

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WOOKEY HOLE CAVES

- CHAMBER 1 'The Witch's Kitchen' – stalagmites (The Giant, The Beehive, The Witch, St. Michael's Mount), legend of the witch (see activity sheet).
- CHAMBER 2 'The Great Hall' – this cave has a range of colours on its roof and walls: red (due to iron oxide); white (calcite); black (manganese); grey (lead). The roof is the height of the nave in Wells Cathedral.
- CHAMBER 3 'The Witch's Parlour' – a very broad cave with a low ceiling, probably formed by flood waters swirling in a violent whirlpool.
- MANMADE TUNNEL – this was blasted through the rock from Chamber 3 to the valley outside the caves. Completed in 1974, this amazing feat of engineering opened up Chambers 7, 8 and 9 to the public and created a circular tour.
- CHAMBER 4 (flooded) – used by the Iron Age people as a burial chamber. They would have been able to wade through from Chamber 3 as the water level was lower at that time.
- CHAMBERS 5 and 6 – flooded.
- CHAMBERS 7 and 8 – tall, narrow caves with beautiful rock formations. The bright orange colour on the walls is due to iron hydroxide. Mosses and other small plants have colonised the caverns since the introduction of electric lights.
- CHAMBER 9 – a spectacular cave, 30 metres from floor to ceiling. Used as a base for divers exploring the caves.

