Look up on top of the walls to see the six chests. They contain the bones of early kings, bishops and a queen. When the Roundheads raided, they opened the chests and threw the bones at the windows. Local people put the bones back in the chests, but they were all mixed up.

This is the holiest part of the Cathedral, where in the past only monks were allowed. They came here seven times a day to pray. Services are still held here every day. The statues on the Great Screen were added in Victorian times. Can you see the statue of Saint Swithun? He’s holding a bridge? The mirror table has a plan that shows who all the statues are.

Now lie down on the steps. It might not be comfy, but it’s the best way to look at the fantastic ceiling. Can you find the white greyhound, the gold pelican and three dice?

The Creepy Crypt is 'hidden place'. It wasn’t used for burials, but for prayer. Imagine what it was like, full of flickering candlelight, long shadows and the low chanting of the monks...

The Crypt often floods in winter, and the water can rise to the knees of the statue. Is it wet or dry today?

The word ‘crypt’ means the ‘hidden place’. It wasn’t used for burials, but for prayer. Imagine what it was like, full of flickering candlelight, long shadows and the low chanting of the monks...

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The West Window was smashed to pieces by the Roundheads. Local people saved the glass, then the window was later rebuilt as a mosaic.

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To find out which bones belong to which person?

Which two dates can you find on the metal memorial?

Why do I get all the dirty jobs?

Why do you think there might be a special chapel for fishermens?

Which two dates can you find on the metal memorial?

How do I get all the dirty jobs?

Why do you think there might be a special chapel for fishermens?

Why do you think there might be a special chapel for fishermens?
Welcome to Winchester Cathedral

Winchester Cathedral’s ‘Wicked’ History

648
The first of two Saxon cathedrals is built here.

828
Winchester becomes the capital of England.

852–862
Saint Swithun is Bishop of Winchester.

1079
The Normans start to build this Cathedral.

1093
Saint Swithun’s bones are brought here from the Saxon Cathedral, which was then demolished.

1348
The Plague (or Black Death) kills about half the population of Winchester. Victims had boils and fever, then died within days.

1358
Saint Swithun’s shrine is destroyed by King Henry VIII’s men. His bones are lost forever.

1642–48
English Civil War. The Roundheads attack the Cathedral, smashing windows and scattering bones. Local people gather up all the broken bits.

1660
The west window is put back together.

1906–11
The Cathedral is sinking. William Walker works underwater to repair the foundations.

Bones, bodies, beasts and baddies
A very horrid children’s trail

Enter if you dare!

The fi rst of two Saxon cathedrals is built here

Welcome to Winchester Cathedral

Winchester Cathedral was built by the Normans almost 1,000 years ago. This was in the days of castles, Crusades and courageous soldiers.

Did You Know?

A cathedral is a church that has a bishop’s throne in it. A bishop is a very important priest.

The Cathedral is still used today for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Baptism is when anyone of any age becomes a member of the Christian family. The sign of the cross is drawn on their heads with holy water drawn from the font. Some people call it Christening.

Christians have worshipped on this site for more than 1,400 years.

Who Was Who?

Here are some of the people who are mentioned in the trail.

Saint Swithun
He was Bishop of Winchester in Anglo-Saxon times, and is a patron saint of the Cathedral. For many years his bones were kept here in a beautiful casket. Pilgrims would ask Saint Swithun for his prayers in heaven for God to cure their illnesses.

William the Conqueror
William, Duke of Normandy, invaded England and became king in 1066. He had lots of castles and cathedrals built to show off his great power. His people were called the ‘Normans’.

Roundheads
In the English Civil War the Roundheads (on the side of Oliver Cromwell and Parliament) fought the Cavaliers (on the side of King Charles I). The Roundheads damaged many cathedrals, including Winchester.

Pilgrims
These people travelled to holy places to pray, or to find cures for their illnesses. They often wore broad-brimmed hats and gowns tied with ropes.

Monks
Monks are holy men who give their lives to God. Winchester Cathedral was run by Benedictine monks until 1539. They wore long black robes with hoods (called habits).

Can you find the monks in the picture?

Most of the pictures in the trail are from the illustrator’s imagination, with a little help from our history experts. Do they help you imagine what the Cathedral was like in the past?

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