

BATS IN CHURCHES



SCHOOLS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Schools can be a highly effective means of community engagement, as children will go home and share their learnings with family and friends. Recognising this, the Bats in Churches project devised a 2 hour programme for primary schools near to project churches. **Between September 2019 and October 2023 this was delivered to 19 schools in 74 sessions, engaging 800 children and 88 adults.**

CASE STUDIES: THE RISSINGTON SCHOOL, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

In September 2019, the first year of the Bats in Churches project, we delivered a pilot of the programme to Y5/6 pupils at

The Rissington School, the nearest primary school to our project church St Peter's in Little Rissington.

Teacher feedback encouraged us to roll out the programme to other primary schools near our project churches:

“Explaining and showing the children how this issue is a local one and how they can help really motivated them to think about how we can help make sure bats are looked after without damaging our local churches.”

Following the visit the school put bats on its Y5/6 curriculum.

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The school visited St Peter's church in October 2021 and again in October 2023, giving the children a chance to learn more about their local church and to look for real evidence of bats in the church.

UBLEY COFE SCHOOL, BRISTOL

In June 2021 we delivered the programme to children from Ubley CofE Primary School at St Michael the Archangel, Compton Martin, Somerset. When the children went back to school and home they talked about the church and its bats to their friends and family. Parents reported that they had not been aware of bats in the church until their children told them about the visit.

The school visit inspired St Michael's to organise a batty community engagement event in September 2021. This went so well that, in 2022, it hosted roost counts and bat walks, with the support of the local bat group, and worked with artist/photographer Ilene Sterns to help create the Bats in Churches multi-media art installation ***On A Wing And A Prayer***.

Schools involved with the programme received a copy of ***The Little Church Bat*** for the school library.

The school programme led to our **Challenge Badge** which can be downloaded from our website.

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