



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