

Kearsney Matters

Use a visit to **Kearsney Abbey** to prompt discussion about why parks are important and create a flag or poster celebrating the park.

Suitable for KS2,
adaptable for KS1



Curriculum areas covered:



History

Continuity and change
Significant local people
and events



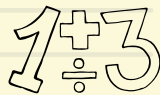
Art & Design

Developing mastery of a
range of materials
and techniques



English

Spoken language
Presentation and debate
Writing
Non-fiction



Mathematics

Problem solving
Symmetry
Reflections



Citizenship

Debate
Responsible activity

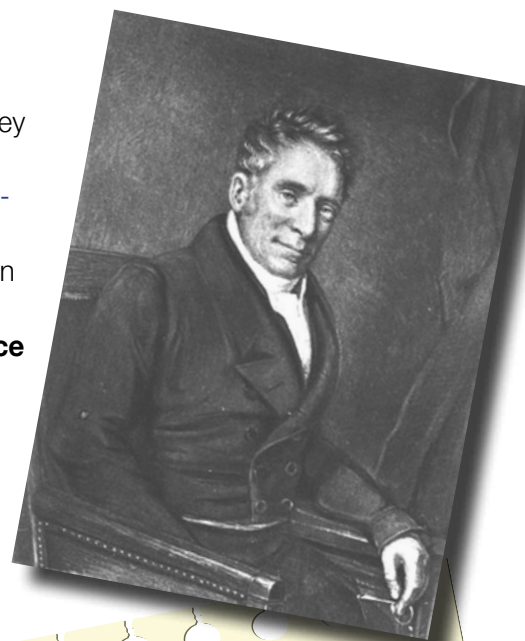


Physical Education

Sustained
activity

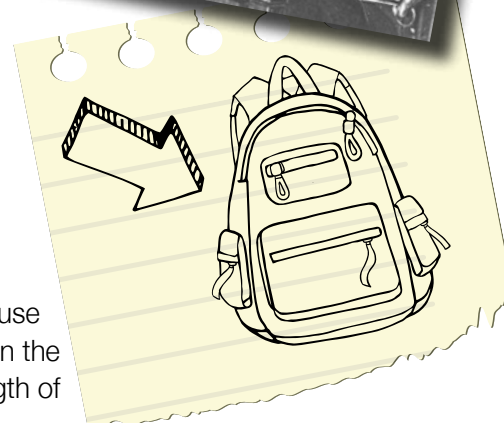
Before your visit:

- Look at the biography of John Minton Fector, who built Kearsney Abbey (see **Kearsney Matters resource sheet 1** or online here).
<http://www.kearsneyparks.co.uk/About-the-parks/People/John-Minet-Fector.aspx>
- Look at the photograph of the house and photographs and information about the former billiards room and the coat of arms on the brackets supporting the room's ceiling beams (see **Kearsney Matters resource sheet 2** or online here).
<http://www.kearsneyparks.co.uk/About-the-parks/Grand-old-buildings.aspx>
- Talk about how a coat of arms would include appropriate symbols and a motto (here 'Honesta quam splendida' – 'honest rather than splendid things').



Where to go:

- Collect the **PUPILS' GREY RESOURCE RUCKSACKS** then use the old billiard room as your base for the activity.



During the visit:

- Look at the photographs on **Kearsney matters resource sheet 2**. Can pupils identify the billiards room within the photographs of the house exterior? Ask them to pace out the extent of the façade of the house in the top photograph, assuming it must have been about five times the length of the front of the billiards room.
- Look inside the old billiards room and compare the present interior with the photograph on the sheet. What features are still there? Where was the table positioned? Explain that the room was traditionally for men only, with the game played in the evenings, which is why the furnishings and decoration are dark and 'masculine'. Look at the coats of arms on the brackets supporting the roof beams and the 'monsters' holding the shields.
- Talk about how the whole park was once a private garden for the house. The park opened to the public in the early 1950s and included an open-air theatre for performances of Shakespeare plays such as A Midsummer Night's Dream.
- Ask pupils about who they think uses the park today? Have they been there with their families? Sit outside the old billiards room and notice who is in the park and what they are doing. Do pupils have any other ideas for fun things to do in the park?
- Make a list of things they think people enjoy about the parks. What values do the parks promote (health, exercise, fresh air, looking after nature)?
- In small groups, ask pupils to create a TV news report about the park ('Here we are in Kearsney Abbey...') interviewing each other about what is good about the park and why they enjoy it. Watch each others' reports and feedback. The reports could be filmed on site.



After the visit:

- Ask pupils to create their own coats of arms, flag or poster for the parks with mottos about what they think is valuable about the amenity.
- For a flag or shield, make the background by folding an A3 sheet of paper in half and designing a geometric pattern on the exposed half. Open the paper up and draw a reflection of the pattern on the other half. Overlay freehand images on the pattern to finish the design.

Resources during visit:

- Use on-site **GREY RESOURCE RUCKSACKS** for Kearsney matters resource sheet 2, clipboards, and ponchos and waterproof mats in case of rain.
- **School to supply:** writing materials (pens/pencils and paper), cameras to film presentations if available.

Curriculum links:

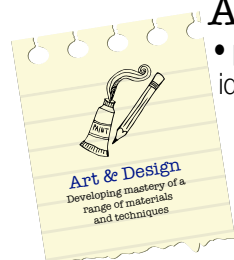
History:

- Understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance, and use them to make connections, draw contrasts, analyse trends, frame historically-valid questions and create their own structured accounts, including written narratives and analyses.

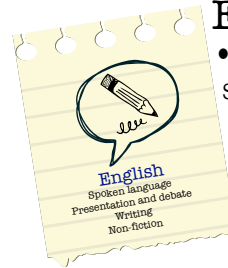


Art & Design:

- produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences.

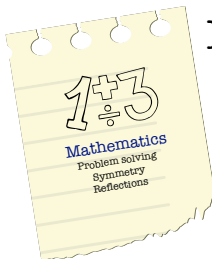


English:



- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates.
- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.
- Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

Mathematics:



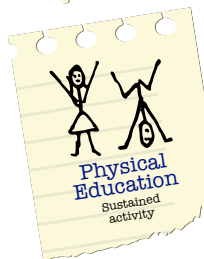
- Can solve problems by applying their mathematics to a variety of routine and non-routine problems with increasing sophistication, including breaking down problems into a series of simpler steps and persevering in seeking solutions.

Citizenship:



- Are equipped with the skills to think critically and debate political questions, to enable them to manage their money on a day-to-day basis, and plan for future financial needs.

Physical Education:



- Are physically active for sustained periods of time.
- Lead healthy, active lives.

Resource Sheet 1 John Minet Fector



John Minet Fector (1754-1821) Kearsney Abbey was built as a grand county house and estate by John Minet Fector (1754-1821), one of Dover's wealthiest businessmen and a popular local figure.

In 1814 John Minet Fector assumed control of the family's private banking business, Fector & Co. which can trace its origins back to the merchant and shipping businesses of his uncle, Isaac Minet, a French Huguenot who arrived in Dover from Calais in 1685.

In 1794 John married Anne Wortley Montague Laurie (1769-1848), the daughter of General Sir Robert Laurie, MP for the county of Dumfries. They had four children: Anne Judith, Charlotte Mary, Caroline and John Minet junior. The family was well connected at home and abroad – in 1814 they entertained the French king in exile and the Prince Regent (later George IV), as well as the Emperor of Russia. John was also a Jurat of Dover (senior councilman) and High Sheriff of Kent, responsible for the administration of justice in the courts at Maidstone.

Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, John decided to build a new country house and estate to be called Kearsney Abbey. He wanted a fine residence for his son, 'in the style of an abbey' (though the site had no religious connections), as well as to boost Dover's economy by providing employment. He also announced the building of an improved bank on the site of the now derelict old Customs House and had plans to make cheap credit available to local businesses.

Unfortunately John died in 1821, before Kearsney Abbey had been completed. He had been extremely popular in Dover and the funeral route from Kearsney was lined with local people. His grand house remained a family residence until 1844.

Fector & Co. went on to play a major role in the development of high street banking as we know it today. In 1842 the company was sold to the National Provincial Bank, which went on to become the National Westminster Bank (NatWest).

Resource Sheet 2

Kearsney Abbey and billiards room



View of Kearsney Abbey c. 1900. The garden was laid out in the 1820s in the style of Capability Brown.

Kearsney Abbey was a fine example of a former country house and estate.

Though the site has no religious connections, John Fector (see **Kearsney Matters resource sheet 1**) wanted his house to be built 'in the style of an abbey'. He used some of the stonework from Dover's medieval old town walls and buildings in its construction, which he had collected when they were demolished as the town was being redeveloped. Most of the manor house was demolished during the 1950s because of extensive dry rot. However, the former billiards room in the west wing still stands.

Billiards room

The billiards room was added in c.1876 by Francis Lyon Barrington (1834–1877), a cousin of Lord Barrington, who owned coalmines in Durham. Francis Lyon moved to Kearsney after he was appointed Justice of the Peace in Kent.

He carried out substantial renovations to the house, including building the billiards room. Billiards was traditionally for men only, with the game played in the evenings, which is why the furnishings and decoration are dark and 'masculine'.



The shields

Toward the top of the walls you can see brackets with finely carved shields supported by monsters.

The ten shields all bear the arms of Francis Lyon Barrington. Among the images is a lion (for Lyon). The shields are clasped from behind by various lively, winged hybrid monsters including a dragon, a griffin, a winged hyena and a devil.



Shield supported by a 'monster'

Resource Sheet - Kearsney Parks Sketch Map

