

**File name: Cellarium**

**Audio length: 1:49 minutes**

Meg: Ok, so this space is known as the Cellarium. But Kat, what on earth is a cellarium?

Kat: So the Cellarium was where the lay brothers lived – remember, lay brothers are the men from poorer backgrounds who lived here. The lay brothers were a really important part of how the monastery ran; they did the manual and agricultural work in the abbey, and they worked on the lands owned by the abbey which could be quite far away. But this meant that the choir monks were freed up to spend their time in prayer and to devote themselves to their religion.

Meg: And what did they do here?

Kat: So this is where the lay brothers slept – above our heads on the first floor. If you look up you can see triangles of rougher stonework where the ceiling used to be attached to the wall; up to 75 lay brothers could have slept here. We're currently walking through their dining room; there was a store house for grain and wool and other provisions. There would have also been a room used as a meeting place where monks might do business, speak to family and friends, because monks were supposed to be quiet in the rest of the monastery.

Meg: Wait, Kat – what were their beds like? In my head they've just got loads of bunk beds.

[Laughter]

Kat: Not bunk beds, more like straw mattresses on the floor.

Meg: What kind of business would monks do?

Kat: Well they had to deal with wool traders and merchants, you know they used to sell their fleeces. At different points in history the abbey made quite a lot of money. A lot of the lay brothers would sleep in the fields, and not even sleep in the abbey, sort of hang out with the sheep.

Meg: In little tents?

Kat: Little huts.

Meg: And so is there anything else that you can point out about the space that we need to clock?

Kat: So the obvious thing is that a lot of it has collapsed, so the line that used to be the railings used to be the outer wall of this building. And the wall to the south collapsed in 1746 so it's not always obvious that this was once a large building.