



## The Undercroft

A visit to the Undercroft gives an opportunity to enjoy workmanship which dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. Vaulted with doulting stone the pillars that support the state rooms above are blue lias stone which came from the Somerset Levels. The new floor is Purbeck Cap stone. The windows are very similar to their original appearance.

In past centuries the undercroft was partitioned and used as a wine store, a buttery, pantries, a cellar for coal and firewood and as accommodation for servants. Bishop Law (1824 -1845) displayed his collections of fossils and minerals here. Bishop Hervey (1869 – 1894), who had a large family, converted the Undercroft into a dining room. As the kitchen was some distance away food was kept warm by a 'hot steam and hot water apparatus', in the room which is today's modern kitchen.

### Items of Interest

- The painted stone shield is a rebus (a picture which alludes to a word/name) for Bishop Beckynnton (1443 – 1466). A beacon above a tun or barrel is displayed.
- The tapestries on either side of the fireplace were designed and woven by the Norwegian artist Mrs Molle-Cecilie Major. One shows the swans, trees and water of the Palace gardens and the other was inspired by the wild life on Exmoor
- The coat of arms of Bishop Hervey (1869 – 1894) is in the glass above the door which leads to the terrace and elements of the coat of arms appear in the glazing of the windows
- The Victorian fireplace

### Where next?

- To the Long Gallery up the Jacobean wooden staircase