Explore and Create: Hidden Heraldry

Did you know…?

A coat of arms is unique to a family or a person.

The colours and pictures are symbolic so the design is intended to represent the family's identity and values. This crest is from St Peter's Church, Sudbury in Suffolk. A dog might signify loyalty, a feather obedience and a helmet strength.

Displaying a coat of arms on a shield, banner or pennant was useful in battle for identifying who was on which side.

These emblems are often found inside churches. They remind everyone that a particular family or person had a connection with the building. Perhaps they paid for part of the church.

Have a look at these coats of arms then why not try designing your own?

Use our ideas page to get you started.

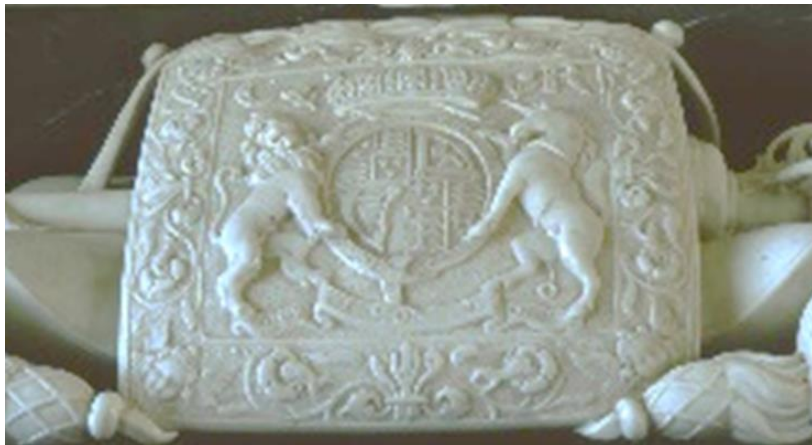# Explore and Create: Hidden Heraldry

What animals do you see?

St Martin's Church, Whenby North Yorkshire

Holy Trinity Church, Blackburn, Lancashire

Church of St Mary Magdalene, Croome D'Abitot, Worcestershire

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Look at how the shields are divided into sections

All Saints' Church, Haugham, Lincolnshire

Holy Trinity Church, Wentworth, South Yorkshire

Church of St John Maddermarket, Norwich, Norfolk

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Crests appear in many different materials.

St Michael's Church, Churchill, Worcestershire

St Peter's Church, Sandwich, Kent
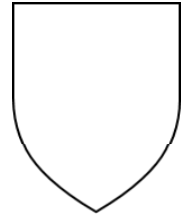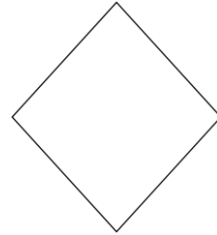

Holy Trinity Church, Wentworth, South Yorkshire

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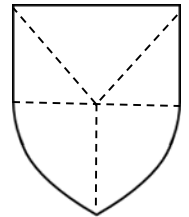
Can you create your own coat of arms?

Start by choosing the shape.
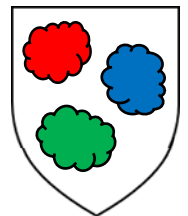A diamond or a heater (the typical medieval shield shape).

Do you want to divide the background?
Horizontally, vertically, diagonally or a using a combination of a dividing lines?
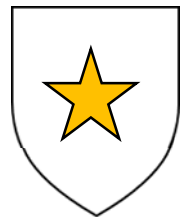
Decide which colours to use.
Pick bright colours and perhaps add some silver or gold.

What symbols will you add?
An object such as a sun, a crown or an anchor? Or maybe an animal - a lion for courage, a bee for hard work or a fox for cleverness!

Cloisters the cat is curious …
He'd love to see what you've created!
Tweet us with an image of your coat of arms: @TheCCT #AdventuresInChurches