

The Magna Carta Armoury



King John reunited with Magna Carta at Worcester in 2015

Toolkit for Guiding and Leading
Magna Carta 800th Anniversary & Legacy



LOTTERY FUNDED



The Armoury – Contents

Part 1

My area and the Magna Carta Story

Part 2

Where can I get information about Magna Carta?

Part 3

How to create and develop a local Magna Carta or Battlefields Trust group

Part 4

What is local history and what can I do with it

Part 5

Spreading the word

Part 6

How to engage and work with formal and informal education groups

Part 7

How the information gathered can be best stored, interpreted, presented and used to support education locally.

Part 8

Extra information and links and conclusions



Published by the Battlefields Trust with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Committee.

Available on line at www.battlefieldstrust.com and www.magnacarta800th.com

Research and text by Paula Kitching, with an introduction by Edward Dawson.

Design by Martin Hoare, Historical Association.

The Magna Carta Armoury

Meaning of Magna Carta

Of all the elements of the Magna Carta story, the battles and sieges are perhaps the most compelling, yet the least known. From Bouvines to Evesham, they chart a period of English history that is familiar mainly to scholars and historians. The aim of this guide and tour trail is to introduce the story to a wider audience, and instil in them a curiosity to find out more and to discover how their own local town or community might fit in with the story.

Introduction to the Toolkit

The 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta by King John at Runnymede on 15 June 2015 has been a cause for celebration and commemoration. In the years since the original issuing of the Magna Carta it has become a symbolic document, the principles of which have helped to enshrine democracies and human rights around the world.

The most famous and often quoted elements make up the Golden Passages which have been printed and repeated over the centuries.

The Golden Passages

No freeman shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land. To no one will we sell, to no one deny or delay right or justice.

What Magna Carta has become meant that the events triggered by the original meeting at Runnymede had until recently not always had the recognition that they deserve. Over 100 sites across England, Wales and the border areas with

Scotland are directly connected to the Magna Carta story, as battles and siege sites; places where the original copies of the Magna Carta were held; as well as the 25 Barons' Towns, many of whom are very actively involved.

Following the anniversary events, The Battlefields Trust seeks to create a legacy of the commemoration built around revisiting the history in the years following the sealing of Magna Carta. Local communities are to be encouraged to find out about and to connect to the heritage of the battle for and against Magna Carta.

The following documents are a series of PDFs (or parts) that have been created to assist individuals and groups to find out about local connections to Magna Carta; how to create local groups or committees to focus on that local history; and how to share the extensive local history of Magna Carta.

The PDFs that make up the toolkit can be read or downloaded as a series, or used individually as a guide for a single theme, such as how to organise an event, or how to organise your research.

Accompanying many of the parts is a case study that provides an actual example of some of the advice and guidance supplied by the toolkit. The case studies include the events organised by a local group for an anniversary and an ongoing project working with schools.

There is nothing for my town – I'm not part of the story

The legacy of Magna Carta means that we are all part of the story. If your town or village does not appear on the list as a baron's town, or as a battle or siege town, or related to someone who was, but you want to make sure then you can check this by doing some research using the approaches previously described. If it still appears to be untouched by the events of Magna Carta then why not begin to explore the impact of the Magna Carta as the principles were implemented (or not). Investigate and research for signs that what was promised was enacted by the local authorities.

Background to Magna Carta

The story of Magna Carta is a fascinating one, from the original documents, to the churches and cathedrals, and of course to the development of democratic ideals. Freedom, liberty and democracy all stem from Magna Carta. This toolkit on Magna Carta aims to help local communities become more involved in the discovering its history, and in developing their own ideas for activities and community enhancement.

When John set off from Odiham and Windsor in June 1215, many hoped that granting the Magna Carta at Runnymede would lead to lasting peace in the kingdom. But the king had no intention of honouring it, and asked the Pope in Rome to annul the charter. This he did readily, and it set the country alight.

The barons, especially those in the north of England were now on the march. They asked the French king, Philip Augustus to send an invading force. It was later known as the First Barons' War. The rebels held many castles, and French came in strength with the king's son, Prince Louis commanding sophisticated troops.

Over the coming months, John made it his mission to pursue and take back these strategic strongholds. The legacy of the charter confirmed by King John and the barons at Runnymede 800 years ago is compelling. The original agreement may not have protected rights and freedoms in the way which modern myths may suggest, but it undoubtedly set the country on a road towards non-autocratic government.

John may not have known this at the time, but his determination to take back control of his kingdom took him on a lengthy tour of the country.

Baronial Wars continue

In a sense, the war which began over Magna Carta turned into a dynastic war for the throne of England. The rebel barons, faced with a powerful king, had turned a civil war into an invasion. The Norman invasion had occurred only 150 years before, and the relationship between England and France was not simply adversarial as it was to become. At Runnymede a security council had been formed of 25 barons, to ensure the promises were maintained.

King John's death

In October 1216, King John succumbed to a fever and died at Newark. His tomb can be viewed at Worcester Cathedral. His premature demise meant his young son, Henry III would be crowned, and many rebel barons began to return to their loyalty. For a time, there was regency, with William Marshall as head of the nation. The Magna Carta was suddenly resurrected, and re-issued by the new king, with small amendments. Both Henry and his son, Edward I would re-issue Magna Carta several times, and copies were sent to churches and cathedrals around the country. The 'magic and mystery' of Magna Carta was to live on.

Both Henry and his son, Edward I would re-issue Magna Carta several times, and copies were sent to churches and cathedrals around the country. The 'magic and mystery' of Magna Carta was to live on. An ostensibly failed peace treaty had survived

to become the cornerstone of liberty in the English speaking world. The rebels used this failure against the crown, but it then took on a new mantle when it was used by the crown against the rebels. Magna Carta had become a serious and valuable statement of the law of the realm in England, to be used widely and kept up to date.

End of the invasion

The culmination of the French invasion came with the Battle of Lincoln Fair, in May 1217. While the town was pro-rebel, the castle was with the king. In August, a large relief force coming by sea was soundly defeated off Sandwich, in Kent, resulting in a peace treaty and the withdrawal of Prince Louis, the following month.

Second Barons' War

There was another civil war from 1264 to 1267 between the forces of barons led by Simon de Montfort, a noble of French birth. He was pitted against royalist forces led by Prince Edward in the name of Henry III. The reign of Henry III is remembered for the strife, which was provoked by the king's demands for more money. It was also marked by a more general discontent with Henry's approach to government.

Henry may have been a foolish and overly pious monarch, but he was also a very cultured man, fond of good living, he revived the court and built Westminster Abbey. Both sides were now raising armies. Simon de Montfort became leader of those who wanted to reassert the Magna Carta. They wanted to force the king to surrender more power to a baronial council.

Section from relief in front of United Kingdom Supreme Court depicting King John granting Magna Carta.

PART ONE

My area and the Magna Carta Story



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury



Research and investigation

Does your local area have a connection?

On the Battlefields Trust and Magna Carta website <http://magnacarta800th.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/The-Magna-Carta-cover.pdf> is information about the many battles and sieges that are known to have been part of the Magna Carta story, this should be the first place to look for a local connection.

If you think that your area has a connection to the battles or sieges that followed on from the encounters between King John and the Barons that led to Magna Carta but it's not mentioned in the link then perhaps carry out some research for yourself.

You might also like to look at the Part two section here on where can I get information about Magna Carta?

If you decided that you need to carry out research about the local dimension, then you might want to visit your local library, contact your local history society and, or a nearby university library. One of the most important places to contact will be your local archives or county records office

Using local archives

Information about your town or areas will be past in your local archive. Many towns and cities have archives alongside government buildings and or libraries. Many of those archives are now accessible online so your first point of contact might be from your home computer online.

If you have not used an archive before it can seem quite daunting. Here is some excellent advice from the Archives hub:

<http://archiveshub.ac.uk/about/>
an organisation based out of the University of Manchester.

They provide the following information for anyone not used to using an archive:

www.archiveshub.ac.uk/guides/workingwitharchives/



13th century crossbowman
in chainmail.



Working with Archives

This page is part of: Using Archives: A Guide for the Inexperienced

I don't feel that I know how to use archives in my research...

It is useful to gain an understanding of how to read and interpret primary sources before you embark upon your main research project, so that you are well prepared. Talk to your tutor, or to staff in the library or archive, about getting help with using primary sources. Many places offer introductory sessions where you can handle sources and learn more about how to use them.

Usually it is good to frame a research project from the very beginning, before looking for primary sources. Once you have a subject, frame your research question, refine it in the light of initial reading and research, and start to explore sources.

I'm not sure what sort of questions I need to ask...

You need to think about contextualizing your sources' using basic questions such as what is it? By whom and when was it created? What does it say? How does it relate to the topic I'm studying? Does it agree or disagree with other interpretations of the topic? These types of questions help you to think about the evidence that original material can provide and help to make connections that can inform your work.

It can also help to ask questions about how complete the archive is – What is missing? Who are the authors and what were they trying to achieve? Did they have an agenda?

It might help to start with your research question and break it down into smaller questions or statements, and it can help to think about key phrases or words that relate to your research. This can help to define your scope and give you focus for your research strategy.

If you are struggling to orientate yourself, it may help to think about your own 'archive' –

your personal collection of material – emails, comments on Facebook, tweets, letters, diaries, photographs. Whatever it is, what does it say about you? What could others learn from it about your life, your opinions and your connections? It will probably leave quite a bit out, so they would only get a glimpse into your life. Archives won't tell you everything and what is left out is worth thinking about.

Visiting an Archive

You may wish to consult an archive collection, in which case you are likely to need to visit a repository or record office – a collecting institution that provides a reading room where you can consult the materials that they hold.

Making an Appointment

You will sometimes need to contact the repository in advance to make an appointment to consult the materials, although this is usually not necessary. Some reading rooms have quite limited opening hours, so it is best to check before you go....and check whether it is free entry. Some collections are held by private institutions and they may have an entry charge.



Rolled 13th century manuscript.
Courtesy of the Pipe Roll Society.



Rochester Castle in Kent was the site of an epic siege by King John against the rebel barons in 1215.

Readers' Tickets

You may need a reader's ticket, which will require registration. Some local record offices are part of a scheme where you register and your ticket is valid for all those participating in the scheme.

Know What you Need

If you know the collections or items you want to look at, take note of the title and the reference number in order to give these to the archivist when you arrive at the reading room.

Ordering Archives

Archives are very rarely on open access, so you usually order what you would like to see and it is brought to the reading room.

Surrogate Material

The original material is not always available for use and surrogates may be provided. This may be because the originals are fragile, damaged, or heavily used. Archives may also be closed for a period of time because information is sensitive.

Online descriptions of collections usually include information about closure periods on collections.

Size of Collections

Be aware of the size of the archive collection(s) you want to view - some are just a few items, some are hundreds of boxes.

Language of Collections

Some archives will not be in English, and sometimes they are not easy to read. Descriptions of archives usually include the languages they are written in.

Using Pencils

Many archive repositories only allow pencils to be used in the reading room. This is to lessen the chances of damage to the documents.

Using PCs and other Devices

Many repositories have sockets for laptops, and wireless internet available, but it is worth checking this before you arrive.

Making Copies of Archives

You may be able to get copies made of parts of archives, either photocopies or photographs. Each repository will have its own policy on this, and it often depends upon the condition of the material.

If you are in doubt about any aspect of visiting or consulting an archive collection, it is a good idea to check with the repository you are visiting before setting off.

Non-archives

For sources on the Magna Carta other than your local archive you might want to look at

Other local sources:

- English Heritage
- A local guildhall
- Church records, either locally or by contacting your local parish vicar
- Local university or FE college libraries
- A local Museum
- The National Archive

Tips

Also when using the archives and looking for references consider the following:

Has the town or locale that I am looking for changed its name or spelling at any time?

Might the area I am looking for have been mentioned in relation to a person or a building e.g. the shire of Baron Red or Battering Castle/Abbey.

Does your area come under the possession of a one of the key figures but

managed to escape a siege – if so why? Knowing why your town escaped the battles may still be an interesting and important part of the Magna Carta story. E.g. my town was under the protection of Baron Red and not attacked, but the Guild people there supplied all the weaponry and food for the attack on Baron Red's neighbour.



Magna Charta,

Made in the Ninth Year of

K. Henry the Third,

And Confirmed by

K. Edward the First,

IN THE

Twenty-Eighth Year of his REIGN.

With some Short, but Necessary

PART TWO

**Where can I get
information about
Magna Carta?**



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury

**MAGNA
CARTA**



In response to the 2015 anniversary lots of books and resources have been produced on Magna Carta.

The issue is not where do I find out about it, as much as, how do I choose what to find out and where do I begin?

In this section we have provided a brief breakdown of where to find sources and what they contain to help you decide what to read and select first.

There is also a section on how to understand and distil, and unpick the resource material and stories that already exist.

The best place to start is <http://magnacarta800th.com/> the Magna Carta 800th was created to support the anniversary; it is not a commercial body. Through the website you can find out about the history of Magna Carta its impact and events and activities that are happening during the anniversary year. It also lists all the different bodies that have exhibitions or special activities to support the Magna Carta 800th anniversary.

In the history section:

- Information about where the battles/sieges were <http://magnacarta800th.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/The-Magna-Carda-cover.pdf>
- There is a useful map <http://magnacarta800th.com/history-of-the-magna-carda/magna-carda-map/>
- Information about key Magna Carta towns <http://magnacarta800th.com/history-of-the-magna-carda/the-magna-carda-towns/> this might give you ideas about who to contact for your research, or how to proceed with your own project.
- A really useful timeline <http://magnacarta800th.com/history-of-the-magna-carda/the-magna-carda-timeline/>

The Battlefields Trust

www.battlefieldstrust.com

They are one of the organisations delivering projects on the Magna Carta – they are engaged with local history of the Magna Carta

The Historical Association

The Historical Association produced a special edition of its magazine *The Historian* on Magna Carta 800th that is available for free online:

www.history.org.uk/resources/general_news_2434.html



The British Library

Magna Carta: Law, Liberty, Legacy Exhibition was held during the summer of 2015, and the material is archived.





How to understand and distil, and unpick the resource material and stories that already exist

Before starting a project it is important to read up on the history, when you have done that you may want to start to create your own timeline or chronology of facts.

By creating your own timeline you can begin to establish what information you have about your area. If the answer is simply 'there was a siege or battle' then you can start looking through your information for references to other battles or to the leaders.

Important questions to establish for moving forward and carrying out your research or approaching other people to help you to build up the local story:

- How do I know there was a siege or battle in my area?
- Where was this information found?
- What was the date of the siege/battle?
- Who was in charge of my area at the time?
- Where was the site of the siege or battle?
- Do I/we know the outcome?
- How many references have been made?

Once you know the date of your siege and who was in charge of your area you can begin to piece together bits of information using the general information found on the Magna Carta 800th Committee website. All of this can be put into your information timeline.

From this you should begin to realise where gaps of information are, and where you need to look for other information.

By creating an information timeline of your own, you will only need to keep reading different accounts of Magna Carta with a clear purpose.

The information timeline a working example:

- Magna Carta granted or sealed
- Barons disperse
- First battle with the King
- The battle with the King in my region (e.g. Yorkshire)
- Yorkshire is under the influence of:
- My area is under the influence of e.g. Baron Red (fictional) who is opposed to the King in 1214 but is reconciled to him in 1215
- December 1215 Baron Red changes sides and is against the King
- Spring 2016 Baron Red's castle near here is attacked by the King's supporters

The Timeline can be the beginning of your research project and one that could be a shared activity. Why not approach a local group or create a new one.

Tips

Don't overstretch your timeline – better to be a sketch of information rather than absolutely everything you can find out about Magna Carta.

If you are using an internet source such as Wikipedia then check any facts or statistics against another source to make sure that it is correct.



Battlefields Trust Study Day at Stoke Park.

PART THREE

How to create and develop a local Magna Carta or Battlefields Trust group



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury



As you begin to establish what happened in your area you may want some help to research and to think about what you are going to do with your findings. Alternatively you might already be a small group of people who want to work together to research and find out about Magna Carta, but you don't know how to get support or be an organised group.

Establishing what you know - the Information timeline approach suggested in Part two should help.

Then think about 'what is the group's purpose'?

- To research?
- To raise awareness of the information or research
- To create activities around the history
- To share the findings in a creative way
- To create a community legacy
- To raise awareness of a historic site of conflict and to draw attention to any threats to that site that may occur in the future

If you know what the group is for then you can begin to approach the right people to join or to participate. It might also help you write up your ideas and general information so that you have something to present to others.

Write up your ideas and general information – this is key. People will ask what you know and what you want to do, it is helpful if you can give them something or send them something.

Creating a group

This does not need to be a new group – but it can be if you want it to be. This could be a project for existing members of a Battlefields Trust group or local history group. Being attached to another group is helpful for support, guidance and learning about organising things.

The most important thing is to have interested people - approach the Battlefields Trust to have a notice put in the magazine or on the website for Trust members who might be interested in this project.

You might want to: create an online forum; or contact your local town council or parish about advertising your idea of a group or your idea for spreading your research findings.

When organising the volunteers/group members consider the following:

- What skills do individuals in the group have? E.g. IT, PR, academic
- How formal do you want the group to be?
- What clear objectives should the group have?
- How much time are people expected to give?
- Who will be in charge of chairing discussions and following up contacts?
- Is everyone happy to have their contact details given to others?



If you do establish a new group or a sub-group of an existing group, then remember everyone is a volunteer and be realistic with people's time and commitments.

Tips for organising a new group or developing group

- Make sure everyone who wants a role has one
- Make sure that meetings are held somewhere that is easy for everyone, or be prepared to move them around
- If you want people with young families involved then consider what time the meetings are held and on what days
- Set clear milestones that are not too ambitious in the beginning to see how people are at working together
- Don't make the group a financial obligation for people (e.g. meeting in the pub may be expensive for some people).
- Once the group is established it is helpful to create

a document that lists what people do and what they are working on for the project, this will be a useful record as well as tool for everyone to engage with. A simple spreadsheet or grid should work and it can be updated and disseminated after each meeting.

- Have an end result – it gives everyone something to work towards
- Be prepared to have your original ideas about what to do with the research changed

Local history is a chance to bring lots of different people together so be flexible in your thinking to allow opportunities for different skills and interests.

For further information you may want to visit the British Association for Local History who has an online resource on creating a local history group. <http://www.balh.org.uk/news/starting-a-local-history-group>



David Simmons, Mayor of Faversham shows Edward Dawson their 1300 version of Magna Carta, issued by Edward I



King John's tomb at Worcester Cathedral
with shaft of autumn sunlight
Photo courtesy of Janice Bridgen.

PART FOUR

What is local history and what can I do with it



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury

MAGNA
CARTA

What is local history and what can I do with it?

Local history is a great way of bringing people together from different walks of life, backgrounds and ethnicities to engage with finding out about the area in which they live. Communities are able to explore their own histories and how that relates to the places in which they live now, irrespective of their social history or ethnicity.

Local history includes examining the physical geography or development of an area, key buildings that were, or are there; exploring the people who lived in that area in the past; exploring institutions or organisations that were in the area; exploring employment and traditional crafts; examining key events and time periods as they played out in an area.

Exploring the Magna Carta 800th story through your local history is a great way to engage with the impact and reality of history.

In Part one of the toolkit there is advice on carrying out local research for local history; however it might be that there is already lots of information about your area at the time of Magna Carta. If there is lots of information about your area and Magna Carta then what your role might be is to ensure that the local aspect come out from the 'grand narrative' of the period.

How to ensure that the new research (or bringing together of information and data) has attractive local angles

The following are a few of techniques for creating a picture of the local story for Magna Carta.

1 – Using the information timeline from Part two

Start with your information timeline. Identify which information is local and what is general – arrange it into two columns. Next to each of the pieces of information write a sentence about what it is, now does that sentence tell you what it is that is local about the information? Ensure that each piece of information relates to a local element, even the information that was general. e.g.

Local - the Castle Keep was the site of preparation for a key battle that occurred 5 miles from the centre of the town. The preparations were organised by Baron Red and employed 200 local men.

General – The sieges of 1216 occurred across the England. In the local areas just outside of London this included Odiham, Windsor and Berkhamsted. News of those sieges reached a location and spread fear in the local area, making preparations against the King more determined.



Image of St Albans Abbey



Next to each to of the pieces of significant information explain what evidence you have for that piece of information – e.g. the book, document or chronicle where you found the information relating to the local history.

2 – Using a basic big events timeline

(e.g. <http://magnacarta800th.com/history-of-the-magna-carta/the-magna-carta-timeline/>)

<http://magnacarta800th.com/history-of-the-magna-carta/battles/>

www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/timeline-of-magna-carta

www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/magna_01.shtml

Use the timeline as a guide to pin information about what happened locally by writing a paragraph on a local element for each big event e.g.

the Magna Carta document was issued by King John more than once. In our region there is one

copy of the first document and a copy of the third. In my town there are no copies but it was the site of a siege in 1216, after the first copy was issued nationally.

Next to each to of the pieces of significant information explain what evidence you have for that piece of information – e.g. the book, document, chronicle where you found the information relating to the local history.

3 – Creating a mind map

Using a large sheet of paper place a picture of a significant place in your local town e.g. the Guildhall, in the middle. Now place other pictures from the area or representing ideas around that central picture and write the connection down on the map or on a side piece of paper.

By the end you should have a visual display of how the Magna Carta story has connections to your local area.

Next to each to of the pieces of significant information explain what evidence you have

for that piece of information – e.g. the book, document, chronicle where you found the information relating to the local history.

Different people can carry out different parts of research to create any of the timelines or maps above.

For organising your information

Explain - what makes each of the local information 'local'?

- Are the events unique to your area?
- How do the events of your area fit into the bigger regional and or, national picture?
- What are the pieces of evidence that you have built up and what are the sources for that information?
- Is there a physical building or place that can represent the local story?
- If significant buildings that were there at the time of Magna Carta are not mentioned in any sources – why might that be the case? E.g. the local Abbey was obeying the Pope's edict and could not be involved with local activities.

- Are their local people who can be named that had a role?
- Is it possible to link an action or response from people in your area to an event?

Finish by creating a one page description that summates the local story of Magna Carta. This can be used to send to other people to promote your local activities and as a way of focusing people on the local dimension.

Tips

Once you start your local research get a large map so that you can mark any key locations.

Check local museums for or libraries for old history projects (the Victorians were very keen on this) and there may have been some local research on the Magna Carta that has been done before.



Visitors crowd around the Salisbury copy of Magna Carta in the exhibition at the Cathedral.



Battlefields Trust members visit battle site.

PART FIVE

Spreading the word



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury





Commaire li empereur dale
maigne fu a ce parlement.
et messieurs othes les freres
qui bons clers estoit et E
velques de frunke. Et ilques li eue

fu loys li rois de france. Godenor, eue
ques de lengres. Arnous eueques de
lisines. Guillmes de florence prestres
cardinaus de leglise de rome au titre
saint eusebe leue lainsiols en

Sharing your findings on Magna Carta and the local story is part of the Magna Carta 800th legacy. Creating events or activities that educate and inform your local community are all things that will help to raise awareness of that period of history and how the ideals of Magna Carta connect to today.

If you are organising anything do think about Health and Safety – The Battlefields Trust can help with further advice but always consider:

- Doing a Rick Assessment
- Briefing people before an event – especially before embarking on a trail.

Event ideas and activities that highlight the themes of Magna Carta

Local talks

Lots of organisations like to have speakers – Historical societies, The Women's Institute, U3A, amenity societies and local schools etc. One of the most successful ways therefore of informing others about the local history of their area is to create a talk or presentation about Magna Carta in your area.

Creating a talk:

- These days most groups like to have a visual images to accompany a talk, therefore a good starting point for putting something together is to collect images of local sites and historic images that will illustrate the places and people that you plan to talk about.
- Next use the information time line or mind map to explore the factual evidence that you have for your talk.
- A suitable length for a talk is around 40 – 45 minutes and then be prepared to answer questions.
- The next step is to work out what your story is – is your presentation just about the local historic connections to Magna Carta; the story of how you researched and discovered the local connections; or is it about how your local area's history fits into the wider narrative of the history of the Magna Carta?
- You may want to create a variety of elements or themes for your talk – if so ensure that the connections or sections are clear, don't just jump around.
- Try and strike a balance between some historical information, but not so much that it doesn't allow for the local dimension to be explored and explained.
- On a sheet of paper create a plan for your presentation with clear single headings – use that as a plan for putting your talk together.

- Select images that support each of your headings or factual points.
- If you are creating a power point presentation then between 12 and 20 images/slides will be about right.
- Practice your presentation to ensure that you have got the length right.

Creating an education trail for the whole community

Once you have established the local history of the Magna Carta in your area it might be possible to create an education trail. An educational trail is an opportunity for people to learn about the history of something by following a route around an area, ideally one they can do on foot. The benefits of an education trail include: people are automatically introduced to the history in their area as they visit it and see it; it can attract a different audience to those that attend static talks; it can work for a variety of age groups, including family groups; it can allow partnerships to be created by connecting different buildings and areas into a single story.

There are two ways that an educational trail can be easily devised and both can be used in

any local area, they are: a walk led by a guide (volunteer) and, or one that is self-guided - can be followed using printed (online) material.

Putting a trail together

- Be realistic and clear about distances – a couple of miles is usually enough for most people. On the other hand some people are looking for longer walks, that are more detailed, just be clear.
- Be realistic about times – give approximates so that people know how much time it will take up.
- Use a map when plotting the trail and provide a map for any printed material.
- Try and ensure that any speaking is done away from busy roads.
- Are there toilets on the route?
- For self-guided trails ensure that explanations for each site on the trail are clear about what the connection to the past is.
- Use crossings for getting across roads.
- Check if any of the trail cuts across private land – will permission be needed?
- It is better to have a trail that makes sense for walking rather than simply for chronology.
- Include a timeline for people to look at.
- If it is a guided tour keep the numbers manageable, so that everyone can hear.



Launching the Magna Carta Trails (second from left, Sir Robert Worcester, MC 800th Committee Chairman; second from right, Edward Dawson, MC 800th Project Director). Photo courtesy of the Magna Carta 800th Committee.

- Don't put a trail together and create an audience for it. Think about the audience BEFORE creating the trail. You might, for example want to create something for people with mobility issues and that would be a very different trail to one for, say sixth-formers.
- The Battlefields trust has a policy that to always expressly ask for a donation from walk participants - a minimum of £5 - this raises funds and also offers an incentive to join as members normally go on the walks for nothing (though many make a contribution anyway).
- Do a risk assessment. Sounds difficult but it isn't. All it really involves is writing down the things you ought to have thought about anyway. The Battlefields Trust can provide examples.

Once you have created your trail then you need to consider advertising it or creating audiences for it.

The Battlefields trust has a number of people who are very experienced in putting trails together and people shouldn't hesitate to contact regional coordinators to ask for more advice.

Creating an event

Consider the following:

- What type of event do you want to put on?
- Can it combine a number of elements e.g. talks, films, quiz?
- How many people are there to help you?
- Do you need to rent a venue or can someone donate a space?
- Do you need to fund your event – publicity, room hire etc. (there is advice on costing and writing a budget in Section 8)
- The time and day of your event will affect the audience – e.g. evenings are not good for families. Time of year may also be important due to weather influences.
- Give yourself plenty of time to plan and organise – a couple of months at least.
- Is there another organisation locally that you could share an event with?
- What outcomes do you want from the event?
- Is there anyone in your group who has specialist skills that they can use e.g. PR, IT
- Will you need volunteers to help at the event and does everyone know what will be expected of them?

Chainsaw sculptures of knights in Northampton.
Photo courtesy of Michael Ingram.



Contacting the local media

It is helpful to contact the local media to promote your activities or simply to let them know about your local research.

Before you contact the media consider the following

- What is it you want them to know?
- Who do you want the media to inform about something – e.g. an audience for a talk?
- Be clear what you are telling them – prepare your information document?
- Can you prove and provide evidence for your story?
- Be absolutely clear why it is a local story
- Why are you telling them this information now?

Tips

- Try and tie your events into a specific anniversary
- Work with others to tie your events into a wider series of events e.g. local history month (held in May), a local series organised by your local council
- Many groups do not pay for speakers, but they will provide expense – make sure any costs are agreed in advance.
- If you are looking for more volunteers or members of your group then always bring recruiting material to an event or walk. People who have just had a good time are particularly likely to sign up.





PART SIX

How to engage and work with formal and informal education groups



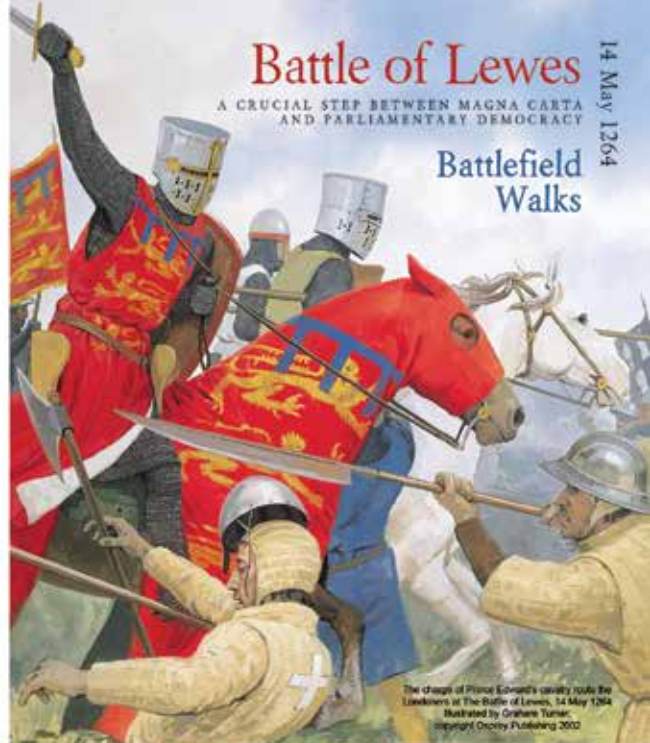
LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury





- 1 Lewes Castle built by the De Warenne family, loyal supporters of the monarchy since the lands were granted to them by William the Conqueror after the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Base for Prince Edward.
- 2 The High Street inhabited by many Lewesians who were injured or killed when their houses were set ablaze during the Battle of Lewes. Escape routes from the walled town were few, one being over the bridge 1. Parts of the medieval town wall still exist at Westgate Street 4.
- 3 Lewes Priory King Henry III arrived on the 12 May for the celebration of the feast of St Pancras. The King returned here after the battle and was joined by Prince Edward.
- 4 Probable site of mill at epicentre of battle (opposite the Black Horse pub).
- 5 Official battlefield site on Landport Bottom.
- 6 Anne of Cleves House C15, Sussex Past Museum.



Further information on the Battle of Lewes can be found on www.battlefieldstrust.com and www.sussexpast.co.uk.
Information on Lewes Priory can be found on www.lewespriory.org.uk and opening times for Lewes Castle on www.sussexpast.co.uk.
Information on Landport Bottom is on www.lewes.gov.uk.
For information on Magna Carta 800th commemorations visit www.magnacarta800.com

Two walks
1) Battlefield walk on the Downs at Landport Bottom, with views over Lewes
2) Town Centre visiting Lewes Castle and the Priory

How to engage and work with formal and informal education groups

Reaching out to other groups and audiences around you for the project is important, both for building support, sharing your findings and securing a sustainable interest and potential group.

If you are enthusiastic about what you have discovered or are beginning to discover, it is also likely that you will want to inform others and ensure they know about their local history.

The obvious group to want to share your findings with are young people, however, before picking up the phone to your nearest school pause and read the following advice.

Working with schools

First of all ask yourself or your group the following questions:

- Why should we offer/share this project with local schools?
- What can this project offer a school?
- Do we want the pupils to deliver/produce/be part of the project development or just receivers of its outcomes?
- What age group would the work we have been doing suit?

- Is there anyone here that has an existing connection to a school?
- Is this an easy thing for schools to engage with?
- Are schools the best way to engage young people or are there other ways?

Some basic facts of working with schools for a Magna Carta – local history project:

1. Magna Carta will fit into the Key Stage 3 History curriculum (secondary schools); however, the history curriculum for the three years that pupils have to study history at secondary is from the year 1066 to today. Magna Carta along with many other subjects is not statutory, but it is a suggested topic. Magna Carta as a suggested topic does not mean that schools have to teach it or teach it in any depth.
2. Lots of schools do their planning for lesson content a year in advance and all for a term in advance. That means they cannot just add things in because you would like them to.
3. Local history is a significant component for schools at Primary and Secondary level, schools are looking to be engaged with local issues (if it meets their overall learning needs).
4. For the anniversary of Magna Carta, a number of organisations have produced schools



Model of King John's Castle delights visitors to Odiham.
Photo courtesy of the Odiham Society.

materials. Those materials are specifically designed to support the school curriculum and have often been given/supplied to the schools free of charge. Therefore they may feel that they are already covering the subject in the best way for their pupils.

5. Most schools require anyone that enters into a school in any type of educational capacity to have a DBS (CRB check) even if they are not going to be left alone with the pupils, except in certain circumstances.

However, as with schools the groups will want some reassurances before they get involved. The same questions can be applied to informal groups as well as school groups; however, they will not be constricted by school curriculums and timetables.

It is important to consider – do you want young people involved as participants in a project or as an audience? The answer to that question should help you determine how or if you approach organisations involving children and what your expectation is.

Projects for schools work best if:

- They come from a e.g. a local charity, a national charity, a personal introduction through a known contact known source
- Allow the pupils an active role or opportunity to participate
- They meet a number of learning needs
- Are planned well ahead of when they need the pupils input or engagement
- They have a clear set of outcomes that can be measured
- There is a specific time frame for the project/young person engagement
- The school has an idea/understanding of the whole project and there is a clear school/pupil role

Schools are not the only way for local history groups to engage with young people through organised channels.

Other groups with young people members

Scout groups, guide groups, local youth clubs, church groups etc. are all involved with their local communities and may wish to be involved.

Money

Most schools have tight budgets and informal education groups are just the same. They will not be in a position to fund your project and may be put off if they are asked to pay for materials or for transport to any local event or site.

Finally, engaging with young people in your local community is always a good way of spreading information and providing a legacy to a project. Although it is not always straight forward to work with schools and groups, creative ways to ensure that young people find out about their local area is always beneficial.

Tips

Young people as part of a family. If you find it difficult to get local school or groups to be part of your project then consider how your activities can have a family dimension. Families with children are often looking for things they can do at weekends, make sure that some of your activities have are attractive to families, such as walks, trails, and creativity workshops and then you will have the attention and participation of young people through that.



Junior lawyers gather in front in the Master of the Rolls (Lord Dyson), in the middle, with Christopher Lloyd, far-right. Photo courtesy of the Magna Carta 800th Committee.

PART SEVEN

How the information gathered can be best stored, interpreted, presented and used to support education locally



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury



In many of the sections in this toolkit it is recommended to write up your findings or research. How you do that is up to you, but in addition to the factual discoveries you make you may want to record how you organised your project and what steps you took to gather your information, create a group and or put together a talk or trail.

All of this can be used to create a simple website or be given to another organisation to be included on their website.

If a local school or college was involved with the creation of the project they are often keen to put the story of the project and the findings on their website.

The Battlefields Trust is able to keep and to hold information about local history that relates to battles and military conflicts with its history in the UK, contact your local group.

Creating local partnerships

One of the benefits of exploring a local history is that it should have an appeal to a number of people and communities in your area. It should be possible during various stages of your project to create or form local partnerships.

Local museums, councils, parish councils, churches, historical associations, arts centres and evening colleges are all potential partners for developing your research, creating events and presenting your findings.

Creating a local partnership may provide support and expertise for organising events and they may also provide audiences. Local partnerships also have the potential for hosting your information – either online, as an exhibition, or through publications.

Local partnerships will also make your project more sustainable and lasting and provide you with links for future activities and opportunities for your group.

What kind of legacy can our project have?

- Your project could be the start of a local history or Battlefields Trust group in your area.

Battle of Evesham re-enacted.
Courtesy of the Simon de Montfort Society



- It can bring communities together with a common purpose and focus
- It might be the start of preservation and interpretation work
- It can contribute to the collective history of the Magna Carta story
- It can contribute to local events across your area or region
- It can be used by schools as a local history project for future years
- It can create local partnerships of longer term value
- Provide opportunities to develop skills

Tips

Write a story for a local newspaper and or history society. When writing a story try and keep it short – it's always better to be asked to add more than to cut it. 500 words is a good size to aim for with your first article. Always use images, ideally ones of local sites.

If you are working in partnership with another group ensure that you are both clear about your different roles and responsibilities for any events long before the event takes place.

Write a strategic partnership document or a spreadsheet of responsibilities so that everyone is clear about what is being done.

As your project develops you may want to write a risk assessment especially if developing outside activities.



Steve Brown delivers the Magna Carta Anthem to Worcester Cathedral.

PART EIGHT

Extra information and links and conclusions



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Magna Carta Armoury



Once you have established your group, carried out your research or put together your project there are a few things that you may want to think about.

A) Applying for a Grant

Apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant

The Heritage Lottery Fund is there to help communities develop their heritage. In addition to big grants for national organisations the HLF also has small grants programmes for local endeavours. Small grants – up to £10,000 <http://www.hlf.org.uk/>

B) Putting a budget together

If you are applying for funding or setting up the group in any formal capacity it is important to put a budget together.

Using an excel spreadsheet or a grid is the best way of doing this. Make sure that you are realistic about any costs, include stationary, and fuel costs. If you are using volunteers for your project list them as donations in kind.

Don't exaggerate costs or requirements, if you want to obtain money from funding bodies they will know or check the current market rate for most things that a project would need.

Make sure you check any rules around VAT. If you are writing a budget to seek funds for a specific project then it is usually helpful to write a timetable alongside the budget, marking clearly

when funds would be needed, spent and the project delivered.

C) Approaching sponsors locally

If you want to give your local project a really local feel then it might be worth going to local businesses for sponsorship. Lots of small businesses like to help other groups in their community especially if they can get some publicity as well. Some of the big supermarkets have local funds for community activities. However, some people will only fund groups if they are registered as a charity.

Be open to sponsorship in kind – so free publicity, or promotion; accountants offering to help with budgets; reduced printing costs for exhibitions etc.

Be prepared that anyone sponsoring an activity will probably want an acknowledgement of that support; this is usually done by adding a logo on to any important materials

D) Write a project plan

A detailed project plan is useful for all projects. It brings together many of the ideas already discussed and puts them into one document.

The plan should have a clear set of aims, projected outcomes and method for fulfilling a project. There should also be a budget and a timetable. A list of people and their roles and responsibilities provide a project plan with a real face and character.



King John at Runnymede reflects on sealing Magna Carta.
Photo courtesy of the Odiham Society.

E) Using social media

To attract a wide audience and to promote your findings, attract volunteers, and publicise events using social media can be really helpful. Starting up a twitter account is free and really easy, however to make sure that you use the Twitter feed correctly spend a few weeks following other people and seeing who is active in your local area.

Once you are on Twitter it is important to send tweets out regularly so that people can see that you are active.

Twitter is useful for sending out publicity and for attracting and engaging with people locally in your area that might not attend events.

Facebook is another opportunity and is available free, but you will need to keep the page updated regularly and encourage people to visit your page.

Remember all social media takes time and getting it right is important if you are to give the correct impression to others.

You can continue to learn more about this period of medieval history by looking up the various websites available. These include:
www.battlefieldstrust.com,
www.magnacarta800th.com,
www.magnacartatrails.com,
www.history.org.uk, www.bl.uk
and www.nationalarchives.gov.uk.



Scott Wilson providing social media support to the Battlefields Trust.
Photo courtesy of the Magna Carta 800th Committee.



Links Magna Carta Toolkit

MC 800th Committee

www.magnacarta800th.com

Magna Carta Trails

www.magnacartatrails.com

Battlefields Trust

www.battlefieldstrust.com

Contact MC 800th Project

magnacarta800@battlefieldstrust.com

Facebook

www.facebook.com/battlefieldstrust

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/battletrust?lang=en-gb>

Baronial Order of Magna Charta 1898

www.magnacharta.com

National Society Magna Charta Dames and Barons 1909

www.magnacharta.org

Magna Carta Barons Association 2013

www.magnacartabarons.info

British Library

britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/magna-carta

National Archives

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/medieval/magna-carta

Historical Association

www.history.org.uk/resources/general_news_2434.html

Magna Carta Chronicle

www.whatonearthbooks.com/shop/magnacartachronicle/

Northampton Battlefields Society

<https://northamptonbattlefieldssociety.wordpress.com/category/magna-carta/>

Simon de Montfort Society

www.simondemontfort.org/

British Council

<https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/magna-carta-my-digital-rights>

English Speaking Union

<http://mymagnacarta.esu.org/>