



A military stronghold and a magnificent Renaissance palace, **Stirling Castle** captures learners' imagination and brings the past vividly to life.

INVESTIGATING STIRLING CASTLE AND PALACE

Information for teachers





Contents

- P2**
Welcome to Stirling Castle and Palace
- P4**
Supporting learning and teaching
- P6**
Integrating a visit with classroom studies
- P10**
Timeline: the story of Stirling Castle and Palace
- P12**
Stirling Castle and Palace: a historical overview
- P19**
Suggested tours
- P20**
Tour 1: Attackers and defenders
- P29**
Tour 2: The Wars of Independence
- P38**
Tour 3: Palace for the Stewart monarchs
- P54**
The Stirling Heads
- P56**
The Stirling Sculptures
- P57**
Other places to visit
- P58**
Other resources

Welcome to Stirling Castle and Palace

Perched on a rocky outcrop and commanding a view for many miles around, Stirling Castle is one of Scotland's most impressive castles. It was built as an almost impregnable fortification and saw lots of violent military action, particularly during the Wars of Independence in the 1300s.

Within the castle walls lies a royal palace, once the luxurious home of the Stewart kings and queens. Today you can visit the 're-presented' rooms of the Palace, recreated to show the splendour of the Scottish royal court in the mid-16th century, when the Palace was new.

Using this resource

This resource is designed for teachers planning to visit Stirling Castle with their learners. It aims to help teachers make the most of their time on-site, and to link the visit with work in the classroom. It is most suitable for lower to middle primary classes.

Please note that the material in this resource is intended for teacher/group leader use. It is not designed to be copied and distributed to learners, though elements may be suitable for more able learners.

Planning your visit

The castle's own website www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk contains a wealth of historical and practical information to help you plan and enjoy your visit, background information about the castle and palace, educational activities, special events, an interactive map, and online games.

Booking your visit

All group visits to Stirling Castle must be booked in advance. Please contact Historic Scotland Learning Services:
Tel: **0131 652 8155/8156**
Email: hslearning@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/learning

Cost

All booked, teacher-led educational visits to Stirling Castle are FREE from September to April. Teacher-led tours may not take place during May and June, because the castle is very busy. There is a small charge for any special activities (see below).

Special activities for schools

Throughout the year, many exciting activities for schools take place at Stirling Castle. These include storytelling with puppets for early years groups, discovery sessions, and art activities based on decoration in the castle.

Visit the Historic Scotland website www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/learning to download the current Schools Programme with full details of all special activities. There is a small charge for these.

Travel subsidy scheme

Did you know that the Scottish Government can contribute to your travel costs? Schools can apply for a travel subsidy to visit any Historic Scotland site. Contact **0131 652 8154** for more details, or download an application form from our website.



Resources

From September to April, the independent Regimental Museum of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, based within the castle, offers resource boxes for learner use free of charge. These boxes contain objects relating to:

- World War I
- World War II and the Home Front

For further details and to book contact **01786 475165**.

Audio tours

Audio tours are available for groups. Teachers are advised to try these out on a pre-visit to assess their suitability for their group. Please discuss when booking.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment of the site is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the group. To assist with this, download Hazard Information sheets from the Historic Scotland website, or contact the site for more information.

FREE planning visit

We strongly encourage teachers to make a free planning visit themselves before bringing a class. This gives them the chance to carry out a risk assessment, try out material, meet staff and become familiar with the site. Please discuss this when booking.

Access

Most of the castle is accessible to wheelchair users, but the following areas are currently inaccessible: the Elphinstone Tower, the Great Kitchens, and the Museum of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The Palace and the Stirling Heads Gallery are accessible via lifts.

The Access Gallery in the Palace Vaults enables visitors with mobility difficulties to experience areas of the castle and palace which are inaccessible to them. In addition to images, interactives and tactile objects, the displays include information on the crafts used to recreate the interior of the Palace. Braille information boards are on display and a Braille guidebook is available from the shop.



Learners have fun with replica medieval weapons.

How to get to Stirling Castle

Stirling town centre is easily reached by car via the M9, leaving at Junction 9 or Junction 10. There are also regular buses and trains. Stirling Castle sits at the top of the historic old town, 15 minutes' walk from the bus or railway station. Simply follow Mar Place up to Castlehill.

Additional facilities

- Toilets
- Café serving a varied menu of hot and cold food and drinks
- Picnic area
- Covered packed lunch area: please book on arrival at the castle
- Parking for buses and cars
- Shop with books and souvenirs for all ages



Supporting learning and teaching

Curriculum for Excellence

A visit to Stirling Castle and Palace and use of any supporting material can help support the development of the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, as outlined below.

Develop successful learners by

- Exploring places, investigating artefacts and discussing the past
- Encouraging learners to think critically about the nature of historical evidence and arrive at their own conclusions
- Making links between current and previous knowledge
- Providing a real context for learning which helps to bring the past to life

Develop confident individuals by

- Providing opportunities for learners to share and present their learning to others using a range of media
- Giving learners opportunities to communicate their own views on historical events and issues raised during the visit

Develop responsible citizens by

- Encouraging learners to have greater understanding of and respect for their own historic and built environment
- Allowing learners to experience examples of the work of historians, archaeologists and conservationists and helping them to understand why this is important

Develop effective contributors by

- Encouraging learners to record and express their observations following on-site investigations
- Providing learners with the opportunity to develop life skills such as photography during their visit

Learning in Social Studies

Most teachers will be visiting Stirling Castle and Palace to support ongoing work in achieving outcomes in *Social Studies: People, Past Events and Societies* at Levels 1 and 2. A focused site visit will help learners work towards the following broad outcomes:

- *develop an understanding of how Scotland has developed as a nation, resulting in an appreciation of their local and national heritage within the global community* by considering the impact of the castle on their local environment
- *broaden their understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present* by finding out how people lived in the past in their local area through investigating places and researching objects
- *develop their understanding of their own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others* by comparing society in the past with how we live now
- *learn how to locate, explore and link periods, people and events in time and place* by focusing on a series of events which took place in the past
- *learn how to locate, explore and link features and places locally and further afield* by using maps to plot the location of a castle, and considering the reason for its location
- *establish firm foundations for lifelong learning and for further specialised study and careers* by developing life skills such as photography and understanding more about jobs in conservation and heritage



Learners proudly show off helmets they made themselves.



Interdisciplinary learning

Curriculum for Excellence actively promotes learning beyond subject boundaries. A site visit offers obvious learning opportunities across many curricular areas in addition to Social Studies. Key areas are:

- **Literacy**

Activities on-site will promote listening and talking in groups. There are opportunities for reading as learners research the society and events of the time and for producing functional, personal and imaginative writing for a range of audiences.

- **Numeracy**

Learners will have authentic, contextualised opportunities to develop skills and confidence in numeracy. A visit provides opportunities to count, estimate, measure and plot; to collect, handle and present data.



Learners admire the intricate hammerbeam roof of the Great Hall. The roof was built without using a single nail.

- **Using ICT to promote learning**

This resource provides opportunities for utilising technology to motivate and challenge learners. Key examples are:

- Learners can become familiar with how to use database websites such as www.scran.ac.uk to stimulate questioning and provide background information before and after a visit.
- Learners can photograph the site using digital cameras. At a lower level, these can be used to design postcards which can be sold as part of an enterprise project. At a higher level, these can be developed into a PowerPoint-type presentation about their visit or as evidence to support their research findings. Learners can learn how to embed photographs within documents as part of a school newsletter, or on a school website. They can also use the photographs to create their own guide to the site.
- Learners can storyboard, script and film, or audio-record their own responses to events which took place at the site, or recreate the events.

- **Expressive Arts**

Many learners have strong reactions to historic sites, which may be expressed and explored through art and design, music, dance, or drama. The Stirling Heads Gallery will stimulate work on fashion and design. Some schools may use their visit as a springboard for exploring traditional Gaelic and Scots music.



Two heads are better than one when trying to solve design problems.



Integrating a visit with classroom studies

Educational visits have greatest value if they are built into the original planning of the area of study. We recommend you plan to visit Stirling Castle and Palace in the middle of your programme of work, so that learners are familiar with some of the subject material and so can make the most of what they encounter on-site. Some suggestions for general pre-visit, on-site and post-visit activities are given below.

General pre-visit activities

Roles of a castle

Discuss with learners how a castle in the old days had many roles – home for the noble and powerful, defensive fort, place where important events took place, and military base.

Strategic location

Look at maps to help learners understand why Stirling Castle was so important: it was situated strategically between the Highlands and the Lowlands.

Involvement in booking and planning

Visit Stirling Castle website www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk for information about events or activities taking place. It can be motivating to involve learners in the booking and planning process.

Familiarisation with layout

Let learners explore the interactive map on the Stirling Castle website www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk in order to familiarise themselves with the castle layout. Perhaps some learners could become the class 'experts' on particular parts of the castle.

Terminology

Help learners to become familiar with some of the terminology of a castle to assist discussion on-site. Words relevant to Stirling Castle and Palace include: *battlement, cannon, chapel, drawbridge, dungeon, earthworks, gatehouse, great hall, guard hall, hammerbeam roof, inner close, machicolation, mangonel, moat, outer close, portcullis, postern, siege engine, siege tower, trebuchet, vault, yett.*

Learners can collate these words into a class dictionary and add to it after the visit.

Class timeline

Many learners struggle with the idea that dates which start 15– are in fact in the 16th century. Help learners develop a sense of time by constructing a class timeline with them. This can be a paper strip stuck to the wall, or a line hung across the room onto which events and dates can be pegged or taped. Mark this out with the learners, counting back the centuries or decades. Learners can add events to the line as your class work progresses.

Individual research

Whatever your chosen study area, it is worth handing over some individual areas of research to learners. Let them choose an area of study from a list of suggestions (for example, cooking at Stirling, defences at Stirling, games and relaxation, how the royals lived, how servants lived). In pairs or small groups, get them to come up with a few key questions on this subject. During their visit, they should look out for evidence to supply answers to these questions – evidence from the built environment, from objects in cases, or from display panels.



At Stirling storytelling puppets are a popular way to engage learners' attention.



General on-site activities

A site visit should be seen primarily as an opportunity for learners to have first-hand experience of a historic environment and to gather and observe historical evidence. To enable learners to do this, this resource offers three suggested tours:

- **Tour 1: Attackers and defenders** focuses on Stirling Castle as a defensive stronghold.
- **Tour 2: The Wars of Independence** focuses on the role of Stirling Castle in the early 14th century.
- **Tour 3: Palace for the Stewart monarchs** focuses on the Palace and Great Hall, and the lives of James IV, James V and Mary of Guise, and Mary Queen of Scots.

Each tour is designed to focus learners' attention on selected aspects of the built and recreated environment in order to enable them to draw conclusions from the physical evidence they can see around them. The tours focus on looking, discussing and thinking, rather than on writing or reading.

Curriculum for Excellence expects learners to be offered opportunities for personalisation and choice in their learning. We therefore recommend that these tours are not seen as an end in themselves, but as a resource on which learners draw in order to progress their own projects. Ideally, learners should arrive at Stirling Castle and Palace with their own 'research mission'. So, for example, learners who take part in Tour 1: Attackers and defenders will gather information to contribute to their group's PowerPoint presentation on 'How to Attack a Castle'. Learners who experience Tour 3: Palace for the Stewart monarchs will gather information to add to their own classroom work on fashion at the court.

Learners can record relevant evidence by:

- taking notes
- sketching
- taking photographs or filming a short movie
- recording oral impressions
- measuring

General post-visit activities

Make time to allow learners to talk generally about their visit and to find out what they thought. Look at photographs together to remind learners of what they saw and give them the chance to share information.

Some overall approaches which offer opportunities for interdisciplinary learning include:

- preparing a guidebook or leaflet for visitors to the castle and palace
- creating a slide show about their visit, with audio commentary
- enacting drama sketches showing events in the castle and palace
- staging a royal banquet, with menus and entertainment



Learners in period costume enact a medieval scene.



Specific classroom activities

Tour 1: Attackers and defenders

Before your visit

Help learners become familiar with some of the medieval methods of warfare. Some castles were lucky never to experience siege; others were besieged but never faced siege engines, the attackers gaining victory by starving, bribing, or tricking the castle's defenders into submission. But some castles were taken using siege engines, trebuchets, battering rams, siege towers, and later by cannon. Help learners to see how castles were constructed in response to these weapons.

Show learners pictures of castles and ask them why castles were built the way they were. Look out for: location, usually on a high point for defensive purposes; moats or dry ditches; thickness and height of walls; drawbridges, yetts and portcullises to defend the entrance; notched battlements behind which defenders could stand; arrow slits; murder holes above doorways; machicolations – galleries projecting from the walls from which missiles could be dropped or fired easily.

Discuss what you could do to defend the castle against siege weapons or archers.

Ask learners to draw a 'perfect castle', with features designed to repel all kinds of attack.

After your visit

Discuss what learners found out about the defences of Stirling Castle and Palace. Copy the plan of the castle on page 19 and ask them to annotate it highlighting the castle's defensive features.

Using this plan, get learners to write a report from the point of view of an enemy spy, suggesting the best method of attacking the castle, or to write an imaginative account of an attack on the castle, either from the attackers' or the defenders' point of view.

Using construction kits or recycled materials, learners can build a castle which is well defended. They can also construct model siege engines or mini-catapults and fire them at model brick walls. They can then discuss whose catapult works best and why. Designs for building a model siege engine can be found at www.mechanicals.co.uk/mechanical/pages/Treb-notes.htm



Learners are shown how a trebuchet works.

Tour 2: The Wars of Independence

Before your visit

If studying the Wars of Independence, or Wallace and Bruce, some preliminary work on the topic should be undertaken before visiting Stirling. Help learners become familiar with some of the key figures of the first phase of the wars: John Balliol; Edward I and Edward II of England; Robert the Bruce and William Wallace of Scotland. Key events can be marked on the class timeline.

Help learners to understand why Stirling was seen as so important strategically and therefore why it was worth fighting over on so many occasions. Look at its location on a map – even one from today. Stirling is located between the Highlands and the Lowlands and controls access to the River Forth. Discuss why this was important. Look at its location in relation to other key places of the time – Edinburgh, Dunfermline, Scone, and St Andrews.

After your visit

From the castle it is possible to see the sites of the Battle of Stirling Bridge (1297) and the Battle of Bannockburn (1314). Learners can write accounts of these battles from the point of view of the inmates of the castle, which was in English hands prior to both battles. Learners can also imagine they are someone who was living within the castle during the three-month siege of 1304 and write a diary of their experience.



Tour 3: Palace for the Stewart monarchs

Before your visit

Depending on your focus, carry out timeline activities as suggested in Tour 2. Learners can plot the major events of key Stewart monarchs on a class timeline: James IV's renovation of the castle to include the Great Hall; James V's construction of the Renaissance Palace; the coronation of the infant Mary Queen of Scots.

Stirling provides an opportunity for learners to explore different aspects of the life of the Stewart monarchs: the formal, constitutional life; the life of leisure – hunting in the forests around Stirling, dancing and music in the Great Hall; and the domestic life of cooking, dressing, and hygiene. Learners can research these elements so that the Palace makes more sense to them when they come to visit. They can highlight specific aspects they want to gather evidence for when on-site.

Alongside this, learners can research the multitude of servants who made the life of the royals possible. Learners can choose an aspect of royal life – for example, cooking, costume, music, housework – and find out as much as they can about the tasks of servants. Again, learners can target particular areas to research during their visit. There are good displays in the castle kitchens, and, on costume, in the interactive galleries.

The Stirling Castle website includes pages on the 'People of the Palace' – see www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk/home/experience/courtlife.htm. Learners can select one of these people and find out as much as they can about them and what their role was.

A key feature of the recreated Palace is the ceiling of the royal apartment decorated with the replica Stirling Heads. These are painted circular carvings made of oak, which feature famous kings and queens and people of the court. Thirty-four of the original Stirling Heads survive and are displayed in a special gallery in the Palace, together with interactives and information on the themes they represent. See pages 54–5 for more information about the Stirling Heads.

Introduce the Stirling Heads to learners, using the pages on the castle website www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk/home/experience/palaceproject/stirlingheadszoom.htm. Which people can they see? What do the images tell us about the people who lived at the time they were made?

After your visit

Split learners into two groups: servants and royals. After initial discussion and possibly role-play or drama work, learners can write or draw parallel accounts of the same day, as seen from the different viewpoints of royal and servant. Photographs taken on-site can be used as backdrops for artwork.

Learners who have researched the work of servants can devise a 'Housekeeper's Guide' to running Stirling Castle and Palace.

If you visited the Tapestry Studio to watch the weavers working on the new tapestries, this can be a stimulus for artwork. A large-scale tapestry takes a long time to produce, but learners can create a similar effect by using collage. Perhaps this could be based on an incident in the reign of a Stewart monarch, or on a traditional ballad.

There are examples throughout the castle of elaborate intertwined initials and dates of certain kings and queens. Learners can create their own versions using their initials and birth dates.

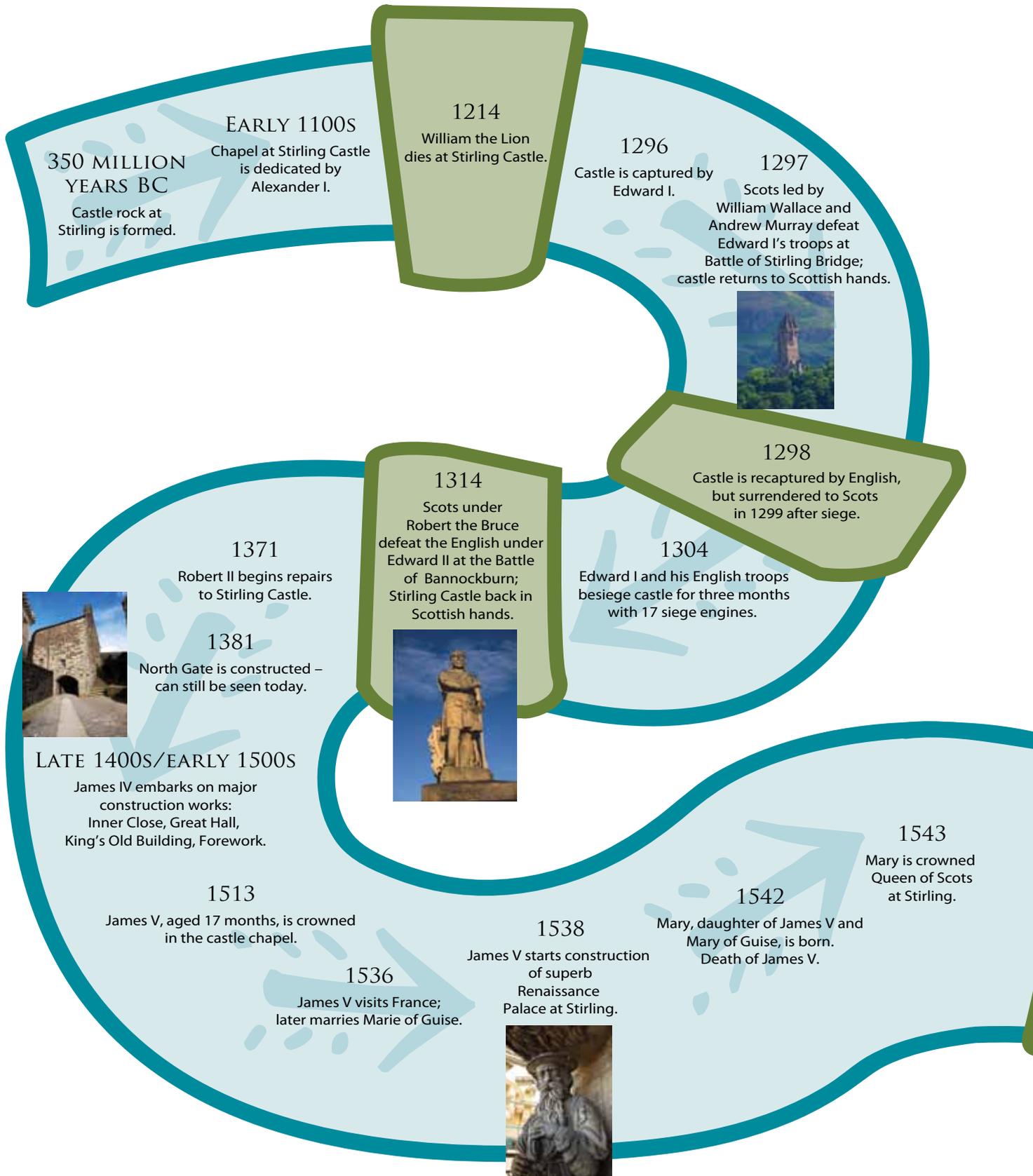
Learners can decorate the ceiling of their classroom in the style of the Stirling Heads. They can design and paint portraits of themselves wearing costume of the period, based on evidence collected from the real Stirling Heads.



The Stirling Heads include four portraits of Hercules. This is one of them.



Timeline: the story of Stirling Castle and Palace





1999

Great Hall is reopened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II after major restoration work.

2001

Work begins on the *Hunt of the Unicorn* tapestries.



2011

Palace reopens to the public after £12 million refit.

1964

Last soldiers leave Stirling Castle.

1849

Queen Victoria visits Stirling Castle.

LATE 1700S

Castle accommodation is remodelled as barracks.

1746

Jacobites under Prince Charles Edward Stuart besiege castle unsuccessfully.

EARLY 1700S

Castle defences are strengthened against feared Jacobite attack.

1681

Future King James VII (of Scotland) and II (of Ireland and England) visits Stirling Castle.

1566

James VI is baptised at Stirling.

1594

Chapel is rebuilt for baptism of James VI's first son, Henry.



1603

Union of the Crowns: James VI becomes ruler of both Scotland and England and moves to England.

1651

Castle is besieged and taken by Cromwell's troops on behalf of English parliamentary army.



Stirling Castle and Palace: a historical overview

The first castles

The most striking feature of Stirling Castle is its location. The crag on which the castle perches is volcanic rock formed more than 350 million years ago, then sculpted into its present form by retreating glaciers at the end of the Ice Age.

As Scotland became populated, it became clear that the rock overlooked an important natural crossroads. Travellers heading north to the Highlands or south to the Lowlands had to walk in its shadow in order to avoid ascending the Ochil or Touch Hills to the east and west. The River Forth could be crossed easily at this point too. The rock was an obvious place to build a look-out point, a stronghold, a fort, or a castle.

The earliest fort here probably dates back to around 1,000 BC, though little evidence remains. When Agricola, leader of the Roman army, invaded Scotland around AD 80, he is said to have found a hill fort here, established by a local tribe. Tradition says that he built up this stronghold, recognising its strategic importance.

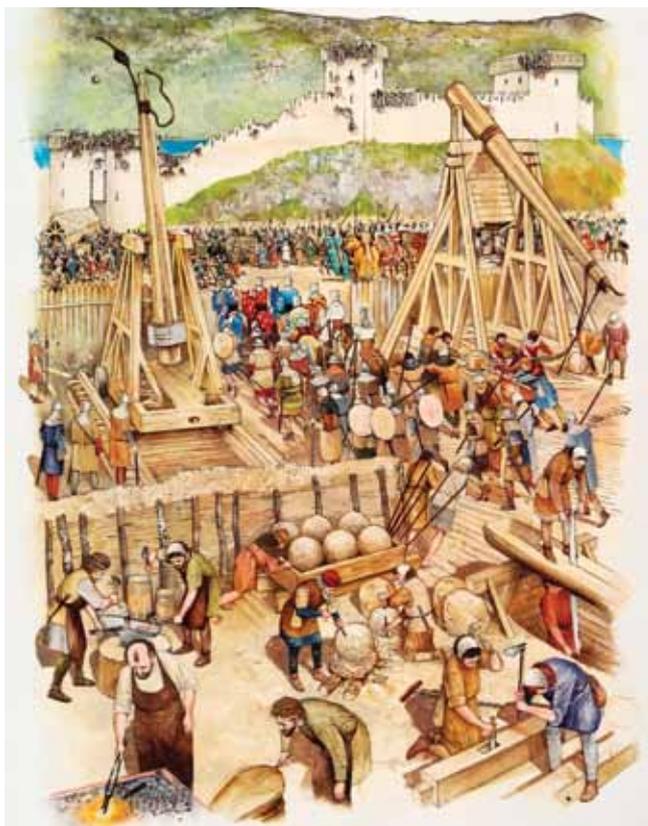
By 1110, there was not only a castle on the rock, but one with royal connections. King Alexander I is on record as dedicating a chapel within a castle at Stirling. The castle at this point was probably spread over three levels, with a summit site and an upper and a lower courtyard, as can still be seen today. The buildings would mostly have been built of timber, protected by ramparts of earth, rock and turf and would have included royal accommodation and space for government.

The castle and the Wars of Independence

The growing importance of the castle by the end of the 13th century meant that it was at the centre of much of the action in the decades of intermittent warfare between Scotland and England known as the Wars of Independence. In 1296, Edward I, 'Hammer of the Scots', captured Stirling when he invaded Scotland. Over the next 50 years the castle was besieged eight times as England and Scotland fought to possess this key stronghold. In fact, between 1296 and 1342 it spent more time in English hands than in Scots'.



Stirling Castle occupies an excellent defensive position – high up, with good views all around.



A hive of activity as attackers prepare to lay siege to Stirling Castle

During this time, Stirling was the scene of several Scottish victories, even though these triumphs were often not long-lasting. In 1297, the army of William Wallace overthrew the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge and briefly regained the castle.

In 1304, Stirling Castle was besieged for three months by the English under Edward I, with 17 great siege engines. So keen was Edward to test his favourite trebuchet, the 'war wolf', that he would not allow the garrison to surrender until he had tried it out.

The finest moment for the Scots came in 1314 with the Battle of Bannockburn, a showdown which forced the English to surrender Stirling Castle to the Scots under King Robert 'the Bruce'. The Scottish victory returned strategic control of Scotland to King Robert.

But, even then, Stirling's future was not secure. Possession was no guarantee of safety to the building: after regaining the castle, King Robert ordered it to be rendered 'indefensible' to make it less attractive and so less likely to fall back into enemy hands.



An artist's impression of the closing stages of the three-month siege of 1304

In 1336, however, the castle was taken by the English again, and was not won back by the Scots until 1342, after a siege lasting six months. During the English occupation, however, many repairs were carried out on the castle to make it habitable once again.

By the early 14th century, the defensive 'curtain' walls, the gatehouses and some internal buildings were built of stone, but other buildings were built of wood or wattle and daub. These were powerless to withstand the pounding of mighty siege engines: trebuchets or catapults, mangonels, and battering rams.

Sieges extracted a terrible price, both on those under siege and also on the castle. Some sieges lasted several months and the garrison defending the castle would have started to suffer from food and water shortages as the castle began to be destroyed around them. Nine skeletons, unearthed during recent renovations, may have been siege victims. You can find out more about these skeletons in the Castle Exhibition.

From the middle of the 14th century, the political situation in Scotland stabilised. The castle remained in Scottish hands and began to develop its role at the heart of the nation's affairs.



Renaissance palace for the Stewart monarchs

In 1371, Robert 'the Steward' became King Robert II, establishing the Stewart dynasty. After repairs and building works, Stirling Castle became a favoured royal residence.

James III (1460–1488) carried out further building works which may have included laying out the Great Hall, but it was not until James IV (1488–1513) came to the throne that Stirling Castle entered a new phase.

Eager to match up to fellow European monarchs, he carried out major building works necessary to establish a venue for the Stewart court. He rebuilt and remodelled the Forework, and built his own residence (the King's Old Building), the Chapel Royal and, most significantly, the Great Hall.

His son, James V (1528–1542), took castle building projects to a new level. In 1538, inspired by time spent in France, and with wealth accumulated from two marriages, he embarked on creating at Stirling a magnificent palace appropriate for his second wife, the sophisticated French Mary of Guise.

He employed the most skilled craftspeople to create the suite of rooms in the palace, designed not only to impress by their art, dazzling beauty and architecture, but also to restrict access to the monarch, creating a sense of mystique. Those wishing to meet with the king or queen had to progress through a series of royal apartments before finally being granted – or denied – an audience.

Unknown, James IV, Scottish National Portrait Gallery



James IV created much of the castle as we see it today.

Unknown, James V, Scottish National Portrait Gallery



James V built a magnificent palace at Stirling in order to impress his French wife, Mary of Guise.



This is how the King's Old Building may have looked around 1500, when it housed the royal apartments of James IV.

Throughout the palace, James lost no opportunity to 'brand' himself as a new kind of monarch, using symbolism from the Bible and classical mythology to boost and establish his image. Statues on the outside of the palace on the walls facing into the Inner Close proclaimed him as a new kind of ruler. A statue of Venus promises peace, Saturn a golden age of plenty, while statues of musicians promise a time of harmony and pleasure. Above, a row of cherubs offers protection. Statues on the outward-facing south wall present a menacing front: soldiers with crossbows, the devil, and figures with shields. These messages in stone would have been clear to all who saw them at the time.

Within the palace rich tapestries hung on the walls and at least one ceiling was adorned with the carved roundels known as the Stirling Heads (see pages 54–5). As well as providing a magnificent decoration on the ceiling of the King's Inner Hall, over 40 carved 'heads' communicated messages about the king: he had the right to rule, had friends in high places, was inspired by classical values, and honoured certain significant contemporaries. While people waited to speak to the king, the Heads provided them with a visual reminder of the king's pedigree, achievements and connections, almost like a visual CV. This is the palace which has been recreated today using, just as James V did, the most skilled craftspeople available.



Mary Queen of Scots

Sadly, James had little time to enjoy the new palace. He died in 1542 before it was completed, leaving his widow, Mary of Guise, and their six-day-old daughter, the future Mary Queen of Scots. In the 1540s, Stirling became the main residence of Mary of Guise and Mary, the infant queen, who was crowned in 1543 in the Chapel Royal. Because Mary was still a young child, the Earl of Arran was appointed Regent to rule on her behalf.

Mary of Guise protected the interests of her daughter in the face of pressure from the earl, but by 1547 the situation had become too dangerous. Mary was sent to France for safety, while her mother continued to try to build support in Scotland. Mary of Guise ruled as Regent herself from 1554 until her death in 1560.

On her mother's death, Mary Queen of Scots, already a widow at 18, returned from France. While she had been abroad, Scotland had become a Protestant nation, and Mary's Catholicism brought her into conflict with many significant leaders, including the Protestant John Knox.



Arnold Bronckorst, James VI and I (as a boy), Scottish National Portrait Gallery

James VI and I as a young boy

Mary's son, the future James VI, was baptised in the Chapel Royal at Stirling, which was still fitted out for Catholic worship. The christening was celebrated with a mock siege and Scotland's first-ever firework display, festivities designed to demonstrate a stable Stewart dynasty at a time of religious upheaval in Scotland.

However, the Stewarts were not to be at Stirling for much longer. Following Mary's enforced abdication and imprisonment, her infant son James became king in 1567. The two never met again. James spent his childhood at Stirling and was educated in the Prince's Tower of the Palace.

James's son Henry was also baptised at Stirling, in a brand-new chapel built in 1594. The christening celebrations featured an enormous model ship bearing the fish course. Henry died young, aged only 18.

In 1603, James became king of England as well as Scotland. He headed south, returning just once to visit. From then on royal visits to Stirling were only ever brief.



The banquet in the Great Hall to celebrate the christening of James VI's son Henry featured a huge model ship carrying the fish course.

The decline of the castle

James' son, Charles I (1600–1649), visited the castle briefly in 1633. Various parts of the Palace were redecorated in his honour, but it was never again a royal home. In 1651, two years after the execution of Charles, Stirling Castle became a military target once more. It was attacked and taken by the English parliamentary army under General Monck. The Forework still bears the scars of the attacks.

The end of the 17th century and start of the 18th century saw escalating dispute relating to the Stewart monarchs' right to rule. Charles I's son, James VII/II, was deposed, exiled and replaced as monarch by his Protestant daughter, Mary and her husband, William of Orange.

The supporters of the exiled James became known as Jacobites after the Latin word for James – *Jacobus*. The Jacobite threat to the stability of the country was real, and the castle was strengthened with new artillery positions constructed on its east side, overlooking today's Esplanade. In 1746, Charles Edward Stuart, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie', and his Jacobite army made an attempt to besiege the castle, but were easily defeated, just months before their ultimate defeat at Culloden.

From this time on, the castle declined in importance. The Palace gradually fell into disrepair; the ceiling bearing the Stirling Heads collapsed in 1777. The castle was used intermittently as a state prison, and then as a military base. The Great Hall was subdivided into three floors to create barrack accommodation around 1800. Later in the 19th century the castle became the base of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

During the 19th century, a growing appreciation of the architectural heritage of the castle complex developed. Queen Victoria visited it – and approved – in 1849, and, in 1906, King Edward VII oversaw the transfer of the castle from the War Office to the Office of Works – the forerunner of today's Historic Scotland. In 1964, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders moved out, signalling an end to the castle's centuries of military significance.



Barrack accommodation in the Great Hall at Stirling when the castle was used as a military base



The castle in modern times

Today Stirling Castle and Palace are primarily visitor attractions, places for learning, for recreation – and as a centre for the promotion of traditional skills and crafts. A landmark event was the opening of the restored Great Hall in 1999, a project which took over 30 years to complete. This project included restoring the hammerbeam roof and removing additions, and rendering and limewashing the external walls to their original yellow, known as ‘king’s gold’.

After years of research by archaeologists and historians, the ambitious and exciting Stirling Palace project has returned the six royal ‘apartments’ of the

Palace to how they may have looked in the 1540s. The apartments were painstakingly recreated by skilled traditional builders and craftsmen and women. Many fascinating discoveries were made in the course of the work. Among these was the discovery of the remains of several medieval skeletons, including a knight who may have been killed in battle. You can find more about these discoveries and others in the Castle Exhibition, or on the Stirling Castle website www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk.

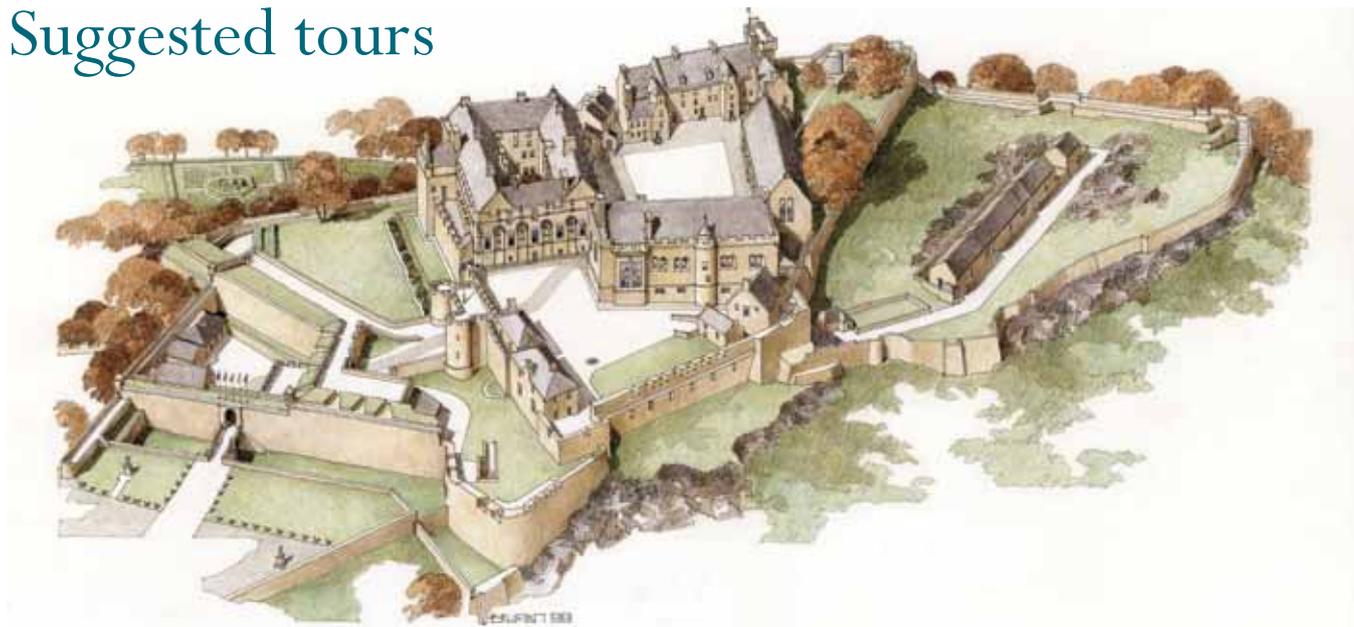
The Stirling Palace project cost £12 million to complete, and is now one of Scotland’s most remarkable visitor attractions.



A craftsman recreates the original decoration of one of the royal apartments in the Palace.



Suggested tours



About the tours

We have devised three themed teacher-led tours of Stirling Castle and Palace:

- **Tour 1: Attackers and defenders** focuses on Stirling Castle as a defensive stronghold.
- **Tour 2: The Wars of Independence** focuses on the role of Stirling Castle in the early 14th century.
- **Tour 3: Palace for the Stewart monarchs** focuses on the Palace and Great Hall, and the lives of James IV, James V and Mary of Guise, and Mary Queen of Scots.

Each tour takes in key locations around the castle and palace and lasts around 60–90 minutes.



A model of the castle is a focal point in the Castle Exhibition.

Managing your tour

If your class is small, you could take them all at the same time round the tour of your choice. With a class of more than 12, we recommend you split the class into smaller groups, each with an adult leader.

Alternatively you could split your class into three groups according to which tour learners are most interested in taking. Each group, with an adult leader, could take a different tour route.

Give each adult leader a copy of the relevant tour notes and map.

The tour notes provide information about each location and discussion points.

The Castle Exhibition

If time allows, either before or after your chosen tour, the Castle Exhibition, located in rooms near the Queen Anne Garden, is well worth a visit. Here you will find a model of the castle and displays relating to siege techniques, the Wars of Independence, the medieval skeletons found at the castle, and a host of other interesting things.



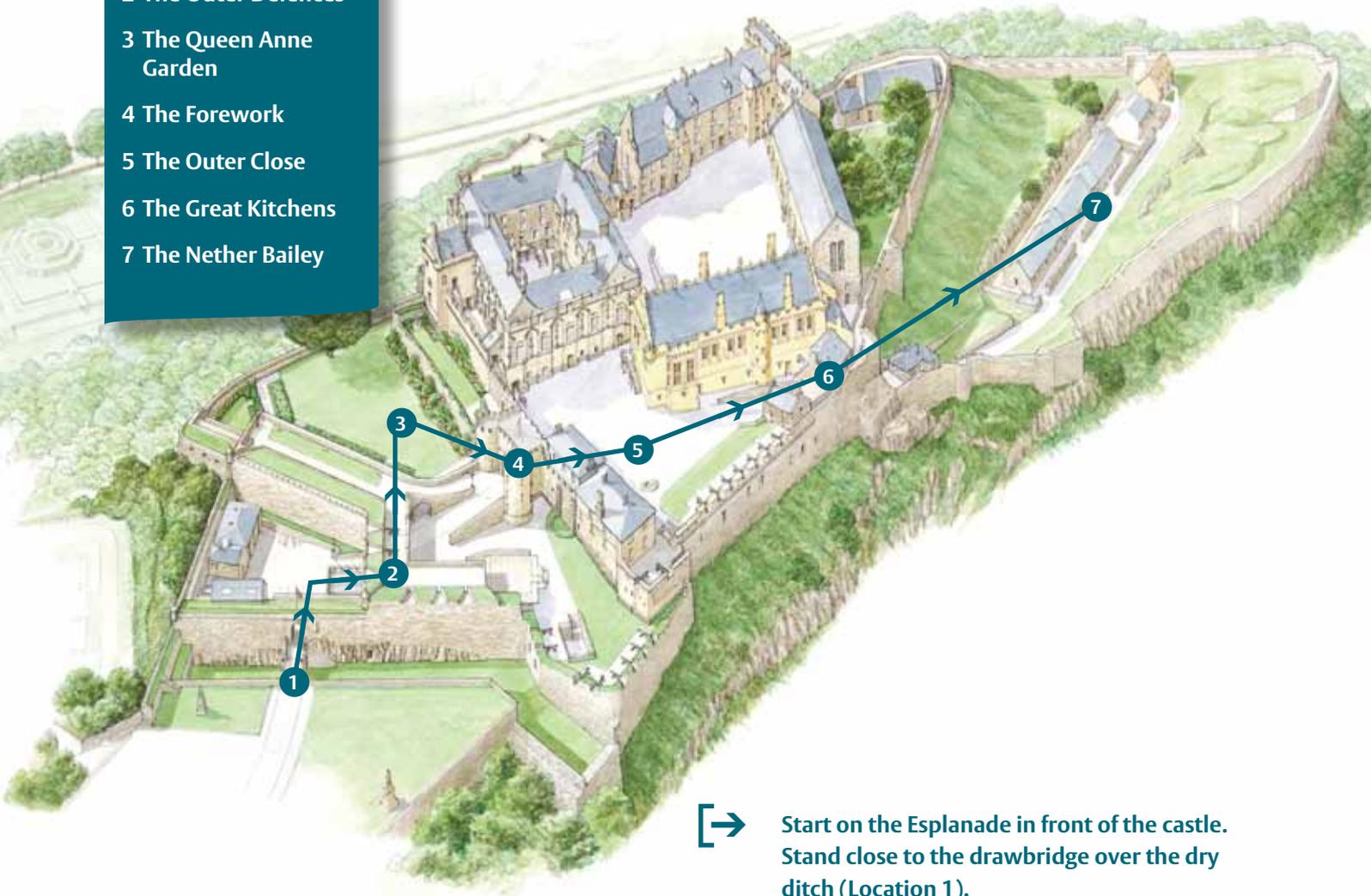
Tour 1: Attackers and defenders

Key locations

Tour 1 takes in seven locations:

- 1 The Esplanade
- 2 The Outer Defences
- 3 The Queen Anne Garden
- 4 The Forework
- 5 The Outer Close
- 6 The Great Kitchens
- 7 The Nether Bailey

This tour explores the defences of Stirling Castle through the ages. It looks at how castles were built and adapted in response to the types of weapons in use at the time. Learners will find out about medieval warfare and siege strategies.



Start on the Esplanade in front of the castle. Stand close to the drawbridge over the dry ditch (Location 1).



The drawbridge leading to the entrance to the castle

Location 1: The Esplanade

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

There has been a castle at Stirling for a long time – probably around a thousand years. The first castle was probably built of wood, and there’s nothing left of it today.

The castle we see now is a mixture of lots of different castles, built over the years by different people. Most of what we see from here was built in the 1700s and 1800s. But as we go in, we’ll see parts built about 500 years ago by King James IV and his son, King James V. The further into the castle we go, the further back in time we travel.

Stirling Castle had many uses. It was a home for the royal family, and place for Parliament to meet. It was also a base for soldiers. It was an important stronghold and so was often attacked. The builders had to find ways to defend it and make it strong.

Today we will investigate how the castle was built to keep enemies out. We’re also going to think about what it was like to live in the castle as a defending soldier.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look around you. Why is this a good place for a castle?	High up, good views all around, steep rocks are a natural defence.
Where we are standing now there is a long flat slope. Why do you think they didn’t build on this part of the rock?	Defenders wanted to leave an open area in front of the castle so that the enemy could not get too close without being spotted.
The castle is protected in lots of different ways. How many can you see?	High stone walls, dry ditch, cannons on top of the wall to the right of the entrance gate
Why do you think there is so much protection on this side?	This side isn’t protected by steep rocks.
Why was there a ditch here? If there was a battle going on, would we be able to stand on the bridge?	To make it harder for attackers to get in. No – The drawbridge would be pulled up to make it hard to get into the castle.

→ Cross the bridge and go through the gateway into the first courtyard (Guardroom Square). Follow the path through the tunnel – the Inner Gate. Walk past an arch on the left, then before the next gateway, turn sharp left and go up a slope to reach the earthwork walls. Stand by the two cannons (Location 2).



Cannons on the Outer Defences protected the castle from attackers.

Location 2: The Outer Defences

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This wall around the castle was built nearly 300 years ago. By this time attackers were using cannons to try to smash down castle walls and force their way in.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What direction are the cannons pointing?	Straight down the hill
Why do you think this is?	To fight off attackers
Is there anything to protect the people who fired the cannons?	Yes – The walls are slanted to protect them.
What do you think it would be like to try to load and fire a cannonball from one of these cannons?	Very heavy to get the cannonball in place; probably quite dangerous as they would have used gunpowder to fire the cannonball.
There are two cannons here now. How many more cannons is there space for up here?	Four more

➔ Follow the wall to the right to the 'pepperpot' turret at the far corner.



From a 'pepperpot' turret like this, a guard could see in every direction.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at the corners of the walls. Can you see some little turrets? They are known as 'pepperpots'. How many can you see?	Three
What do you think they were for?	To protect the guards if they needed to fire at attackers
Why do you think they are in this position?	So that the guards could see in every direction along the walls
Look at the wall to the left. How thick do you think it is?	2–3 metres thick
Why do you think it was so thick?	To make it harder to break down
Do you think it is solid stone? Why/why not?	No. Walls are built of earth to stop cannon balls getting any further – the earth would slow them down.
Do you think it was ever attacked?	No signs of any damage to the walls

➔ Turn sharp left down steep steps immediately below the pepperpot turret to come out in the Queen Anne Garden (Location 3).



Discussion points

Why do you think sieges were a popular way of attacking a castle?

- If you won the siege and took the castle, it wouldn't be damaged, so you could use it without having to repair it.
- Less risky than attacking the castle directly.
- Fewer of your soldiers would be killed.

Location 3: The Queen Anne Garden

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

In the old days, if people wanted to take a castle, they would set up camp around it. They would try to stop anybody getting in or out and stop food getting in. This was called a **siege**. Sometimes sieges went on for months until the people in the castle were dying of hunger and gave in, or they ran out of ammunition. Stirling Castle was besieged several times. One siege in 1304 lasted from April to July! Think how hungry the people inside must have been.

If enemies didn't have time for a long siege, they would try to force a way in. Ask your group: 'Can you think of how you would do it?'

- You could use a kind of giant catapult, called a **trebuchet**, which fired huge stone balls. The balls went very high so this weapon was good for smashing up the roofs and frightening the people inside.
- You could also use a **battering ram**, which was a kind of giant, solid pole, which could be used for bashing through a gate.
- You could try to get in by climbing over the walls using a kind of portable set of ladders called a **siege tower**.
- In later years you could use a **cannon** which fired stone balls. Sometimes the balls were heated so that they would set fire to whatever they landed on.
- Sometimes people tried to dig tunnels and burrow underneath the walls of a castle – but the rock is too solid here.



The Queen Anne Garden was once used as a bowling green.



Did you know?

Besiegers didn't always fire stones from their siege engines. Sometimes they fired dung or dead animals, to spread disease – or even the heads of enemies!

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look over the wall at the edge. Which of the weapons would have been most useful if you wanted to attack from this side – trebuchet (catapult), siege tower, battering ram, or cannon?	Probably the trebuchet and then later the cannon – could fire high The battering ram and siege tower would not have been useful from this side, because the castle is too high.
Look around the garden. Can you see any stone balls anywhere? Where do you think they came from?	Decoration along the top of the walls Balls were fired at the castle, probably from a trebuchet.
Look up at the high tower. This is part of the Palace. It's called the Prince's Tower. Can you see anything on the Palace which shows how it was defended?	Battlements with 'up and down' defences to protect defenders standing on the walls with guns or bows and arrows
Do you think this part of the Palace was ever attacked?	Doesn't look like it – the walls don't look damaged at all.
How do you think the defenders inside the castle could defend themselves against a siege?	By making sure they kept plenty of food and ammunition inside the castle By attacking the siege weapons from above by firing stone balls at them By firing at the attackers directly with bows and arrows or later with guns

Later on this area was used by the kings and queens as a place for relaxing and for playing games such as bowls or even football.

➔ Go through the archway at the end of the garden then turn left. Stand by the main entrance gate (Location 4).



The Forework seen from the Outer Defences

Location 4: The Forework

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This part of the castle is called the Forework. It used to be the main entrance to the castle. The gatehouse we see now was part of a wall which stretched all round the castle. The towers on either side of the gate used to be twice the height they are now. The interpretation panel to the right of the gate shows what the entrance might have looked like.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at the round towers. Can you see bullet marks on the walls? These are from when the castle was attacked in 1651. How close do you think the attackers must have been then?	Fairly obvious marks Quite close
Stand just inside the gateway. Look up. Can you see a slit in the stone above you? What do you think this was for? Can you see a gate a bit like a portcullis anywhere around you? Why do you think there are three entrance ways here?	Used to be where a portcullis – a metal gate – could slide up or down In gateway to left Two for pedestrians and a wider one for carts with supplies or for marching troops
If you were coming up to this gate, there would be guards and sentries watching you. Find three places where they might stand. What evidence can you find to show you that these guards might have weapons?	On the battlements, in the towers on either side, in windows above the side gates Narrow slits in side towers, for use by people firing weapons

➔ Go into the small room in the tower on the right.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What do you think this room was used for? How can you tell?	Guard room – slits for shooting out of It's the obvious place!
It had another use too. Look for two more clues. Don't forget to look down!	There used to be a dungeon below – clues are a trapdoor in the ground, and a large bolted door.

➔ Go through the gate and stand inside the courtyard area (Location 5).



The archway that connects the Outer Close to the Inner Close

Location 5: The Outer Close

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

We are now inside the castle walls. To the left you can see the Palace buildings, where the king or queen and their family would have lived. The yellowish building is the Great Hall, where there would have been feasts and parties, and where the Scottish Parliament used to meet sometimes. All the battlements and defences we have been looking at were to keep Scotland's leaders safe.



On the south side of the Outer Close you can see the Main Guard House (left), built in the late 18th century, and the Fort Major's House (right), built soon afterwards.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Can you find the old well in the ground?	To the right, with a grille over it, just before the row of cannons
Why was it important to have a well inside the castle walls?	Water supply needed inside in case of siege
What did they use the water for?	The same things as today – washing, cleaning, cooking, drinking
Look over the wall by the cannons. Can you see the river and the bridge? Why was the river specially important in the old days?	The river was used as a transport route – easier to carry heavy things by boat. Also important as a barrier – the river would slow down an army trying to invade.
Look at the cannons. Where are they all pointing?	Towards the river, town and bridge
Why are there are so many here?	To protect the bridge

➔ Go down the slope and follow the signs to the Great Kitchens (Location 6).



This figure can be seen in the reconstructed interior of the Great Kitchens.

Location 6: The Great Kitchens

The Great Kitchens area starts with a short video about medieval food and cooking. You can decide whether you want your class to watch this.

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This is what the old castle kitchens might have looked like. Here is where food for the kings, queens and their important guests was prepared. If you were a soldier defending the castle, you would not have eaten food as special as some of this. But some of your food would have been the same. As you go round, try to get some idea of what a soldier might have eaten.

There are four parts to the kitchen: the cooking area, preparation area, bakehouse, and area for putting completed dishes. As you look around, think about the food and tools you can see and the different jobs being done.

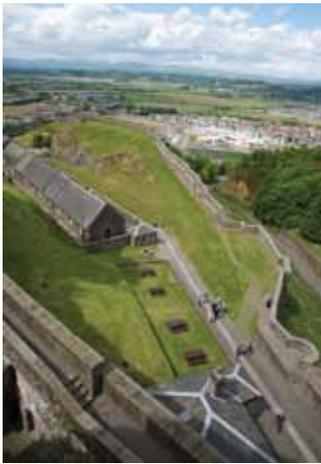
Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What food can you see that is the same as food we have today?	Same: many fruits and vegetables, meat, seafood, bread, eggs
What foods are completely different?	Different: not many people eat swans, rabbits, peacocks, or little birds today.
Most of the food you can see here would be grown in Scotland. What can you see that would be grown locally?	Most food in the kitchens is local.
Some food came from overseas. Can you find any examples?	Food from overseas: some fruits (for example, figs, peaches)
How is this kitchen the same as kitchens today?	Same: tables for preparing food, place for cooking food, sharp knives
How is it different?	Different: no running water, candles instead of electric light, no fridges
How many different jobs can you see being done in these kitchens?	Washing up, cooking by fire, carrying food, rolling pastry, serving food, pounding spices, peeling cabbages, baking, etc
Are any jobs done by children?	Young boy is working by the fire; another boy has dropped the milk.
What things might a poor soldier eat?	Oatcakes, soup, occasional meat

Did you know?

When the royal court moved from Linlithgow to Stirling in 1543, it took 19 carts to move the contents of the royal larder and all the cooking and baking equipment.



Come out of the Great Kitchens. Continue down the slope through the North Gate into the Nether Bailey (Location 7).



The Nether Bailey was a service area for the castle.

Discussion points

As you leave the castle, encourage your group to discuss what they have learned:

- What have we found out about how people used to attack castles in the past?
- What have we found out about how Stirling Castle was defended?
- What have we found out about how people used to live?

Location 7: The Nether Bailey

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

Most castles had two entrances: a main entrance at the front for grand visitors to use, and a back entrance, called a **postern**, where servants and deliveries came in. This gateway is the oldest entrance to the castle. See how thick the walls are!

This courtyard area is called the Nether Bailey. Here there were stables, food stores, a blacksmith's and other workshops, as well as the royal dog kennels. Later on it was used as an area for punishing soldiers. It was also where gunpowder was kept.

You can see there is a wall all around this area. Ask your group: 'What do you think the wall was used for?' It was probably used more for patrolling and keeping watch than for seriously keeping people out.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Compared to the rest of the castle, this part is not very strongly defended. Why do you think this is?	Strong natural defences: steep rocks all around – very hard for anyone to get close



If learners wish to walk around the walls, please ensure that they walk, rather than run, and supervise them closely at all times.



If you have time, it is well worth dropping in on the wonderful Tapestry Studio in this area, where weavers are recreating medieval tapestries.

Our tour is now finished. If you have time, learners may enjoy the following areas:

- The Great Hall
- The Chapel Royal and Inner Close
- The Palace: wonderfully restored royal apartments
- The Vaults: interactive exhibitions on court life, designed for children



Tour 2: The Wars of Independence

Key locations

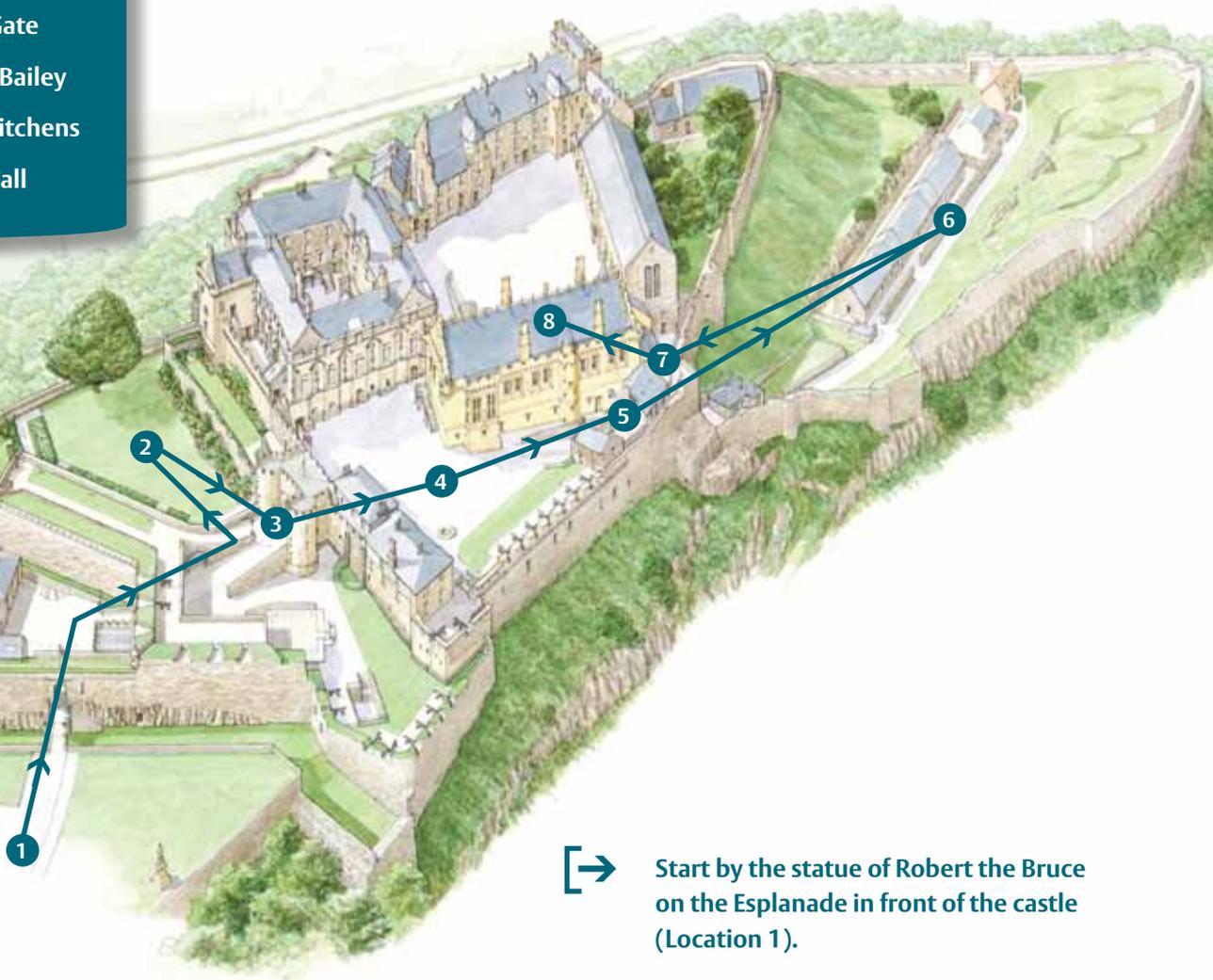
Tour 2 takes in eight locations:

- 1 The Esplanade
- 2 The Queen Anne Garden
- 3 The Forework
- 4 The Outer Close
- 5 The North Gate
- 6 The Nether Bailey
- 7 The Great Kitchens
- 8 The Great Hall

This tour explores Stirling Castle at the time of the Wars of Independence.

Although little remains of the castle from this time, it was central to much of the action and provides a good setting for discussion of events and of how castles were used in the medieval period.

Certain elements of the castle have been included even though they were built much later; what we see now are simply updated versions of what would have been there in the 1300s.



Start by the statue of Robert the Bruce on the Esplanade in front of the castle (Location 1).



The statue of Robert the Bruce on the Esplanade

Location 1: The Esplanade

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

About 700 years ago, Scotland and England were at war. King Edward I of England invaded Scotland to try to control the country. The Scots fought back. These wars, later called the Wars of Independence, lasted on and off for about 50 years.

Stirling Castle was an important royal castle. It was also in a powerful position. In the old days all the flat land around Stirling was a bog, which made it hard to cross. If you were in charge of Stirling Castle, you could control who headed north to the Highlands or south to the Lowlands. So the castle was often fought over. Sometimes the English were in control, and sometimes the Scots. It changed hands eight times in 50 years!

But the castle we see today was mostly built much later. The castle at the time of the Wars of Independence was built of wood as well as stone and was much smaller. Some parts have just rotted away and others were destroyed through fighting.

Even though there's nothing left of the castle from the time of the Wars of Independence, it is still a good place to find out about the wars and to investigate how castles were attacked and defended 700 years ago.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at where the castle is. Why do you think this is a good place for a castle?	Good position on top of the lump of rock – can see for miles around. Close to river – useful for transport Good location – can control Highlands and Lowlands.
Look at the statue of Robert the Bruce. What clues can you find that he is king?	Crown, royal lion on shield
What clues can you find that show how important he was to Scotland?	<i>Rampant</i> (standing) lion is symbol of Scottish royalty; carving of thistle.
Look at what he is wearing. What is he about to do?	About to head into battle
How is he ready to defend himself?	Big sword, chain mail on legs and arms, protective gloves
What do these things tell us about how battles were organised in those days?	Battles were fought at close contact – hand to hand with your enemy.
This statue was put up more than 500 years after the Battle of Bannockburn. Can we trust it to show us what Bruce looked like and what he carried in battle?	Unreliable source of evidence – though statue maker probably did some research to make it as accurate as possible.

Did you know?

When King Robert the Bruce of Scotland won back Stirling Castle from the English, he actually ordered his men to destroy it, so that there would be no point in the English attacking it again. Eventually, in more peaceful times, the Scottish kings and queens built the castle back up again.



Go over the bridge into the castle. Follow the path round through the first archway. Turn left under another arch into the Queen Anne Garden (Location 2).



The tranquil Queen Anne Garden may have been created as early as the 1400s as a place for the Stewarts to relax in.

Location 2: The Queen Anne Garden

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

At the time of the Wars of Independence, if people wanted to take a castle, they would set up camp around it. They would try to stop anybody getting in or out and stop food getting in. This was called a **siege**. Sometimes sieges went on for months until the people in the castle were dying of hunger, or they ran out of ammunition. Stirling Castle was besieged several times. In 1304, Edward I and his army besieged the castle from April to July! Think how hungry the people inside must have been.

If enemies didn't have time for a long siege, they would try to force a way in. Ask your group: 'What weapons could you use to do this?'

- You could use a kind of giant catapult, called a **trebuchet**, which fired huge stone balls. The balls went very high so this was good for smashing up the roofs and frightening the people inside.
- You could use a **battering ram**, which was a kind of giant, solid pole which could be used to bash through a gate.
- You could try to get in by climbing over the walls using a kind of portable set of ladders called a **siege tower**.
- In later years you could use a **cannon** which fired stone balls. Sometimes the balls were heated so that they would set fire to whatever they landed on.

Look south (to the left) over the end wall. The white pole sticking up far in the distance marks where the Battle of Bannockburn took place in 1314. At that time the English held the castle. Robert the Bruce and his men won back the castle for Scotland.

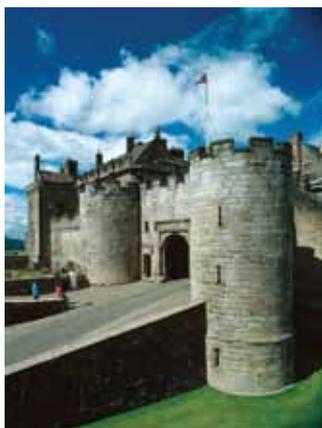
Discussion points

Why do you think sieges were a popular way of attacking a castle?

- If you won the siege and took the castle, it wouldn't be damaged, so you could use it without having to repair it.
- It was less risky than attacking the castle directly.
- Fewer of your soldiers would be killed.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look over the wall at the edge. Which of the weapons would have been most useful if you wanted to attack from this side – trebuchet (catapult), siege tower, battering ram or cannon?	Probably the trebuchet and then later the cannon because they could fire high. The battering ram and siege tower would not have been useful from this side, because the castle is too high.
Look around the garden. Can you see any stone balls? Where do you think they came from?	Stone balls used as decoration along the top of the walls. Balls were fired at the castle, probably from a trebuchet.
How do you think the defenders inside could defend themselves against a siege?	By making sure they kept plenty of food and ammunition inside the castle By attacking the siege weapons from above by firing stone balls at them By firing at the attackers directly

➡ Return through the archway. Turn left to stand by the main gate (Location 3).



The impressive Forework installed by James IV around 1500

Location 3: The Forework

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This gateway to the castle was built long after the Wars of Independence, around 500 years ago, but there was certainly a wall with a gate around the castle at that time.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
If you were coming up to this gate, there would have been guards and sentries watching you. Can you find three places where they might have stood?	On the battlements, in the towers on either side, in windows above the side gates
What evidence can you find to show you that these guards might have weapons?	Narrow slits for arrows and then later for guns in side towers
Stand just inside the gateway. Look up. Can you see a slit in the stone above you? What do you think this was for?	Used to be where a portcullis – a metal gate – could slide up or down.
Can you see a gate a bit like the portcullis anywhere?	In the gateway to the left
Why do you think there are three entrance ways here?	Two for pedestrians and a wider one for carts with supplies or for marching troops

➡ Go into the room at the bottom of the tower on the right.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What do you think this room was used for? How can you tell?	Guard room – slits for shooting out of It's the obvious place!
It had another use as well. Look for two more clues – don't forget to look down!	There used to be a dungeon below – clues are a trapdoor in the ground which leads down, and a large bolted door.

➡ Go through the gate into the Outer Close (Location 4).



The Wallace Monument, built in 1869, marks the position from which, in 1297, William Wallace watched the English approach before the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

Location 4: The Outer Close

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

We are now inside the castle walls. At the time of the Wars of Independence, this area would have been busy with horses in the yard, guards on duty, and probably servants carrying food and buckets of water. The castle was like a village inside its own wall.

Look over the wall by the cannons. Ask your group: 'Can you see the bridges over the River Forth?' In 1297, the Scots under William Wallace and Andrew Murray had a great victory over the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge. The bridge where the battle took place was a bit closer to the castle than those you can see today.

Look at the tower on the hill in the distance. This is the Wallace Monument. It was built in 1869, hundreds of years after the battle. It is built at the place where Wallace and Murray stood and watched the English approaching before the battle.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Why was the river specially important in the old days?	The river was used as a transport route – easier to carry heavy things by boat than on the tracks. Also important as a barrier – the river would slow down an army trying to invade.
Why do you think Wallace decided to fight the English at the bridge?	Easy to attack on the narrow bridge
Can you find the old well in the ground?	To the right, with a grille over it, just before the row of cannons
Why was it important to have a well inside the castle walls?	Water supply needed inside in case of siege

➔ Cross the Outer Close area and move down the slope opposite to the North Gate (Location 5).



The North Gate is the oldest building in the castle.

Location 5: The North Gate

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This is the North Gate, the oldest part of the castle which is still standing. It was built around 1381, around 30 years after the wars had finished. It was probably built on the site of the original 'back door' into the castle.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Stand in the gateway. How thick do you think the walls are here?	5 –10 metres thick
The passage way is curved rather than straight. Why do you think this is?	So that the attacking enemy couldn't see where they were heading

➔ Continue down the steps and go through the archway of the North Gate into the Nether Bailey (Location 6).

Location 6: The Nether Bailey

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This courtyard area is called the Nether Bailey. Here there were stables, food stores, a blacksmith's and other workshops.

You can see there is a wall all around this area. Ask your group: 'What do you think the wall was used for?' It was probably used more for patrolling and keeping watch than for seriously keeping people out.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Compared to the rest of the castle, this part is not very strongly defended. Why do you think this is?	Strong natural defences: steep rocks all around – very hard for anyone to get close

! If learners wish to walk around the walls, please ensure that they walk, rather than run, and supervise them closely at all times.

➔ If you have time, it is well worth dropping into the wonderful Tapestry Studio in this area, where weavers are recreating medieval tapestries.

Otherwise, go back through the archway of the North Gate and follow the signs to the left to the Great Kitchens (Location 7).



Soldiers patrolled this wall around the Nether Bailey to keep watch for enemies.



These two figures can be seen in the reconstructed interior of the Great Kitchens.

Location 7: The Great Kitchens

The Great Kitchens area starts with a short video about medieval food and cooking. You can decide whether you want your class to watch this.

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

When the castle was expanded, the kitchens in the North Gate were not big enough. New kitchens were built here much later, in the 1600s, but the kitchens in the castle at the time of the Wars of Independence were probably quite similar.

This is where food for the kings, queens and their important guests was prepared. If you were a soldier defending the castle, you would not have eaten food as special as some of this. But some of your food would have been the same. As you go round, try to get some idea of what a soldier might have eaten.

There are four parts to the kitchen: the cooking area, preparation area, bakehouse, and area for putting completed dishes. As you look around, think about the food and tools you can see and the different jobs being done.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What food can you see that is the same as food we have today?	Same: many fruits and vegetables, meat, seafood, bread, eggs
What foods are completely different?	Different: not many people eat swans, rabbits, peacocks, or little birds today.
Most of the food you can see here would be grown in Scotland. What can you see that would be grown locally?	Most food in the kitchens is local.
Some food came from overseas. Can you find any examples?	Food from overseas: some fruits (for example, figs, peaches)
How is this kitchen the same as kitchens today?	Same: tables for preparing food, place for cooking food, sharp knives
How is it different?	Different: no running water, candles instead of electric light, no fridges
How many different jobs can you see being done in these kitchens?	Washing up, cooking by fire, carrying food, rolling pastry, serving food, pounding spices, peeling cabbages, baking, etc
Are any jobs done by children?	Young boy is working by the fire; another boy has dropped the milk.
What things might a poor soldier eat?	Oatcakes, soup, occasional meat

Did you know?

A traditional menu for a grand meal would consist of five courses:

- a kind of soup called pottage
- roast meat – perhaps pork, lamb, or beef
- pies and pastries
- a sweet course, usually tarts or fritters
- fruit and sweetmeats

➡ **Leave the Great Kitchens. Walk back up the slope. Turn right to walk past the Great Hall, go under a stone arch into the Inner Close, and from there into the Great Hall, in the far right of the Close (Location 8).**



The Great Hall, built for James IV, provided a spectacular setting for state events.

Location 8: The Great Hall

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This is the Great Hall of Stirling Castle. It has been restored to how it might have looked in the 1500s. The castle that Robert the Bruce and Edward II fought over would have had a hall too, though not as grand as this one.

All castles had halls – but this one was the biggest ever built in Scotland. It was built for feasts, celebrations and important official events, like meetings of Parliament or royal christenings.

The Great Hall has had lots of different uses over the years. Most recently it was used as an army barracks. Eventually, Historic Scotland decided to restore it.

One of the biggest jobs was to rebuild the roof in the original style. It is called a hammerbeam roof.

The walls were repainted outside in a colour called ‘king’s gold’. Historians believe that all the buildings in the castle may have been painted this colour.

Did you know?

Skilled woodworkers used 400 oak trees to build the Great Hall roof, which is made up of 1,300 beams. Their tools haven’t changed since medieval times. The roof was built without using a single nail. Instead, all the beams lock together like jigsaw pieces and are held in place with more than 3,000 wooden pegs.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look around you. How many fireplaces can you find?	Five
What were they used for?	For warming the room and for light
Look at the big one at the end of the hall. How much wood would you need to have a fire here?	Several trees!
There are two other things in the hall which helped keep it warm in the old days, apart from the fires. What are they?	Wood panelling Heavy hangings to keep out draughts
Where would the king or queen have sat?	At the head of the hall, on the platform, where the double chairs are
Why was this the best place?	Warm – right beside fire Well lit – beside windows
The windows probably had beautiful stained glass. How would the king and queen have looked when the sun was shining through?	Lit up in beautiful colours
The kings and queens loved dancing and music. Look around and see if you can work out where the musicians would have been.	Musicians’ gallery at the far end of the hall and halfway along one wall



Learners admire the magnificent hammerbeam roof of the Great Hall.

Discussion points

As you leave the castle, get the learners to think about what they have learned:

- Why was Stirling Castle so important during the Wars of Independence?
- What have we found out about how Stirling Castle was defended?
- What have we found out about how people used to live?

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
<p>Not everything in the hall is traditional. Try to identify some things which would not have been here in the old days. Do you know what they would have used instead?</p>	<p>No electric light – would have used candles or oil lamps (see replica candle stands).</p> <p>No heaters – would have used fires.</p> <p>No speakers for amplified music – would have had live music.</p> <p>No ramps, barriers, fire extinguishers, etc</p>
<p>Rebuilding the hall helped Historic Scotland learn a lot about building methods in the past.</p> <p>Look at the hall. How many different types of craftsmen would it take to build a hall like this?</p>	<p>Foresters and sawyers to cut wood</p> <p>Joiners or woodworkers to build the roof, fit panelling and make furniture</p> <p>Stone masons to cut and shape the stones</p> <p>Builders to build the walls.</p> <p>Plasterers to cover the walls</p> <p>Glaziers to fit the windows</p> <p>People to weave the fabric, fit the curtains, etc</p> <p>Metalworkers to make candle stands</p> <p>Plumbers to build drains and gutters</p> <p>Painters or 'harlers' to paint and decorate inside and out</p>

➡ Leave the Great Hall by the exit at the other end which brings you out into the Inner Close. On the wall of the building opposite the Great Hall you can see a memorial plaque to the siege of 1304.

Our tour is now finished. If you have time, learners may enjoy the following areas:

- The 16th-century Palace, now fantastically recreated
- The Chapel Royal
- The Ramparts at the south end of the castle (follow signs to the Douglas Gardens)
- The Vaults: interactive exhibitions on court life, designed for children



Tour 3: Palace for the Stewart monarchs

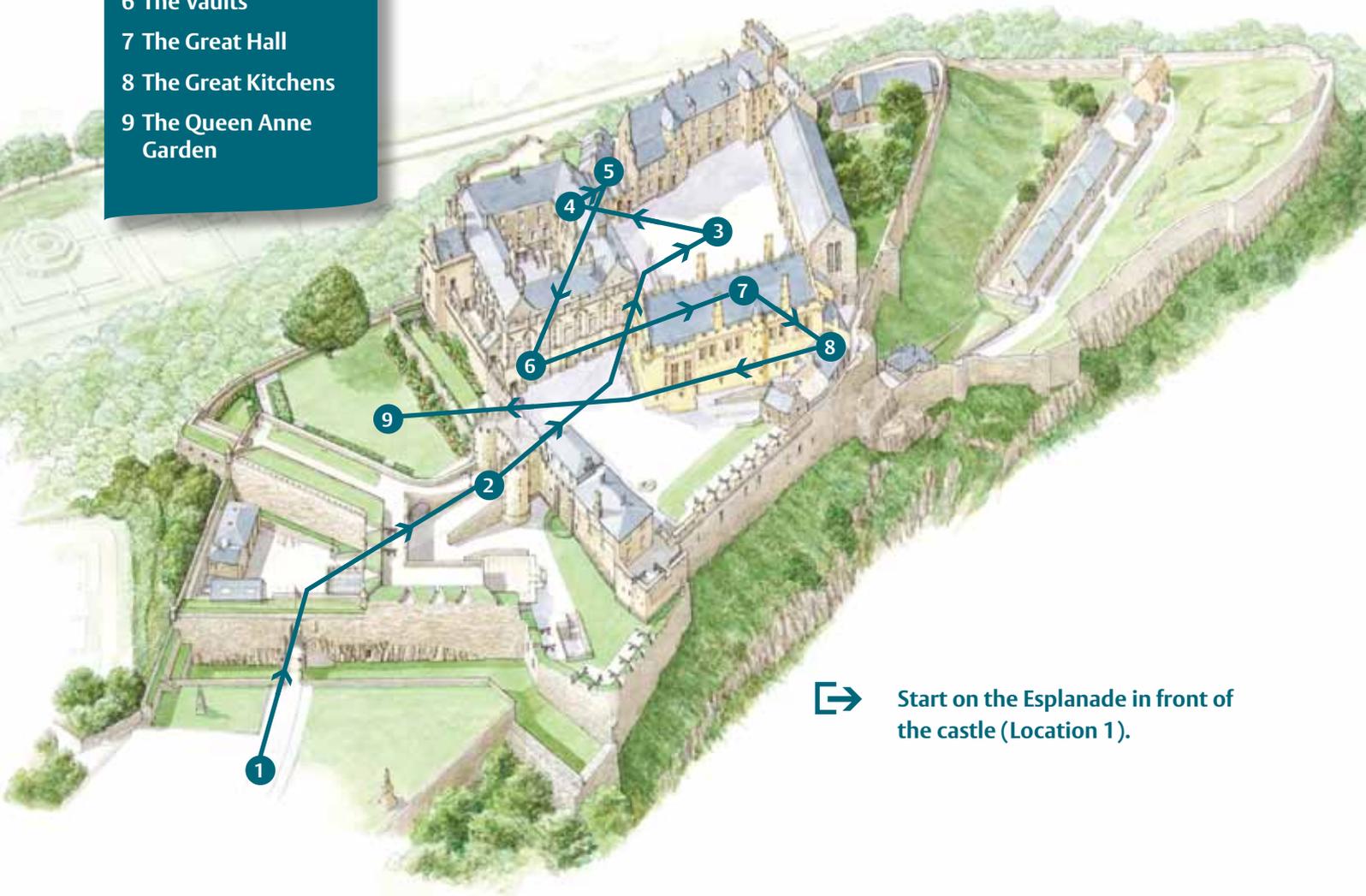
Key locations

Tour 3 takes in nine locations:

- 1 The Esplanade
- 2 The Forework
- 3 The Inner Close
- 4 The Palace – The King's and Queen's Private Apartments
- 5 The Stirling Heads Gallery
- 6 The Vaults
- 7 The Great Hall
- 8 The Great Kitchens
- 9 The Queen Anne Garden

This tour explores Stirling Castle and Palace as the home and court of the Stewart monarchs – chiefly James IV, James V and Mary of Guise, and Mary Queen of Scots.

Tour 3 includes information about two Optional Locations – the Chapel Royal and the Tapestry Studio. You may want to visit these if time allows.





The Esplanade can be seen clearly in this aerial view of the castle.

Location 1: The Esplanade

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

What is Stirling Castle? For one important Scottish family, it was their home. The royal family of Stewart built most of the castle and used it as one of their royal palaces.

In those days, kings and queens travelled around a lot. They had other royal homes – for example, at Edinburgh Castle, Linlithgow Palace, Dunfermline Palace and Falkland Palace. Have any of you visited any of those places?

There has been a castle here in Stirling for probably about 1,000 years. But most of what we can see from here was built in the 1700s and 1800s. Inside, we're going to focus on the parts built around 500 years ago by King James IV and his son James V.

Today we are going to explore the castle and royal palace to find out more about how the Stewart kings and queens lived. We will also find out a little bit about the servants who worked for them and made it possible for them to live here.

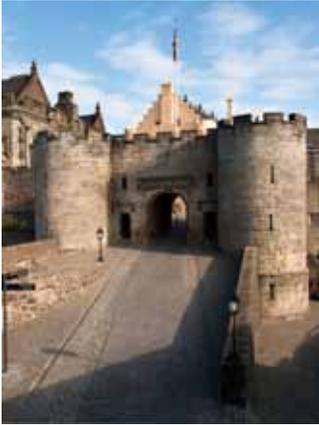
Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look around you. Why do you think this was such a good place for a castle?	Up high on a rock – good for defence Can see your enemy coming from a long way off. Close to a river – good for transport
Although there has been a castle here for a long time, most of what we can see is less than 500 years old. Why do you think there is little left of the castles that were here before?	Made of wood which rotted Destroyed in fighting Demolished to make way for new buildings
Why do you think the Stewarts had more than one royal home?	They wanted to 'show their faces' in different parts of the kingdom.



Queen Anne's initials above the gateway into the castle

➡ **Go through the gateway. See if learners can spot the initials AR – standing for 'Anna Regina' ('Queen Anne' in Latin) – as they go through the gate. Queen Anne was the last Stewart sovereign of Britain.**

Continue over the bridge and stop in front of the Forework (Location 2).



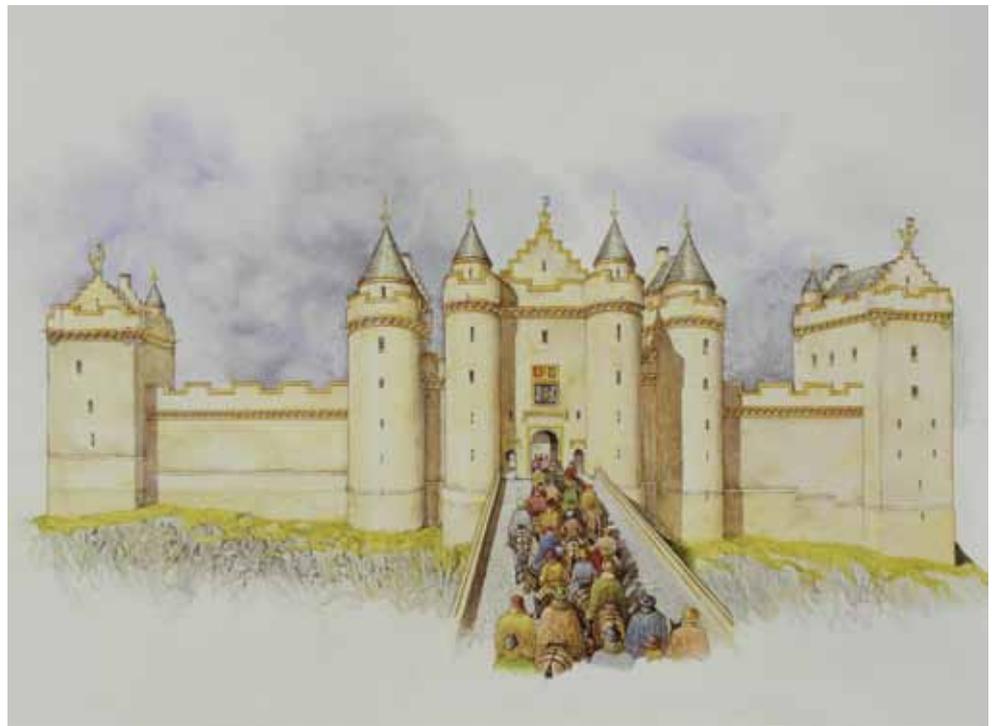
The Forework was designed by James IV to create an impressive entrance to the castle, similar to entrances to palaces in France and Italy.

Location 2: The Forework

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

Five hundred years ago, in the early 1500s, Stirling Castle looked very different. King James IV wanted Stirling to be a luxurious place to live and a magnificent royal setting for his court. He knew that French and Italian rulers were creating beautiful and impressive palaces and he wanted the same for Scotland. So he started making a lot of changes to Stirling Castle.

James really liked the stories of King Arthur and the Round Table, and wanted to create a dramatic, almost fairytale-like entrance to the castle. He redesigned the gateway to create the entrance we can see now, which is called the Forework.



An artist's impression of how the Forework might have looked in James IV's time when it had four tall towers

The Forework would have looked more impressive when it was new. The towers on either side of the gate used to be twice as high as they are now – and there would have been four of them. They had turrets at the top and would have been decorated with lions and unicorns. If you look at the little panel on the wall to the right of the gateway, you can see a drawing of what it might have looked like.

As you walk through this gateway, you can be sure that you're walking in the footsteps of Scotland's kings and queens.



Did you know?

Today the stone is bare, but 500 years ago the Forework was probably painted a bright yellowish colour known as 'king's gold'.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at the round towers. Can you see bullet marks on the walls? These are from when the castle was attacked in 1651.	Fairly obvious marks
Stand just inside the gateway. Look up. Can you see a slit in the stone above you? What do you think this was for?	Used to be where a portcullis – a metal gate – could slide up or down.
Can you see a gate a bit like a portcullis anywhere around you?	In gateway to left
Why do you think there are three entrance ways here?	Two for pedestrians and a wider one for carts with supplies or for marching troops
If you were coming up to this gate, there would be guards and sentries watching you. Find three places where they might stand.	On the battlements, in the towers on either side, in windows above the side gates
What evidence can you find to show you that these guards might have weapons?	Narrow slits in side towers, for use by people firing weapons
Why do you think James IV wanted to create such a dramatic gateway?	To impress people

➡ Go into the small room in the tower on the right.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What do you think this room was used for?	Guard room – slits for shooting out of
How can you tell?	It's the obvious place!
It had another use too. Look for two more clues. Don't forget to look down!	There used to be a dungeon below ground – clues are a trapdoor in the ground, and a large bolted door.

➡ Walk through the gateway. Cross the square in front of you and walk between the Palace on your left and the (yellow) Great Hall to your right, then go under a stone bridge and enter the Inner Close (Location 3).



Mary of Guise, French wife of James V and mother of Mary Queen of Scots

Location 3: The Inner Close

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This part of the castle is called the Inner Close. This was where the original castle probably was, but nothing is left of the old castle today. James IV built the amazing yellow Great Hall here – we'll have a look inside later. Opposite, on the other side of the courtyard, James built a place where he could live when he was at Stirling. Today we call this the King's Old Building.



The King's Old Building, the royal lodgings of James IV

Did you know?

Historians generally use the spelling 'Stewart' for monarchs up to Mary Queen of Scots. After this they use the French-style Stuart preferred by Mary.

After James IV died, his son became King James V. His wife, who was known as Mary of Guise, was French. She was used to very grand buildings at home in France so James decided to build a brand-new Palace. This is the building you can see on the other (south) side of the Inner Close.

He used the whole building as a giant advertisement to show everyone what a great king he was and how good Scotland would be during his reign. You can see lots of statues on the building. They're not just decoration – they all are part of the message which James V wanted to communicate.

Note: See The Stirling Sculptures on page 56 or pick up a leaflet about the sculptures from the ticket office.



The statue of James V on the wall of the Palace

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at the two royal buildings: the King's Old Building and the Palace. What differences can you see?	Different size Different shape of stone The Palace is much more decorated and grander.
Face the Palace. James V wanted everyone to know that he had built the Palace, so he put his initials on the wall – in Latin. The Latin for James begins with the letter I. Can you find his initials anywhere?	'I S' is carved above the windows. This stands for <i>Iacobus V</i> , which means James V.
Just below the roof you can see four pillars. One of them still has a statue on it. It's a long way up, but can you see what it is?	A musician, playing a pipe
What message do you think James was trying to communicate by having statues of musicians?	There would be music and happiness as long as James was king.
Look at the next row of statues. The one on the far left is of James V himself. Can you see him? He has a long beard. He doesn't look very like a king here, but above him is an animal with a crown – can you see what it is? What message is James trying to communicate by showing himself with a lion?	Lion, a traditional symbol of Scottish royalty That he is strong and brave
The other four statues show gods and goddesses from the Greek myths. Together they symbolise peace, plenty and richness. What other carvings you can see on this wall?	Carved 'monster' waterspouts Venus (in the middle) holds a globe and part of a dove – a symbol of world peace.



Enter the Palace by going through the door at the right-hand end of the wall. Turn left once you're inside and enter the King's Outer Hall. Walk in a clockwise direction (following the signage) through the King's and Queen's Private Apartments (Location 4).

Note: You may encounter costumed guides as you go round. Feel free to ask them questions – they are happy to talk to school groups.



The magnificent fireplace in the King's Outer Hall

Did you know?

In heraldry, the unicorn is the supporter of the royal arms of Scotland. This mythical creature was believed to have special powers of protection and purification.

Location 4: The Palace – The King's and Queen's Private Apartments

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

We are now inside James V's royal Palace. It has recently been restored by Historic Scotland, who look after the castle. The restoration work cost £12 million! A lot of what you'll see is modern, but it has been made in just the same way as it would have been made in the time of James V, in the 1540s. Unfortunately for James, he died before the Palace was completed – so you are seeing it more finished than he ever did.

This room is called the **King's Outer Hall**. People who wanted to meet the king had to wait in here until he was ready to see them – or until they were sent away. In the old days this room would probably have been full of people.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Some parts of this room are really old. Can you work out which parts they are?	Walls, fireplace, doors
Can you spot James V's name anywhere?	Above the fireplace: IACOBUS REX 5 Above windows: 15 (again)
What animals can you see anywhere in the decoration?	Unicorns and lions in painted crest above fireplace
Does it feel warm in here today? How do you think they would have kept it warm in the 1540s?	Big fire blazing in fireplace Shutters closed over windows to keep out draughts
How do you think you would have felt if you were waiting here to meet the king?	Maybe nervous Excited



Move through into the next room, the King's Inner Hall.



The King's Inner Hall with its colourful ceiling decorated with replicas of the original Stirling Heads



As well as telling jokes, the jester's job was to tease the king, to stop him getting too self-important!

This is the **King's Inner Hall** where people would have met with the king – if they were important or lucky enough to be allowed in.

Look up at the ceiling. This is a recreated version of the original ceiling, which was made up of about 40 carved wooden faces, known as the Stirling Heads (see pages 54–5 for more information). Like most of the decoration, these were all part of James V's advertisement for himself.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
How can you tell that you're now in the presence of the king?	Huge crown painted above fireplace
Look up at the ceiling. Look for James V and his wife, Mary of Guise (second row of heads, fourth and fifth along). Does he look like the statue outside?	He has a beard in both, but he looks grander here.
In the fifth row, the three heads at the right-hand end show the strong man Hercules from Greek stories. What is he doing in each one?	Strangling snakes, killing a lion, holding a club
Why do you think James showed Hercules on the ceiling?	To tell people that he was as strong and brave as Hercules
James also included the king of England, Henry VIII, and the European emperor Charles V. Can you find them?	Second row, first and second from left.
Why do you think they were included here?	To flatter them in order to keep the peace; or maybe to show that he was just as powerful as them. Henry was James' uncle; perhaps James wanted to remind people he had a claim to the English throne.
James also wanted to show that his court would have music – and fun! Can you find the court jester anywhere?	First row, first image

➡ **Move into the next room, the King's Bedchamber.**



Although this was the King's Bedchamber, he didn't use it to sleep in.

This is the **King's Bedchamber** – but it wasn't used for sleeping. This was where the king had secret talks with his trusted advisers. He slept in a little room to the side. The room feels quite empty, and there's no bedding on the bed. This is because the room has been restored to the time soon after James V died and no one was using it.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at the carving on the fireplace. What messages is James trying to give us?	Thistles, lions – both symbols of Scotland
Look up at the ceiling. What signs or symbols do you recognise?	Blue and white saltire flag, I 5 = James V again, thistles round crest in middle, unicorns as symbol of Scotland

➡ **Leave the King's Bedchamber and go into the Queen's Bedchamber.**



The sumptuously decorated Queen's Bedchamber

This room is the **Queen's Bedchamber**, designed and furnished for the wife of James V, Mary of Guise. The room has been restored to how it would have looked when she lived in it after James died. Their daughter, Mary Queen of Scots, lived at Stirling as a baby. Can you imagine her crawling around this room?

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
How does this room feel compared to the King's Bedchamber?	Full of furniture, beautifully decorated, bedding on the bed, etc
What clues are there that this room was lived in by royalty?	Royal coat of arms with crown hanging above the fire, crowns by fireplace
Look at the bed. Why do you think it has curtains round it, and a roof?	For additional warmth and privacy
Queen Mary obviously used this room for lots of different activities. What can you see that she's been doing?	Playing cards, writing letters, perhaps sleeping, perhaps praying, drinking, eating fruit
What things keep the room warm?	Fire, rugs, curtains around bed, shutters at window, wall hangings
Just like her husband, Mary had a special symbol for her family: three eagles shot with a single arrow. Can you see it?	On one of the circular panels on the ceiling
James had I 5 everywhere. Can you see Mary's initials anywhere?	MR above window = <i>Maria Regina</i> = Queen Mary

➡ **Move through into the next room, the Queen's Inner Hall.**



Beautiful tapestries adorn the walls of the Queen's Inner Hall.



A detail from one of the tapestries

Did you know?

A set of high-quality tapestries at the time of James V and Mary cost the same as a warship!

This is the **Queen's Inner Hall**. It is the room in which where Mary of Guise would have met honoured guests. When the king was still alive, the King's Inner Hall would have been decorated in a similar style.

Look at the tapestries on the walls. They were woven specially for the Palace. Each tapestry took up to four years to make. They show a story called *The Hunt of the Unicorn* and are based on original tapestries from the time of James and Mary.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look at the tapestries. Can you work out the order for hunting and capturing the unicorn?	Reasonably easy to work out: start of hunt, chasing, capture and killing of unicorn
What birds and animals can you see in the tapestries?	Horses, unicorn, dogs, squirrels and lots of different kinds of birds, etc
Look at the clothes people are wearing. In what way are they the same as clothes today? In what way are they different?	Very bright colours, highly decorated Some garments similar, but few men wear tunics today.
Do you think a tapestry is a good source of evidence for historians?	It's not a very reliable source, because we don't know how much the designer of the tapestry made up. But it's better than nothing!
Why do you think they had tapestries like this?	Decoration, warmth – and to show off their wealth
Above the throne on the ceiling are paintings of two people. Who are they?	James and Mary

➡ Move through into the Queen's Outer Hall.

This room is the **Queen's Outer Hall**. People would have waited in here to see the queen. It was also sometimes used as a dining room. The queen had her own kitchen below this room.

When you leave this room, you'll enter an undecorated corridor leading out. This has been left to show traces of a staircase and additional floors that were added later.

➡ Come out of the Palace and go up a flight of stairs from the Inner Close to enter the Stirling Heads Gallery (Location 5).



One of the original Stirling Heads

Location 5: The Stirling Heads Gallery

This exhibition is well worth a visit to see 34 of the original wooden Heads and to find out, through displays and touchscreens, what they can tell us. There is also an exhibition about James V and his building of the Palace and a short film.

You may wish to let learners explore the exhibition by themselves, or ask them to choose one head to draw and find out about, ready to discuss when back in school.



The gallery has been specially designed to show off the original wooden Heads to best advantage.

➡ Leave the gallery by the Prince's Tower exit and walk down the stairs. You will come out of the Palace on to the Prince's Walk. Look up to the left to see the dramatic sculptures on the south wall of the Palace. Turn sharp left then go through the archway on the left and down the stairs to the Vaults (Location 6).



The exhibitions in the Vaults are guaranteed to stimulate learners.

Location 6: The Vaults

The Vaults, beneath the Palace, house a series of interactive exhibitions, designed for children. Learners can explore the following aspects of life at the Stewart court: music, painting and colour, costume, carving, court jester.

➡ When you exit the Vaults, turn left back into the Inner Close, and follow the signs for the Great Hall.



James IV's Great Hall has been repainted in what historians believe to be its original colour, known as 'king's gold'.

Location 7: The Great Hall

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This is the Great Hall of Stirling Castle. It has been restored to how it might have looked in the 1500s. All castles had halls – but this one was the biggest ever built in Scotland. It was built for feasts, celebrations and important official events such as royal christenings. Because it was such a big space, sometimes Parliament met here.

Mary Queen of Scots celebrated the birth of her son James here. The celebrations went on for three days and included the first fireworks display ever held in Scotland. When James' son Henry was christened, he went one better. The celebrations included dragging in a huge ship, stuffed full of an amazing variety of fish. The Stewarts certainly knew how to party!

When Historic Scotland decided to restore the Great Hall, one of the biggest jobs was to rebuild the roof in the original style. It is called a hammerbeam roof.

The outside walls were repainted in a colour called 'king's gold'. Historians believe that all the buildings in the castle may have been painted this colour.

The Great Hall was reopened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1999.

Did you know?

Skilled woodworkers used 400 oak trees to build the Great Hall roof, which is made up of 1,300 beams. Their tools haven't changed since medieval times. The roof was built without using a single nail. Instead, all the beams lock together like jigsaw pieces and are held in place with more than 3,000 wooden pegs.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look around you. How many fireplaces can you find?	Five
What were they used for?	For warming the room and for light
Look at the big one at the end of the hall. How much wood would you need to have a fire here?	Several trees!
Where would the king or queen have sat?	At the head of the hall, on the platform where the double chairs are
Why was this the best place?	Warm – right beside fire Well lit – beside windows
The windows probably had beautiful stained glass. How would the king and queen have looked when the sun was shining through?	Lit up in beautiful colours
The Stewarts loved dancing and music. Where would the musicians have been?	Musicians' gallery at the far end of the hall and halfway along one wall



The interior of the Great Hall with its amazing hammerbeam roof, built without using a single nail

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
<p>Not everything in the hall is traditional. Try to identify some things which would not have been here in the time of the Stewarts. What would they would have used instead?</p>	<p>No electric light – would have used candles or oil lamps (see replica candle stands).</p> <p>No heaters – would have used fires.</p> <p>No speakers for amplified music – would have had live music.</p> <p>No ramps, barriers, fire extinguishers, etc</p>
<p>Rebuilding the hall helped Historic Scotland learn a lot about building methods in the past.</p> <p>Look at the hall. How many different types of craftsmen would it take to build a hall like this?</p>	<p>Foresters and sawyers to cut wood</p> <p>Joiners or woodworkers to build the roof, fit panelling and make furniture</p> <p>Stone masons to cut and shape the stones</p> <p>Builders to build the walls</p> <p>Plasterers to cover the walls</p> <p>Glaziers to fit the windows</p> <p>People to weave the fabric, fit the curtains, etc</p> <p>Metalworkers to make candle stands</p> <p>Plumbers to build drains and gutters</p> <p>Painters or ‘harlers’ to paint and decorate inside and out</p>



If you wish to visit the Chapel Royal (Optional Location), leave the Great Hall by the same way you came in. As you exit, the chapel is on your right.

If you do not want to visit the chapel, cross the Outer Close and follow the signs to the Great Kitchens (Location 8).



The interior of the Chapel Royal, built in 1594

Optional Location: The Chapel Royal

This was the private chapel of the Stewarts which was rebuilt by James VI for the christening of his son Henry.



One of the figures you can see in the reconstructed interior of the Great Kitchens

Did you know?

The grandest guests were served first. When they had eaten all they wanted, then the remnants were passed on to the next most important guests, and so on, all the way down to the servants and the kitchen dogs!

Location 8: The Great Kitchens

The Great Kitchens area starts with a short video about medieval food and cooking. Watch this if you wish then proceed into the main kitchen area.

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This is where food for the Stewart kings, queens and their important guests was prepared by their many servants. Imagine the noise, smells, sounds and heat.

There are four parts to the kitchen: the cooking area, preparation area, bakehouse, and area for putting completed dishes. As you look around, think about the food and tools you can see and the different jobs being done.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
What food can you see that is the same as food we have today?	Same: many fruits and vegetables; meat, seafood, bread, eggs
What foods are completely different?	Different: not many people eat swans, rabbits, peacocks, or little birds today.
Most of the food you can see here would be grown in Scotland. What can you see that would be grown locally?	Most food in the kitchens is local.
Some food came from overseas. Can you find any examples?	Food from overseas: some fruits (for example, figs, peaches)
How is this kitchen the same as kitchens today?	Same: tables for preparing food, place for cooking food, sharp knives
How is it different?	Different: no running water, candles instead of electric light, no fridges
How many different jobs can you see being done in these kitchens?	Washing up, cooking by the fire, carrying food, rolling pastry, serving food, pounding spices, peeling cabbages, baking, etc
Are any jobs done by children?	Young boy is working by the fire; another boy has dropped the milk.

➡ If you wish to visit the Tapestry Studio (Optional Location) to see weavers at work, leave the Great Kitchens and walk down the slope through the North Gate to reach the studio.

Otherwise, leave the Great Kitchens, walk past the Great Hall and through the gate of the Forework. Turn right into the Queen Anne Garden (Location 9).



Weavers at work in the Tapestry Studio



This detail from one of the tapestries being woven for the Palace shows the mythical unicorn.

Optional Location: The Tapestry Studio

In this courtyard area there used to be food stores, a blacksmith's and other workshops. Nowadays there is a modern weaving studio where you can see weavers at work. This is where the tapestries you saw in the Palace were made. The weavers are working on the last tapestries in *The Hunt of the Unicorn*.

In the time of the Stewarts, tapestries were a popular way of decorating walls. The tapestries were woven on looms. The threads used were wool, silk, or in some cases, gold. They were hung up to look beautiful and also helped to keep out cold and damp.

James IV and James V were big collectors of tapestries. In 1539, there were over 100 tapestries at the Palace! Some were bought by James IV and were handed on to his son. Others came from their wives. They were valuable and were kept carefully. Eventually, though, they became worn out. By the time of Mary Queen of Scots, some tapestries had been recycled into bed coverings and chair seats.

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look closely at the tapestry. How many colours is the weaver working with?	Will depend on whatever is being woven at the time.
What is the picture of? Which way up is it?	Tapestry is woven sideways.
Can you see what the weavers use to help them copy the picture?	A paper pattern is placed behind the weaving.
How do you think they get the tapestry off the loom?	The tapestry is cut from the loom when it's finished.
Tapestries were very expensive. They were a way of showing off how rich you were. Why do you think they cost so much?	Expensive materials – silk and gold thread Took a very long time to make.
The Stewarts were always on the move, from one palace to another. Why was having tapestries an advantage?	Tapestries could be rolled up and taken with the royal baggage to the next palace.



Go back through the North Gate, past the Great Hall and through the gate of the Forework. Turn right into the Queen Anne Garden (Location 9).



The King's Knot seen from the Queen Anne Garden

Location 9: The Queen Anne Garden

Information for teachers. This can be read to learners.

This garden was probably used by the Stewarts as a place to relax.

If you look over the wall, there is a good view across the land round about Stirling. In the time of the Stewarts, much of this land would have been woodland. It was a popular place for Mary Queen of Scots and members of the royal household to hunt deer and other wild animals and was one of the first Royal Parks in Scotland. Birds and animals were brought in specially to keep the woods well stocked.

Look at the unusual patterns in the grass below. These are the remains of formal gardens, now known as the King's Knot. This would have been a pleasant place for the Stewarts to walk and relax. Mary's grandfather, James IV, was very interested in gardening and collected seeds, plants and trees. They were probably planted here.

The Stewart kings and queens practised sports such as archery on the flat ground below the castle. They also held jousting tournaments, where riders knocked each other off horses with big sticks called lances – good training for battles!

There would have been vegetable gardens and orchards surrounding the castle, and most of the food in the kitchens would have come from these gardens.

Discussion points

As you leave the castle, get the learners to think about what they have learned:

- What have we found out about how the Stewarts changed Stirling Castle?
- What have we found out about how the Stewarts lived?
- What have we found out about the people who worked here and how they lived?

Teacher prompts	Desired learner responses
Look around the garden. Can you find some round stone balls used as decorations on the top of the wall? What do you think these used to be?	Balls fired at the castle when it was attacked, probably in 1304
Look down at the patterns on the King's Knot. Nowadays it's just grass. What do you think it might have looked like then?	Trees and hedges along the walkways, flowers growing in between

Our tour is now finished.



The Stirling Heads

The ceiling of the King's Inner Hall was richly decorated with carved and painted round wooden portraits, today known as the Stirling Heads. The 34 surviving original Heads are on display in the Stirling Heads Gallery. The King's Inner Hall today is decorated with richly decorated replicas.



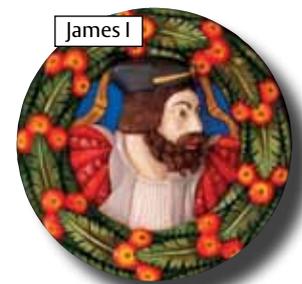
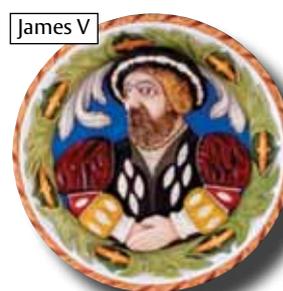
Key to the replica Stirling Heads on the ceiling of the King's Inner Hall

The original ceiling was dismantled after it collapsed around 1777 and the Heads were dispersed. Fortunately Mrs Jane Graham, wife of the deputy governor of the castle, made an illustrated record of the Heads. Most of them have now been rediscovered, but around ten are still unaccounted for.

Not just decoration, the Heads displayed the key messages James V wished to communicate about himself and his court.

Dynasty and right to rule

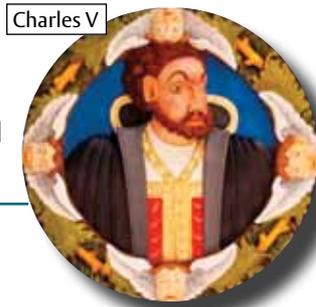
Portraits of James V, his ancestor James I, his mother Margaret Tudor and his uncle Henry VIII of England demonstrate the Stewart line of succession.





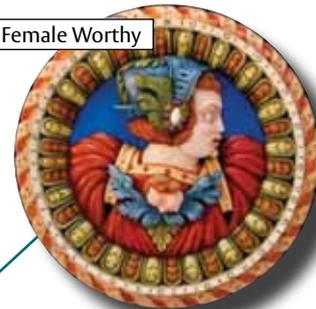
Friends in high places

The Heads feature portraits of Scotland's allies at this time, including the powerful Emperor Charles V.



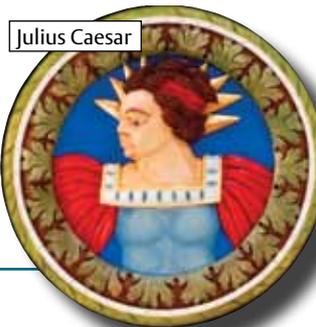
A kingly code

A number of 'worthies' are depicted – chivalric heroes and heroines, who embody virtue and honour. A harp tune was found carved into the border of this one. You can hear this music playing in the Stirling Heads Gallery.



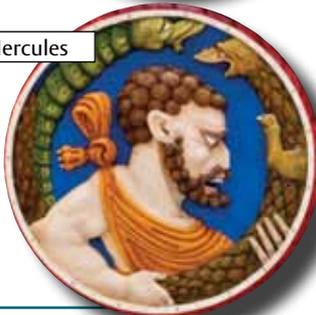
Learned leaders

James included portraits of Roman emperors such as Julius Caesar to demonstrate his classical education and inspiration.



Hercules the hero

Because James associated himself with the moral and physical qualities of Hercules, he included four portraits of him.



Meet the court

Many of the Heads show courtiers dressed in dazzling fashions of the time. Some are thought to represent French noblemen and women, perhaps associates of Mary of Guise. These show James was receptive to new fashions and ideas from the Continent.



Pageantry and costume

A number of the Heads show entertainers – actors dressed up, a poet in full flow, and the court jester.



Love and marriage

The Palace was James V's tribute to his bride, Mary of Guise. The dancing cherubs known as *putti* shown on the ceiling celebrate romantic love.



A specialist painting one of the Stirling Heads



The Stirling Sculptures

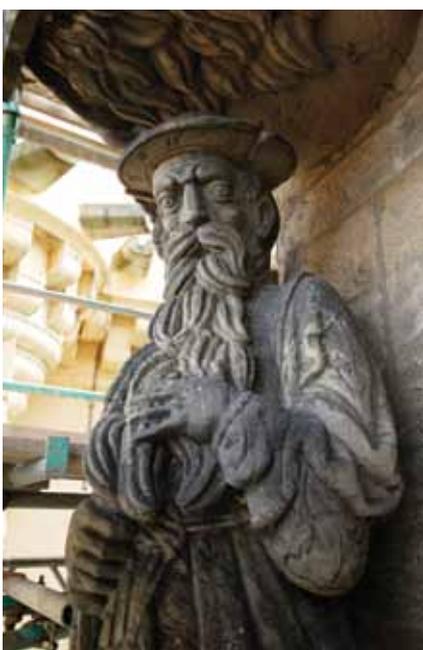
The outside of James V's Palace is covered with amazing statues. You can pick up a leaflet from the ticket office which unlocks their meaning. Here are some examples of what you can see.



Exterior of the Palace showing some of the sculptures



Saturn, god of time and agriculture



James V



The devil



Venus, goddess of love



Other places to visit

Here are some suggestions for other places to visit which may complement your visit to Stirling Castle.

Argyll's Lodging, Stirling

Argyll's Lodging is Scotland's most splendid and complete example of a 17th-century town house. Situated on the upper approaches to Stirling Castle, its fine architecture marks it out as a property intended for a great nobleman serving the royal court.

Tel: 01786 431319



Argyll's Lodging

Doone Castle, Doune

Doone Castle is a magnificent late-14th-century courtyard castle with a splendid reconstructed hall. A great place to visit if you are exploring castle life.

Tel: 01786 841742



Doone Castle

Linlithgow Palace, Linlithgow

The birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots, and home to many Stewart monarchs from James I on. Its ruins are still magnificent, in particular the courtyard with its stunning fountain.

Tel: 01506 842896



Linlithgow Palace

The National Wallace Monument, just outside Stirling

Built in 1869 to commemorate Wallace's victory at Stirling Bridge, this tower is a great vantage point. Contains displays relating to the life of Wallace, including the 700-year-old 'Wallace Sword'.

Tel: 01786 472140



The National Wallace Monument



Other resources

Websites for teachers

www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk

The website of Stirling Castle and Palace contains a wealth of background information, practical details, online activities, and an interactive map.

www.scran.ac.uk

A good source of photographs and images of objects, including objects from Stirling Castle.

Books for teachers

Peter Yeoman *Stirling Castle: Official Souvenir Guide*
Historic Scotland 2011

The official guidebook to the castle. Full of useful information and well illustrated.

Investigating Castles in Scotland Historic Scotland 2011
Booklet containing lots of background on castle life and suggestions for class activities. Available to download from **www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/learning**

Chris Tabraham *Scottish Castles and Fortifications*
Historic Scotland 2000

An excellent general guide to the development of Scotland's castles

Investigating The Wars of Independence 1296–1357
Historic Scotland 2005

Booklet containing lots of background on the wars and suggestions for class activities. Available to download from **www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/learning**

Investigating Mary Queen of Scots Historic Scotland 2011
Booklet containing background information about the queen and her eventful life, suggestions for sites to visit and classroom activities. Available to download from **www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/learning**

John Guy *My Heart is My Own: the Life of Mary Queen of Scots* Harper Perennial 2004

A gripping biography, highly readable and drawing on many new sources of evidence

Angela Royston, *Mary Queen of Scots* Pitkin Unichrome Ltd 2000

A well-illustrated booklet, also suitable for more able learners



Websites for learners

www.scottisharchivesforschools.org/ffa/index.asp

Scottish Archives for Schools, *For Freedom Alone*, an online resource for more able learners that explores the Wars of Independence through three archive letters

www.scottisharchivesforschools.org/ffa/index.asp

Scottish Archives for Schools, *The Universal King: James VI and the Union of the Crowns*, an online resource for more able learners that explores the Union of the Crowns through a selection of primary sources of evidence. Includes the earliest surviving letter of James VI, written from Stirling Castle when he was about six years old.

www.ltsotland.org.uk/scottishhistory

A library of resources, including games and information, relating to various eras in Scotland's history

www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/as/burghlife

BBC Scotland Schools: *Burgh Life in Mary's Time*
Online interactive game set in Stirling. Explore the burgh of Stirling, and enter the castle to attend the christening of Mary's son James.



Books for learners

Phil Roxbee Cox *What Were Castles For?* Usborne Publishing Ltd 2002

A simple illustrated guide

Christopher Gravett *Eyewitness Castle* Dorling Kindersley 2002

Lavishly illustrated guide to castles and castle life

Terry Deary *Bloody Scotland* Scholastic 1998

One of the ever-popular *Horrible Histories* series – lively, engaging and provocative

Allan Burnett *Robert the Bruce and All That; William Wallace and All That; Mary Queen of Scots and All That* Birlinn 2006

Three titles from a series that presents key characters from the past in a lively and engaging style

Margaret Simpson *Mary Queen of Scots and her Horrible Husbands* Scholastic 2001

Similar in approach to *Bloody Scotland*

A Elizabeth Douglas *Mary Queen of Scots* NMS Publishing 2009

The story of Scotland's Queen Mary from her early life at the French court to her execution

Colin Dargie, *Stuart Scotland* Heinemann 2002

One of the excellent *Explore Scottish History* series, richly illustrated with photographs and contemporary accounts

Acknowledgements

Author: Elspeth Mackay

Series Editor: Sue Mitchell

Copy Editor: Jackie Henrie

Layout and Production: APS Group (Scotland)

All images © Crown copyright, reproduced courtesy of Historic Scotland (www.historicscotlandimages.gov.uk), unless otherwise credited in the text

Produced with financial assistance from Historic Scotland Foundation, Scottish charity number SC032044

© Historic Scotland 2012

Historic Scotland
Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh EH9 1SH



