





# MAGNA 800<sup>th</sup> CARTA



## Magna Carta

is Latin for “Great Charter”.

It was first agreed in June 1215 by King John of England and his Barons. 2015 represents the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta.

British citizens – and hundreds of millions of people worldwide – enjoy many rights that can trace their origin to Magna Carta. These include:

- **The Rule of Law** – everyone has to abide by the same rules
- **Limits on the power of rulers** – even Monarchs and leaders have to follow rules
- **Trial by jury** – Magna Carta was used to help establish the principle that people accused of a crime should be allowed to be judged fairly
- **Religious liberties** – Magna Carta proclaimed that “the English Church shall be free” and today in the U.K. anyone is allowed to freely practise their own religion
- **Limits on taxation** – over time Magna Carta helped to ensure that rulers could tax people only with their consent

Magna Carta is an exceptional document on which democratic society has been constructed. Two key Clauses of the original 1215 Magna Carta stand out and are as applicable today as they were 800 years ago:

- Clause 39 “No free man 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... except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land”
- Clause 40 “To no one will we sell, to no one deny or delay right or justice”



Magna Carta was used to help draft both the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution, and many of its concepts are found in the 1791 US Bill of Rights.



The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948. Speaking at the General Assembly of the United Nations, Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt said that “we stand today at the threshold of a great event both in the life of the United Nations and in the life of mankind. This declaration may well become the international Magna Carta for all men everywhere”.



You can find more information about the 800th anniversary commemorations at the following website:  
[www.magnacarta800th.com](http://www.magnacarta800th.com)

Salisbury Cathedral is home to one of the four remaining original 1215 Magna Carta. From 2015, to mark the document’s 800th anniversary, the Salisbury Magna Carta will be housed in a new Heritage Lottery funded exhibition in the Cathedral’s Chapter House, supported by an exciting programme of celebratory events.

