The Bishop's Palace

WELLS · SOMERSET

Guides' Information Pack

The Palace Buildings Tour The Palace Grounds Walk

Additional Details

2026

BISHOP'S PALACE BUILDINGS TOUR – GUIDES' BRIEF

We know that each guide will bring to their role their own interests and their own love for the site, and that this will make each tour distinctive. We also know that visitors come with their own questions and priorities, and that a good guide will respond to these in delivering a tour. We know that every tour will be a little different and believe that this is the art of delivering the best visitor experience we can.

Some general notes:

a. All guides have, of course, to be able to think on their feet, and must feel confident about altering the route when circumstances make this advisable: e.g. when your group includes people with limited mobility.
b. The subjects listed in the *'Additional Details'* column include some of the many other details that guides might include or use to answer questions. Please refer also to the 'Additional Details Handout' under their reference, e.g. (*see* 01) etc. NB: **Not all subjects can be covered in a single Palace Buildings Tour (PBT)!** PBT should be no more than **30 mins in duration**. Please take the group's requirements and needs into account and adjust the tour content accordingly.
c. You can choose a route for the PBT that suits you and your group. You may like to enter by the chapel and exit by the porch, it is entirely up to you. **Please remember that there is a service in the chapel each Tuesday at Noon** There may also be weddings, room bookings etc in the building so you will need on these occasions to be flexible. You could extend the introduction from the outside and include The Great Hall possibly if you cannot enter the building. **Always check the daily briefing sheet when you sign in, so you are aware of bookings and room closures.**
d. Our intention is to entertain, amuse, inform and enlighten. You are a guide, not a lecturer. Lighten your talk with amusing anecdotes and smile. Use short, simple words. Our visitors are on holiday or enjoying a day out. Most

people struggle to remember fine detail and to place dates. Keep things simple e.g about '600 years ago' not 'in the 14th century'.

e. Talk about no more than two or three things (for two to three minutes) at each stopping point.
f. Check that the group can hear. Face the group (and not what you are talking about), ask for the group to let you know if they can't hear. Repeat any questions from the group before answering.
g. Vary your eye contact around the group so everyone feels included. If you don't know the answer to a question, it's OK to admit it! Don't guess or 'blag' an answer.
h. Be friendly but assertive with your group. Ask them to keep together or gather round but do this with humour and without ordering people around!
i. Ask questions to engage the group. This will also help you gain a level of knowledge about them. You cannot assume they will know about English history, Christianity, church terminology or gardening.
j. The Guide Pack is divided into Buildings tour (30 mins) and Grounds tour (45mins). In the winter, the tours are combined and take an hour. Please use your discretion on how much time is spent inside and outside, depending on the weather.
k. **Remember you are here for the visitors**. Think about what they might want, how they might be feeling and what they are expecting. Keep an eye on their body language and be ready to adapt your style or tour accordingly.
l. **Thank you for sharing your love of this unique place with our visitors**.

BISHOP'S PALACE BUILDINGS TOUR – GUIDES' BRIEF

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Garden side of Ticket Office		1. As visitors arrive for the tour, engage in general chit chat (eg where they've come from today) 2. Once everyone present, welcome them & introduce yourself. 3. Explain what tour will be about; that it will take 30 mins and they can peel off at any point 4. Explain that you will now be taking them to the start point for the tour	
Lamp Post (between Black Walnuts & Chapel)	Arrange group so that they are looking out across the lawn towards the Palace.		
Lamp Post	Overview & Timeline	1. Jocelyn's Palace the early 1200s. 2. Burnell's Chapel & Great Hall late 1200s 3. Ralph's fortifications in the mid 1300s 4. Bekynton's North Wing & Tower mid 1400s. 5. The Bishop's Table (underfloor heating and solar panels)	1. The American Black Walnuts. (*see* 01) 2. Forecourt lawn (croquet). (*see* 02) 3. Bishop's Northwest Corner Turret. (*see* 03) 4. The Gatehouse etc. (*see* 04) 5. The Bishop's Table named in memory of Bishop Ken who would invite 12 poor people to dine at his table weekly in late 1600s.
Lamp Post	Set the Scene	1. Presence of water brought people to settle here. 2. St Andrews stream flowing down the lawn. 3. Picture how it was in 800 years ago when there was only Jocelyn's Palace.	1. Evidence of sporadic settlement in Wells from pre-historic times. (*see* 00)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Entrance Porch	Get group to move down to the entrance porch to the palace	1. This porch was built in 1846 when Bishop Bagot (1845 — 1854) employed a well-known Victorian architect, Benjamin Ferrey, to make changes to the building. These included the addition of the top storey and other alterations. (Get group to look up to top floor and notice change in colour of the stone. It is believed that it was built with stone from The Great Hall after Bishop Law's destruction of two of its walls some 20 years or so before.) 2. Prior to 1846 this porch was positioned one bay to the left and it did not stand in the centre of the facade as it does today. The coat of arms above the entrance to the porch is that of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The keys of Saint Peter and the sword of Saint Paul are the arms of Bath Abbey and the cross of Saint Andrew is the arms of Wells Cathedral. 3. The bishop's mitre announces the building to be The Bishop's Palace. The lanterns on either side of the entrance would have had lamps placed inside them. From the outside, look up to the drainpipe heads which show a pelican wounding its own breast to feed its young, a design taken from Bishop Piers' (1632 — 1670) coat of arms.	1. Notice that there are no steps *up* to the palace and indeed there are steps *down* to the chapel. This was because Bishop Law had 6ft of soil brought into the site to improve the gardens in the early 1800s. 2. The heads on either side represent the church (bishop) and the state (king). 3. To the right of the porch notice the mounting block.

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Entrance Hall	Walk group into the Entrance Hall	1. This hall and the parallel undercroft created the firm foundation for the first floor hall built for Bishop Jocelin (1206 — 1242). Using the red and yellow triassic limestone, the mason chose the finer doulting stone for the vaulting. Before the 16th century fireplace was installed the space would have been heated with charcoal braziers. 2. The windows contain fragments of stained glass from the French city Rouen, which Bishop Law (1824 — 1845) collected after the destruction of church windows during the French Revolution. 3. The long refectory table where Bishop Ken shared meals with 12 poor men and women when he was in residence in late 1600s The wooden tabletop that was not original has been replaced with a glass one so that you can see the original legs beneath. Our café is named 'The Bishop's Table' in his memory. 4. Invite visitors on tour to take advantage of the free multimedia guides once the guided tour is completed. Point out film that can be watched too. 5. In the early 1600s one of the stone spiral stairs was replaced by the wooden Jacobean staircase you can see today. Note the Somerset dragons which were repainted in the 1970s.	1. This glass along with pieces of 15th and 19th century English glass decorate many of the Palace and Chapel windows. Spiral stone stairs at both ends of the hall provided access to the first floor Hall and Long Gallery. 2. Bishop Bickersteth and his wife spent many hours removing paint from the staircase in the 1970s. Quite a labour of love! 3. When mentioning the Somerset Dragons, you may like to tell the story of Bishop Jocelin and the dragon (in fact a wyvern as it had two feet). Legend has it that a dragon appeared from Worminster Sleight and began eating the local sheep and cattle, and some say children too. The locals begged Bishop Jocelin to slay the dragon which he did. Before it died the dragon warned that it would return every 50 years and if it had not been honoured it would come back to life. Invite visitors to stroll along the south side of the moat to see the mosaic made by local children in 2001. The tradition continues! Mention our dragon in the arboretum, especially if there are children in the group.

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Undercroft	Walk group into the Undercroft	1. A visit to the Undercroft gives an opportunity to enjoy workmanship which dates back to the 13t" Century. Vaulted with Doulting stone the pillars that support the state rooms above are blue lias stone which came from the Somerset Levels. 2. The new floor is Purbeck Cap stone. The windows are very similar to their original appearance. 3. 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. 4. 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 adjoining the Undercroft which is today's modern kitchen. 5. Functions, including weddings, still frequently use this wonderful space.	1. The painted stone shield is a rebus (a picture which alludes to a word/name) for Bishop Beckynton (1443 – 1466). A beacon above a tun or barrel is displayed. 2. 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 wildlife on Exmoor. 3. 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. 4. The Victorian fireplace. 5. The plug socket covers were kindly left by the crew who filmed 'The Huntsman' here in the summer of 2015 (see 51). 6. Bishop Law had a great interest in fossils found at Banwell Caves, located on his land.

LOCATION	GUIDES INFO	KEY DETAILS	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
Long Gallery	Walk group up to Long Gallery	1. In medieval times a long gallery was an essential space for work and recreation and this space may have been divided into three rooms. 2. During the civil war between the King and Parliament 1641, the Royalist forces made their headquarters in the Palace. The Parliamentary forces tried to damage the Palace with cannon fire from Tor Hill (now Tor Woods) but failed. When the Parliamentary troops entered Wells, the Palace was looted and portraits and an organ stolen. Following the Civil War the Palace was neglected for several decades. By 1824 Bishop Law had turned it into a comfortable Georgian residence and began the present collection of portraits (see 52) 3. The building of a storey over this Long Gallery by Bishop Bagot (1845 — 1854) enabled the architect Benjamin Ferrey to renovate the whole of this first floor. In the Long Gallery, windows were enlarged; plaster ceilings installed and the decorations carried out in Victorian Italian Gothic style.	1. The moulding, panelling and coving made from papier mâché to look like carved wood 2. The wallpaper is modern blocking of a Victorian design taken from a medieval fresco in a Norfolk church 3. Bishop Bagot's motto seen in mouldings below the windows is 'Antiquam obtinens' ('possessing antiquity') 4. The long table is one of three made for Bishop Hervey (1869 — 1894) not used here then (see image 1) 5. It was also used by St Brandon's School for daughters of the Clergy as a school room and dormitory. The school moved here from Bristol during WW2 when their school building was requisitioned for the war effort. (See image 2 and amusing quote from Bishop Wand). 6. The accommodation above is used by members of the team that need to be on-site for security and to operate the sluice gates to prevent flooding of the grounds and buildings.

LOCATION	GUIDES INFO	KEY DETAILS	ADDITIONAL DETAILS
Bishop Wynne Willson's Study	Proceed into Bishop Wynne Willson's Study	1. In the 13th century this room and the adjoining Conference Room were once Bishop Jocelin's Great Hall. The Hall was once open to the beams and rafters of the roof and painted stonework on the walls. It was untouched by the building work over the Long Gallery and the window in this room overlooked the deer park. In 1977 two of the original window embrasures were found behind Victorian bookcases. 2. In past centuries this room has been used as a nursery, a music room, a drawing room and lastly as Bishop Bradfield's study (1946 —1960). He later moved his office and family accommodation to the north wing of the Palace built by Bishop Beckynton (1443 — 1466). This wing was once believed to be for servant accommodation but now known to have contained accommodation for the bishop and guests – it included a grand hall with great chamber over and solar. 3. This room has now been re-imagined as Bishop Wynne Willson's study (1921-1937). This exceptionally modest man was a dedicated bishop who was known for his generosity, humour, and deep concern for his clergy and parishioners. The room tells us about the man, his interests and passions. Point out the desk and invite visitors to return at the end of the tour to read the information boards and open the desk drawers to learn more about Bishop Wynne Willson.	1. Ceiling installed by Bishop Bagot (1845 – 1854) and decorated with his coat of arms. 2. Elaborate papier mâché decorative work on doors and covings which were made to look like wood carving. 3. The coat of arms is that of Bishop Piers (1632 – 1670) who was the longest serving Bishop of Bath and Wells. It is fashioned from a single ring of oak and was made to mark the restoration of Charles II in 1660. 4. The large round table in the corner is one of 3 tables given to the Palace by Bishop Hervey's widow. 5. The clock was made in 1785 and donated to the Palace.

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Conference room	Move into Conference Room	1. Note the thin wall between the drawing room and this room. It would originally have been one large hall open to the rafters with a raised dais at the north end where the bishop would have sat. In the space above the ceiling there remains evidence of the medieval hall. 2. It was Bishop Henderson who opened the Palace to visitors in the 1970s and this room has been dedicated to his memory. It is now used for conferences and exhibitions. 3. The Victorian Italian gothic style favoured by Bishop Bagot is seen in the fine delicate plaster work of the ceiling, the decorative fireplace and inner embrasures and the outer carved canopies of the sash windows.	1. Benjamin Ferrey, the architect, distanced himself from much of the internal work which was carried out by George Jackson & Sons ltd. Ferrey wrote a letter to the bishop saying he considered himself only responsible for the masonry work. 2. The arms of Bishop Bagot in the corner of the ceiling. 3. In the mouldings of the ceiling are shields and mitres bearing Bishop Bagot's arms and motto 'Antiquam obtinens' (possessing antiquity). 4. Invite your group to look out onto the formal gardens below.

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Coronation room	Move into Coronation Room	This room was originally the 'solar' and the east gallery which adjoins it was the garderobe. These were private rooms for the bishop away from the busy medieval hall. 1. The wood and plaster panels date from the 18th century and were not altered by Bishop Bagot's extensive building work (1845 – 1854). 2. These rooms you have visited have formed the residence for Bishops from the early 13th century until the Second World War when Bishop Underhill (1937 – 1943) moved to the north wing so that the pupils and staff of St Brandon's School, Bristol, could move in. 3. In 2023 this room was opened by The Duke & Duchess of Gloucester as the new 'Coronation Room'. 4. The Coronation Cope was last worn at a coronation by Bishop Bradfield at Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's coronation (see 53) 5. The display table showcases the prompt cards and other memorabilia from King Charles III's coronation in 2023, attended by our current bishop, Bishop Michael Beasley.	1. After the war in 1945, when there were shortages of all kinds and these rooms needed repair, the Church Commissioners took the decision to move Bishop Bradfield (1946 – 1960) to the north wing. 2. It was left to Bishop Henderson (1960 – 1975) to restore and open the Palace to visitors.
East Gallery	Once finished in here return to entrance hall and enter the chapel by 'back door'	1. This was originally the bishop's garderobe, possibly used to store his important documents, vestments and for personal use. 2. It is now used as a gallery. 3. This gallery now displays precious items both from our collection and the Bishop of Bath & Wells' collection. (ref 54 & 55)	1. There is a secret staircase behind the right panel of the south window, used originally to access the garderobe from the floor below. 2. Abbot's Chair & Glastonbury Chair (ref 54)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional details
The Bishop's Chapel	Get group to sit in the pews preferably on the north side (right as you go in) Point out that this is still a place of worship and a very important part of the life here at The Bishop's Palace.	1. Explain: This is Bp. Michael's private chapel where regular weekly services are held. 2. The Chapel is dedicated to the Holy Trinity and St Mark. 3. Built in the Decorated Gothic style by Bp. Burnell in the late 1200s. 4. From the 1600s onwards there followed almost 200 years of neglect and stagnation. 5. Bishop Law restored the East Window and the coloured glass are fragments from Rouen after the French Revolution. 6. Pews, please see last picture in the pack 7. Bishop Peter Price (2001-2013) restored the pews, and installed the altar, president's chair and icons. He also arranged for the painting of the ceiling bosses.	1. Chapel build, lay-out and detail. (see 39 to 50 and image 3)
Lamp post	Closing the walk	1. Thank them for joining you. 2. Mention other tours happening that day (check which are running before you set off on the tour). 3. Suggest refreshments at The Bishop's Table; Souvenirs and information about membership / events from the shop. 4. The Bishops Palace Trust (a registered charity) relies on entrance income/donations etc. to look after the site so everyone can continue to enjoy it in the future. 5. Remind them about the multimedia guides that will enable them to learn even more about the Palace	

YOUR NOTES

BISHOP'S PALACE GROUNDS WALK – GUIDES' BRIEF

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Some general notes:

a. All guides have, of course, to be able to think on their feet, and must feel confident about altering the route when circumstances make this advisable: e.g. when your group includes people with limited mobility or when guiding in very wet weather.
b. The subjects listed in the *'Additional Details'* column include some of the many other details that guides might include or use to be able to answer questions. Please refer also to the 'Additional Details Handout' under their reference, e.g. (*see* 01) etc. NB: **Not all subjects can be covered in a single Palace Grounds Walk (PGW)!** PGW should be no more than **45 mins in duration**. Please take the group's requirements and needs into account and adjust the tour content accordingly. You don't have to follow the suggested route in this pack, lots of guides choose to finish up by the Well Pools and then invite visitors to explore the Quiet Garden, Community Garden, Dragon's lair from there by themselves.
c. Our intention is to entertain, amuse, inform and enlighten. You are a guide, not a lecturer. Lighten your talk with amusing anecdotes and smile. Use short, simple words. Our visitors are on holiday or enjoying a day out. Most people struggle to remember fine detail and to place dates. Keep things simple e.g about '600 years ago' not 'in the 14th century'.

d. Talk about no more than two or three things (for two to three minutes) at each stopping point.
e. Check that the group can hear. Project your voice to compensate for outdoor noise levels, face the group (and not what you are talking about), ask for the group to let you know if they can't hear. Repeat any questions from the group before answering.
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PALACE GROUNDS WALK – GUIDES' BRIEF

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Garden side of Ticket Office		1. As visitors arrive for the tour, engage in general chit chat (eg where they've come from today) 2. Once everyone present, welcome them & introduce yourself. 3. Explain what tour will be about; that it will take 45 mins and they can peel off at any point 4. Explain that you will now be taking them to the start point for the tour	
Lamp Post (between Black Walnuts & Chapel)	Arrange group so that they are looking out across the lawn towards the Palace.		
Lamp Post	Overview & Timeline What are we looking at?	1. Jocelyn's Palace the early 1200s. 2. Burnell's Chapel & Great Hall late 1200s 3. Ralph's fortifications in the mid 1300s 4. Bekynton's North Wing & Tower mid 1400s.	1. The American Black Walnuts. (*see* 01) 2. Forecourt lawn (tennis/croquet). (*see* 02) 3. Bishop's lock-up. (*see* 03) 4. The Gatehouse etc. (*see* 04)
Lamp Post	Set the Scene	1. Presence of **water** brought people to settle here. 2. **Water** shaped the architecture and landscape. 3. St Andrews stream flowing down the lawn. 4. Picture how it was in 800 years ago when there was only Jocelyn's Palace. 5. The 14 acres of gardens have been shaped and designed by past and present bishops and today are managed by a team of 6 gardeners and a large team of volunteers.	1. Evidence of sporadic settlement in Wells from pre-historic times. (*see* 00) 2. Romans were known to be active on the Mendips and locally. Romano-British pottery finds have been discovered under the Undercroft

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Great Hall (Within)	Walk group into the Hall	1. Burnell's splendid dining & entertaining hall built circa 1280 is the 3rd largest secular hall in England after Canterbury & Westminster Palace. 2. Built to reflect his position in society and to enhance Wells as an Episcopal centre. 3. The design is based on the Great Hall at Lincoln and built of red & yellow Triassic sandstone in the Decorated Gothic style (1270-1370). 4. Early 1550s, Edward VI gave permission for the Great Hall to be demolished, probably from a request from Bishop Barlow. But only the lead roof was removed. 5. Hall gradually deteriorated until Bishop Law decided to remove two of the walls to create a 'folly' as part of his creation of a picturesque landscaped garden – highly fashionable at the time. 6. South lawn further developed in a picturesque style/ gardenesque style from 2004 by present head garden	1. Burnell; Edward I chancellor. (*see* 05) 2. Burnell's aspirations (*see* 06). 3. Ceremonial Porch. (*see* 07) 4. Explain layout of Hall. (*see* 08) 5. Stories from the Great Hall: a. 1331 Edward III Christmas visit. (*see* 09) b. 1337 Great feast. (*see* 10) c. 1539 Trial of Abbot Whiting. (*see* 11) d. 1553 Sir John Gates. (*see* 12) 6. Bp. Law's controlled demolition and raising ground levels. (*see* 13)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
South Lawn	Most visitors are happy to do ramparts at their leisure after the guided walk as long as you mention the view to Palace fields, Ken's Walk etc.	1. 'Ken's Walk'. 2. Bp. Ralph of Shrewsbury's fortifications early in the mid 1300s, an assertion of authority & symbol of power during a time of civil & religious tension. 3. Water was a horticultural resource, used in growing food and creating decorative gardens. 4. Site of a formal Dutch style garden in the late 1600s/early 1700s which included a L-shaped canal Chapel South Wall – On the way around point out the following: 5. Gingko Tree – thought to be 250 years old. 6. Drainpipe hopper design. 7. 'Low Side' Window	1. Bp. Ken and his composing. (*see* 14) 2. Licence to Crenellate. (*see* 15) 3. South Lawn trees. (*see* 16) 4. Dowsing survey. (*see* 17) 5. Drainpipe hopper design, mystical symbol for Christ Jesus. (*see* 37) 6. 'Low-Side' window blocked up. (*see* 38)
		1. The Palace Fields were part of a deer park created by Bp. Jocelyn in the early 1200's.	1. Deer Park & Palace Fields. (*see* 18)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Formal Gardens	Choose to position group in a central point or if you prefer, slowly walk and talk as you progress through the garden.	1. The Formal Gardens have developed over the centuries and are still changing. 2. When Bp. Peter Price came here (2002-2013) the gardens came to the fore. Thanks to the hard work of the staff and volunteers in the garden team we are now an RHS partner garden 3. The dahlia bed contains dahlias named after Bishops. 4. Point out the Portcullis Knot Garden based on the design of the portcullis crest - one of four crests within the oriel window, the Exotic Garden planted with draught resistant plants and the Stumpery 5. Jocelin Border by the apple store with the Bishop Jocelin metal sculpture nearby.	1. The inner gardens have been 'dry' since Bp. Law raised the ground levels and redeveloped the landscape. 2. Although in times of heavy downpours, water can still break through in other parts of the garden. 3. The Garden & Borders. (*see* 36)
The Moat	Depending on size of group, this can be done either on the moat path or if a larger group in the area of the bridge over the cascading water steps.	1. Created when Bp. Ralph of Shrewsbury diverted St Andrews stream. 2. The moat helps to manage the water on the site. 3. Was used to act as a mill pool for the bishop's mill, holding water in a big reservoir until needed to turn a waterwheel. 4. Moat wildlife, particularly the swans.	1. Moat dimensions & statistics. (*see* 19) 2. Wildlife that live in, on, under and by the side of the moat. (*see* 20) 3. Garden team use sluices to manage the flow of water – if they get it wrong the Palace floods.
Well House (Cistern House)	Have group facing the Well House.	1. Bp. Bekynton erected this building, known as the Well House in 1451 and made a grant to the town, guaranteeing a supply of water. 2. Fresh water supple was crucial to the people of Wells. 3. This part of the outer gardens is a complex landscape of pools and channels – both above and below ground. 4. We are now standing on what is an island.	1. Explain the cistern workings. (*see* 21) 2. In 1460, Bp. Bekynton had the 'New Works' houses/shops built to the north side of the Market Place. (*see* 22)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
St Andrews Well (Scotland)	Group at viewing platform	1. **Here we have the reason and purpose of why we are standing here today – why there is a Bishop's Palace – why there is a magnificent Cathedral Church and why there is a city called Wells.** 2. This pool is known as 'The Holy Well of St Andrew'. 3. St Andrew is the dedicated saint to the Cathedral Church of Wells; he was the 'first called' to follow Jesus. 4. Regarded in medieval and post-medieval times, as a sacred spring, but there is no evidence to support this. 5. There is certainly an association between the presence of water and the creation of a great ecclesiastical centre. 6. The water sources and their unceasing flow through the city would have been very important in the Middle Ages, both for practical and spiritual reasons.	1. The source. (*see* 23) 2. King Ine & Bp. Aldhelm. (*see* 24) 3. Archaeological survey. (*see* 25) 4. The well stream. (*see* 26) 5. 'City of God'. (*see* 27)
Gather group around the Water Wheel	Gather group around the Water Wheel	1. The 'Pumping Machine' was most probably installed in the early 1870s 2. The water taken from the Well Pool used to be pumped under the moat into the Palace for the bishop's household use in Victorian times.	1. History. (*see* 28) 2. Abandonment. (*see* 29)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Well Pool	Choose the best position for the group; the favourite is at the east end to pick up the renowned view of the Cathedral's reflection in the Well Pool.	1. This part of the site seems timeless but can change rapidly and needs to be managed carefully. 2. Created by Bp. Law in the 1820s & 30s as part of his redevelopment of the inner and outer gardens. 3. He enclosed three well pots within this new pond to create a pool. 4. See how the pool perfectly mirrors the Cathedral.	1. Prior to redevelopment & water management today. (*see* 30) 2. 'Bottomless Well'. (*see* 31) 3. Water as a control leverage. (*see* 32)

Location	Guides Information	Key Details	Additional Details
Well Pool	The east end of the well pool is also a position to point out these four areas. **(This is the point that many guides conclude their tour, having already taken the group through the Phelps Garden)**	1. The Arboretum was commissioned by Bp. Bickersteth to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee in 1977. 2. These allotments were established in the 1960s and 1970s - now run by Wells City Council. However, Bp Law in the 1800s established allotments in Palace Fields – he wanted to provide the poor with a means of growing their own food 3. THE DRAGON'S LAIR – children's play area interpreting the legend of Bishop Jocelin and the dragon. Note there is a loo. 4. The Quiet Garden – a place for peaceful reflection. Includes the poustinia. Closing the Walk: 1. Thank them for joining you. 2. Suggest they look around the Palace themselves or join the next Palace Buildings Tour. 3. Mention the multimedia guides included in ticket price 4. Suggest refreshments at The Bishop's Table; Souvenirs and information about membership/events from the shop. 5. The Bishops Palace Trust (a registered charity) relies on entrance income/donations etc. to look after the site so everyone can continue to enjoy it in the future.	1. Arboretum has been managed since 2004 for wildlife and as a result, many of the plants & flowers have increased. (*see* 33) 2. Bp. Law was a key figure in the allotment movement. (*see* 34) 3. Development projects. (*see* 35)

Guides’ Additional Details

The Palace Buildings Tour and The Palace Grounds Walk 2026

NB: This information is intended for background knowledge and to help answer questions from visitors.
It is not to be included in the tour content.

REF	DETAIL
00	1. For more than 1500 years occupation of this site has centred on the prehistoric wells which rise in the outer gardens of the Palace. Since the 1200s the Bishop's Palace has been shaped by the presence of the wells and the water which flows from them 2. Tradition tells that in 705 King Ine of Wessex gave Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, land at Wells so that he could establish a Minster church here. The earliest reference to this church at 'Wiela' is given in a charter of 766 by King Cynwulf 3. Appearance of the site in the 1100s: the Anglo-Saxon Minster visible to the south of where the cathedral is now, but its size and architectural style quite different.
01	1. The larger American Black Walnut tree was planted over 200 years ago; the same year as Florence Nightingale was born (1820-1910) and King George III died (1738-1820). 2. The smaller walnut was planted in the mid-1980s to replace the older one that had been struck by lightning and was feared would fall down. (Father & Son).
02	1. Known as the Croquet Lawn, the Wells croquet club has played here since 1976.
03	1. Northwest Corner Turret: A round defensive tower or bastion probably built the same time as the ramparts. Sometime in the 1800s renovated to create an oratory – a quiet place for prayer and reflection. By 1989 it was being used as a potato store but look inside and the ten commandments can still be seen displayed on the wall.
04	1. The Gate House: the drawbridge was last raised in 1831 when riots in Bristol relating to The Reform Act caused the Bishop Law to take this precaution. It is from here that the swans are fed. 2. Evidence points to one of Bishop Eden the Lord Auckland's daughters teaching the first swan to ring a bell for food in the 1850s/1860s. The bell was originally on the left side of the gatehouse by a window but now on the right side (looking at it from the Bishop's Eye).
05	1. Bp. Robert Burnell (Bp.1275 – 1292) had hoped that Edward I would pay a visit to his Great Hall, but disappointingly his friend the King never came.
06	1. Bp. Burnell had aspirations to be Archbishop of Canterbury; twice Edward nominated him, in 1270 when Prince and 1278 as King, each time he was blocked by the Pope who apparently wasn't impressed that he had illegitimate children – bishops were supposed to be celibate. 2. Bp. Burnell was rumoured to have a long term mistress – Juliana - & 6 illegitimate children. One boy, William Burnell, went on to be Dean of Wells Cathedral (1292-5).

REF	DETAIL
07	1. Ceremonial Porch possibly was of two stories with a vaulted ceiling to the lower space. There were stones steps which lead to a door into the bishop's 'solar', his private apartment. 2. Ceremonial Porches in the 13th century became symbolic place of entry for the lord. In 1244, Henry III, (Edward 1's father), gave orders to, "have an entrance which befits such a Palace, so that the King may dismount from his palfrey with dignity and make his way beneath it".
08	1. William Worcestre (c. 1415 – c.1482), recorded that the Hall was a traditional aisled structure with a nave and side aisles; it is believed the roof, lead on wood, was probably supported by piers, but no evidence of these have been found. 2. Known as 'end halls', it had two spaces; the 5-bay hall and 'bishop's solar' at the west end along with the 'bishop's garderobe' in the south west turret which has been described as, "the finest medieval loo in England". 3. Below the solar and screened off from the hall, would have been pantry and buttery with the arched door leading through to the kitchen. 4. The 'high-table' would have been at the east end. 5. The large windows, almost spanned the complete elevation of the hall, had two lights divided by a transom with the lower light shuttered and the upper held glass, shutter hook irons can still be seen.
09	1. In 1331, Edward III spent Christmas here with such a large entourage that Bp. Ralph of Shrewsbury (Bp.1329 – 1363) had to spend Christmas at one of his other palaces at Wookey and Banwell.
10	1. In 1337, Bp. Ralph entertained some 268 people across 2 days. Food and other costs, such as hay for the visitors' horses cost him £5.10s.7½d, about £6000 in today's money.
11	1. In November 1539, it is said that the last abbot of Glastonbury Abbey, Richard Whiting and his treasurer John Thorne with another monk, Roger James were tried in the Great Hall for treason against Henry VIII. 2. Thomas Cromwell (Earl of Essex) – the king's chief minister and (absentee) Dean of Wells (1537-1539/40) - had Whiting initially taken to the Tower of London and then brought back here for the trial. (NB: Cromwell's nephew, Richard William, alias Cromwell was the great grandfather of Oliver Cromwell) 3. They were found guilty and taken to Glastonbury where all three were fastened upon hurdles and dragged by horses to the mount of Glastonbury Tor where they were hanged, drawn and quartered. 4. The Abbot's head was displayed on the gate to the abbey and his limbs distributed throughout the region
12	1. In 1552, Sir John Gates acquired the lead from the roof of the Great Hall; Edward VI had granted permission, in a letter, for its demolition presumably because he had received a petition to do so. Was Barlow, as owner, the petitioner and why did he petition the King? Barlow was not wealthy - hugely reduced income due to the loss of most of the bishopbric's land and properties; he was having to support a large family.

REF	DETAIL
	He could not afford to maintain the Great Hall. Edward, in his letter also mentioned that Barlow had no need for such a building as he had others in which to entertain. 2. From that time and for the next 300 years, the Great Hall was neglected and fell into ruin. 3. In 1553 Gates was executed with his patron, the Duke of Northumberland, by Queen Mary for their part in the Lady Jane Grey plot.
13	1. Bp. George Henry Law (Bp.1824 – 1845) wanted to design a Picturesque style garden, he had the south and east walls removed – it is believed that the stone removed was later used for repair and the building work above the Long Gallery. 2. At the same time the ground level was raised to its present level; this was achieved by bringing in soil from different parts of Somerset. 3. This raising of the ground level has resulted in the squat appearance of the lower windows and doors.
14	1. It is said that Bp. Thomas Ken (Bp.1685 – 1691) walked these ramparts. Was he mentally composing prayers and sermons? It is now known that it is unlikely that any of his famous hymns and prayers were composed here as these were published in his Manual Of Prayers in 1674. 2. Bp. Ken also composed many other hymns and songs when he was at Winchester, including his time as Royal Chaplain to Charles II.
15	1. In 1329, Bp. Ralph was granted a royal 'licence to crenellate' (furnish with battlements). 2. This allowed him to build the drawbridge, gate house with portcullis and chute for pouring molten lead or oil on attackers. The walls were ramparted and strengthened by bastions. Finally, he had channelled St Andrews stream to form the moat. 3. The bank/mound of earth of the south rampart walk is the soil excavated to make the moat. 4. The fortifications would not have deterred a trained army, it wasn't meant to. 5. The defences were tested in 1642 during the English Civil War, when Charles I Royalist's army made the Palace its headquarters. The Parliamentarian army fired canon from Tor Hill which caused the Royalists to retreat.
16	1. Two Mulberry trees (Earl of Cork 1897) & a Black Mulberry tree – the wisest of trees according to the Roman author Pliny. 2. English Walnut – the squirrels eat most of the nuts. 3. The large wooden hand was made from the Tree of Heaven, originally planted in 1890 but felled in a storm several years ago. In China this tree is traditionally planted when a daughter is born, the wood becoming part of her dowry. At the garden festival in 2015 Alan Titchmarsh planted a new catalpa tree nearby. 4. The Tulip tree - planted by Bp. Peter Price to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee in 2002.
17	1. A dowsing survey of this site has shown where several small streams used to run through the inner gardens, now encircled by the rampart. 2. These would have been used to irrigate plots for growing food and medicinal plants. 3. An L-shaped canal was created in the middle of the lawn during the late 1600s or early 1700s when water features were fashionable in gardens; it may have been used for trout. Its shape can still be seen during periods of drought.

REF	DETAIL
18	1. The Palace Fields were part of a Deer Park. 2. Deer was a source of food for the bishop's household. 3. This land is still farmed by the Church Commissioners. 4. Palace Farm is located just to the right (west).
19	1. Surface area of moat is 2 acres. It has a capacity of approx. 4 million gallons of water. Its depth varies but averages approx. 6ft. 2. The average flow is 181 litres/40 gallons per second. (Approx a bath full. In times of flood it will fill 10 baths a second) 3. Every August Bank Holiday, the 'Wells Moat Boat Race' takes place, a charity raft race organized by Wells Lions Club & Air Training Corps.
20	1. In the 1850s, one of the daughters of the Bp Eden, taught the then swans to pull a rope attached to a bell, which hung from a window of the gate house – when they did so the swans would be fed from the window. 2. In 2006, to celebrate 800 years since Bp. Jocelyn of Wells (Bp. 1206 – 1242) was granted land to build the Palace; Queen Elizabeth gave a pair of swans to the bishop. 3. Variety of wildlife on the moat; Mute Swans – Moorhens – Little Egret – Mallard & Tufted Ducks – Coots – Herring Gulls – Sea/Urban Gulls. 4. Kingfishers have been seen and Dippers – Wagtails – Sandpipers have all visited. 5. Insects etc seen are: Wasps – Hornets – Dragonflies – Damselflies – Bees. 6. Others seen are: Frogs – Toads – Mink – Otters – Bank & Field Voles – Wood Mice – Water Voles occasionally. 7. Rats are regular visitors but as these are ecclesiastical rats, they are acceptable!
21	1. Water collected in a cistern within the Well House flowed through lead pipes to a stone built conduit in the Market Place with 4 taps for the people to draw their water 2. On the roof of the Well House is Bp. Bekynton's favourite hunting dog the Talbot. 3. The present 'fountain' structure in the Market Place dates from the 1800s and is near the same place as the original outlet. It feeds the north gutter of the High St. The south gutter is fed from an outlet on the moat near the duck feeding platform.
22	1. Some of the water was diverted at Penniless Porch to provide the houses with their own stream, flowing beneath. As well as washing away household rubbish, it was probably used as a very early water closet! There was an additional supply inside for drinking supplied from the well house. 2. Water can still be seen today, flowing beneath a glass slab set in the floor of a shop. It is the second building from Penniless Porch (*see* no 26)
23	1. The wells here and beneath the other pools, rise from an underground river which drains the whole of the East Mendips.
24	1. In 705, the Anglo-Saxon king, Ine of Wessex (reign 688-726), gave Aldhelm, his bishop, land to build a minster beside these wells. 2. Aldhelm of Sherborne (639-709) – abbot of Malmesbury; on the division of Winchester diocese, he became Bishop of Sherborne (705-709) – Wells was part of his new See.

REF	DETAIL
	3. Aldhelm died in 709 whilst on a diocese visit at Doulting. Doulting, between Shepton Mallet and Frome, is where the finer limestone is quarried for the vaulted ceilings in the Bishop's Palace, Chapel and the Cathedral.
25	1. Archaeological surveys show that the original minster lay slightly to the south of the present Cathedral. 2. This would explain why the Market Place and High Street are out of line with the present Cathedral. 3. Ecclesiastical buildings are, in the main, built on the plane West to East; we enter the church from the West and our Christian journey, (via the nave (ship)), is towards the East (altar) towards Jerusalem.
26	1. A stream from this well flowed close to the southern side of the minster. 2. Water might have been taken from the stream for some liturgical uses. 3. The present day Cathedral is still close to the stream, which for much of its route runs underground. 4. The stream continued beyond the Cathedral into the City of Wells, sometimes above and sometimes below ground, it passed under the 'NewWorks'
27	1. The Book of Revelation *(cc 21-22)* describes a vision of the City of God. 2. Revelation 21 – *'To him who is thirsty I will give to drink …… from the spring of the water of life'* NIV. 3. Revelation 22 – *'Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city'* NIV. 4. Wells, with its ceaseless waters, could be seen as an earthly reflection of this perfect city. 5. The West Front of the Cathedral shows the Day of Judgement as described in the Book of Revelation foretelling the entry into the New Jerusalem (Heaven)
28	1. The 'Pumping Machine' was in-situ 1886; it is difficult to say when it was installed, but certainly unlikely prior to circa1850. 2. The existence of a filter suggests that the water pump would have been for drinking water as well as for general use.
29	1. Bp. Hervey became concerned about the purity of the water. 2. He believed an outbreak of typhoid fever in his household might have been caused by drains at the nearby asylum contaminating the ground water which rises in the wells. 3. Most of the town's wells were eventually classified as unfit for drinking because foul water (such as sewage) leaked into ground water sources
30	1. Prior to Bp. Law's changes the focus would have been on practical management of the water flowing from several well pots to maintain supplies to the moat and well house. 2. Today, the water levels still need to be managed daily. 3. The Garden Team use the network of channels and sluices to achieve this. If they get it wrong they are likely to have a flood on their hands. 4. In very wet weather the water from the remotest swallet, (where a stream disappears into the ground), reaches the well in 24 hours. In times of drought it can take a week or more.

REF	DETAIL
	5. During the winter months it is drained to prevent flooding.
31	1. Sometimes water can be seen bubbling up from what the Somerset historian, John Collinson referred to in 1791 as a *'Bottomless well'*. 2. The sandy bed can sometimes be seen 'boiling' and in constant motion as the water rises through it.
32	1. Bishop William Piers (Bp. 1632-1670) had the water stopped from reaching the City of Wells because he was offended that the city corporation had neglected to present the bishop with the customary gift of a silver bowl. 2. He was then presented with a silver bowl and gloves for his wife and the water flowed once again.
33	1. The Arboretum has a labyrinth of grass pathways threading themselves through natural growing areas. 2. Within is one of the finest Foxglove trees in England, *(similar in appearance to the Indian Bean tree).* 3. The Arboretum was planted in 1977 to mark Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee.
34	1. The allotments are now managed by the City Council and are one of only two within Wells.
35	1. Quiet Garden (formerly known as Garden of Reflection) – A quiet area for visitors where they have space for their own spiritual contemplation. 2. Community Garden – A creative project for local people and community groups. 3. Orchard – Linking the Community Garden and Quiet Garden. 4. Gardener's compound and greenhouse
36	1. <u>Corner Terrace</u> – The terrace has been used as an area for theatrical & musical events. The old Apple Store now serves as a food and beverage outlet in busy summer periods and special occasions. The bed in front of it is known as The Jocelin Border. 2. <u>Phelps Garden</u> 2005– Funded by the Phelps Family of Palace Farm, it is the site of the original gardens laid out in the 1820's by Bp. Law. In Victorian times it contained 8 squares of box hedge but, in 1914 it was grassed over; most men folk had gone off to the Great War. It was partially reinstated in the 1970s by Bp. Bickersteth. The large urn dates from 1850.
37	1. <u>The Pelican:</u> Early Christian symbol of the Passion of Christ Jesus. The pelican in her piety is vulning (from the Latin *vulno* to wound) herself to make her breast bleed; the dripping blood feeds her young. This symbolises Christ on the cross, shedding his blood for God's children.
38	1. The 'Low-Side' window, now blocked up and sitting low to the ground due to the ground level being raised in the 19th century, was probably used to ring the 'Sanctus Bell' to draw attention, to those working outside the Chapel, to the solemn moment during the celebrating of the Mass
39	1. Bp. Burnell's, Decorated Gothic style chapel can be observed by the wonderfully large windows with decorative tracery, set in deep casements, flanked by Blue Lias, (from the Somerset levels). 2. Like the Great Hall, built of red and yellow Triassic sandstone with Doulting limestone for the vaulted ceiling. 3. The Reformation period was a time of the more puritan minded clergy. The Chapel suffered almost 200 years of neglect until in the 1820s Bp. Law began the tradition of restoration which continues today

REF	DETAIL
40	1. East Window: Bp Law found this boarded-up and on removing the boarding discovered most of the window glass broken or missing. 2. He sent Somerset men with wagons and horses over to the Rouen region of France and brought back cart loads of French medieval stained glass that had been smashed from the ruined churches during the French Revolution. 3. He had this glass made into mosaic patterns that we see today; also in the East Window are modern glass designs: - the Cross of St Andrew – the Arms of bishops Law and Henderson
41	1. Fenestella *(Latin: window/gate)*: This also was boarded-up, it would have been used, before Henry VIII's CofE when the tradition was the Church of Rome, for celebrating the Mass, it comprises of: - 2. *Piscina:* A stone basin with drain used to wash hands and holy vessels, as they had been in contact with the elements, during the Celebration of Mass; this water, now sanctified, would drain to the consecrated ground outside. 3. *Sedilia:* Graduated stone seats used by the Priest, Deacon and Sub-Deacon. Note how the sanctuary floor has been raised. 4. *Hangings:* These were hung in 1960, Winged Lion of St Mark, Great Seal of Bp. Burnell, Arms of bishops Ken and Henderson.
42	1. Pews: Bp. George Kennion (Bp. 1894-1921) in early 20th century, commissioned apprentices from Taunton to carve the pews. Each pew has the name of the wood carver's parish of origin. Search for the carved mouse and snail
43	1. Heraldic Frieze: Bp. John Bickersteth (Bp. 1975-1987) in the late 1970s commissioned the green panelling, with bishops from Burnell onwards. 2. Two non-mitred, cardinal's hats instead. 3. Note that not all bishops had Arms but have used other devices, Bp James Thompson (1991-2001) a case in point.
44	1. Alter & Presidential Chair: Bp. Peter Price commissioned these to celebrate 800 years (1206-2006), since Bp. Jocelyn was granted land to build his Palace. 2. Designed by David John and made by Richard Richardson, with the chair being made by David John himself. 3. Made of maple wood and inlaid with Ancaster stone. 4. The legs are connected by a Celtic Knot design to represent reconciliation and connectedness which is the theme. 5. The altar rests on Ancaster stone with a circular text of reconciliation carved by John Rowlands Pritchard. 6. Engraved from 2 Corinthians 5.18. *'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself and he has given to us the ministry of reconciliation'*
45	1. Liturgical Colours: The problem was what to do with the altar frontals as it seemed a pity to cover such a wonderful altar with them, thus hiding the workmanship. 2. It was Dee, the wife of the former bishop – Peter Price, who came up with the idea to display them between the columns of the wall behind the altar. All the colours of the liturgical year are included in the pattern of the fabric.
46	1. The Icons: Continuing the theme of reconciliation with these beautiful icons that seek to illustrate the Bible story of reconciliation. 2. The artist; Bulgarian born Silvia Dimitrova, also painted the 'Stations of the Cross' in the Cathedral.
47	1. Processional Cross: The processional *Resurrection Cross* was designed by Pat Sampson and is cast in silver
48	1. The Ceiling: The vaulted ceiling bosses were painted in the autumn of 2008, using colours similar to those in the Middle Ages. 2. The carvings depict foliage, flowers & berries, also humans, animals, birds, beasts & Green Men.

REF	DETAIL
	3. Together it is considered to be a description of how we are with the natural world and how it is with us. 4. Green Man dates from pre-Christian times and is a symbol of creative fertility in nature; other names May King (Man-in-the-Oak) or (Jack-in-the-Green). 5. In Christian imagery it is a symbol for Easter and the Resurrection
49	1. Amazing Child: Sculpture by Rory Geoghegan, stands on a plinth designed by Daphne Jowit. 2. The Celtic Knot design in the plinth echoes the symbol of connectedness at the base of the altar. (this is currently in the southside of the Entrance Hall, adjacent to passage through to Chapel)
50	1. Christ the Teacher: Carving by Thomas Preator given to the chapel by Bp. George Carey (Bp. 1987-1990), went on to be Archbishop of Canterbury.
51	1. Filming Hot Fuzz 2006, The Huntsman 2015, Galavant ABC Productions 2015, Terry and Mason's Great Food Trip BBC 2015, Holiday of your Lifetime 2015, The White Princess 2016, Poldark 2016 / 17 , The Spanish Princess 2018, Antiques Roadshow 2021. Wolf Hall, second series 2024
52	Portraits Please make your own notes on Bishop's who are of particular interest. You can use the display books in the long gallery.
53	**Coronation Cope**

REF	DETAIL
	The -Coronation of Richard I in 1189 set the precedence in writing for the Bishops of Bath and Wells supporting the Monarch on their left at their Coronation. (NB not all coronations since have seen the Bishop of Bath and Wells in attendance).This cope was commissioned for Bishop Kennion to wear at the Coronation of King Edward VII in 1902. The ladies of the diocese opened a public subscription list for a new cope. The cope was designed by Mr Micklewaite, architect and surveyor of Westminster Abbey. The main body of the cope is made of cream silk damask powdered with a floral design and overlaid with sun bursts in couched gold thread. The embroidered shields surmounted by a Bishop's Mitre on the dark blue velvet orphrey, (the wide band at the top edge of the cope), depict the cross of St Andrew and the keys of St Peter with the sword of Saint Paul. At each end of the orphrey are shields containing three fleuree crosses. At the neck of the cope is a detachable figurative hood; in earlier times this would have been a real hood. Made of velvet, it is embroidered with couched gold thread and coloured silk threads. It features the letters IHS bordered with a curvilinear design. IHS is a 'Christogram', an abbreviation of Jesus's name. IHS comes from the Latinized version of the capitalized Greek name for Jesus: IHSOUS. These same letters, with the 'h' shaped to form a cross, are also embroidered on the velvet morse, the name given to the fastening that fastens the two sides of the cope together across the front of the body. The cope has been altered through the years to suit the stature of successive Bishops: approximately eight inches from the lower edge a seam is visible and the gold thread embroidery has been re-worked over the seam to keep the "sun-ray" motif uniform. It is believed that the cope was shortened for Bishop Bradfield. The cope has been worn for these Coronations: King Edward VII 1902 Bishop GW Kennion King George V 1911 Bishop GW Kennion King George VI 1937 Bishop Wynne Wilson Queen Elizabeth II 1953 Bishop HW Bradfield The cope was not worn at the coronation of King Charles III. Whilst our cope had been well conserved, that of the Bishop of Durham's had not. It was therefore decided that the Bishops of Bath and Wells and Durham would wear matching copes borrowed from Westminster Cathedral. Bishop Peter Hancock wore the cope for his Service of Welcome and Enthronement as Bishop of Bath and Wells in 2014. Given the volume of fabric which the cope is made of it is not surprising that the bishop said: "It is certainly heavy to wear". Bishop Peter Price wore it for his Enthronement (2002) and for a special service for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2012. Bishop Bradfield chose to wear the cope for his official portrait which can be seen in the Long Gallery, as did Bishop Hancock. The cope chest was made for Bishop Kennion in 1902. The people of Wiveliscombe Parish Church had the cope chest on loan for more than 40 years but it finally returned to the Palace in 2012 for its Coronation Connections exhibition.

REF	DETAIL
54	**The Glastonbury Chair** is a nineteenth-century term for a wooden chair, usually of oak, possibly based on a chair made for Richard Whiting, the last Abbot of Glastonbury, England This chair was originally made in Britain from a description brought back from Rome in 1504 by Abbot Richard Beere to Glastonbury Abbey, and was produced for or by John Arthur Thorne, a monk who was the treasurer at the abbey. Arthur perished on Glastonbury Tor in 1539, where he was hung, drawn and quartered alongside his master, Richard Whiting, the last Abbot of Glastonbury, during the dissolution of the monasteries. The Abbot sat on a Glastonbury chair of this type during his trial here at The Bishop's Palace The chair is richly decorated with Latin script on the arms and back. Across the top of the back are the words 'Monacus Glastome,' indicating where it was made and on the arms are the phrases 'God save him,' 'May the Lord give him peace' and 'Praise be to God.' On the inner face of the right arm is 'Johanus arthurus,' the Latinized name referring to John Arthur Thorne. It is a common misconception that the chair folds, however it can be quickly dismantled if required. There is no evidence to indicate these chairs were regarded as especially portable. This is one of two original surviving examples seen today. The second chair can be seen at the Church of St John the Baptist in Glastonbury
55	**Abbot's Chair** The chair was made between 1550 and 1700 and probably dates from the early part of the 17th century. Probably made in Pembrokeshire/Carmarthenshire area The shape of the turning on the upper front legs is very similar to another extant chair – this suggests one specific workshop with one individual having produced both chairs. Very few of the joints are pegged – the maker would use a combination of seasoned and green wood in construction and the unseasoned wood would swell and secure the different sections of the chair – pegged joints were used to give added strength to areas such as the seat – the joint at the top of the back leg is pegged – the seat is fixed with round tenon joints – two of the joints go through the front legs and project but are not pinned which is unusual – seats in examples of these chairs that survive are secured with a combination of a square and round tenon joints – together they give added strength – the presence of only round tenon joints to secure the seat is another characteristic of this chair maker. Made of Ash with an oak plank seat – this is not unusual. The underside of the seat has been carved using an adze axe – this is not unusual.

REF	DETAIL
	All the planks from which the chair is constructed were riven – the wood would have been split before being worked – this can be seen in the chair as the split in the wood travels across the different sections of turning. All the extant examples of these chairs are slightly different – there are no two early turned chairs that are identical. The chair is riddled with worm – the worm is dead – the chair does not need to be treated further

- IMAGE 1 Long gallery c.1890
- IMAGE 2 St Brandon's School for daughters of the Clergy and Bishop Wand's quote
- IMAGE 3 Layout of the pews

Long Gallery Victorian Period c. 1890

Clearly the Bishop's private quarters.

1 The Long Gallery, 1940, showing girls from St Brandon's School for Daughters of the Clergy, Bristol, at lessons. The Gallery was used also as a dormitory. Bishop Underhill (1937-43) leased part of the Palace to the School, which was evacuated to Wells shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War.

By courtesy of Janet James

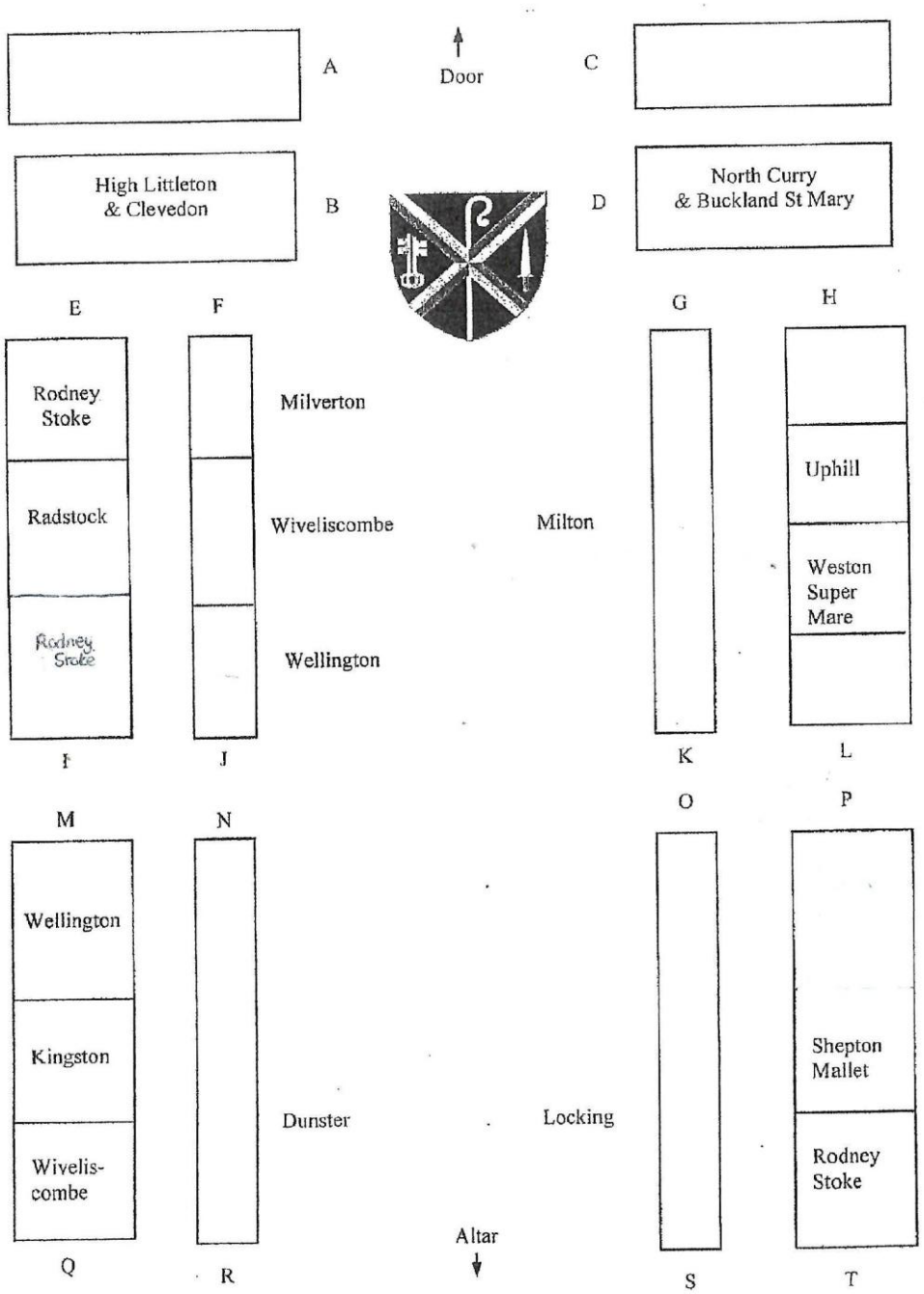
The photograph, a rare contemporary interior view of the Palace, shows the arrangement of the paintings at the time. Most clearly seen, from left to right, are Hervey (**28**) Kenn (**6**), Wynne Willson (**32**), Montagu (**4**), Moss (**14**) and Laud (**7**), with possibly Wynne (**11**) between them. The remainder remain indistinct, though the heavy, ornamented frame second from end is probably the Pickersgill Law (**27**), now in the Panelled Room, together with Hervey and Wynne Willson. Moss was also moved later and is currently in the Drawing Room. The first of the two small portraits displayed at the lowest level may be Fox (**25**).

An interesting sidelight on the School at Wells, and on Bishop Underhill (**30**), is given by Bishop Wand, Underhill's successor, in his autobiography (**38**, *References*), page 165:

> [The girls] had been admitted to the place as a war-time refuge by my predecessor in a burst of generous feeling engendered by the difficulties of the time. Actually he had no particular liking for children, and he liked little girls least of all. He was getting ill and their noise was most disturbing to him. He retreated from them as far as he could into the inner recesses of the house, and when he could retreat no further the poor man died, one of the unsung heroes of the war.
>
> We liked the children and we could ignore the noise. At first we found their untidiness something of a handicap. They had annexed the long gallery, the nerve centre of the whole house, and turned it into a dormitory. The beds were not neat and uniform like hospital beds, but covered with many-coloured quilts, on the top of which during the holidays were placed unmentionable articles, upside down. My study [the Drawing Room] was at the far end of this gallery and visitors had to walk between the ranks of this silent guard of honour to reach my door. It was rather too much, and after a time I persuaded Miss Almond, the charming and able Headmistress, to accept the loan of some other rooms in place of the long gallery.

KEY TO CHAPEL PEW CARVINGS

Early 20th Century woodworkers who were employed to make the chapel pews carved their parish names in the wood.



KEY TO PEW END CARVINGS

A Buckland St Mary
B Weston super Mare
C, D Washford
E, F West Monkton
G, H Locking
I, J North Curry
K High Littleton
L Wiveliscombe
M, N Burnham
O Thorn Jeniron
P Kingston
Q Weston super Mare
R Burnham
S, T Clevedon

YOUR NOTES