

# DESIGN YOUR OWN ROOF BOSS

St Mary's Church in Beverley is nationally famous for its collection of medieval and Tudor roof bosses. At the point where two or more roof beams meet, it was common practice to place a wooden cap, carved with religious or domestic images – these were called roof bosses.

You have studied many of the roof bosses in St Mary's Beverley in completing these worksheets. They show religious images such as Christ, angels, saints and miracles. They often simply showed scenes from town life, or reflected the concerns of the people who lived in Beverley in this period. There are scenes showing drunkenness, mystical beasts such as unicorns which the people believed were real, and people going about their daily lives growing crops and selling woollens.



The image above is a roof boss from St Mary's. It shows a **Manticore**. This was a terrifying beast with the head of a human, body of a lion and tail of poisonous spines. It was said that if a knight speared a Manticore with his lance, the Manticore's poison would go through the lance, instantly killing the knight and his horse.

There are several of these carved on the roof of St Mary's in Beverley. We have no way of knowing why the people of Beverley were so concerned about this particular beast.

## Task

You have a blank template on which to design your own roof boss.

It should be of a mythical creature which you design. You need to consider the following:

1. Include at least one part of a human. It was their links to ordinary humans that made these beasts particularly disturbing.
2. Consider what animal parts it will include. Will it have wings, a tail, fins?
3. Most importantly, make clear how it threatens people – possibly claws, teeth, spines, fire.....

