

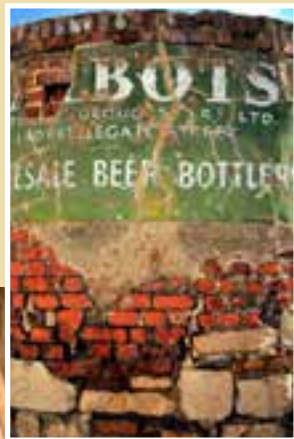
A HISTORY OF BLACKFRIARS

Blackfriars is a stunning medieval priory with significant historical importance. The site was built between 1240 and 1270 on land belonging to Gloucester Castle. The priory is situated very close to the medieval south gate to the city, and under the car park at the front of the building are roman remains of military buildings and a medieval cemetery. The site boasts original thirteenth century scissor-braced roofs in each range and the scriptorium is the earliest surviving purpose-built library in Britain.



During the Reformation and the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the site was bought by Sir Thomas Bell and was transformed into a family home called 'Bell's Place' in 1539. The scriptorium was transformed into a factory for the manufacture of caps and cloth. It has

since been passed through generations of families and has been divided into private dwellings and factories. It has also been used as a school, a church, stables and even as a chandlery (a supply shop) for the nearby dockland.



FACILITIES

- Toilets (including a disabled toilet)
- Thomas Bell room and cloister garden are available for packed lunches.
- There are disabled lifts and ramps onsite.
- The Scriptorium does not have any electricity or disabled access to the upper level due to its historical nature.
- Parking – there is an area to the front of Blackfriars for coach drop off. There is parking for coaches at the bottom of Westgate Street or the car park at the docks. There is limited parking space in our car park for small minibus or a couple of cars – please ring for availability.



GET IN TOUCH

For more information or an education pack please contact the Blackfriars team on 01452 396384 or email blackfriars@gloucester.gov.uk

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BLACKFRIARS

— GLOUCESTER —

Blackfriars Priory Educational Visits



Over
700
years of
history!



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We welcome all children's groups including schools, home learning groups, brownies, guide and scout groups, youth and church groups.

Choose one of three exciting sessions for a fun few hours of learning, or alternatively why not make a day of it and book two of the sessions and really delve into the fascinating past of Blackfriars.



SESSION ONE - LIFE IN A MEDIEVAL PRIORY:

The visit will focus on how the Dominican friars lived at Blackfriars. We will look at the daily routine and lives of the medieval friars and their role in medieval Gloucester. We will also look at a medieval herb garden and how the plants were used as medicine. It was believed by some that smelling basil could grow a scorpion in the head!



The friar's lives changed when Henry VIII became head of the Church in England, we will look at how this affected their lives. The Dominicans were also teachers and preachers and produced illuminated manuscripts. We will look at this process and even create our own!



SESSION TWO - ARCHAEOLOGICAL DETECTIVES:

Blackfriars is a protected site and scheduled ancient monument. Excavations have been conducted onsite revealing evidence of Roman, Medieval, Tudor and modern day history. A large cemetery was discovered outside the priory wall suggesting that the site was at one time operating as a hospice.



Join us for an archaeological excavation – uncover artefacts, record your findings and discuss what the objects tell us about how people lived at Blackfriars. Become an archaeological detective and solve the clues of the past!

SESSION THREE - TUDOR LIFE AT BELL'S PLACE:

Walk in the footsteps of the Tudors at Blackfriars! In this session you will get the opportunity to dress as Thomas Bell, Lady Bell and their servants and discover how they lived at 'Bell's Place'. The visit will look at life in a Tudor household, servant life and find out how the Bells became wealthy and important people in medieval Gloucester.



Discover how Blackfriars turned from priory to medieval home and how the site developed to accommodate these changes.



Contact us
for an education pack

01452 396384
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Tudor portrait of
Sir Thomas Bell.