

# Canterbury & Magna Carta

A special programme of exhibitions, activities and events commemorating the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta.



# Evaluation Report, October 2015

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## 1. Introduction

The city of Canterbury's commemorations of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta took place over six weeks between 6<sup>th</sup> June and 19<sup>th</sup> July 2015 through the *Canterbury & Magna Carta* programme.

2015 marked the 800th anniversary of the sealing of one of the world's greatest agreements, Magna Carta. It was the first document imposed upon a King of England by a group of his subjects, the barons, in an attempt to limit his powers by law and to protect their rights. The charter is an important milestone for constitutional law in England and beyond. As the seat of the Archbishop, Canterbury played a significant part in the making of this historical document. Eight years prior to its sealing, Stephen Langton was appointed to the position of Archbishop of Canterbury and went on to play a leading role in negotiating the terms of Magna Carta.

Canterbury City Council, The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury Cathedral Archives, The Marlowe Theatre, Visit Kent and the Business Improvement District worked in partnership to develop, market and host a special programme of exhibitions, activities and events across the city to commemorate this special occasion. The Canterbury and Magna Carta programme was led by Canterbury City Council.

The city wide programme included a rich and diverse selection of activities, events and exhibitions and welcomed children, young people and adults from across the city, district, county and beyond with many overseas visitors attending events across Canterbury.

Canterbury's commemorative events formed part of the Kent-wide celebrations of the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, the cornerstone of which was the HLF and Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> funded *Magna Carta Rediscovered* summer touring exhibition of seldom seen artefacts and the Faversham Magna Carta which dates to c1300. The exhibition toured to Canterbury, Rochester, Dover, Sandwich, Maidstone and Faversham and was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

New partnerships developed through the project brought fresh ideas to the table and allowed all organisations to engage with new audiences. This collaborative approach has inspired future programming and built relationships that are continuing now the Magna Carta programme has drawn to a close.

Thank you to everyone who took part in and supported Canterbury's commemorative Magna Carta programme. The project and associated programme has sown the seeds for successful partnerships which can now grow and develop in years to come.

**9** PARTNERS

**11** MAJOR EVENTS

**9,363** WEB HITS

**83,520** EXHIBITION VISITS

**88,000** TOTAL VISITORS

ACROSS ALL EXHIBITIONS &  
EVENTS

## 2. Programme Highlights

### **Canterbury in the Age of Magna Carta** 6 June to 6 September, The Beane

Organised by Canterbury City Council Museums & Galleries, this special exhibition featured items from the Cathedral Archives rarely seen on public display, including the priory register of c1290 which includes a transcription of the Canterbury Magna Carta made whilst it was still at the Cathedral. The exhibition focused on the characters that lived in the City and their stories during the age of Magna Carta and was accompanied by an exciting learning programme.

### **Magna Carta, King John and the Civil War in Kent Conference**

6 June, Canterbury Christ Church University

Co-hosted by Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury Cathedral Archives and

Library and the Historical Association (Canterbury Branch) this major conference on Magna Carta included speakers: Professor David Carpenter (author of *Magna Carta*, Penguin 2015); Richard Eales (a leading thirteenth-century historian); Dr Sean McGlynn (author of *Blood Cries Afar: The Forgotten Invasion of England, 1216*); Professor Nicholas Vincent (author of numerous books on Magna Carta); and Professor Louise Wilkinson (author of a biography of King John's youngest daughter).

### **Beane Magna Carta Day**

6 June, The Beane

Visitors were invited to investigate real medieval objects, try on costumes and take part in creative activities including medieval writing and seal making in celebration of the opening of the Canterbury in the Age of Magna Carta exhibition.

### **Magna Carta Tours**

13 June, The Beane

As part of the wider programme, Canterbury Tourist Guides offered six free of charge guided tours of the city on the hour between 10am and 3pm. Tours

departed from the Beane and expert guides linked the Magna Carta story to Canterbury. These tours were designed to complement the family trail taking place in the city on the same day.

### **Our Great Charter**

13 to 28 June, The Beane

Presented by Skillnet, 'Our Great Charter' was an audio, visual and tactile experience communicating people's thoughts and feelings about what makes lives better. By channelling interest in Magna Carta and charters of rights, facilitators were able to create modern Great Charter taking visitors on a journey towards the achievement of equality.

### **Parade and Evensong Service**

13 June, Canterbury Cathedral

Everyone was welcomed into Canterbury Cathedral for a special Evensong Service to mark this important occasion. Prior to the service, a copy of Magna Carta was paraded through the city by the Lord Mayor of Canterbury providing visitors and onlookers the opportunity to view the document on its journey to the Cathedral.

### **Magna Carta Family Trail**

13 June, Various Heritage Sites

Various city heritage sites came together to present an exciting day for families to coincide with the national celebrations. The day consisted of a family friendly self-led trail through the city visiting the Cathedral, the Beane, Eastbridge Hospital, the Westgate Towers and Curzon Cinema. Those taking part could meet characters from the time of Magna Carta, listen to medieval music and take part in a range of hand on activities.

### **Magna Carta Rediscovered**

2 July to 19 July, The Beane

This specially designed interactive exhibition told the stories of kings and barons, castles and battles, ancient manuscripts and seals in a touring

exhibition funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Magna Carta 800 and Faversham Town Council. Visitors to the Beaney had the thrill of viewing an original reissue of a document from 1300 on loan from Faversham Town Council.

**The Rights of Others**  
**8 July to 11 July, The Beaney**

In a year that marks anniversaries of Magna Carta and the end of the Second World War, whilst we are witnessing increasing atrocities in the news, the Marlowe asked whatever happened to our dream of freedom?

Evaluation of the project took the form of an online survey. The full report can be viewed in appendix 2 of this document.

### **3. a) Partner activity – Canterbury City Council and Canterbury Cathedral**

**Event – Parade and Evensong Service**

*13 June, Parade 2.15pm, Service 3.15pm*

To commemorate this historic occasion, a copy of the Magna Carta was paraded through the city by the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, starting at the Buttermarket. Following the parade everyone was welcomed into Canterbury Cathedral for a special Evensong Service. The combination of the parade and cathedral service allowed local residents and visitors to Canterbury to engage with the commemorations.

**Event – Magna Carta Family Trail**

*13 June, Various Heritage Sites*

The trail was designed to engage family audiences with the heritage of Canterbury and the Cathedral in the age of Magna Carta in a fun and informative way. A cumulative total of well over 2,000 people (mainly families with children) visited the 6 participating sites, with over 120 children visiting all 6 venues and receiving a chocolate medal from the Cathedral Shop. Feedback was very good, and provides a useful template for future events and partnerships. There were concerts of medieval music given by the Canterbury Gregorian Music Society as part of the trail, and also performances by Marlowe young drama group of 'The Rights of Others'. The Curzon also screened the animated Robin Hood.



- **The participating venues were:**
- Cathedral Schools Department: 261 visitors (further visitors engaged with costumed characters)
- The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge– 1268 visitors
- Canterbury Tales: 297 visitors
- Eastbridge Hospital: 783 visitors
- Canterbury Archaeological Trust: 180 visitors
- Westgate Towers: 450 visitors

### **Event – Cathedral Open Gardens Trail**

A successful activity for children and families. Approximately 80 people took part and the event was an effective way of promoting and publicising forthcoming Magna Carta events.

### **Event – Magna Carta Dinner**

This popular event featured guest speaker David Starkey, approximately 90 guests attended and it proved an enjoyable occasion, also raising funds for the Canterbury Journey project.

### **Event – Afternoon Tea with guest speaker Cressida Williams, Head of Archives & Library, Canterbury Cathedral**

Approximately forty people enjoyed afternoon tea which included an illustrated talk by Cressida Williams. Feedback received was positive.

## **3. b) Partner activity – Canterbury City Council & The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge**

### **Event – Our Great Charter**

*13 to 28 June, The Beaney*

This multi-media, interactive and accessible exhibition by Skillnet, a group of adults with and without learning difficulties included opportunities to listen to “Equality rap”, recorded by Skillnet members, interact with word cloud, contribute to live Twitter feed, look at/touch braille artwork, add to Charter Cactus with written roundels, and watch video featuring Canterbury residents talking about their thoughts on a new Great Charter.

### **Outcomes**

- 1 x multi-media, interactive and accessible exhibition
- Visit by Skillnet to Canterbury in the Age of Magna Carta exhibition at The Beaney
- A new charter created during the exhibition by Skillnet with the help of visitors



### **Facts and figures**

- 2,030 people visited the exhibition in the Front Room at the Beaney
- 28,009 twitter followers received at least one related tweet relating to the exhibition
- Three primary schools visited on the first Monday of the exhibition (30+ pupils)

## Exhibition – Canterbury in the Age of Magna Carta

6 June to 6 September, The Beaney

This special exhibition featured items from the Cathedral Archives rarely seen on public display, including the priory register of c1290 which includes a transcription of the Canterbury Magna Carta made whilst it was still at the Cathedral. The exhibition focused on the characters that lived in the City and their stories during the age of Magna Carta and was accompanied by an exciting learning programme.



### Outcomes

- An exhibition curated by the Beaney using the council's collections, special loans from Canterbury Archives, & Canterbury Archaeological Trust & advice on historical content from Canterbury Christ Church University
- Magna Carta Trail for Families
- 1 x Family Craft Activity (over 180 individual seals made)
- 1 x open day with family activities
- 1 x preview evening promoting both exhibitions and the wider supporting programme

### Facts and figures

- 51,010 people visited the exhibition





*Image above: The Beaney played host to a special private view event to launch Canterbury in the age of Magna Carta and Magna Carta Rediscovered.*

### **Event – Magna Carta Rediscovered**

This specially designed interactive exhibition told the stories of kings and barons, castles and battles, ancient manuscripts and seals in a touring exhibition funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Magna Carta 800 and Faversham Town Council. Visitors to The Beaney had the thrill of viewing an original reissue of a document from 1300 on loan from Faversham Town Council.

### **Exhibition Visitor Numbers**

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Visitor Numbers</b>
Faversham	15,000
Canterbury	5,391
Maidstone	4,956
Dover	1,250
Sandwich	3,883



### **Starta Magna Carta Thearta**

Graham Clarke interactive MC-themed drama workshop which was funded by Magna Carta 800

- 1 Year 6 class from St Stephens Junior School, 21 children
- 9 rehearsed and performed with Graham Clarke in front of an audience of pupils, teachers (inc Head and Deputy Head) and guests
- 12 pupils undertook a workshop on medieval Canterbury based around Magna Carta exhibition in Drawing Room and Urry maps laid out in People and Places gallery.

### **3. c) Partner activity – The Marlowe Theatre**

#### **Event – The Rights of Others**

*8 July to 11 July, The Beaney*

In a year that marks anniversaries of Magna Carta and the end of the Second World War, whilst we are witnessing increasing atrocities in the news, the Marlowe asked whatever happened to our dream of freedom?

Evaluation of the project took the form of an online survey. The full report can be viewed in appendix 2 of this document and a summary of the key findings are shown below. A large number of positive responses about the project were received from those that took part with 95% of people surveyed wanting to take part in the project again next year. The survey also teased out the reasons people get their children involved in these types of projects and the main reasons were around areas such as confidence and happiness, which certainly links well to the growing agenda of health and wellbeing through the arts. There are also some great comments from people that demonstrate what taking part meant to them.

#### **Facts and figures – see appendix 2 for full report**

- 95% of people wanted to take part in the project again next year
- 50% of those taking part were children
- 63% felt the project was extremely valuable to their child
- What did you/your child enjoy most about the project?
  - Just the opportunity to join in and perform
  - I think the way the teachers Martin and Darren made it fun and serious and Erin loved performing
  - Being part of a larger performance in front of her family
  - Meeting like-minded people and having the chance to perform in a friendly environment



In fact, the workbook has been so far reaching internationally the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand has also requested permission to stock the workbook in their library.

### Facts and figures

- More than 2000 copies of the Magna Carta workbook ordered by schools in Kent & Medway

### Event – Sixth Form Conference – Democracy, Freedom & Magna Carta

Following the news that one of the two copies of Magna Carta held by the British Library originally belonged to Canterbury Cathedral and in the knowledge that Stephen Langton (Archbishop of Canterbury 1207-1228) was one of the most important figures in the history of Magna Carta, Canterbury Cathedral hosted a 6th Form Conference in the International Studies Centre.

This conference was presented in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University’s School of Humanities, School of Psychology, Politics and Sociology and the Outreach Team. The event was free of charge and of relevance to those studying history or politics at A level although, the topics covered were of general interest to students of all subjects.

Promoted by Canterbury Christ Church University’s Outreach Team and featuring speakers including academics Professor Louise Wilkinson from the School of Humanities and Dr David Bates from the School of Psychology, Politics and Sociology discussing Canterbury in the time of Magna Carta as well as the impact of Magna Carta on more modern aspects of liberty and law.



### 3. e) Partner activity – Kent County Council

#### **Citizenship Ceremony**

Magna Carta facsimiles presented to new citizens Gift a facsimile Magna Carta to new citizens at Allington Castle, home of the national MC 800th Chairman, Sir Robert Worcester. Linked to a national initiative  
Allington Castle, 1<sup>st</sup> June

#### **Starta Magna Carta Thearta - Graham Clarke interactive MC-themed drama funded by Magna Carta 800**

The cast consisted of volunteer members of the public (some from Guild Players in Deal) and other's recommended by Maddie of Mad for Music.  
The audience consisted of 30 pupils from St. Mary's C of E primary school in Dover, a member of the public and Joanna from Dover Arts Development

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<i>KHLC 20 June</i>	30
<i>Faversham Library</i>	30

#### **Human Library**

Magna Carta human library on the theme of equalities and criminal justice

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<i>KHLC 4 July</i>	8

#### **LiberTEAS**

A cup of tea and a Magna Carta related event, e.g. make a medieval charter, aimed at children and families.

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<i>Tunbridge Wells Library</i>	17 (7 adults and 10 children)

#### **Magna Carta Academic Talks**

- **Peter Tann, 'Why does Faversham have its Magna Carta?'**,  
Talk at Kent History and Library Centre, 5 March.  
Attendance: 38
- **Mark Morris, 'King John: Tyranny, Treachery and the Road to Magna Carta'** Talk at The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge, Canterbury 25 June  
Attendance: 30
- **Geoff Doel and John Morgan, 'Outsiders: smugglers, poachers, highwaymen, pirates and outlaws'**  
Talk illustrated with songs and slides, Kent History and Library Centre, 30 July. Attendance: 28
- **Nicholas Vincent, "Kent's place in Magna Carta: the making and preservation of a legend"**  
Kent History and Library Centre, 13 August.  
Attendance: 58

## **Magna Carta Rediscovered**

Kent History and Library Centre 25 July- 5 September

Attendance: 4035

### **Talks by LR&A staff**

- Cheriton Library Talk Time 20 February  
Attendance 25
- Allington Library Library Talk Time Group 24 April  
Attendance: 10
- Kent Music School Magna Carta Music Making Week Cornwallis Academy  
7 April  
Attendance: 43 (mostly children/young adults)

### **Events for Children**

Costumed re-enactment group for local school children: 'What is Magna Carta? Why was it created? What does it say, and why has it become one of the most celebrated documents in history?' Tonbridge Library, 9 June

### **Special Event for Magna Carta Day**

'Singing Justice and Injustice: a celebration of Magna Carta in words and music', Songs from Paul Carbuncle, poetry from Philippa Jevons, plain chant from Canterbury Gregorian Music Society  
Archbishops Palace, Maidstone 15 June.  
Attendance: 70

## **4. Marketing and Communication**

The rich and diverse programme which covered exhibitions, talks, family trails and an academic conference was designed to be inclusive and accessible to a wide audience. The partners worked together with CCC and CCU leading on the development of shared marketing materials with a consistent look and feel. The materials developed conveyed the strong historical aspect of the programme without alienating certain groups or audiences.

### **A local approach supported by national initiatives**

The decision was made early on in the marketing planning process to focus resources on raising awareness of the programme amongst local audiences within Canterbury and the surrounding areas, utilising the wider national campaign to drive footfall to the city from outside the local area.

Building awareness of the programme locally was essential to driving visitor numbers and engagement with the wider programme. This was achieved by:

- Maintaining a close relationship with local press via a single contact
- Dedicated webpage, Facebook page and A5 events leaflet
- Targeted distribution of marketing materials via Canterbury City Council and associated partners
- A planned and phased approach to press releases, maximising coverage throughout the duration of the programme
- Utilising the wider 'Rediscovered' and MC800 campaigns and websites to drive footfall to associated events

All major events were promoted via a dedicated A5 events leaflet with smaller 'fringe' events being publicised via social media or individual web listings due to shorter lead times.

### **Website**

[canterbury.co.uk/magnacarta](http://canterbury.co.uk/magnacarta) provided an online platform separate from individual partner sites, supporting the city wide collaborative message of the Magna Carta programme, providing a single source of information for those interested in the programme. The webpage was created specifically for Canterbury's commemorative programme and linked out to partner sites where appropriate.

The webpage attracted **9,363** total page view throughout the duration of the programme and **7,572** unique page views.

### **Social Media**

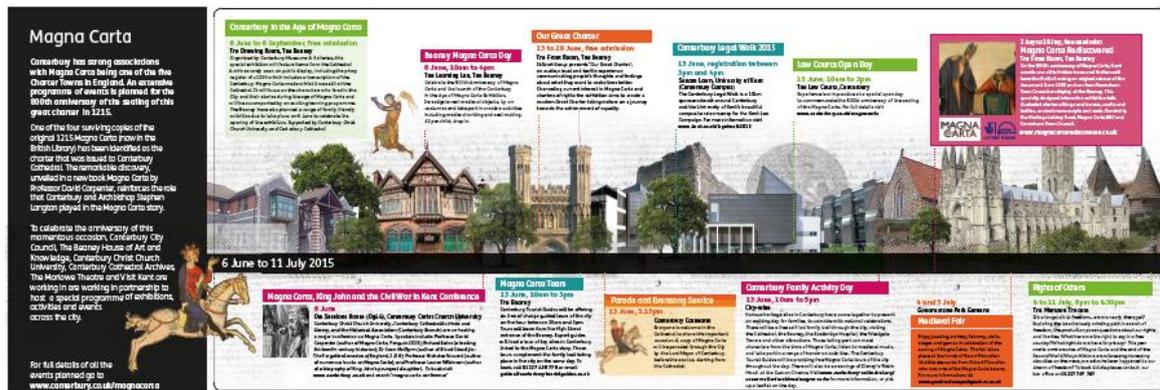
A dedicated Facebook page was created to support the programme:

[www.facebook.co.uk/canterburymagnacarta](http://www.facebook.co.uk/canterburymagnacarta)

Partners used an agreed hash tag when posting about events and activities to build awareness and create a sense of collaboration. Local social media plans were also aligned with those of MC800 to maximise cross promotional opportunities and avoid any duplication of message.

## A5 events leaflet

A dedicated A5 promotional leaflet was developed contained information about all the major activities and events taking place and was distributed by all project partners as well as at Canterbury’s main Visitor Information Centre. The leaflet took on the same look and feel as the website and all other promotional materials maintaining consistency and creating a sense of collaborative programming. 15,000 copies were distributed between May and July 2015.



## Press coverage

Canterbury’s programme of commemorative events received strong press coverage from both regional and national press. Coverage is detailed below by date and publication:

01/03/2015	BBC History	National	Magna Carta	Mention
01/04/2015	Canterbury Index	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
01/04/2015	Discover Britain	National	Magna Carta	Mention
01/04/2015	East Kent Lifestyle	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
10/05/2015	Kent on Sunday	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
22/05/2015	Sittingbourne KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
22/05/2015	Medway KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
28/05/2015	Faversham News	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
01/06/2015	MMM Magazine	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
03/06/2015	Canterbury Times	Regional	Magna Carta	Listing
04/06/2015	Herne Bay KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
05/06/2015	Medway KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
05/06/2015	Sittingbourne KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
11/06/2015	Faversham News	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
12/06/2015	Sittingbourne KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
12/06/2015	Medway KM	Regional	Magna Carta	Mention
18/06/2015	Kentish Gazette	Regional	Magna Carta	Article
01/07/2015	Canterbury Index	Regional	Magna Carta	Listing

## 5. Visitor Comments

Comments received from the visiting public were extremely positive with many choosing to leave feedback in comments books or complete face to face surveys.

## 6. Conclusions

The *Canterbury & Magna Carta* programme delivered exciting and inclusive events, exhibitions and schools activities accessible for all ages and audiences. The programme was led by Canterbury City Council working in partnership with key partners including Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury Cathedral, Visit Kent, Kent County Council and the Business Improvement District. The programme was well supported by local residents and visitors from further afield.

A strong collaborative marketing campaign successfully raised awareness of this historic milestone and used fresh and relevant marketing materials to introduce the subject to new audiences without alienating traditional visitors. The campaign reached new audiences with opportunities for cross promotion.



One of the major legacies of the project will be a new permanent display of Canterbury's Magna Carta statues at The Beaney. The statues of Stephen Langton and Robert de Fitzwalter have recently been conserved. A third statue depicting Saher Quincy, Earl of Winchester is currently undergoing refurbishment ahead of display in April 2016 following a successful application to Magna Carta 800. Supporting learning activities will enable a wide audience to continuing learning about Canterbury's links to Magna Carta and its relevance today.