

Abingdon Abbey

Teacher's Pack

This teacher pack contains activities and suggestions to complement the teaching about life at Abingdon Abbey at KS2 and KS3. It was developed as part of the Lost Abbey of Abingdon Project by Wessex Archaeology.



Produced by Wessex Archaeology
www.wessexarch.co.uk



Teacher's Pack

This teacher's pack contains activities and suggestions to complement the teaching of Local History at KS2 and KS3. It was funded by The Lost Abbey of Abingdon Project and developed by Wessex Archaeology.

This pack includes:

- ◆ A script to introduce Abingdon Abbey to the class – the PowerPoint presentation that accompanies this can be downloaded from www.wessexarch.co.uk/learning/resources/medievalmonastery
- ◆ Fun and informative educational activities that allow your class to explore different elements of Abingdon Abbey's history
- ◆ Activity sheets can be downloaded separately for each activity in the teacher's pack
- ◆ You can download the A3 version of the History of Abingdon Abbey gameboard and the Medieval Monastery activity sheet from www.wessexarch.co.uk/learning/resources/medievalmonastery

An image bank resource can be downloaded as a zip file from www.wessexarch.co.uk/learning/resources/medievalmonastery

Curriculum links at KS2

This teacher pack is designed to support National Curriculum history units 4: *Historical enquiry*, 7: *Local history* and 10: *Britain and the wider world in Tudor times*.

Curriculum links at KS3

Components of the pack will also support National Curriculum history units 4: *Historical enquiry* and 8: *Britain 1500 – 1750*.

In addition, this teaching pack can be used to explore themes within citizenship and geography, and can be an interesting stimulus for literacy or art.

Learning Outcomes

- ◆ Students will gain an understanding of the long history of Abingdon Abbey
- ◆ Students will explore life in an abbey and compare it to their own lives
- ◆ Students will use archaeological evidence to draw conclusions about abbey life
- ◆ Students will compare Abingdon today to Abingdon in the past
- ◆ Students will discuss how historical events affected Abingdon

The Lost Abbey of Abingdon Project

The Lost Abbey of Abingdon project was created to raise awareness about Abingdon Abbey and its historical importance during medieval times. The project involved creating a Heritage Trail for the surviving medieval buildings, a time line, a booklet about the abbey and an education pack. Local volunteer historians completed the majority of the work.

In addition to a very generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Abingdon Joint Environmental Trust and the Vale of White Horse District Council also contributed to the project.





Introduction to Abingdon Abbey



A Benedictine monk from Abingdon Abbey

This script accompanies a PowerPoint presentation or intro.pdf, which can be downloaded from www.wessexarch.co.uk/learning/resources/medievalmonastery

In this lesson, we are going to learn about Abingdon's abbey.

What is an abbey?

An abbey or monastery is a place where monks lived, separated from the outside world and all its distractions. They wanted to spend all their time worshipping God. They followed a Christian religion called Roman Catholicism.

Abingdon Abbey has a long history. Traditionally people said that a nobleman built the monastery on the banks of the River Thames in 675 AD. We do not know if this is true.

There is evidence that the monastery did exist as early as the 10th century. At this time, the Abbot Ethelwold made the monastery follow the Rule of St. Benedict. This was a book, which told the monks how to worship God and manage the monastery.

A large wall separated the abbey from the rest of the town. Inside there were many buildings, including dormitories, an infirmary for the sick and a church. The monastery also owned farmland outside Abingdon and had fisheries along the River Thames.

The town of Abingdon grew up around the monastery. Outside the abbey's gateway, there was a busy market. Many townspeople worked for the monastery or paid taxes to it through the things they sold at Abingdon market.

The monastery existed for hundreds of years and became one of the wealthiest in the country.

However, in 1538 the Tudor King, Henry VIII, began to close all the large monasteries in England. Abingdon was the first of the large monasteries to be closed. He ordered the removal of materials from Abingdon Abbey to build his own palaces. Over time, some of the buildings, including its grand church, disappeared completely.

Over the past 100 years, archaeologists have searched for evidence of the abbey. They have discovered the foundations for the church, the cemetery for the townspeople, a bell tower and the vineyard.

If you walk around Abingdon today, you can still find evidence for the monastery's history.



Archaeologists excavating the site of the abbey church in 1922



The Gateway – the entrance through the monastery wall is one of the few parts of the abbey that survive today





Activity 1: The History of Abingdon Abbey

During Abingdon Abbey's long history, many interesting things happened. Play the Dragons and Ladders game to find out more about its history.

Abingdon Abbey Dragons and Ladders

You must explore the history of what happened to Abingdon Abbey over time. The ladders highlight some of the great events that have happened, but some disasters have befallen it too, so watch out for the dragons.

Instructions

All printed materials are available at the back of the teacher's pack, except the gameboard. You need to download this separately from the website at www.wessexarch.co.uk/learning/resources/medievalmonastery

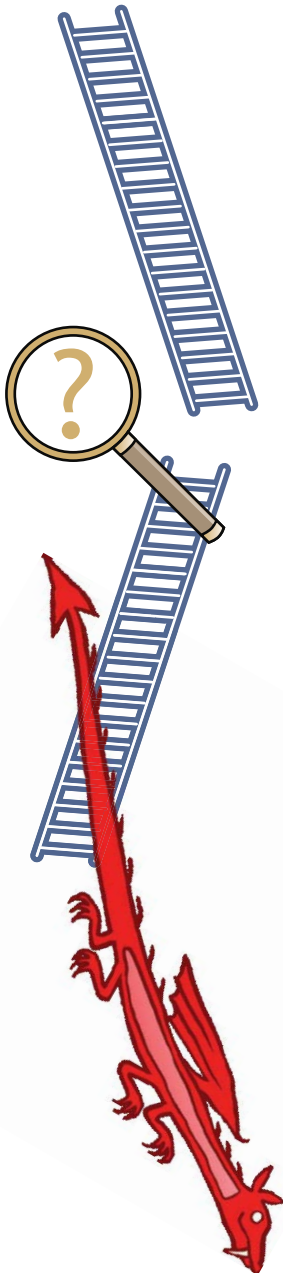
- ◆ Print the A3 **History of Abingdon Abbey game board sheet**
- ◆ Print and cut out the '**History cards**' sheets
- ◆ Print and cut out the coloured game counters
- ◆ Use dice, one or two per game

Number of players: two to four per board.

Rules of the game

The rules are similar to those for normal Snakes and Ladders

- ◆ A player rolls the dice and moves forward that number of squares
- ◆ If a player lands on a square with a **magnifying glass symbol**, they must pick up a **History card** and do what the card tells them
- ◆ If a player lands on the **bottom of a ladder** they move up it
- ◆ If a player lands on the **tail of a dragon** they must move down it
- ◆ The first to reach '**You discovered the history of Abingdon Abbey**' box is the winner!



Activity 2:

Living by the Rules

Life in a monastery was very different from our lives today. The abbey belonged to an Order, or family, of Roman Catholic monasteries called **Benedictine**. They followed a set of rules created by St. Benedict of Nursia.

Around 529 AD, St. Benedict wrote a book of instructions for his own monastery in Egypt. There were 73 chapters detailing how life should be conducted in the monastery. It included many rules. Here are some of the most important:

- ◆ There should be eight services or 'offices' to worship God each day, including one at night-time
- ◆ The monks should live separately from the world
- ◆ They must not get married
- ◆ They must not have any belongings
- ◆ They must not hit another person, even in self-defence
- ◆ Everyone should have chores as well as worshipping God
- ◆ They should only talk when necessary
- ◆ They must help the poor, sick, young and old
- ◆ There must be only two meals a day, and only the sick are allowed to eat meat

The monks made a promise called a 'vow' to follow these rules when they joined the monastery. Many monasteries across Europe adopted this rulebook, including monasteries in Britain.

Have you heard the saying 'bending the rules'? Over time, monks changed the rules by interpreting them differently. This made the rules less strict. For example, many monks had servants to do their chores for them.

Discussion

What do the students think about the monastery rules?
What rules do they have to follow at school? At home?

What does 'bending the rules' mean? Has anyone ever done this? Why?

St. Benedict created these rules because he thought they would help the monks to worship God. Why do we need rules at school?

Talk to the hand

In the refectory (the dining hall), monks were not allowed to speak. The monks created their own sign language to communicate instead.

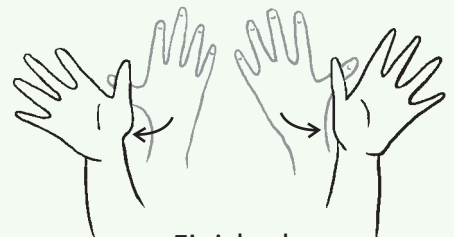
Here are some useful signs ...



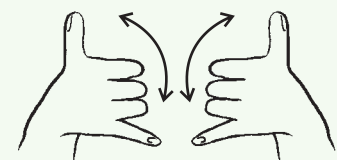
Drink



Eat/Food



Finished



Play

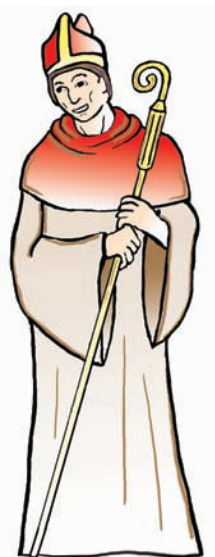
What other things might you want to say?
Try creating your own signs.



Activity 3:

Who is Top Trumps at Abingdon Abbey?

The monastery was a large family, with the abbot as the leader. In early monasteries, everyone had his own job to do and no one was more important than anyone else. Even the abbot slept in a dormitory with all the other monks, there was no special treatment.



The Abbot

Over time, some jobs became more important. Inside the monastery, the abbot was the most important person. By the 12th century, he usually had his own bedroom or even his own house. Monks who ate at the abbot's table often had meat, while everyone else had fish or vegetables. If anyone disagreed with the abbot, he had the power to punish them or even send them away to another monastery.

You can explore the jobs and the relationships of the different people connected to Abingdon Abbey using our Top Trump card activity.

Instructions

Print out the Top Trumps sheets at the back of this teacher's pack and cut out the individual cards.

The Rules of the Game

The rules are similar to any Top Trumps card game. On each card, there is a person and their job title. The value on the card indicates their importance in the monastery.

- ◆ Give each student one or more cards
- ◆ Use a system for randomly selecting two children to show their cards
- ◆ Get them to compare the value of each card. The one with the highest value wins the opponent's card
- ◆ If the value matches then it is a draw and both students keep their cards
- ◆ The student who wins the most cards wins the game



The Prior

Discussion

Get your students to discuss the person's job. Can they tell from the picture on the card what the job involved? Why did one card have a higher value than another? What made them more important?

Supplement what they say with information about each person included in the following Top Trump teacher notes.

Throughout history, there have been disagreements about the power of the church versus the power of the king. You can discuss with students the values we have given King Henry, the Pope and other kings; not everyone would agree with these values.



Teacher's Notes

Top Trumps



10 – King Henry VIII

In 1538, King Henry VIII began to close the larger monasteries and started a new church. This could make him our Top Trump as he was so powerful that he closed Abingdon Abbey.



6 – Prior

The Prior was the Abbot's deputy and was in charge of discipline.



10 – Pope

The Pope was the head of the Roman Catholic church; monasteries took their orders about religion from him. Many people would see the Pope as the Top Trump. Discuss this with your students.



6 – Proctor

The Proctor was the accountant for the monastery. He was in charge of the money and therefore was an important person in the abbey.



9 – King

People believed that God appointed kings and so they ruled the churches in their country. However, sometimes the church and the king did not agree.



5 – Kitchener

The Kitchener was in charge of buying food, drink, and other necessary items. He had the keys to the cellar. He was a father to the whole community, and an important part of the monastery.



8 – Patron

Rich and important people gave money to the monastery to pray for their souls. They were called 'patrons'. Monasteries relied on patronage for part of their income.



4 – Almoner

The Almoner was in charge of distributing alms (charity) to the poor. In the monks' vows they promised to help the poor and sick.



7 – Abbot

The word 'Abbot' means father. He was the head of the monastery. Everyone in the monastery had to listen to him.



4 – Infirmer

The Infirmer looked after the 'infirmary' or sick-house. Some monks were famous doctors. Abbot Faritius was the physician for King Henry I (1068–1125) and helped bring his daughter Matilda into the world.

Teacher's Notes

Top Trumps



4 – Precentor

The Precentor was in charge of the chanting of prayers in the abbey choir. He also looked after the library and led the studies of the monks.



2 – Novice

A novice was a new recruit who was learning to be a monk. A novice became a monk once he had made his vows.



4 – Chamberlain

The Chamberlain was responsible for all the monk's clothing. He also supervised bedding, bathing and shaving.



2 – Lay Brother

Lay Brothers were monks from poor family backgrounds, who could not read. They normally did manual labour on the monastery's farms.



4 – Sacristan

The Sacristan looked after the church and its furnishings. He also took charge of burials.



1 – Lay Servant

A Lay Servant was not a monk but a person whom the monks used as a servant. Over time, the monks did less manual labour and left this work for the servants.



3 – Monk

Most monks were from noble and educated backgrounds. They were often scholars, which means they liked to spend time studying books.

Activity 4:

Who's in the Box?

Your class are going to become archaeologists for this lesson.

Archaeologists study people from the past – who they were, what they did, where and how they lived. They have to work from clues such as the things that people in the past have lost, thrown away or deliberately buried. It's a bit like being a detective.

You can use the Abingdon Abbey handling box, which contains all the artefacts included in this activity. To obtain the box, contact Liz Morgan, Abingdon Partnership Facilitator by email elizabethm7@aol.com or call 07991 34603.

Alternatively, print off the series of 'Who's in the box?' clues sheet – pictures of artefacts – from the back of the teacher pack. Cut them out so that each artefact is on its own piece of paper or card.

All of the things in the pictures were used by to someone in the past. Your class are going to use all of their investigative skills to find out:

- ◆ Who used them
- ◆ When that person lived
- ◆ What that person did as a job

Give one card to each pair of students (depending on the size of the class) and ask them to study and discuss it.

What does their picture show? What can they learn from it? Can they tell when this item was used? Or who might have used it?

Some of the items may be unfamiliar to them – in this case encourage your students to tell you as much as they are able to about the item, such as what it is made of and to have a guess at what it was used for.

After a few minutes study, ask the students to stand up and tell the class what they learnt from their picture. Supplement what they say with the information about each item included in these teacher notes (see below).

By the time everyone has had a turn they should have a good idea of who the items belonged to. But are they right?

The answer is – A Tudor Monk / The Kitchener

Discussion

For older groups you could discuss more about what this monk specifically did? What is the evidence? How do we know what period this monk lived in?

You can use the teacher's notes to discuss more about the monk's appearance and habit.

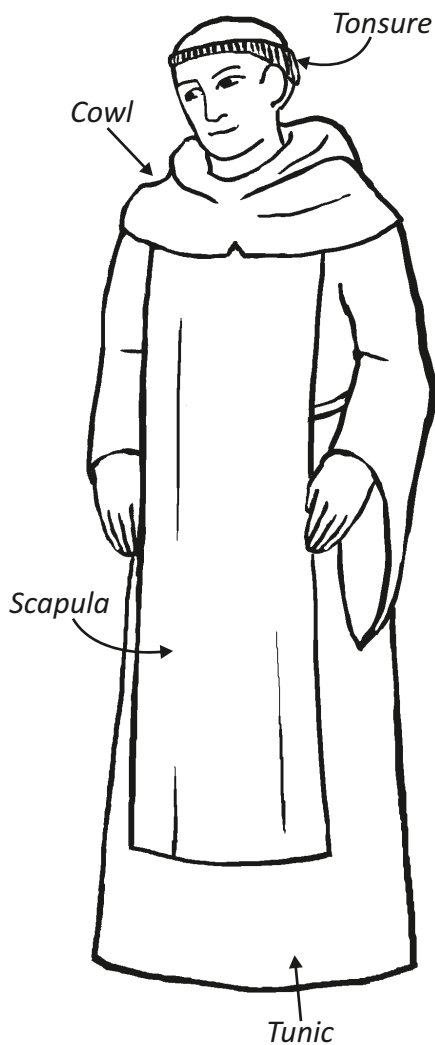


Teacher's Notes 1

Who's in the Box?

Using the handling box you can get one of the students to dress up in a monk's habit.

Alternatively use the cards showing the habit, along with the rest of the artefact cards in the '**Who's in the box?**' activity. The cards are located at the back of the teacher's pack.



Keeping Out of Fashion

It was important that monks showed people that they were different. They were not interested in the things that other people were, such as fashion and belongings.

A monk wore a '**habit**' (a kind of uniform), which consisted of three parts: a tunic, scapula and cowl. The habit meant that every monk looked the same. It was simple and definitely not stylish. They also had their hair partly shaven. This was called a '**tonsure**'. You can see it in this illustration of a monk.

Different orders or groups of monks wore different coloured habits. Benedictine monks wore black.

Tunic – This was tied around the waist with a cloth or leather belt. It was a very simple garment. The monks wore their tunic all the time, even in bed. They had two that they could interchange.

Scapula – This was a long piece of woollen cloth worn over the shoulders. The monks wore a scapula over the top of their tunic when undertaking messy chores, to stop the tunic from getting dirty.

Cowl – This was a hood and was the third part of the habit that a monk wore.

Discussion

In a way this was a uniform, because it told people that the person wearing it was a monk. Do the students understand why the monks dress like this?

Why do people wear uniforms today?

Teacher's Notes 2

Who's in the Box?



Coins – Coins can provide excellent dating evidence because they have the name of the monarch at the time they were minted. We have provided coins from two monarchs – Henry VII and Henry VIII – so stress that in this instance the items must date from the Tudor period. This evidence suggests that this person lived close to the time when the Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries.



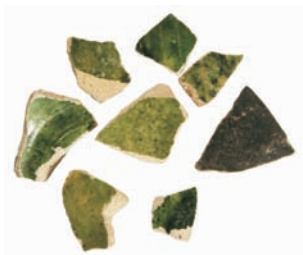
Feathers – Most monks came from an educated background. They were scholarly and many spent time studying and copying manuscripts. Feathers were used as quills, for writing.



Shoe – Most students will identify this straight away as a shoe. Encourage them to describe it and to identify the differences between this one and their own shoes. Do they think that this is a modern shoe? Might it be older?



Tankard – Monks drank beer, made in the abbey brewery from crops grown by the monastery. This type of pottery dates from the Tudor period. The clue is in the green glaze on the inside of the pottery. This was first introduced in the medieval period.



Fragments of pottery – Finding a complete object like the tankard above is rare. Archaeologists usually find fragments of pottery like these. They use pottery as well as coins to date sites because pottery manufacture changes throughout history.



Alms bowl – This wooden bowl was one of the few things a monk actually owned. Ask the class what it was used for. It would have been multi-purpose – for eating and when begging for alms (charity).



Candles – These candles are made of beeswax. Ask the class why they are joined at the wicks. Tell them that old-fashioned candles were made by dipping string into hot wax. By dipping both ends of the string at once the candle-maker doubled his output. They could also be hung up for sale or storage.



Latin Missal – Is this like any of the books in the classroom? What clues reveal its great age? What type of book is this? This is a missal. It is a religious book and contained the text for the religious services, and the music for the choral parts of the service. It is handwritten. The language is Latin; Roman Catholics used Latin for all their religious services. Printing only started in the middle of the 15th century. Even then printed text was rare. Interestingly, the first known specimen of printing in England was ordered by abbot John Sante of Abingdon Abbey in 1474. This Abingdon missal dates from 1461.



Keys – The kitchener had access to the food stores and wine cellars. What do you think these keys were used for?



Rosary – What does this look like? Have any of the students seen or used a rosary before? It looks almost like a piece of jewellery. Catholic monks held the rosary in their hands as they recited a series of prayers. When praying, the monk held different parts of the rosary. When holding the cross, he made the sign of the cross and recited a prayer, the Apostles Creed. For each small bead, he repeated a different prayer, Hail Mary, and for each large bead he recited another prayer, Our Father. Catholics still use a rosary today to pray.



Cross – Although monks did not have any real belongings, some were allowed to wear a cross on a chain. What does this symbol mean to monks?



Activity 5:

First Class Students

Monasteries were important places for learning. Many monks were well educated and they spent their time in the monastery studying. They had libraries with books about history, religion, music, medicine and poetry.

Before the 15th century, books were handwritten rather than printed. Monks wrote many of the early books. They used coloured ink and a feather quill to write and copy manuscripts.

They wrote in a language called Latin as well as Old English. They often translated books from other countries into Old English for others to read.



Some of the books had beautiful illustrations, like the *Abingdon Missal* written in 1461. This was a religious book. You can see that the first letter of the paragraph has a picture inside it. This picture is of the angel giving news to Mary that she would soon give birth to the baby Jesus.

Courtesy of Bodleian Library
www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk

Art activities

- ◆ Get the students to make quills from feathers and try writing. You can use paint instead of ink.
- ◆ Ask the students to take the first letter of their name and draw an illustration around it that tells you something about them: hobbies, holidays or even something they like to eat.

Teachers only

If you want to get a point for your feather quill you will need to cut the nib. To do this put sand in a small saucepan and heat gently. Put the ends of the feathers into the hot sand and leave until sand is cold. This softens the nib. Use a sharp knife to cut the nib to a triangle and then make a slit at the top of the nib.

This is not advised as an activity for students.



Activity 6:

The Monastery as a Business



Abingdon Abbey was a well-run business. It became one of the six wealthiest monasteries in England.

The monastery needed to make money and grow food. It had to feed and house the monks as well as help the poor. It did this in several ways.

Farming

The monastery owned farmland, outside the boundaries of its walls. Sometimes the monks farmed the land; sometimes it was leased out to tenant farmers. On the land, the monastery grew crops and kept animals.

Millstream

In the 10th century, the monastery's Abbot Ethelwold ordered the building of a millstream, which ran off the River Thames and through the abbey's land. It was a vital part of everyday life, supplying fresh water but also providing drainage and removing sewage.

It was also important for industrial activities, for making beer and powering the mills for grinding corn into flour. Later it powered a fulling mill, which prepared cloth for dyeing by beating it in a mixture of urine, clay and soapy plant extracts.

Fisheries

The demands of a primarily meat-free diet meant that fish was an important food source. The monks had fisheries and fishponds to ensure that they always had a supply of fresh fish.

Market and Fairs

Local markets and fairs had to pay a toll to the abbey. St Mary's Fair brought in large numbers of visitors.

Anything extra that the monks made could be sold in Abingdon market. The market was controlled by the abbey and they taxed people for selling their goods there.

Activities to Do

Geography

How important is the River Thames in these activities?

Print out the **Medieval Monastery activity sheet** at the back of this pack. Get students to examine it and colour in any activities that needed water, for example the mill or washing.

What activities on the sheet could make the monastery money or supply them with things they need?

Literacy – Read All About It

The abbey controlled the townspeople through market taxes and providing work, land for farming and possibly houses for rent. Sometimes the townspeople became fed up with this. In 1327, there was a riot and people broke into the monastery. They set fires and stole some of the abbey's treasures. The monks were forced to escape into the River Thames. The ringleaders were caught and hanged.

Ask the students to write a newspaper article about the riots.





Activity 7: Exploring Abingdon

Many monasteries were located in remote places, far away from towns and the busy everyday life of normal people. However, in Abingdon the town grew up around the abbey.

The monastery was an important part of Abingdon for nine hundred years. While only a little of the abbey buildings remain today, the monastery's history is part of what makes Abingdon the town it is today.

If you explore the town, you can still find evidence for the monastery.

You will need

- ◆ A printout of **Map 1 Medieval Abingdon Abbey**
- ◆ A printout of **Map 2 Abingdon Abbey Today**
- ◆ **Spot the Abbey** activity sheet
- ◆ Tracing paper
- ◆ Clipboards

Instructions

You can use these two maps to explore Abingdon and examine what it was like in the past compared to today.

Ask the students to trace the modern Map 2 and secure the traced version on the top of medieval Map 1.

Discussion

What does the legend or key mean on Map 1?

Brown – the building is still standing (although it may have been changed in some way).

Purple – the building is no longer there but we know the location from books or work done by archaeologists.

Grey – estimation of where a building might have been. Many monasteries had similar layouts, so we can make an educated guess about certain buildings' locations.

You can try the following Outdoor Activities

- ◆ Use the maps to go on a tour of Abingdon Abbey.
- ◆ Use the '**Spot the Abbey**' sheet to identify the parts of the abbey that still exist. Mark them onto Map 1.
- ◆ Find the old market place in the town.
- ◆ In Victorian times, the Abbey Gardens was a real garden, rather than a park. It was built by Mr Trendell who was a wine merchant. He added a building that looks like the ruins of the abbey. Where is it? Why do you think they did this?
- ◆ In the Abbey Gardens the outline of the abbey's church is marked with stone kerbing on the grass. Imagine what it would have looked like when it was still there. How big was it? Using this as a starting point, can the students work out the locations of some of the other missing buildings on the map?
- ◆ Identify modern buildings located within the area where the monastery once was, using the traced Map 2.
- ◆ Do Activity 8 – Garden Wall Challenge.

Alternatively, try the following Indoor Activities

- ◆ Spot the difference: ask your students to compare the traced modern Map 2 with the medieval Map 1. What medieval buildings remain today?
- ◆ Print the Medieval Monastery sheet from Activity 6. Get students to compare it to Map 1. Use the map to label the buildings on the colouring sheet.
- ◆ Colour in the buildings on the Activity 6 Medieval Monastery sheet according to the Map 1 legend; for example, colour in the buildings that still exist in brown.



Activity 8:

Be a Building Archaeologist

Abingdon has changed a lot over time, as our past activities have shown.

Archaeologists examine artefacts to find out about the past. A building is simply a big artefact. It can tell us many things about the people who lived there. We can study buildings to see how they have changed.

The photographs below are of the Checker, one of the abbey buildings, which survives today. It was where all the money and possibly legal documents were kept.

Get the students to examine and compare the two photographs below. Print out the 'Be a Building Archaeologist' activity sheet at the back of the teacher's pack.

If you visit the Checker you will see that the stairs have been reinstated since the photo on the left was taken. This happened in 1992.

Photographs used with kind permission of the Friends of Abingdon



20th Century



19th Century

Discussion

Discuss the differences between the two photographs. Which photograph is older? What do you think the original use of the feature was – a door or window? How many differences can you see?

Why not try our Abbey Garden Wall activity sheet? You can find it at the back of this pack.

Game Counters



History Cards

New Monks

Today the novices (trainee monks) take their vows and join the monastery. Move forward two spaces.



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Charity

The Abingdon monks give money and food to help the poor. This is called giving of alms. Move forward two spaces.



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By Royal Command

Abingdon's Abbot John Sante travels to France as the King's Ambassador. Move forward one space.



A Royal Visit

In the 16th century, King Henry VIII stays at the abbey to escape the plague. Move forward three spaces.



A Wealthy Patron

A rich lord gives the abbey some money to pray for his soul to go to heaven. Move forward two spaces.



The Good Book

The first printed (rather than hand-written) bible in England is made for Abingdon's Abbot John Sante in 1474. Move forward one space.



Fresh Water

In 953 AD, Abbot Ethelwold orders the construction of a millstream. It provides fresh water and operates the abbey's mills. Move forward two spaces.



Abbey Gardens

In Victorian times, a wine merchant creates a beautiful garden on the site of the old abbey. Move forward one space.



Restoring the Abbey

In 1944, The Friends of Abingdon buy some of the surviving abbey buildings and restores them. Move forward two spaces.



Following the Rules

In 953 AD Abbot Ethelwold introduces the rules of St. Benedict to the abbey to help them worship God and run the monastery. Move forward two spaces.



Silence Please!

A monk is talking in the dining hall, which is against the rules. Go back one space.



Silence Please!

A monk is talking in the dining hall, which is against the rules. Go back one space.



Early Start

In the 10th century, during the winter the monks start the day at 2am in the morning for the first service of the day. Go back two spaces.



Dinner-time

The monks cannot eat meat because it is against the rules. They can only eat fish and vegetables. Move back one space.



The Disappearing Church

After King Henry VIII closes the Abingdon Abbey in 1538, the abbey's church is taken apart and eventually completely disappears. Move back three spaces.



Bad Harvest

This year the harvest from the land the abbey owns was poor. Move back one space.



Taxes

In the 14th century, the townspeople are unhappy about the taxes they have to pay to the abbey. Move back two spaces.



Trouble with the Law

In the 14th century, the townspeople take the abbey to court to complain about how much it controls their lives. Move back one space.



Getting ready for Bed

It is common for monks to sleep in their clothes to be ready at any time to get up for prayers. This is not very comfortable. Go back one space.



Breaking the Rules

A monk disobeys the Abbot, who is the head of the abbey, and will be punished. Move back two spaces.



10



King Henry VIII

10



Pope

9



King

8



Patron

7



Abbot

6



Prior

6

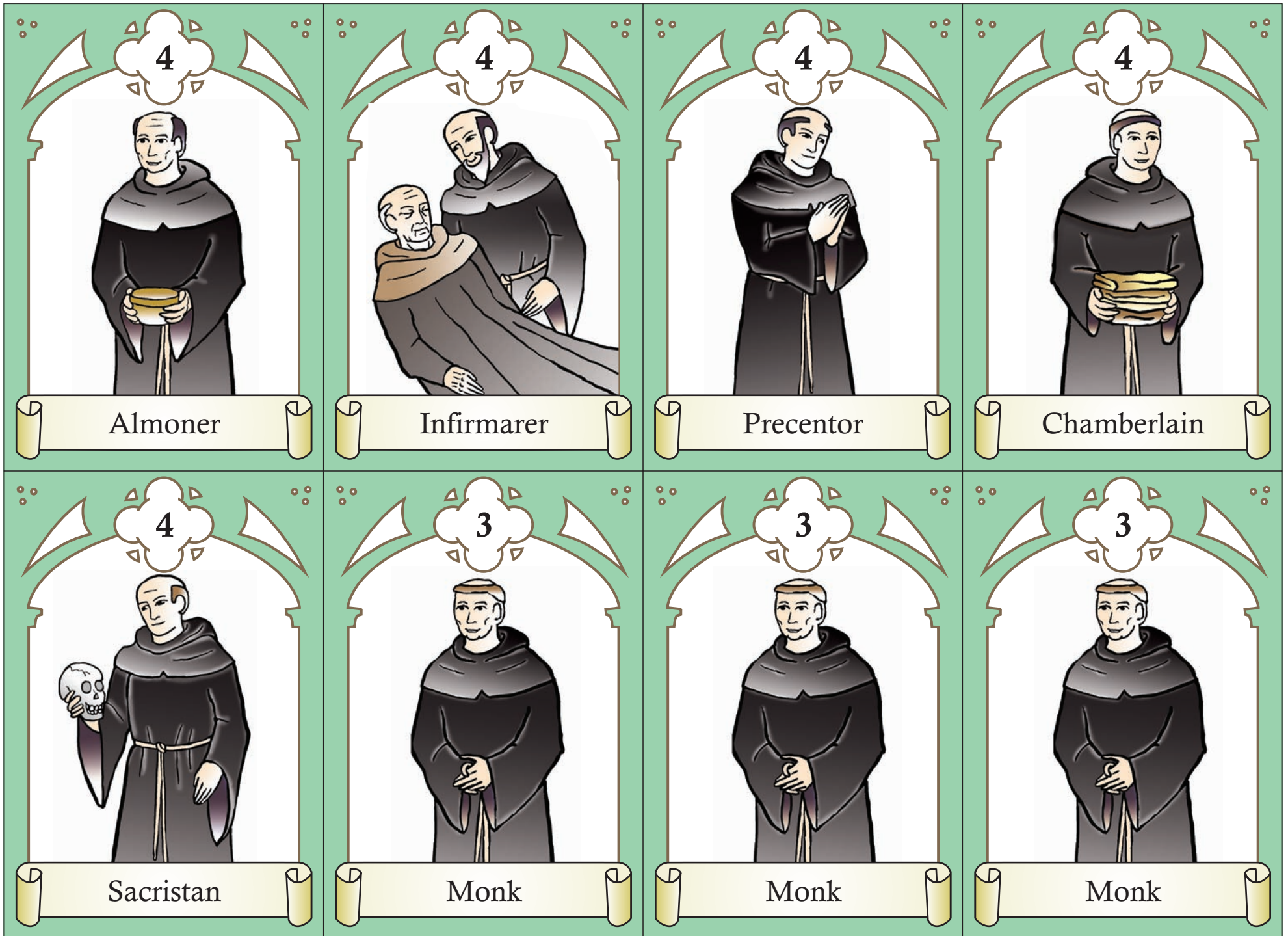


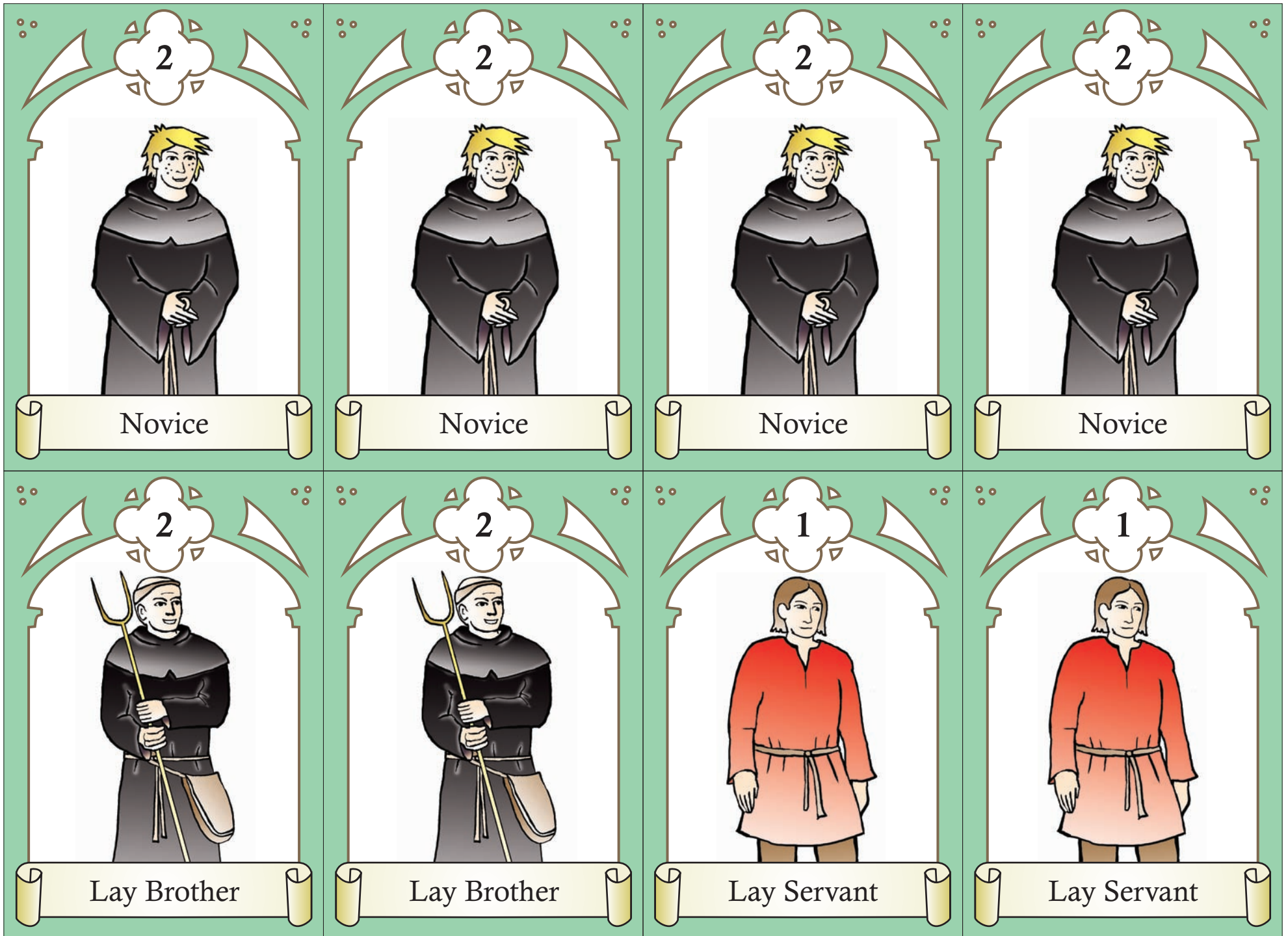
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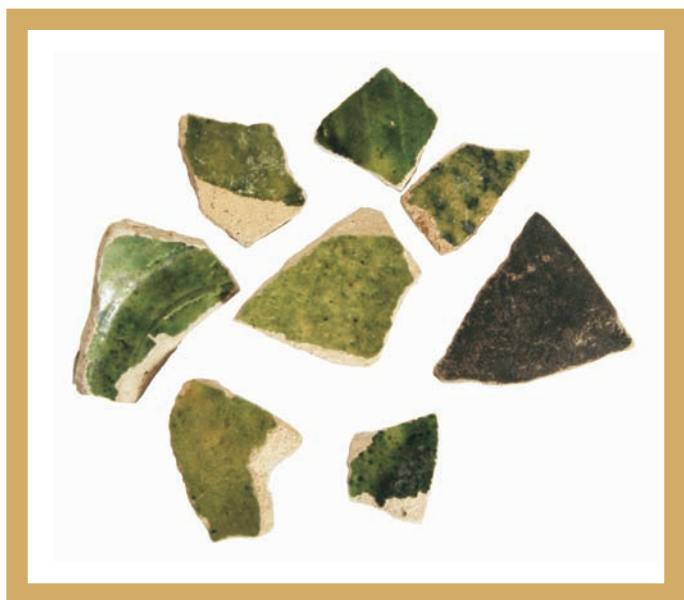
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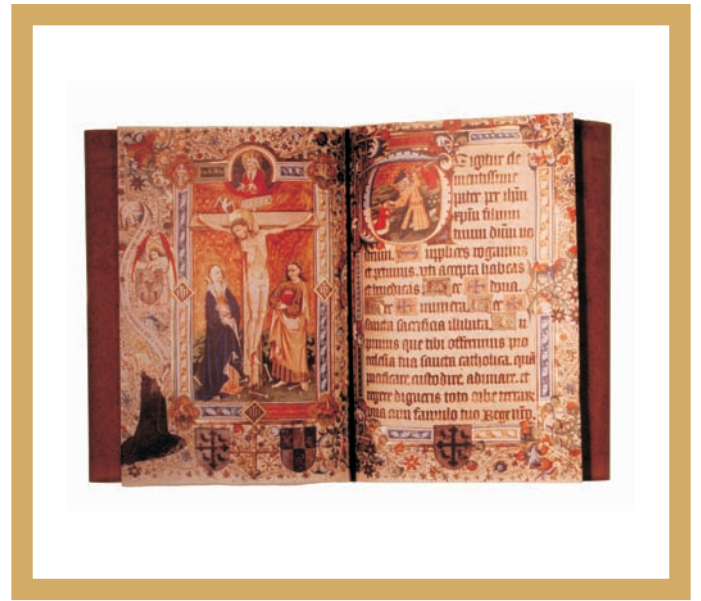


Kitchener










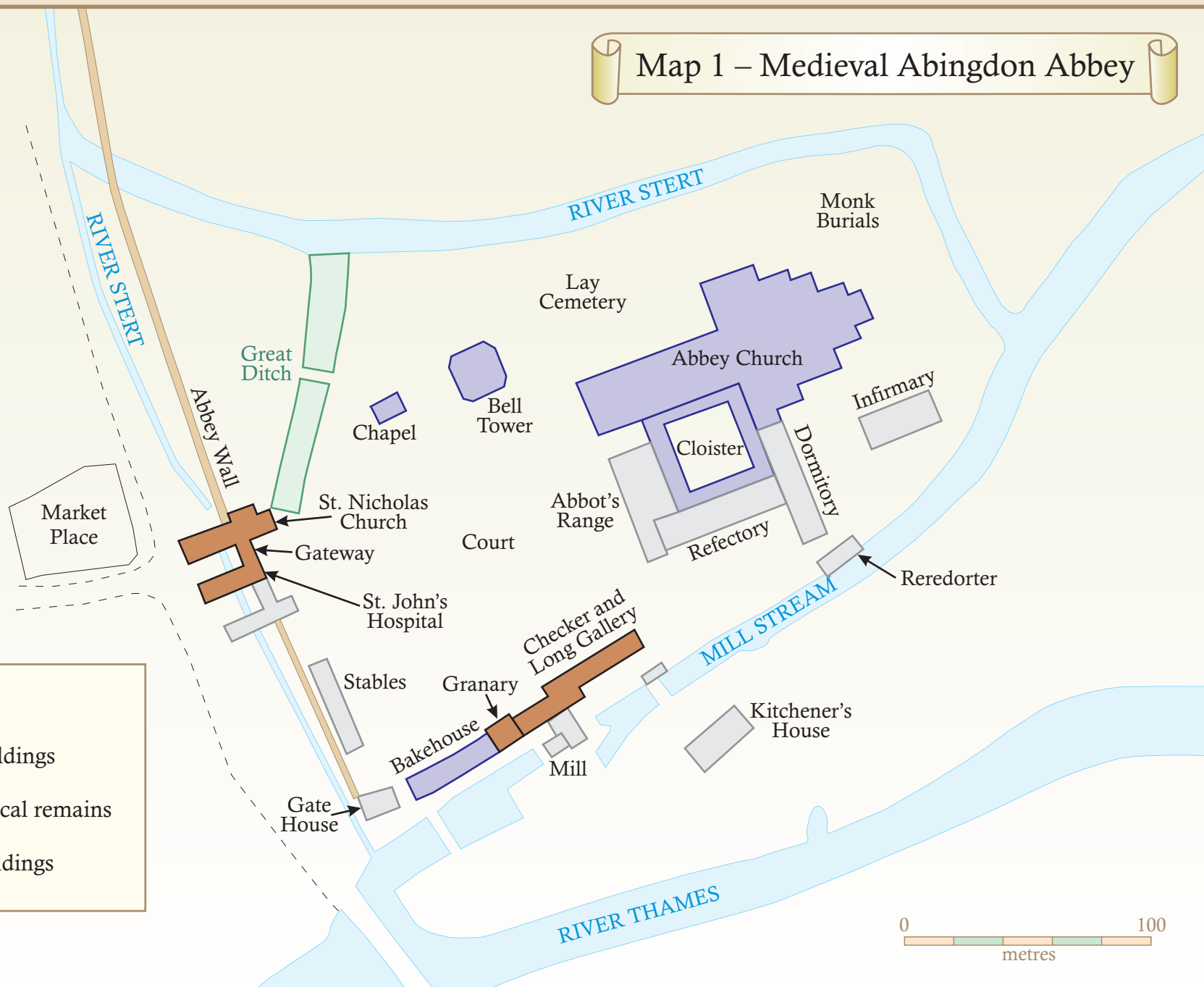


Map 1 – Medieval Abingdon Abbey



Buildings Key




	Existing buildings
	Archaeological remains
	Possible buildings

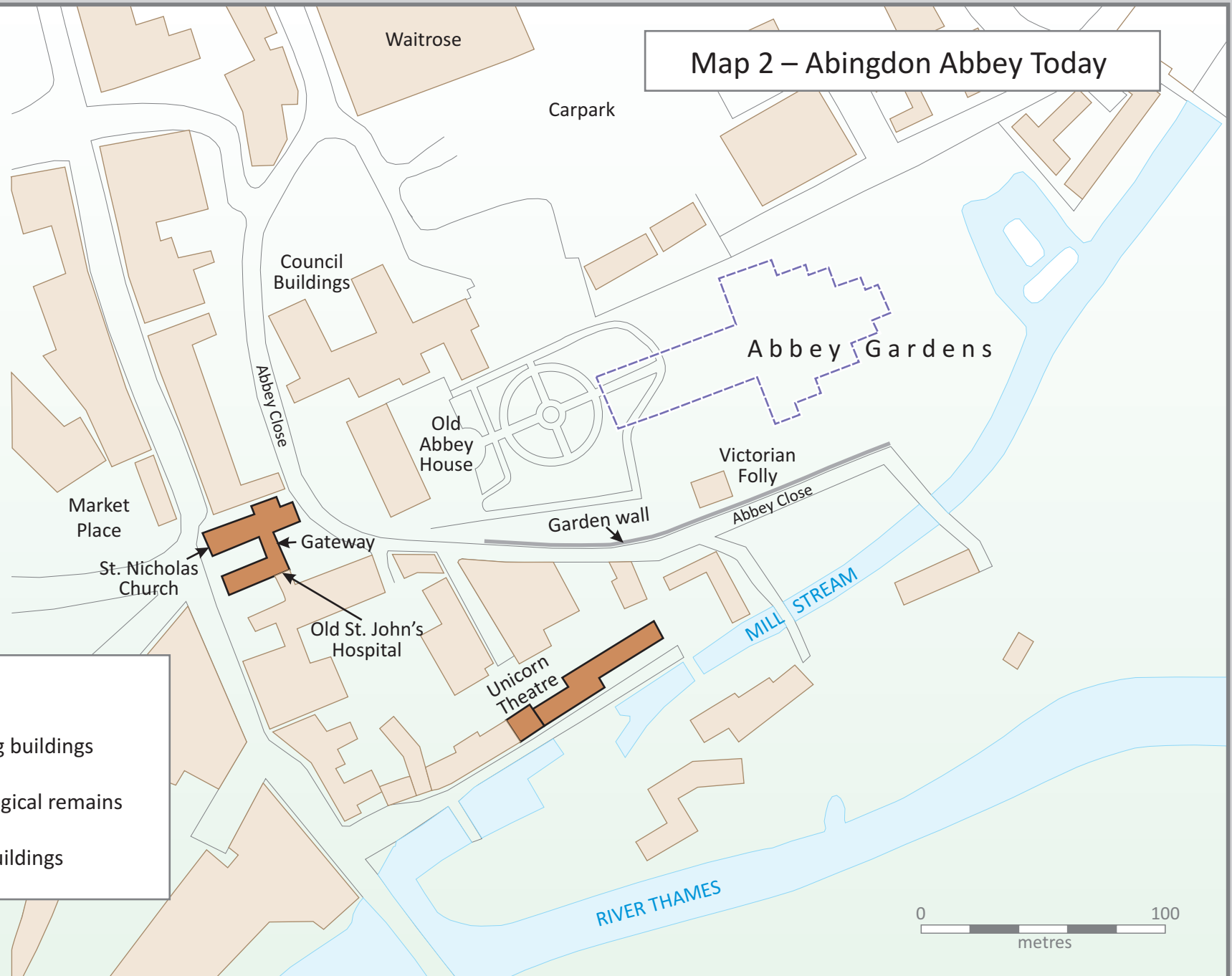


Map 2 – Abingdon Abbey Today



Buildings Key

-  Remaining buildings
-  Archaeological remains
-  Today's buildings





Spot the Abbey

After King Henry VIII closed the abbey in 1538, most of the buildings were taken apart. However, these photographs show the parts of the abbey that still survive today. Take a tour of Abingdon. Can you find them?

Find and mark the exact locations of the photographs on Map 1 Medieval Abingdon Abbey.



A. St Nicholas Church

Located on the outskirts of the abbey, the monks built this church for employees and travellers.



D. The Checker Hall

Historians think that the monk in charge of the mill or granary lived here.



B. St. John's Hospital

Can you spot the river tunnel in St. John's Hospital? The river Stert ran through this tunnel. It is difficult to see because it was blocked up.



E. The Checker

This is the entrance to the Checker. Historians think it was the business office of the wealthy monastery.



C. The Abbey Gateway

The monks rebuilt the main gateway in c.1450 AD. Important visitors, including Henry VIII, rode through this arch.



F. Millstream

The monks built a millstream to provide water for running the mills. It was a vital part of everyday life, supplying fresh water but also providing drainage and removing sewage.



Be a Building Archaeologist



Photographs used with kind permission of the Friends of Abingdon

Garden Wall Challenge

Visit the Abbey Gardens in Abingdon and have a good look at the garden wall.

This wall was built long after the abbey was gone, but a lot has happened to it during its life.

Explore the wall and see if you can identify any changes. Can you find evidence for

- ◆ the wall being made taller?
- ◆ windows added to the wall?
- ◆ a building that is no longer there?
- ◆ a blocked doorway?

If you cannot visit the gardens why not try using these photographs instead. What can you see?

Discussion

If this is what happens to a simple garden wall, what do you think happens to a building or town over time?

What has changed about Abingdon Abbey and the town since the monastery closed in 1538?

