

TOP THINGS TO SEE

EXPLORE
GAINSBOROUGH OLD HALL

Find these places and complete each challenge. Teachers can guide their groups, reading the information before students complete the challenges. Or, students may like to lead their own learning in small groups with support.

Can't find your way?
Use the map on page 6 to help.



1 GALLERY

This gallery was built by Thomas Burgh IV so that people could get between the Great hall and the east end of the building without having to go outside!

The large windows allow for good views across the inner courtyard towards the town. This was an impressive welcome for visitors arriving to see the family.



The gallery at Gainsborough Old Hall.

DID YOU KNOW?



Using glass for windows was new in the 15th century. They were made in small diamond shapes because it was difficult to make larger sheets of glass at the time.

CHALLENGE TIME!

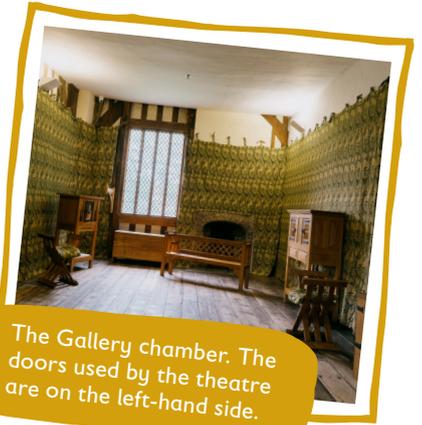


Write down three things you can see from the windows:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2 GALLERY CHAMBER

This room, sometimes called a 'solar', was a space for the lord and his family. It was private, away from the public, busy hall. Rooms like this often had a 'squint' – a narrow window from which to watch the activity in the hall below.



The Gallery chamber. The doors used by the theatre are on the left-hand side.

DID YOU KNOW?



In 1790, Gainsborough Old Hall began to be used as a theatre. The two large doors, which open to give a view of the hall, were probably put in at this time so stage sets could be lifted and lowered. They may even have been used in a balcony scene.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Look at the tapestry. What animals can you see?

BONUS: If time, you can have a go at the games in this room too.



The Great chamber.

3 GREAT CHAMBER

When the Old Hall was first built, this space was two separate rooms. This end was a smaller hall where the lord could eat with his family, welcome guests or speak to his top servants. The decorations on the posts as you enter from the corridor show that this space was important.

DID YOU KNOW?



In 1849, the two rooms were merged to make an assembly room for the town. The ceiling was raised, the walls plastered, a new fireplace and doorway put in, and chandeliers hung. The portraits are of the Hickman family who lived at the hall, 1596–1730.

CHALLENGE TIME!

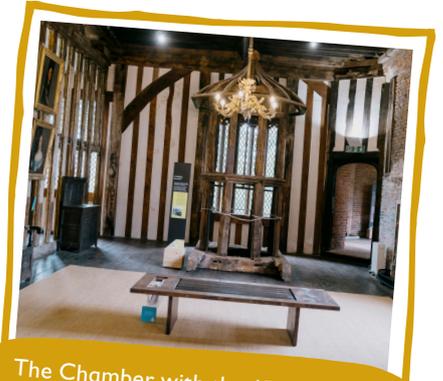


Look around this room. Can you see where the roof has been raised? (There's a display panel nearby to explain.)

BONUS: There are fruits shown on the chandeliers. Can you spot them? What fruits are they?

4 CHAMBER

Before the rooms were merged, this was a space where the lord and his family could be together privately. An inventory (a list of things that were here) shows that this room, like the Great chamber, was richly decorated with carpets, tapestries and fireplaces.



The Chamber with the 15th-century louvre in the centre.

DID YOU KNOW?



The wooden frame is the 15th-century louvre that used to be in the roof of the Great hall. It would have had tiles on top and each side had slats that could be opened and closed by ropes. This was to let smoke from the fire below out of the room.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Louvres get their name from the French word for 'open' – 'ouvert' (pronounced 'oo-verre').

Practise your best French with this sentence:

'Ouvrez les lamelles s'il vous plait.'
(‘Open the slats please.’)

5 TOWER BEDCHAMBER



Senior curator, Kevin Booth, inspecting the wooden rose.

This eight-sided (octagonal) tower has three floors. On each floor there is a room with a fireplace and a toilet. The size and quality of the fireplaces and windows get better as the tower rises. At the top of the stairs the roof is vaulted (arched) with a wooden rose in the middle. From the roof there are excellent views.

DID YOU KNOW?



The tower is made of brick. There are also brick decorations, stone windows and six chimneys. Brick cost a lot of money in the 15th century, which shows how rich the Burgh family were.

CHALLENGE TIME!



One of Henry VIII's servants was called the 'Master of the Stool'. This person had many jobs, including wiping the king's bottom! It was seen as a very important role. Can you **think** why? [Clue: it's not just cleanliness, being close was also key.]



The East range corridor.

6 EAST RANGE CORRIDOR

Gainsborough Old Hall is unusual for having a corridor connecting the rooms. Medieval houses like this weren't normally built with corridors; instead they were just a series of interlinking rooms. The stained-glass windows are probably scraps from a different window, re-cut and placed here.

DID YOU KNOW?



This line of timbers ('studs') dates from about 1470. It separated the corridor from the inner room. Studs close together like this cost a lot of money. They were a visual reminder to anyone visiting that the family were rich and important.

CHALLENGE TIME!

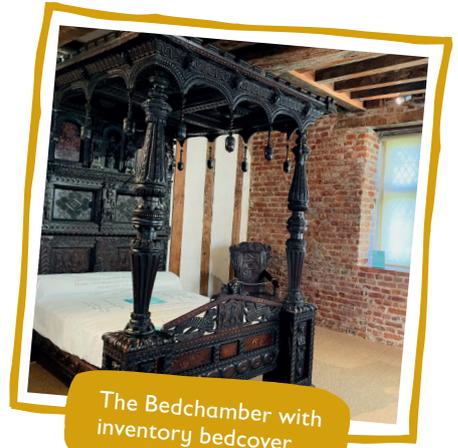


How many timber studs can you **count** as you walk down the corridor?

BONUS: What images can you see on the stained glass?

7 BEDCHAMBER

This room has seen many changes over the years. In the 17th century it was a bedchamber. It was large, well lit, with three wide windows and a stone fireplace. Later, it was used as a sitting room.



The Bedchamber with inventory bedcover.

DID YOU KNOW?



We know how this room was furnished from an inventory, made in 1625, when Sir William Hickman (the owner of Gainsborough Old Hall at the time) died. More than 100 objects were recorded. Many of them are listed on the bedcover.

CHALLENGE TIME!



Look at the inventory items written on the bedcover. **Discuss** as a group, then write an inventory for your bedroom. How do they compare?

TIP: A bezoar stone is a lump found in the digestive system of certain animals and was believed to help ward off evil and disease.

My Inventory



The Dining room and inscription.



8 DINING ROOM

This room, with oak panelling, is shown as it was in the late Victorian era. At this time the panelling was painted dark brown. The motifs over the mantle were probably added in the 18th century.

DID YOU KNOW?



Using a microscope we know that the panelling has had 13 coats of paint over the last 300 years. It started as a light pale stone colour in about 1600. This was to help create a light and warm space.

CHALLENGE TIME!



The writing in the smaller room says 'Trust truth only'. Legend says that this was written by a guard who came with Henry VIII on his progress (a tour around the main towns and cities of the country). What do you **think** the guard meant by this?

9 WEST LODGING RANGE

This part of the building had three floors, with long corridors leading to 12 nearly identical rooms. For 400 years these rooms were lived in by a variety of people. Each room had a small window, a fireplace and a toilet. In the first-floor rooms you can find information about who lived here and what they did.



DID YOU KNOW?



People in the 15th and 16th centuries believed that burn marks had the power to protect them from bad things – a fire, illness or injury. They are often found at doorways and windows – guarding the ways in – and also in rooms used for sleeping.

CHALLENGE TIME!



How many burn marks can you see? **Sketch** one of them here:

BONUS: Which famous brand of chocolates is one of the people who lived here linked to?



The scorch marks in the West lodging range.

