the parish church on the Witley Court estate to create decorative interiors that imitate carved work or plasterwork. In the house, plasterwork and lime putty were used in a similar way.

In this activity, students make papier mâché and use it to create a picture frame that echoes the plasterwork inside Witley Court.

DESIGN INSPIRATION

Get students to think back to their visit to Witley Court and the surviving plaster and putty decoration they saw in the entrance hall. Show them sources 1 and 2 on pages 54–55. These show the entrance hall in around 1920 and a view of one of the walls today. Zoom in to help students spot repeating patterns of leaves, swirls and arches.

You could also look at images of Great Witley's parish church for more inspiration. Information about this c

MAKING PICTURE FRAMES

The Teachers' Notes on page 59 provide step-by-step instructions. For more intricate designs, tissue paper, toilet paper or kitchen paper work well as they can be moulded into shape. This is also a great activity for recycling scrap paper rather than throwing it away.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Many grand country houses like Witley Court had picture galleries to display artwork, including portraits of the people who lived there. Students could create self-portraits to go in their frames and display them in a classroom picture gallery.

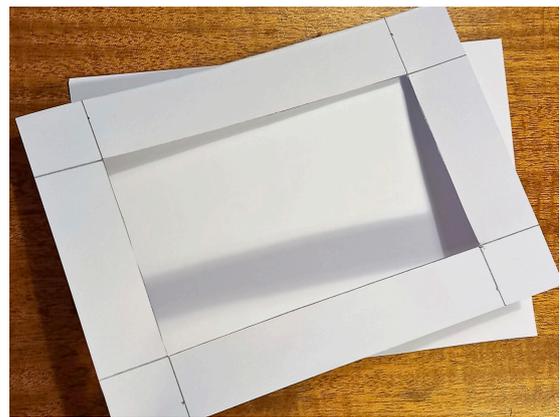
PAPIER MÂCHÉ PICTURE FRAMES

TEACHERS' NOTES

PICTURE FRAMES PART 1

Give students two pieces of A5 card each to create a picture frame.

1. Place one piece of A5 card landscape. Place a ruler along the top (long) edge. Mark 3cm and 18cm. Repeat along the bottom edge.
2. Draw lines to join up the dots at 3cm and 18cm.
3. Turn the card portrait. Place a ruler along the top (short) edge of the card. Mark 3cm and 12cm. Repeat along the bottom edge.
4. Draw lines to join up the dots at 3cm and 12cm.
5. Cut out the inner rectangle and discard. You should be left with a picture frame that can be landscape or portrait.
6. Apply glue along three edges. Do not apply glue along the top.
7. Stick on the other piece of A5 card and leave to dry.



The inner rectangle has been cut out of this piece of card. It is ready for step 6.

PICTURE FRAMES PART 2

Provide students with paste (two parts PVA glue to one part water) and paper to decorate their picture frames.

1. Rip up paper or tissue into smaller strips or pieces ready to use. This is a great way to recycle scrap paper.
2. Dip paper into the paste, wipe off the excess and stick on the picture frame to create a base layer. Do not cover the opening at the top of the frame.
3. Dip tissue or kitchen paper into the paste. Squash it into a worm shape. Use it to create a repeating pattern, such as spirals or arches. Once finished, leave to dry. Once dry, students can put a picture inside the frame by sliding it through the opening. Then they could be put on display in a classroom picture gallery.

SELF-LED ACTIVITY

PARTERRE GARDEN DESIGN



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2–3 (Art, Maths)

Learning objectives

- Know what a parterre garden is and how they were designed
- Design a parterre garden inspired by those at Witley Court

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes



The east parterre garden viewed from above.

SUMMARY

The parterre gardens at Witley Court were restored by English Heritage between 2002 and 2009. Their intricate designs are meant to imitate embroidery. They use repeating patterns and symmetry. They are best viewed from above.

In this activity, students create their own parterre garden design. They select the plants and gravels they wish to use, lay them out in a symmetrical pattern and add a key to explain their choices.

PREPARATION

Print out and photocopy enough of the activity on pages 61–63 for your group. The historical information on page 13 explains more about parterre gardens.

INSPIRATION

Start by getting students to examine the images on page 61. Discuss the shapes and colours used. Some students might find it helpful to use a mirror to identify the line of symmetry.

DESIGN TIME

Some students will find one line of symmetry enough of a challenge, but others may want to use two lines, creating a quadrant. Some students may also require support when creating a key for their design.

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Plant a permanent reminder of students' learning and brighten up your school environment by planting some of these flowers at school. Many of them will grow well in containers so you don't need a lot of space but avoid heliotropes as they are toxic to people and animals.

PARTERRE GARDEN DESIGN

Parterre gardens are designed to be viewed from above. They have intricate, symmetrical patterns made from flowers and gravels. Work your way through these activities to plan and design your own parterre garden.

1 SPOT THE SYMMETRY

Examine the images of the east parterre garden. Find the lines of symmetry.



2 SPOT THE FEATURES

Identify the colours and shapes used in these parterre garden designs.

3 PRACTICE TIME

Practice plotting out lines of symmetry by **drawing** a square measuring 5cm x 5cm. **Add** dotted lines to show the lines of symmetry. Can you find all four of them?

4 DECISION TIME

Examine the selection of flowers and gravels below. **Choose** at least three for your parterre design. You could choose plants that flower at the same time of year (such as spring, between March and May). **Colour** in the squares next to your chosen flowers and gravels. For example, if you choose verbena in purple, colour the square in purple.

<p>SALVIA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The herb sage is in the salvia family. It has blue-purple flowers in the summer.</p>	<p>PRIMROSE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Primroses provide a splash of colour in the spring and nectar for butterflies.</p>	<p>HELIOTROPE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Heliotropes were popular because their flowers smelt of cherry pie. But they are toxic to animals and people!</p>	<p>VIOLA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Viola flowers are edible. They come in a variety of colours and flower from April until September.</p>	<p>VERBENA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Verbenas have clusters of small flowers from May to October. They can be red, pink, white or purple.</p>
				
<p>PELARGONIUM <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Pelargonium flowers can be white, pink, orange, red or purple. They can't survive frost.</p>	<p>PETUNIA <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>These large trumpet-shaped flowers come in a variety of colours.</p>	<p>WESTMORLAND SLATE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A green-grey gravel made from crushed slate.</p>	<p>DERBYSHIRE SPAR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A gravel made of crushed stone. At Witley Court they only used the white bits.</p>	<p>CRUSHED BRICK TILES <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A gravel made from crushed red brick tiles.</p>
				

Now you are ready to start planning your parterre garden design using the template on the right of this page. Follow the steps below to complete your design.

5 LINE OF SYMMETRY

The dotted line on the template marks the line of symmetry for your parterre garden. Everything on the right of the line must mirror what is on the left.

For a bigger challenge, **add** a second line of symmetry across the centre to create four symmetrical sections.

6 HEDGING

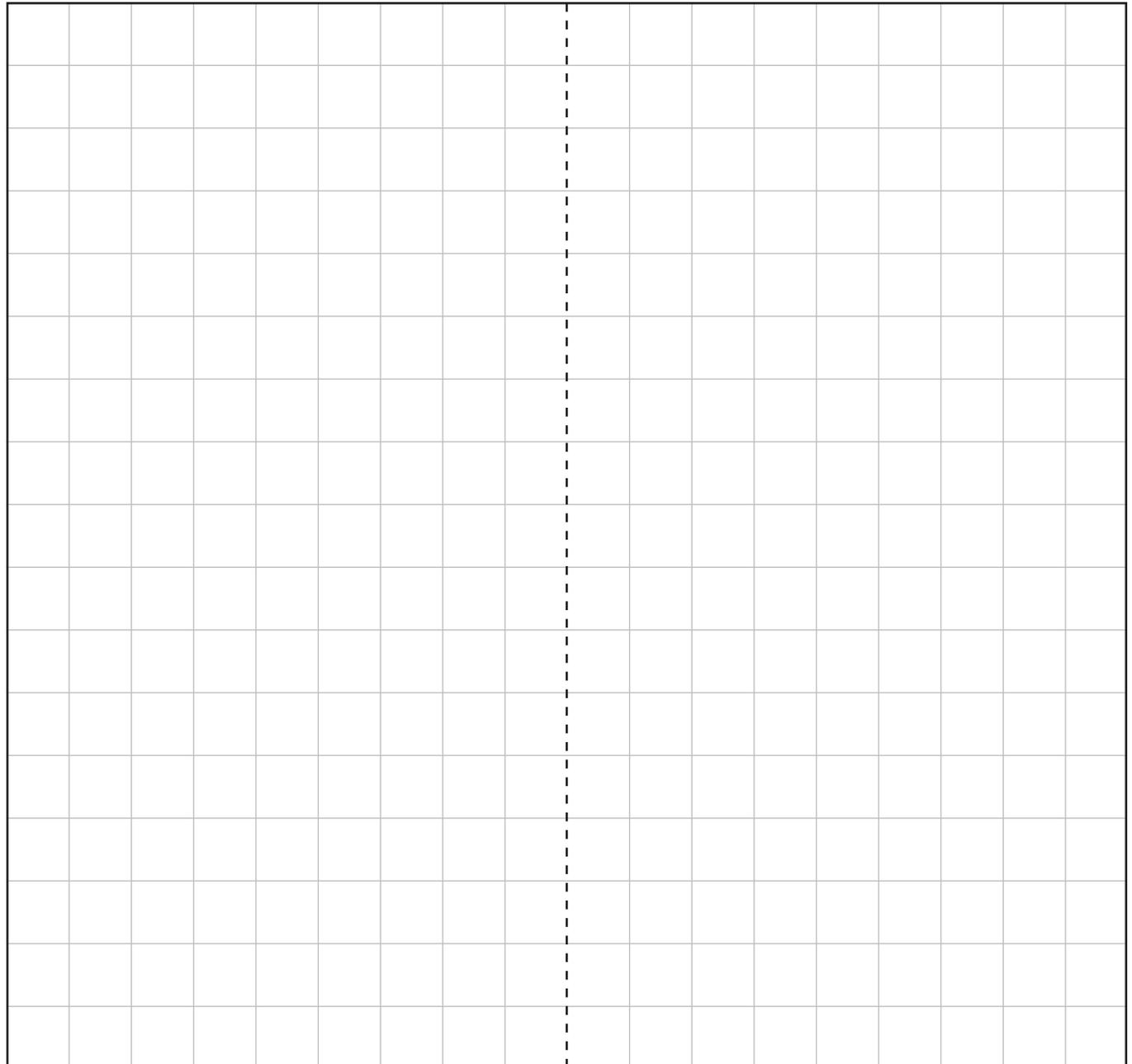
Draw in your box hedging and colour it in green.

Make sure:

- it is symmetrical
- it includes geometric shapes such as squares
- there are spaces for flowers and gravel

7 ADD A SPLASH OF COLOUR

Add your chosen flowers and gravels into the spaces on your design.



SELF-LED ACTIVITY

WATER PRESSURE DEMONSTRATION



KS2

KS3

Recommended for

KS2–3 (Science)

Learning objectives

- Know what water pressure is.
- Understand how water pressure increases with greater depth.
- Observe the effect of pressure on water flow.

Time to complete

Approx. 60 minutes



Water bottles of the kind used in this experiment. You can use a small water bottle or a larger one. This is a great way of reusing single-use plastic bottles.

SUMMARY

The Perseus and Andromeda fountain needed clever engineering to make it work. Understanding water pressure helped the engineers to decide where to build the reservoir and how to pipe the water to the fountain. In this activity, a simple scientific experiment is carried out to demonstrate water pressure.

PREPARATION

Follow the instructions in the Teachers' Notes on page 65 to set up the experiment. This can be useful for students to see as part of the demonstration. However, you know your group best and you may wish to do the preparation before the lesson. Before starting the experiment, get students to predict what they think will happen.

DEMONSTRATION

Follow the instructions in the Teachers' Notes to carry out the demonstration. As this experiment uses water, you may want to do it outdoors or over a sink or washing-up bowl. Repeat the experiment to consolidate learning.

TAKING IT FURTHER

Students could write up a report of the experiment. This could include:

- their predictions before the experiment
- a labelled diagram of the experiment
- their observations of the experiment (what happened)
- the conclusions they have reached about water pressure

MORE LEARNING IDEAS

Repeat the experiment but with the lid screwed on tightly. Remove the sticky tape. The water stays inside the bottle because of air pressure. Air pushes against the holes, stopping water from escaping. Remove the lid. Air pressure pushes down on the water, sending it shooting out through the holes.

WATER PRESSURE DEMONSTRATION

TEACHERS' NOTES

PREPARATION

To prepare, you will need:

- an empty plastic bottle (any size will work)
- a pencil
- a pin
- sticky tape

1. Use the pin to make three holes down the side of your bottle at a roughly equal distance apart.
2. Expand the holes a little bit using a pencil.
3. Cover the holes with sticky tape.

DEMONSTRATION

You will need:

- a pre-prepared plastic bottle
- a towel or paper towels
- a jug of water
- sticky tape
- an arrow cut out of paper

1. Fill your plastic bottle with water. Keep the lid off. Ask students to predict what will happen once the sticky tape is removed. Will the flow of water be the same from each hole?
2. Pull off the sticky tape.
3. Get students to observe and describe what happens. Water should be coming out with greater force at the bottom and the flow of water should slow down over time.
4. Explain to students that water pressure is the weight of water pushing downwards (because of gravity). Dry off the bottle and stick the arrow on to show this downward pressure.
The deeper the water, the greater the pressure will be. This means the water at the bottom of the bottle is under more pressure than the water at the top. This makes it shoot out from the lowest hole with more force. As the water level in the bottle gets lower, the jets of water slow down. This is because the pressure reduces as the water gets shallower.
5. Put new sticky tape over the holes and repeat the demonstration to consolidate learning. When repeating the experiment, you could use three stopwatches to time how long it takes for the water to flow out of each hole. You could also experiment with what happens when the lid is screwed on tightly (see the MORE LEARNING IDEAS section on page 64).