

**МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ
РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ**

**УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ
“ВИТЕБСКИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ
ТЕХНОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ”**

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СТРАНОВЕДЕНИЕ**

**СОЕДИНЕННОЕ КОРОЛЕВСТВО
ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ И СЕВЕРНОЙ ИРЛАНДИИ:
ИСТОРИЯ, КУЛЬТУРА, ГОРОДА**

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В учебные материалы включены тексты по истории и культуре Великобритании. Часть текстов представляет города Великобритании и виды спорта, родиной которых является эта страна. Лексический материал соответствует программным требованиям.

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Travelling to Britain



Every year thousands of people travel from the Continent to Great Britain. Perhaps one day you will go there, too, with a friend, with your class or with your parents. Then you must decide how you want to get there. The quickest and, usually, most expensive way to travel to Britain is by plane.

London has got two main airports: Heathrow and Gatwick. Heathrow is the biggest airport in Europe and the busiest international airport in the world. In 1985 more than 31 million passengers used Heathrow. Tourists who fly to Britain on a charter flight usually land at Gatwick airport. From Heathrow you can get to Central London by Underground (it takes about 45 minutes). From Gatwick you can take a train to Victoria Station (it takes about 30 minutes).

It is cheaper for many people, especially families, to go to Britain by car or by train. That means that — until there is a tunnel — they must cross the Channel or the North Sea. You can leave from ports in France, Belgium, Holland or Germany.

On the shorter routes you can choose between a ferry boat or a hovercraft. From Calais to Dover the crossing takes about one and a half hours by boat and only 35 minutes by hovercraft. Hovercraft fly over the water at a top speed of 75 miles an hour. Although they are faster than boats, they cannot carry as many passengers and cars, and they are noisy and not very comfortable in stormy weather!

The idea for a tunnel under the Channel is very old — even Napoleon dreamed of it. More than once work on a tunnel was begun but never completed. In 1973 it was stopped because some British politicians believed it was too expensive or too dangerous: armies from the Continent might use it; or even rabid foxes from France!

But finally in 1986 the British and the French agreed to build a Channel tunnel. Of course it might never be completed, but work began in 1987 and should be finished in 1993. The plan is for a railway tunnel with two main tubes 131 feet under the Channel floor. The tunnel will be 30 miles long altogether, and 23 miles will be underwater. If it is built, it will be the longest underwater tunnel in the world. Special shuttle trains which can be loaded in only ten minutes will carry cars, lorries and passengers through the tunnel in only half an hour.



Great Britain and the sea: Did you know?

- Great Britain has got more than 300 ports.
- The British coast is over 6,000 miles long.
- No place in Britain is farther than 75 miles from the sea.
- Most British families go to the coast for their holiday.
- A favourite food - fish - comes from the sea. And an important form of energy comes from under the sea: North Sea oil.

Britain has always been famous for its ships and sailors. Two famous ones were both called Francis. Sir Francis Drake was the first Englishman who sailed round the world. His journey took three years: from 1577 to 1580. 389 years later - in 1966 - Sir Francis Chichester sailed round the world alone at the age of 65. His journey took just 226 days.

The Romans in Britain

In the year 410 the Roman army left Britain to defend the Empire in other parts of Europe. After 350 years of peace and good government under a strong Roman army, the British were suddenly alone and had to look after themselves. And they were not able to defend themselves against their new enemies.

There are very many places in Britain today where you can still see Roman remains. For example, part of the city walls and one of the big gates in Colchester, or the baths at Bath. Some place names tell you that they were originally Roman towns: Lancaster, Manchester, Worcester, Gloucester, etc. These names come from the Latin word 'castra', which means camp. Many modern roads also follow the routes of the original Roman roads, for example Watling Street or the Fosse Way. These roads are usually very straight and go from one Roman town to the next.

And it was a long time before certain things that were normal during Roman times became popular again. Houses in Britain, for example, did not have glass windows again until the 16th century. And central so heating was never introduced again until after the Second World War!

The Angles and Saxons started to invade the country along the east and southeast coasts. The Saxons did not live in the Roman towns, and over the years these slowly fell into ruin. Verulamium stood empty, while a new town grew around the hill where St. Alban had been executed. The name of that town became St. Albans. [2]



The Angles and Saxons in Britain

Unlike the Romans, the Angles and Saxons did not live peacefully with the Celts. In fact, they burned many villages and killed the people there. Many Celts were forced to leave their homes and settle in what is now Wales and Scotland. As more and more of these Germanic people settled in Britain, Celtic was no longer the native language of the population, but was replaced by 5 Anglo-Saxon. The new invaders divided the land into different kingdoms. Together these kingdoms became known as England and the people who lived there the English. The name "English" comes from the Angles, and there is still a part of England that is called East Anglia. There are other names in England that remind us of its Saxon past. For example, Sussex and Essex. Sussex was once the South Saxon Kingdom – and Essex ..., well, what do you think that once was? Town names that end in "-ton", "-ham" or "-bury" also tell us that these were once Saxon villages or settlements. Anglo-Saxon was a Germanic language and that is why many English words are similar to words in German: for example man, wife, house, father, mother, sister, brother, see, eat, sleep, speak...

On October 14th, 1066 England was invaded for the last time. On that day, Duke William of Normandy met and defeated the English army at Hastings. The battle started early in the morning. When it was over in the evening, Harold, the last Saxon king of England, was dead and Duke William had conquered one of the oldest and richest kingdoms in Europe. On Christmas Day, 1066 Duke William — or William the Conqueror as he later became known — was crowned William I, King of England, in Westminster Abbey.

William the Conqueror was King of England for twenty-one years. At first the Saxons hated the Normans and they had good reasons for this. King William divided the country among his Norman lords and these lords forced the Saxons to work on the land for them. There were lots of forests and wild animals in England at the time. These forests now belonged to the Normans. The Saxons were not allowed to hunt in them or to kill any animals — not even rabbits. If the Saxons killed any of the King's animals, the Normans hanged them or cut off a hand or an arm. The men who controlled the forests and the people for the Norman kings were the Sheriffs. They lived in the larger towns in different parts of the country.

Under the Normans, the Saxons had no rights and if they broke a law, the only hope for those who were persecuted was to leave their villages and hide in the forests where they lived as outlaws. It is in one of those forests, in Sherwood Forest, where our story takes place. It is the twelfth century. Bad King John, the brother of Richard the Lionheart, is King of England. Robin Hood is living in Sherwood Forest with his men. And not far away in the next town is their enemy, the Sheriff of Nottingham. [2]



William the Conqueror



England



Population: 51,092,000

Area: 130,395 km²

Capital: London

Largest city: London

Demonym: English

Patron saint: St. George

Motto: Dieu et mon droit (French for "God and my right")

England is a country which is part of the United Kingdom. Its inhabitants account for more than 83% of the total UK population, whilst its mainland territory occupies most of the southern two-thirds of the island of Great Britain. England shares land borders with Scotland to the north and Wales to the west and elsewhere is bordered by the North Sea, Irish Sea, Celtic Sea, Bristol Channel and English Channel. The capital is London, the largest urban area in Great Britain, and the largest urban zone in the European Union.



England became a unified state in the year 927 and takes its name from the Angles, one of the Germanic tribes. It has had a significant cultural and legal impact on the wider world being the place of origin of the English language, the Church of England and English law, which forms the basis of the common law legal systems of many countries around the world. In addition, England was the birth place of the Industrial Revolution and the first country in the world to industrialise. It is home to the Royal Society, which laid the foundations of modern experimental science. England is the world's oldest parliamentary system thus many constitutional, governmental and legal innovations that had their origin in England have been widely adopted by other nations.

There has not been a Government of England since 1707, when the Acts of Union 1707, putting into effect the terms of the Treaty of Union that had been agreed the previous year, joined the Kingdom of England with the Kingdom of Scotland to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Prior to this, England was ruled by a monarch and the Parliament of England. However, following the establishment of devolved



government for Scotland and Wales in 1999, England was left as the only country within the United Kingdom still governed in all matters by the UK government and the UK parliament in London and England-specific committee such as English Heritage.

The list of England's largest cities or urban areas is open to debate because, although the normal meaning of city is "a continuously built-up urban area", this can be hard to define, particularly because administrative areas in England often do not correspond with the limits of urban development, and many towns and cities have, over the centuries, grown to form complex urban agglomerations. Various definitions of cities can be used. London is by far the largest urban area in England and one of the largest and busiest cities in the world.

England's economy is the second largest in Europe and the fifth largest in the world. It follows the Anglo-Saxon economic model. England's economy is the largest of the four economies of the United Kingdom, with 100 of Europe's 500 largest corporations based in London. As part of the United Kingdom, England is a major centre of world economics. One of the world's most highly industrialised countries, England is a leader in the chemical and pharmaceutical sectors and in key technical industries, particularly aerospace, the arms industry and the manufacturing side of the software industry.

London exports mainly manufactured goods and imports materials such as petroleum, tea, wool, raw sugar, timber, butter, metals, and meat. England exported more than 30,000 tons of beef, worth around £75,000,000, with France, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain being the largest importers of beef from England.

The central bank of the United Kingdom, which sets interest rates and implements monetary policy, is the Bank of England in London. London is also home to the London Stock Exchange, the main stock exchange in the UK and the largest in Europe. London is one of the international leaders in finance and the largest financial centre in Europe.

Traditional heavy and manufacturing industries have declined sharply in England in recent decades, as they have in the United Kingdom as a whole. At the same time, service industries have grown in importance. For example, tourism is the sixth largest industry in the UK, contributing 76 billion pounds to the economy. The largest centre for tourism is London, which attracts millions of international tourists every year.

As part of the United Kingdom, England's official currency is the Pound Sterling.

England has a vast and influential culture that encompasses elements both old and new. The modern culture of England is sometimes difficult to identify and separate clearly from the culture of the wider United Kingdom, so intertwined are its composite nations. However the English traditional and historic culture remains distinct albeit with substantial regional differences.

English Heritage is a governmental body with a broad remit of managing the

historic sites, artefacts and environments of England. London's British Museum, British Library and National Gallery contain some of the finest collections in the world.

There is a long history of the promotion of education in England in schools, colleges and universities. England is home to the oldest existing schools in the English speaking world: The King's School, Canterbury and The King's School, Rochester, believed to be founded in the 6th and 7th century respectively. At least eight existing schools in England were founded in the first millennium. Sherborne School was granted a royal charter in 1550, but may have been the site of a school since the 8th century. Most of these ancient institutions are now fee-paying schools, however some state schools are also very old, most notably Beverley Grammar School founded in 700. The oldest surviving girls' school in England is Red Maids' School founded in 1634. The most famous schools in England are now fee-paying institutions, including Winchester College (founded 1382), Eton College (1440), St Paul's School (1509), Rugby School (1567) and Harrow School (1572).

England is also home to the two oldest universities in the English speaking world: Oxford University (12th century) and Cambridge University (early 13th century). There are now more than 90 universities in England. Several of these are world famous in their own right.

The English have played a significant role in the development of the arts and sciences. Many of the most important figures in the history of modern western scientific and philosophical thought were either born in, or at one time or other resided in, England. Major English thinkers of international significance include scientists such as Sir Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon, Michael Faraday, Charles Darwin and New Zealand-born Ernest Rutherford, philosophers such as John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Bertrand Russell and Thomas Hobbes, and economists such as David Ricardo, and John Maynard Keynes. Karl Marx wrote most of his important works, including *Das Kapital*, while in exile in Manchester, and the team that developed the first atomic bomb began their work in England, under the wartime codename Tube Alloys.

As birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, England was home to many significant inventors during the late 18th and early 19th century. Famous English engineers include Isambard Kingdom Brunel, best known for the creation of the Great Western Railway, a series of famous steamships, and numerous important bridges, hence revolutionising public transport and modern-day engineering.

Prominent English figures from the field of science and mathematics include Sir Isaac Newton, Michael Faraday, Robert Hooke, Robert Boyle, Joseph Priestley, J. J. Thomson, Charles Babbage, Charles Darwin, Stephen Hawking, Christopher Wren, Alan Turing, Francis Crick, Joseph Lister, Tim Berners-Lee, Andrew Wiles and Richard Dawkins. Some experts claim that the earliest concept of a Metric system was invented by John Wilkins, first secretary of the Royal Society in 1668. [3]

London



Population: 7,512,400 (within the boundaries of Greater London)

Area: 1,577.3 km²

Demonym: Londoner, Cockney

Nickname: The Big Village, The Old Smoke, Town

Motto: Domine dirige nos' (Latin for "Lord, direct us")

London is the capital and largest urban area of England and the United Kingdom. An important settlement for two millennia, London's history goes back to its founding by the Romans. Since its settlement, London has been part of many movements and phenomena throughout history, including the English Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, and the Gothic Revival. The city's core, the ancient City of London, still retains its limited medieval boundaries; but since at least the 19th century the name "London" has also referred to the whole metropolis that has developed around it.

Now London is the most populous city and metropolitan area of the European Union and the second most populous in Europe (or third if Istanbul is included). It is also ranked 4th in the world in number of billionaires (United States Dollars) residing in the city.

London is one of the world's leading business, financial and cultural centres, and its influence in politics, education, entertainment, media, fashion and the arts contribute to its status as a major global city. London boasts four World Heritage Sites: The Palace of Westminster, Westminster Abbey and St. Margaret's Church; the Tower of London; the historic settlement of Greenwich; and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

However, London ranks as one of the most expensive cities in the world, alongside Tokyo and Moscow, the city is a major tourist destination both for domestic and overseas visitors.

The etymology of London remains a mystery. The first major settlement was founded by the Romans in AD 43 as Londinium, following the Roman conquest of Britain. This Londinium lasted for just seventeen years. Around 61, the Iceni tribe led by Queen Boudica stormed this first London, burning it to the ground. The next, heavily-planned incarnation of the city prospered and superseded Colchester as the capital of the Roman province of Britannia in 100. At its height in the 2nd century, Roman London had a population of around 60,000.

By the 600s, the Anglo-Saxons had created a new settlement called Lundenwic near the old Roman city, around what is now Covent Garden. The original Saxon city of Lundenwic became Ealdwic ("old city"), a name surviving to the present day as Aldwych, which is in the modern City of Westminster. By 1042, London had become the largest and most prosperous city in England, although the official seat of government was still at Winchester.

Following a victory at the Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror was crowned King of England in the newly-finished Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1066. William granted the citizens of London special privileges, while building a castle in the south-east corner of the city to keep them under control. This castle was expanded by later kings and is now known as the Tower of London, serving first as a royal residence and later as a prison.

In 1666 the Great Fire of London broke out in the original City and quickly swept through London's wooden buildings, destroying large swathes of the city. Rebuilding took over ten years, largely under direction of a Commission chaired by Sir Christopher Wren.

Following London's growth in the 18th century, it became the world's largest city from about 1831 to 1925. Rising traffic congestion on city centre roads led to the creation of the world's first metro system—the London Underground—in 1863.

The Blitz and other bombing by the German Luftwaffe during World War II killed over 30,000 Londoners and destroyed large tracts of housing and other buildings across London.

In 1965 London's political boundaries were expanded to take into account the growth of the urban area outside the County of London's borders. The expanded area was called Greater London and was administered by the Greater London Council.

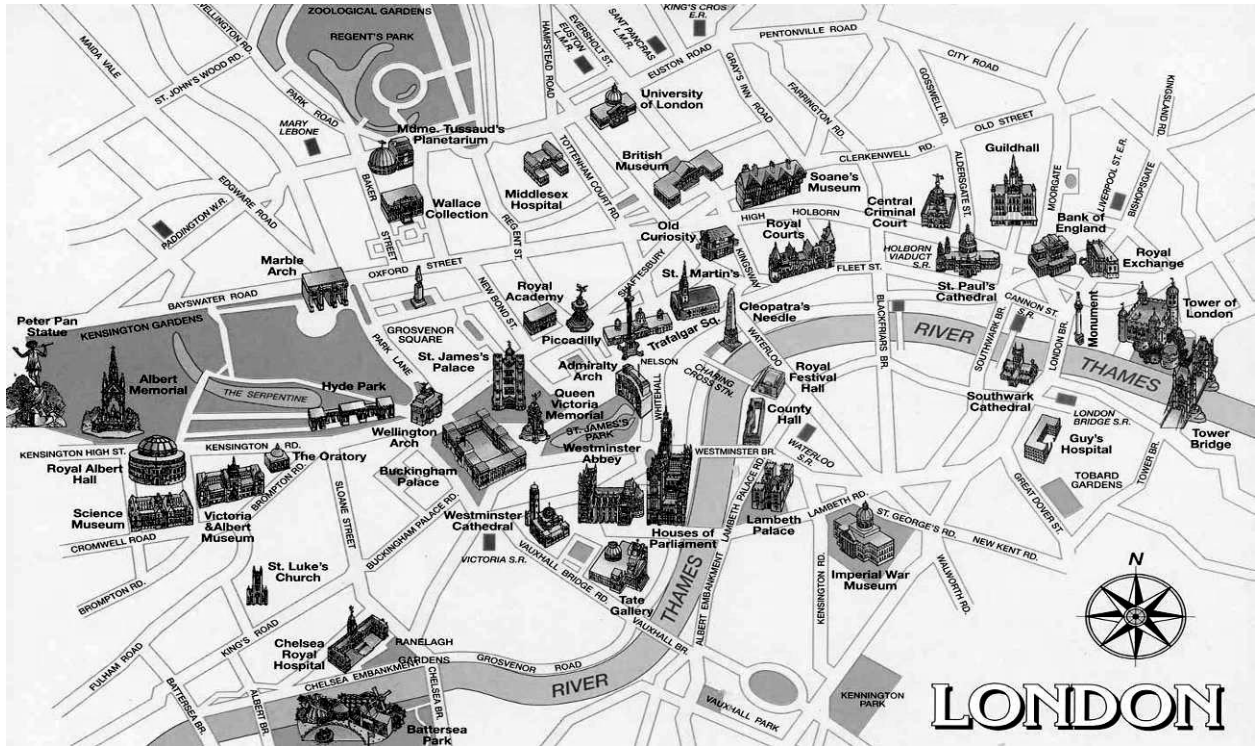
Unlike most capital cities, London's status as the capital of the UK has never been granted or confirmed officially—by statute or in written form. Its position as the capital has formed through constitutional convention, making its position as *de facto* capital a part of the UK's unwritten constitution. The capital of England was moved to London from Winchester as the Palace of Westminster developed in the 12th and 13th centuries to become the permanent location of the royal court, and thus the political capital of the nation.^[65] According to the Collins English Dictionary, London is not the capital of England, as England does not have its own government. However according to the Oxford English Reference dictionary, London is the capital of England.

London's vast urban area is often described using a set of district names (e.g. Bloomsbury, Knightsbridge, Mayfair, Whitechapel, Fitzrovia). These are either informal designations, or reflect the names of superseded villages, parishes and city wards. Such names have remained in use through tradition, each referring to a neighbourhood with its own distinctive character, but often with no modern official boundaries. Since 1965 Greater London has been divided into 32 London boroughs in addition to the ancient City of London:

1. City of London
2. City of Westminster
3. Kensington and Chelsea
4. Hammersmith and Fulham
5. Wandsworth
6. Lambeth
7. Southwark
8. Tower Hamlets
9. Hackney
10. Islington
11. Camden
12. Brent
13. Ealing
14. Hounslow
15. Richmond
16. Kingston
17. Merton



18. Sutton
19. Croydon
20. Bromley
21. Lewisham
22. Greenwich
23. Bexley
24. Havering
25. Barking and Dagenham
26. Redbridge
27. Newham
28. Waltham Forest
29. Haringey
30. Enfield
31. Barnet
32. Harrow
33. Hillingdon



The City of London is one of the world's three largest financial centres with a dominant role in several international financial markets, including cross-border bank lending, international bond issuance and trading, foreign-exchange trading, over-the-counter derivatives, fund management and foreign equities trading (the London Stock Exchange). It also has the world's largest insurance market (Lloyds of London), the leading exchange for dealing in non-precious metals, the largest spot gold and gold lending markets, the largest ship broking market, and more foreign banks and investment houses than any other centre.



The City has its own governance and boundaries, giving it a status as the only completely autonomous local authority in London. London's new financial and commercial hub is the Docklands area to the east of the City, dominated by the Canary Wharf complex which is home to such companies as the HSBC and Clifford Chance. Other businesses locate in the City of Westminster, the home of the UK's national government and the well-known Westminster Abbey.



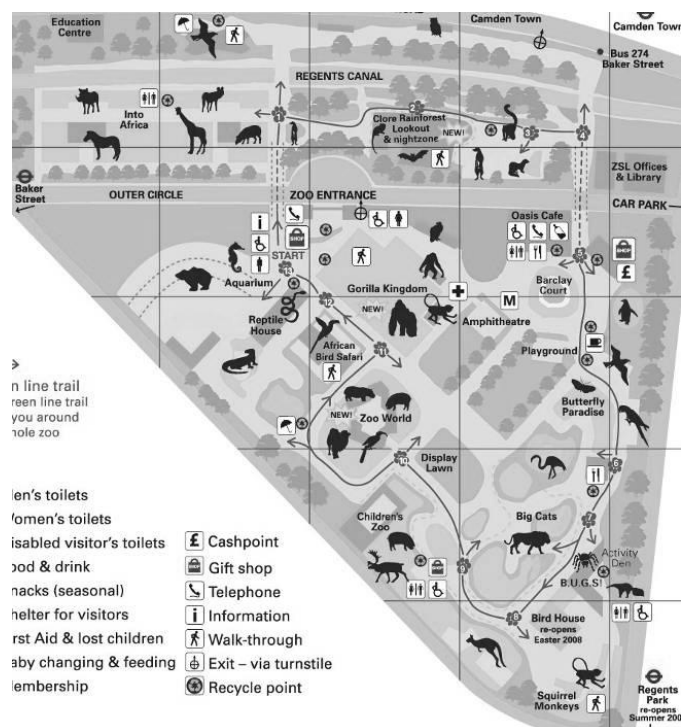
The West End is London's main entertainment and shopping district, with locations such as Oxford Street, Leicester Square, Covent Garden and Piccadilly Circus acting as tourist magnets. The West London area is known for fashionable and expensive residential areas such as Notting Hill, Knightsbridge and Chelsea – where properties can sell for tens of millions of pounds. The average price for all properties in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is £894,000 with similar average outlay in most of Central London.

The eastern region of London contains the East End and East London. The East End is the area closest to the original Port of London, known for its high immigrant population, as well as for being one of the poorest areas in London. The surrounding East London area saw much of London's early industrial development; now, brownfield sites throughout the area are being redeveloped as part of the being developed into the Olympic Park Thames Gateway including the London Riverside and Lower Lea Valley, which is for the 2012 Olympics.



London is too diverse to be characterised by any particular architectural style, having accumulated its buildings over a long period of time and drawn on a wide range of influences. It is, however, mainly brick built, most commonly the yellow London stock brick or a warm orange-red variety, often decorated with carvings and white plaster mouldings. Many grand houses and public buildings (such as the National Gallery) are constructed from Portland stone. Some areas of the city, particularly those just west of the centre, are characterised by white stucco or whitewashed buildings.

The largest parks in the central area of London are the Royal Parks of Hyde Park and its neighbour Kensington Gardens at the western edge of central London and Regent's Park on the northern edge. This park contains London Zoo, the world's oldest scientific zoo, and is located near the tourist attraction of Madame Tussauds Wax Museum. Closer to central London are the smaller Royal Parks of Green Park and St. James's Park. Hyde Park in particular is popular for sports and sometimes hosts open-air concerts. [7], [8]



Sights of London

London is not only the British capital, it is also one of the biggest and most famous cities in the world. Millions of tourists go there every year. They visit the many historical sights. Let's do our own tour of London. We can start in Westminster, at the Houses of Parliament. Do you know what Big Ben is? Is it the name of the tower, the clock on the tower, or the big bell inside the clock tower? Well, people sometimes call the clock and even the tower Big Ben, but it is really the name of the huge bell. (It weighs 13k tons.) You can hear Big Ben on the BBC World Service in almost every country in the world.



Now let's go along Whitehall to Trafalgar Square. Then we can walk along the Strand and Fleet Street to St. Paul's Cathedral, where Prince Charles and Princess Diana got married in 1981. St. Paul's is the second largest church in the world. Christopher Wren built it after the Great Fire of London in 1666. When you climb to the top of St. Paul's, you have got a wonderful view over London. From the top of St. Paul's to the ground it is 365 feet – one foot for every day of the year.

From St. Paul's it is not very far to the Tower of London. The Tower is over 900 years old and is one of the most famous castles in Britain. It was once a royal palace, the home of the kings and queens of England. Later it was a prison and a place for many executions. Some people say there are still ghosts in the Tower. Today it is a museum and over two million people visit it every year. They come to see the Crown Jewels and the Beefeaters.

Now let's go back to the West End and take the Underground to Baker Street. From there it is a one-minute walk to Madame Tussaud's with its wax figures of kings, queens, pop stars, politicians and – in the Chamber of Horrors – famous criminals. (Many years ago a criminal even sent his clothes to Madame Tussaud's on the day of his execution.) And when you see some of the big names from history, you will be surprised how small many of them really were!

Finally, perhaps you'd like to go on a boat trip along the River Thames? From Westminster Pier, for example, you can travel down past the Tower and Greenwich to one of the most unusual tourist attractions in the world: the Thames Flood Barrier. In the past there have been several terrible floods in London. They can happen when the wind pushes the sea up the river towards London. There are walls along the river, but these are not high enough to protect the city. In 1928 fourteen people died when the water came over the walls in Westminster. A really bad flood might kill thousands of people and damage many of the historical buildings. Londoners now hope that the huge Thames Barrier will hold back the water so that this will never happen.

Londoners

Tourists usually see only a very small part of London. They visit the sights, or they go to the big stores, theatres and cinemas in the West End. But this is London, too. In areas like Brixton in South London and the East End, a lot of houses and buildings are very old and shabby. Most people there are poor. The parents of many young people once came from India, Pakistan or the West Indies.

Houses and flats in the nice parts of London are very expensive. They cost so much that even most people with good jobs cannot pay for them. So many people live in the towns and villages outside London. Of course they must travel a long way to work. Two or three hours every day in a train is quite normal for some of these commuters.

The name of one very small part of London (about one square mile) is famous all over the world. It is the City. The City is the oldest part of London, the place where the old Roman town was first built. In this small area you can find the, big banks, the offices of many big firms and one of London's most famous streets: Fleet Street. This street was once the home of Britain's largest newspapers and magazines, but few are still there today. Although half a million people work in the City, only about 5,000 live there.



Trafalgar Square

The square was named in commemoration of the victorious sea battle of Trafalgar in 1805. On October 21 a combined French and Spanish fleet was attacked by the English under Admiral Nelson and was destroyed. This ended the possibility of an invasion and established England's superiority on the seas. Lord Nelson was fatally wounded in the battle.



In 1829 John Nash (1752-1835) laid out Trafalgar Square. Nelson's Column was erected in 1842. The total height of the monument is 184 feet and the statue of Admiral Nelson is 17 feet tall. Its pedestal is decorated with bas-reliefs of famous sea battles. These bas-reliefs were cast of cannons captured from the French.

Four bronze lions that look down onto the square from the base of the monument are the work of the English architect of Landseer. They symbolize the four countries of the UK: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Trafalgar Square is one of the busiest places in London. The square is the place where demonstrations and mass rallies for peace, disarmament and for working people's rights are held. At weekends Londoners love to come to the square to feed the pigeons.



Not far from Trafalgar Square you can see Parliament Square with the Houses of Parliament to the left. This building dates only from the 19th century, but it stands on the site of the palace of Edward the Confessor founded in 1050.

The Palace of Westminster had been used both as a royal residence and as a parliament house until King Henry VIII moved from there in 1512. Soon after the Palace of Westminster also lost its other non-parliamentary residents, the canons of St. Stephen's, for in 1547 the college of canons was dissolved and the chapel abandoned.

Parliament in its 18th century setting was brought to a dramatic close by the events of 16 October 1834. On that day the whole building caught fire, and 24 hours later, most of the remainder of the palace was a smoking and blackened ruin. It was decided to erect a new Palace of Westminster on the old historic site, and to plan it so as to serve the needs of Parliament.

The foundation stone of the new building, designed by the architect Sir Charles Barry and his assistant Augustus W. N. Pugin, was laid in 1840. The House of Lords Chamber was ready for use in 1847, and the House of Commons Chamber in 1850. The Clock Tower was completed in 1858, and the Victoria Tower, then the highest tower in the world (98m high), was completed in 1860. When parliament is sitting, the Union Jack is flown from the Tower from 10 a.m. to sunset. It is also flown on

special occasions. When the Sovereign comes it is replaced by the Royal Standard. The palace contains over 1,000 rooms, a hundred staircases and 2 miles of corridors, and covers an area of 8 acres. Construction of the second tower - the Clock Tower - was completed in 1858. The Tower is 318 feet high. You have to go up 374 steps to reach the top. The dock came into service in 1859 and was nicknamed "Big Ben". Its name probably derives from Sir Benjamin Hall, who was the First Commissioner of Works when it was hung and whose name was inscribed on the first bell. Above the belfry a lantern is lit after dark whenever Parliament is sitting.



Buckingham Palace

And now we are coming to Buckingham Palace which is the official London residence of Her Majesty the Queen and is one of the best known symbols of the British monarchy.

Buckingham House - the building now completely enveloped by Buckingham Palace - was built for John, Duke of Buckingham, between 1702 and 1705. It was sold to the Crown in 1762 for the sum of £28,000 and just a year later King George III bought it for his nineteen-year old wife. Although King George III had modernized and enlarged the house in the 1760s and 1770s, the transformations that give the building its present character were carried out by the architects John Nash, Edward Blore and James Pennethorne. The first Queen to live there was young Queen Victoria, who moved in on 13 July 1837, three weeks after her accession on the throne. Even though many of the 1,000 windows would not open, doors were ill-fitting, lavatories were unventilated and bells did not ring, the Queen loved the Palace (Blore finally finished it in 1847).



Buckingham Palace is certainly one of the most famous buildings in the world, known to millions as The Queen's Home. Yet it is very much a working building required for the administration of the modern monarchy.

In some ways the Palace resembles a small town. It has a police station, two post offices, a hospital, a bar, two sports clubs, a disco, a cinema, and a swimming pool. There are 600 rooms and three miles of red carpet. The kitchens sometimes serve up to 600 meals a day. On great occasions it takes 3 days to lay the table and 3 days to do the washing-up. The post office deals with over 100,000 items every year. There is a special three-man security team equipped with a fluoroscope, which examines every piece of mail that arrives at the Palace.

Buckingham Palace is not only the home of the Royal Family, where children are born, brought up and get married, it is also the workplace of an army of secretaries, clerks and typists, telephonists, carpenters, and plumbers. There are gardeners, chauffeurs and engineers, cooks, kitchen hands, footmen, butlers, stewards, maids and cleaners, policemen and soldiers, and even two clockmakers who wind and maintain the Palace's 300 clocks. The business of monarchy never stops and the light is often shining from the window of the Queen's study late at night.

All the offices of those eldest to Her Majesty are located on the ground floor corridor immediately beneath her private apartments. Official visitors enter the Palace by the Privy Purse door on the right, viewed from the Mall. ;

There can hardly be a single one of the 600 or so rooms in the Palace that is not in more or, less constant use.

The senior member of the Royal Household is the Lord Chamberlain. His responsibilities include overseeing all the departments of the household. There are more than 200 domestic staff employed at Buckingham Palace and each one comes under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Household.

Above the State Entrance is the central balcony, where the Royal Family appear on occasions of national importance. When The Queen is in the residence, the flag flies over the Palace. Nearly every morning London's most popular ceremony, the Changing of the Guard, takes place on the forecourt.

St. Paul's Cathedral

Our next stop is St. Paul's Cathedral. We'd better stop here and have a look at the sheer beauty of this magnificent Cathedral.

St. Paul is the patron saint of London. St. Paul's Cathedral was built in 1675-1710 and was the fifth church on the same site. The earliest wooden cathedral was erected in AD 604 for Mellitus, Bishop of the East Saxons. Mellitus was one of the second wave of missionaries sent to England by Pope Gregory the Great.



The Saxon church was destroyed by fire and rebuilt a number of times.

After the last disaster in 1087, the Norman's undertook to construct a massive church whose size and style reflected the importance of London. This church, known as old St. Paul's and built in Gothic style, was the heart of everyday life in the City of London. It was the largest church in England and the third largest in Europe. But the Great Fire of London destroyed the Cathedral in 1066.

Sir Christopher Wren was chosen in 1669 to design and construct a new St. Paul's.

He was not only an architect, but also a Latinist, scientist, anatomist, astronomer, mathematician and engineer. The first building that he designed was Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1661. His next masterpiece, built between 1664-1669, was the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford.

Wren's first design of St. Paul's was rejected as it was thought to be untraditional. His second design was more ambitious and a model was made. While the King approved, the Church authorities disagreed. Finally, King Charles II issued a warrant of approval to allow the project to proceed. A tax was put on coal coming into the Port of London to pay for rebuilding St. Paul's. The Cathedral was largely created and carved from stone from the royal quarries at Portland in Dorset.

St. Paul's is a cathedral church, the main church of a diocese. It is where the Bishop of London has his throne or "cathedra". Great Paul is Britain's heaviest swinging bell. It weighs 17 tonnes and rings daily for five minutes at 1 o'clock. The Cathedral clock Big Tom is of similar size to Westminster's Big Ben. Music plays a large part in the life of the Cathedral. The organ was rebuilt in 1872.

There is also a Library in St. Paul's. It has remained unchanged since its completion in 1709. The Library has some 13,000 books, sermons and pamphlets.

Three recurring symbols can be found in St. Paul's: a sword, a pelican, and the heads of winged cherubs. Nearly 150 full and part-time staff are needed to run St. Paul's.

Between two or three million visitors a year visit St. Paul's Cathedral.

The Tower

The name "The Tower of London" has long been used for the whole of the great fortress and palace founded by William the Conqueror. It belonged originally, however, to the central square tower, now called the White Tower. The strategic position gave the Tower control of the River Thames and London Bridge as well as the city itself.

The foundations of the White Tower were laid in about 1078, and the work was directed by Gundulf, a monk from Bee in Normandy. But when William the Conqueror died in 1087, the Tower was still unfinished. His son, William II, continued the work, which was completed in about 1097. Additional buildings and defences were constructed during the reign of kings Richard I, Henry III, Edward I, Edward III, Richard II, Henry VIII covering a long period from the 12th century to the end of the 16th. Waterloo Barracks and the Royal Fusiliers Museum were built in the 19th-20th centuries.



During its long history the Tower has served as a fortress, a palace, a mint, and a state prison. It has the history of a place of murder and execution. Visitors are reminded of the grim history of the Tower by the Traitors' Gate, the river entrance through which prisoners passed. A lot of notable and noble persons were executed in the Tower: Henry VI, last of the House of Lancaster, was imprisoned here when the War of the Roses brought to power the House of York. He was kept in the oratory on the upper floor of the White Tower and was murdered in 1471 while at prayer. Later, two young princes, Edward V and his brother Richard, Duke of York, were murdered in the Bloody Tower, it is believed that their uncle, Gloucester, who became Richard III, had them smothered as they slept. Later, Henry VIII had two of his wives executed on Tower Green: Anne Boleyn, tried on a charge of adultery, was beheaded in 1536. She was followed in 1542 by Henry's fifth wife, Catherine Howard. Sir Thomas More was imprisoned in the lower chamber of the Bell Tower. He was executed for his refusal to accept King Henry VIII as head of the Church in England. Lady Jane Grey, the "nine days" Queen, a young victim of politics, was beheaded on the Tower Green in 1554. The same year, the future Queen Elizabeth, Anne Boleyn's daughter, was imprisoned by her half-sister, Mary I, Henry VIII's elder daughter. In 1601 Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was also executed on the Green. Dreadful instruments of torture were invented and used in the Tower. Here are some of them: the rack, which made its victims "a foot longer"; iron shackles; iron gloves; manacles; an iron cage that compressed head, hands and feet, and the portcullis mechanism which is still in working order.

The last person to be beheaded in the Tower, as well as in England, was Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat. He was publicly executed on Tower Hill in 1747.

Mentioned above, are only but a few of the victims beheaded and executed in the Tower of London. No wonder ghosts are said to be wondering there at night.

Today the Tower is Britain's most famous museum, whose working day finishes every night at 10 o'clock with the ancient Ceremony of the Keys. It's an unusual and interesting tradition. At 9.53 p.m. the Chief Warder leaves the Byward Tower, carrying in one hand a candle lantern and in the other The Queen's Keys, and goes to Traitors' Gate where an escort awaits him. He hands the lantern to a member of the escort and they move to the outer gate, the first to be locked. Then, the doors of the Middle and Byward Tower are locked, and the procession retraces to the Bloody Tower, where a sentry calls, "Halt! Who goes there?" The Chief Warder answers, "The Keys". "Whose Keys?" comes the question. "Queen Elizabeth's Keys". "Pass Queen Elizabeth's Keys. All's well". The Keys are delivered to The Queen's House and the guard is dismissed.



London Museums

London Museums are another tourist attraction. The most important collection of historical paintings in the UK is housed at the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, which covers all the major European schools since the 13th century.

The National Gallery started with a small collection of 38 paintings. They were bought by the British government from the estate of merchant John Angerstein (1735-1823) soon after his death. Initially the collection was exhibited in the merchant's house at Pall Mall. In 1838 it was reopened to the public in its present



building. Masterpieces of such great painters as Hogarth, Constable, Gainsborough, and Reynolds are exhibited there. During the war the walls of the building of the National Gallery were destroyed in some places. But the pictures were taken to Wales and put in a deep cave at the foot of a mountain. They were saved.

The most comprehensive collection of antiquities is to be found at the British Museum in Great Russell Street. The Museum was founded in 1753. It has many departments covering a vast range of subjects. One of its most interesting sections is the National Library. It has more than 6 million books. The library receives nearly 2 thousand books and papers daily. The National Library of the British Museum has a copy of every book printed in the English language. There are also some of the first English books printed by Caxton, who lived in the 15th century and made the first printing press in England. The British Museum has a wonderful art gallery, too. It has unique collections of sculptures, drawings and paintings of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Normans, Africans, Chinese, and Indians. There is also a fine collection of Greek art and beautiful Chinese vases in the Museum.

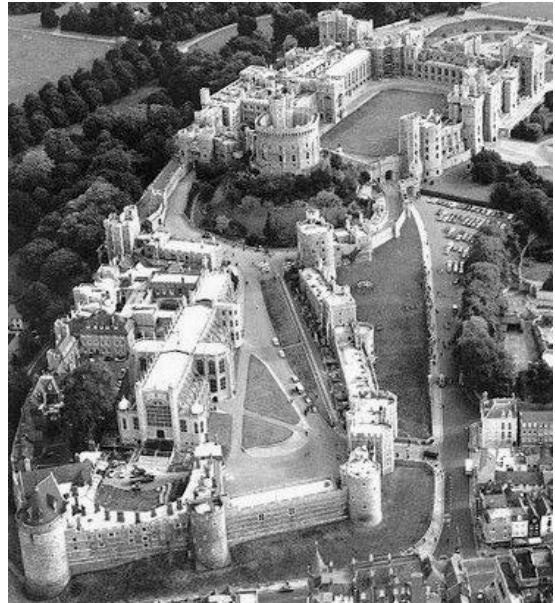
Windsor Castle

The story of London and its marvellous sights won't be complete without visiting Windsor Castle. It has belonged continuously to the sovereigns of England since the days of the Norman Conquest over 900 years ago, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, is

a descendant of its founder. It was not as a stone-walled castle but as a typical Norman stronghold of earth and timber that it first existed, one of many constructed by the forces of William the Conqueror to control the country after his invasion of 1066.

The Castle is divided into three Wards: the Lower, Middle and Upper Wards.

Crowning the Middle Ward is the Round Tower, built as the main stronghold of the castle by King Henry II in the 12th century. The Round Tower formed the central feature of the original fortress with its surrounding dry moat, walls, and towers. The tower is not strictly circular in form: its longest diameter measures 103 feet and its shortest is 94 feet. The Union Jack is flown from the top of the Round Tower, and is replaced by the much larger Royal Standard when the Queen visits the castle.



Beside the Round Tower stand the twin towers of the Norman Gate, built by King Edward III in the 14th century. [6]

The Upper Ward



The Norman Gate leads into a small courtyard in the Upper Ward known as Engine Court. On the left is a gallery constructed by Queen Elizabeth I in the 16th century, followed by a building erected a century earlier as quarters for the Royal Family. The Engine Court looks out on the vast open courtyard known as Quadrangle where the Changing of the Guard takes place.

To the left of the Quadrangle can be seen the State Apartments and the State Entrance and on the right are the Private Apartments of the Queen. The North Terrace can be reached either by walking down the steps beneath the Royal Library, or from

the Middle Ward through an opening in the outer wall of the castle. The North Terrace, built by King Charles II in the 17th century, commands a panoramic view of the Thames Valley, with Eton College and the Chiltern Hills beyond. [6]

The Lower Ward



To reach the Lower Ward the visitor must return along the North Terrace to the Middle Ward and the foot of the Round Tower. On the right stands the Albert Memorial Chapel. It stands on the site of the earlier chapel built by King Henry III in 1240. The richly decorated interior of the chapel

was created for Queen Victoria in 1863-73 as a memorial to her husband, Albert, the Prince Consort, who died in 1861 at the age of only 42. The chapel is the work of Sir George Gilbert Scott and houses a marble figure of Prince Albert, whose tomb is in the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore.

St. George's Chapel is situated further down the hill on the right. The Chapel was founded in 1475 by King Edward IV as the chapel of the Order of the Garter and completed 50 years later by King Henry VIII. The chapel is in regular use on great ceremonial occasions and the most important of these is the service of the Order of Garter. This historic pageant takes place in early June. The order, which was founded in 1347 by King Edward III, is Britain's highest order of chivalry.

Queen Mary's Dolls House must be the most magnificent dolls house in the world, an English country mansion in miniature. The house designed by the famous architect Sir Edwin Lutyens as a gift for Queen Mary was intended to be a work of the finest English craftsmanship, a model of an early 20th century royal residence perfect in every detail.

Built on a scale of 1 to 12, the house is a miracle of scale and accuracy. It has electric lighting, hot and cold running water, and folly-operating lifts and door locks. It boasts an electric vacuum cleaner, an electric iron, and a Singer sewing-machine. The exterior of the house has sliding sash windows.

In the morning of Friday 20 November 1992 a terrible fire broke out. It swept through the northeast wing of Windsor Castle. The fire caused millions of pounds worth of damage. A brave rescue operation, however, saved the art treasures from the

flames.

Windsor Castle is an ideal weekend residence for the Queen. As a young princess the Sovereign was evacuated here to safety with her sister Princess Margaret in 1940, and the princesses lived at Windsor throughout the Second World War.

Nowadays the Royal Family come to Windsor to enjoy outdoor activities, such as riding, carriage-driving, polo, and shooting in the Great Park. Prince Charles often plays polo on Smith's Lawn during the season. Ascot Week in June is greatly enjoyed, as well as the Royal Windsor Horse Show, and the traditional Garter procession and service. All these events are highly popular with the public, too, attracting huge crowds. [6]

London and its canals

London's canal network, once an arterial link with the industrial north, had, until recently, become a neglected backwater - overgrown, hidden from view and virtually forgotten. Times change. Today the London canals have undergone a major resurrection and the public have been encouraged to participate in the revival.

If when being in London you have got a spare afternoon, try a canal appetiser. Walk from Camden Town to Little Venice, it's a two-mile trip and should take about an hour. Take the Northern Line tube or buses 3, 24, 27, 31 or 74 to Camden, walk down High Street and turn into Camden Lock Market.

Camden Market is worth a visit in itself. It's a great place for antiques, handicrafts, jewellery, leather, pottery and people watching. In a far corner of the paved artists quarter a doorway gives passage to the Regent's Canal towpath, the start of the walk.

An iron bridge spans the canal at this point overlooking Hampstead Road Lock. If a narrow boat happens to be passing, take the time to watch the lock in operation, moving craft from one level to another. This lock is just one of twelve that allow the canal to drop 86 feet down to the Thames at Limehouse Basin in the East End.



Heading west, keep an eye open for deep grooves scored into stone and ironwork. The old marks were caused by towropes stretched taut across the surface where horses once hauled working boats. The function of Regents Canal has changed over time. Working narrow boats and barges no longer ply their trade; the waters now belong to pleasure boats and Sunday walkers.

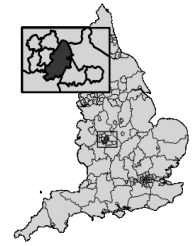
The towpath passes under a number of bridges as you move towards a sharp right-hand turn in the canal at Cumberland Basin.

Originally the architect of Regents Canal, Hohn Nash, planned to push his commercial waterway into fashionable Regents Park from Cumberland Basin. Well-heeled gentry in fancy houses squashed his plan and Nash was forced to turn along the edge of the park...hence the right-angle bend.

Walk under two elegant iron bridges and notice the intricate scroll work and inscriptions on the overhead spans. The path now skirts London Zoo, complete with grunts and growls, and looming above all else is Lord Snowdon's futuristic aviary. You can not get into the zoo from the towpath, but you will get a good view of some of the inmates.

Then I would recommend you to stop for a while at Macclesfield Bridge with its imposing Doric columns. It is known for a fascinating history and is commonly called "Blow Up Bridge". In 1874 a barge carrying gun-powder exploded as it passed under the bridge.

Birmingham



Population: 1,010,200

Area: 184.46 km²

Demonym: Brummie

Nickname: Brum", "Brummagem", "Second City", "Workshop of the World", "City of a Thousand Trades"

Motto: Forward

Birmingham is the second-largest city in the United Kingdom. It is one of the country's principal industrial centres and has an impressive history of industrial and scientific innovation.



The city's reputation was forged as a powerhouse of the Industrial Revolution in England, a fact which led to Birmingham being known as "the workshop of the world" or the "city of a thousand trades". Although Birmingham's industrial importance has declined, it has developed into a national commercial centre, being named as the third best place in the United Kingdom to locate a business, and the 21st best in Europe. It is the birthplace of exhibitions in 1850 and remains a popular location for conventions today. Thus, it is also the fourth most visited city by foreign visitors in the UK.

People from Birmingham are known as 'Brummies', a term derived from the city's nickname of Brum. This comes in turn from the city's dialect name, Brummagem, which is derived from one of the city's earlier names, 'Bromwicham'.

In the 6th century, Birmingham was an Anglo-Saxon farming hamlet on the banks of the River Rea. The name 'Birmingham' comes from "Beorma ingas ham", meaning "home of the people of Beorma." Birmingham was first recorded in written documents by the Domesday Book of 1086 as a small village, worth only 20 shillings.

In the 12th century, Birmingham was granted a royal charter to hold a market, transforming Birmingham from a village to a market town. As early as the 16th century, Birmingham's access to supplies of iron ore and coal meant that metalworking industries became established.

In the 17th century, Birmingham had become an important manufacturing town

with a reputation for producing small arms. Arms manufacture in Birmingham became a staple trade and was concentrated in the area known as the Gun Quarter. During the Industrial Revolution (from the mid-18th century onwards), Birmingham grew rapidly into a major industrial centre and the town prospered. During the 18th century, Birmingham was home to the Lunar Society, an important gathering of local thinkers and industrialists.

Two of Britain's "big four" banks were founded in Birmingham - Lloyds Bank (now Lloyds TSB) in 1765 and the Midland Bank (now HSBC Bank plc) in 1836 - and today the city employs 108,000 in banking, finance and insurance.

During the Victorian era, the population of Birmingham grew rapidly to over half a million and Birmingham became the second largest population centre in England. Birmingham was granted city status in 1889 by Queen Victoria. In the decades following The Second World War, the population of Birmingham changed dramatically, with immigration from the Commonwealth of Nations and beyond. The population peaked in 1951 at 1,113,000 residents.

Birmingham established its own university in 1900. Now the city is home to three universities and two university colleges: the University of Birmingham, Aston University, Birmingham City University, Newman University College and University College Birmingham. The Birmingham Conservatoire and Birmingham School of Acting, both now part of Birmingham City University, offer higher education in specific arts subjects. BCU opened the New Technology Institute facility in the Eastside area in 2006.

Birmingham has been the location for some of the most important inventions and scientific breakthroughs. Local inventions and notable firsts include: gas lighting, custard powder, the magnetron, the first ever use of radiography in an operation, Lewis Paul and John Wyatt's first cotton Roller Spinning machine and the UK's first ever hole-in-the-heart operation, at Birmingham Children's Hospital. Among the city's notable scientists and inventors are Matthew Boulton, proprietor of the Soho engineering works, Sir Francis Galton, originator of eugenics and important techniques in statistics, Joseph Priestley, chemist and radical and James Watt, engineer and inventor who is associated with the steam engine. Many of these scientists were members of the Lunar Society.

The Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is the main art gallery and museum in Birmingham. It has renowned displays of artwork that include a leading collection of work by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the world's largest collection of works by Edward Burne-Jones. The group also owns other museums in the city such as Aston Hall, Blakesley Hall, the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter and Sarehole Mill, a popular attraction for fans of J. R. R. Tolkien.

The Barber Institute of Fine Arts is both an art gallery and concert hall. It also has one of the world's most detailed and largest coin collections. Cadbury World is a museum showing visitors the stages and steps of chocolate production and the history of chocolate and the company. [1], [2]

Leeds



Population: 761,100

Area: 551.72 km²

Demonym: Leodensian, Loiner

Nickname: 'Knightsbridge of the North'

Motto: Pro Rege et Lege (Latin for "For King and Law ")

Leeds is located on the River Aire in West Yorkshire, England. It is the urban core and administrative centre of the wider metropolitan borough of the City of Leeds. The county borough of Leeds was awarded city status in 1893, but in 1974 this status was transferred to the larger new metropolitan borough named "City of Leeds". Thus Leeds, although commonly referred to as a "city", does not have this legal status unless the wider area is being discussed.



Historically a part of the West Riding of Yorkshire, the recorded history of Leeds can be traced to the 5th century when the Kingdom of Elmet was covered by the forest of "Loidis", the origin of the name Leeds. During the Industrial Revolution, Leeds developed into a major industrial centre for the production and trade of wool, before emerging as a centre for commerce and higher education, being the location of the University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University and Leeds Trinity and All Saints. Today the city is one of the largest financial and legal centres outside London.



Leeds was an agricultural market town in the Middle Ages, and received its first charter in 1207. In the Tudor period Leeds was mainly a merchant town, manufacturing woollen cloths and trading with Europe via the Humber estuary. At one point nearly half of England's total exports passed through Leeds. At the time of the Industrial Revolution Leeds grew rapidly. The

city's industrial growth was helped by the building of the Aire and Calder Navigation in 1699, Leeds and Liverpool Canal in 1816 and the railway in 1848. The industries that developed in the Industrial Revolution included making machinery for spinning, machine tools, steam engines and gears as well as other industries based on textiles, chemicals, leather and pottery. Coal was extracted on a large scale and the Middleton Railway, the first successful commercial steam locomotive railway in the world, transported coal from Middleton colliery into the centre of Leeds. The first permanent set of fully automatic traffic lights in the world were installed at the junction of Park Row and Bond Street, Leeds, in 1928.

By the 20th century this social and economic base started to change as Leeds saw the creation of the academic institutions that are known today as the University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University and Leeds Trinity & All Saints. This period also witnessed expansion in medical institutions, particularly the Leeds General Infirmary and St James's Hospital.

In the 1980s, the Conservative government designated Urban Development Corporation status on a number of areas of UK cities: some declining areas were taken out of local authority control and government funding was provided with the aim of speeding up and concentrating private sector investment in the most run-down areas. Leeds Development Corporation ran from 1988–1995 and helped to focus attention on two decayed industrial areas, the lower Kirkstall Valley and the riverside area to the south east of the city centre. Achievements of LDC included refurbishment of many riverside properties, the opening up of Granary Wharf and the Royal Armouries development.

Leeds was voted 'Britain's Best City for Business' in 2003 but dropped to 3rd place behind Manchester and Glasgow in 2005. Leeds is one of the largest financial centres in England outside the capital. New tertiary industries such as retail, call centres, offices and media have contributed to a high rate of economic growth. Leeds



was successful in becoming the first British city to have full broadband and digital coverage during the dot-com bubble, enabling it to become one of the key hubs in the emerging new media sector. Companies such as Freeserve, Energis, Sportal, TEAMtalk, Contactmusic.com and Ananova emerged from Leeds to dominate the UK internet industry. Over 100,000 people work in financial and business services in Leeds, the largest number of any UK city outside London. The strength of the economy is also indicated by the low unemployment rate.

Leeds has an extensive and diverse range of shops and department stores, and has been described as the 'Knightsbridge of the North'. The diverse range of shopping facilities, from individual one-off boutiques to large department stores such as Harvey Nichols and Louis Vuitton outlets, has greatly expanded the Leeds retail base. The Victoria Quarter, several existing arcades



connected together by roofing the entirety of Queen Victoria Street with stained glass, is located off Briggate, Leeds' main shopping street. Other popular shopping attractions include Leeds Kirkgate Market, Granary Wharf, Leeds Shopping Plaza, Headrow Shopping Centre, The Light, The St John's Centre, The Merrion Centre Leeds, Birstall Retail Park and the White Rose Centre. In addition, there are also two proposed shopping developments, namely the Eastgate Quarters and Trinity Quarter, the former due to be anchored by John Lewis and a second Marks and Spencer store for the city.

Leeds has a large number education establishments, with Education Leeds having responsibility for statutory education for young people in the city.

Leeds has two universities, the University of Leeds, with around 31,500 full-time students (and a further 52,000 on short courses), and Leeds Metropolitan University with around 26,000. It also has several higher education colleges: Leeds College of Art and Design (formerly Jacob Kramer College), Leeds Trinity & All Saints, Leeds College of Music (the largest music college in the UK), Northern School of Contemporary Dance and Park Lane College Leeds, which offers both further and higher education. This gives Leeds one of the largest student populations in the country. The city was voted the Best UK University Destination by a survey in The Independent newspaper.

The city is home to several further education colleges, such as Park Lane College Leeds (the largest further education college in Leeds with over 38,500 students), Leeds College of Technology, Leeds College of Building, Joseph Priestley College and Leeds Thomas Danby. Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College is a very large college for A-level students close to the city centre.

The Leeds Festival takes place every year in Bramham Park, having moved from Temple Newsam after pressure from some local residents. It features some of the biggest names in rock and indie music. The city is home to the Leeds International Pianoforte Competition, held every three years since 1963, which has launched the careers of many major concert pianists. There is also the Leeds International Concert Season, the largest local authority music programme of any UK city outside London.

The city also has an internationally recognised film festival; the Leeds

International Film Festival is the largest film festival in England outside London and shows films from around the world. It incorporates the highly successful Leeds Young People's Film Festival, which features exciting and innovative films made both for and by children and young people. [3], [4]

Wales and the Welsh



Population: 3,004,600

Area: 20,779 km²

Capital: Cardiff

Largest city: Cardiff

Demonym: Welsh

Patron saint: St. David

Motto: Cymru am byth (Welsh for "Wales forever")

Wales is a small country. It is only about a quarter the size of Scotland. It is a country of small farms and sheep. (There are three sheep for every person in Wales!) And you are never very far from the sea. This is Tenby, a popular holiday centre in the southwest.

The Brecon Beacons National Park

In a small and crowded island like Britain National Parks are necessary and important. The countryside there is protected against development. In Wales there are three National Parks: Snowdonia in the northwest, the Pembrokeshire Coast in the southwest and the Brecon Beacons in the south.

Together they cover about one fifth of the whole of Wales. People visit the National Parks to go walking, climbing, pony-trekking or just to enjoy the beautiful countryside.



At the beginning of the century, Wales was the largest coal-exporting area in the world. One third of the world's coal was produced in South Wales. Today coal is still an important industry, but many mines have now closed down. In 1984 the miners went on strike for a whole year because the government wanted to close down more mines. The men knew there were no other jobs for them. But the strike did nothing to improve the miners' situation. It just made everybody very bitter.

New industries – are they helping Wales?

There are many successful new industries in Wales. But often they do not bring enough jobs. And sometimes they are in areas where people want to protect the country-side. The nuclear power station Trawsfynydd, for example, is in the mountains of central Wales. Under the mountains around Snowdon there are, important minerals. But should new mines be opened here and should the countryside be destroyed just because of a few thousand jobs?

The Welsh love music and they are famous as singers. Every July there is a huge festival of music and poetry: the International Eisteddfod in Llangollen, North Wales. People come from all over the world to play, sing - or just listen.

Project work

Work in groups and collect information and pictures about your area and do the same as Megan.

Put everything together and make a poster in English for a British friend.

Where did the Celts come from?

When you read the beginning of Megan's letter to Liz, you probably thought "What strange words!". Those words were, as you know, Welsh. Welsh is a Celtic language, it is not like English or German. It is much older than both of these languages. Celtic tribes came to Britain from Europe over two thousand years ago. One tribe, the Britons, gave the island its name, Britain. The Celts loved to fight and the different tribes often fought against each other. They made strong swords and other weapons. But they so loved music and made beautiful jewels and fine clothes. The most powerful people in the tribes were the Druids – or priests. The Celts wrote no books and they left no buildings.



To the hills!

Over the centuries Britain was invaded a number of times, first by the Romans, later by the Angles and Saxons from their homes in Germany and Denmark and finally by the Normans from France. The Romans and Celts lived together peacefully. But there were terrible battles between the Celts and the Angles and Saxons, until finally the Celts had to move to the hills of Wales, to Scotland and Cornwall. Today these are the places where traces of Britain's Celtic past can still be found in the language and culture.

The Welsh today

The Saxons called the Celts in Wales the 'Wealas', the foreigners. During the centuries that followed, this name became 'Welsh'. They and the English often fought against each other. Then in 1282 the English King Edward I defeated the last Welsh prince, Llewellyn. Then King Edward's son became the Prince of Wales. Today this is still the title for the



first son of the British king or queen. Prince Charles is now the Prince of Wales. But he has no power over the Welsh. And they are proud that, 700 years after Llewellyn, they are Welsh and not English.

Cardiff



Population: 317,500

Area: 66.52 km²

Demonym: Cardiffer, Cardiffian

Nickname:

Motto: Y ddraig goch ddyry cychwyn (Welsh for “The red dragon will lead the way”)

Cardiff is the capital city of Wales, Europe’s youngest capital and one of the fastest-growing cities in Britain. As well as being the political capital, it is Wales's centre for business, education, sport, tourism, culture, media and government.

The name Cardiff and its Welsh equivalent Caerdydd are both believed by most modern experts to derive from post-Roman Brythonic words meaning "the fort on the Taff". "Dydd" or "Diff" are both modifications of "Taff", the river on which Cardiff Castle stands.

In the past, historians suggested that the name Cardiff might derive from the name "Caer-Didi" ("the Fort of Didius") given in honour of Aulus Didius Gallus, governor of a nearby province at the time when the Romans established a fort at Cardiff.

Roman period to the Middle Ages

The history of what is now Cardiff began with a Roman fort on the site, built in 75 AD.

Soon a little town grew up in the shadow of the castle, made up primarily of settlers from England. Cardiff had a population of between 1,500 and 2,000 in the Middle Ages, a relatively normal size for a Welsh town in this period.

In 1536, the Act of Union between England and Wales led to the creation of the shire of Glamorgan, and Cardiff was made the county town. The town grew rapidly from the 1830s onwards, when the Marquess of Bute built a dock which eventually linked to the Taff Vale Railway. Cardiff became the main port for exports of coal from the Cynon, Rhondda, and Rhymney valleys.

From 1901 coal exports from Barry surpassed those from Cardiff, but the administration of the coal trade remained centred on Cardiff, in particular its Coal

Exchange, where the price of coal on the British market was determined and the first million-pound deal was struck in 1907.

The city was proclaimed capital city of Wales on 20 December 1955.

As the capital city of Wales, Cardiff is the main engine of growth in the Welsh economy. Industry has played a major part in Cardiff's development for many centuries. The main catalyst for its transformation from a small town into a big city was the demand for coal required in making iron and later steel, brought to the sea by packhorse from Merthyr Tydfil.

At its peak, Cardiff's port area, known as Tiger Bay, became the busiest port in the world and—for some time—the world's most important coal port. In the years leading up to the First World War, more than 10 million tonnes of coal was exported annually from Cardiff Docks.

Today, Cardiff is the principal finance and business services centre in Wales, and as such there is a strong representation of finance and business services in the local economy. This sector, combined with the Public Administration, Education and Health sectors, have accounted for around 75% of Cardiff's economic growth since 1991.

Cardiff Castle is a major tourist attraction in the city and is situated in the heart of the city centre, near the main shopping area of Queen Street and St. Mary's Street. The National History Museum at St Fagans in Cardiff is a large open air museum housing dozens of buildings from throughout Welsh history that have been moved to the site in Cardiff.

Other major tourist attractions are the Cardiff Bay regeneration sites which include the recently opened Wales Millennium Centre and the Senedd, and many other cultural and sites of interest including the Cardiff Bay Barrage and the famous Coal Exchange.

Cardiff is home to four major institutions of higher education: Cardiff University, founded by Royal Charter in 1883 as the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, is a "red brick" university and member of the Russell Group of leading research led universities; University of Wales Institute, Cardiff gained university status in 1997; The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama is a conservatoire established in 1949 and is based in the grounds of Cardiff Castle. The University of Glamorgan has a Cardiff campus, Atrium, which is home to the Cardiff School of Creative & Cultural Industries.

As well as academic institutions, Cardiff is also home to other educational and learning organisations such as Techniquet, a hands-on science discovery centre that now has franchises throughout Wales, and is part of the Wales Gene Park in collaboration with Cardiff University, NHS Wales and the Welsh Development Agency. [5]

Bristol



Population: 416,400

Area: 110 km²

Demonym: Bristolian

Nickname: "city living" capital of the south-west

Motto: Virtute Et Industria (Latin for "By Virtue and Industry")

Bristol is the largest city in the south west of England, with a population of approximately half a million. The city lies between Somerset and Gloucestershire and has been politically administered by both counties in part at various times. However, Bristol is historically a county in its own right and is properly entitled the City and County of Bristol.

It is England's sixth, and the United Kingdom's ninth most populous city, one of England's core cities and the most populous city in South West England. It received a royal charter in 1155 and was granted county status in 1373. For half a



millennium it was the second or third largest English city, until the rapid rise of Liverpool, Birmingham and Manchester in the Industrial Revolution during the latter part of the 18th century. It borders the counties of Somerset and Gloucestershire, lying between the cities of Bath, Gloucester and Newport, and has a short coastline on the estuary of the River Severn, which flows into the Bristol Channel.

Bristol is the largest centre of culture, employment and education in the region. From its earliest days, its prosperity has been linked to that of the Port of Bristol, the commercial port, which was in the city centre but has now moved to the Severn Estuary coast at Avonmouth and Portbury, to the western extent of the city boundary. In more recent years the economy has been built on the aerospace industry and the city centre docks have been regenerated as a centre of heritage and culture.

Bristol grew up in Saxon times at the confluence of the rivers Avon and Frome. A bridge was built there and the settlement was known as Brigstow. The local dialect caused an 'L' to be added to the end of this - hence Bristol.

By the 14th century Bristol was England's third-largest medieval town (after London and York). Renewed growth came with the 17th century rise of England's American colonies and the rapid 18th century expansion of England's part in the

Atlantic trade in Africans taken for slavery in the Americas. Bristol, along with Liverpool, became a centre for the slave trade although few slaves were brought to Britain. During the height of the slave trade, from 1700 to 1807, more than 2,000 slaving ships were fitted out at Bristol, carrying a (conservatively) estimated half a million people from Africa to the Americas and slavery. Still standing in Bristol is the Seven Stars pub, where abolitionist Thomas Clarkson collected information regarding the slave trade.

As a major seaport, Bristol has a long history of trading commodities, particularly tobacco; deals were frequently struck on a personal basis in the former trading area around Corn Street, and in particular, over metal trading tables, known as "The Nails". This is the origin of the expression "cash on the nail", meaning immediate payment.

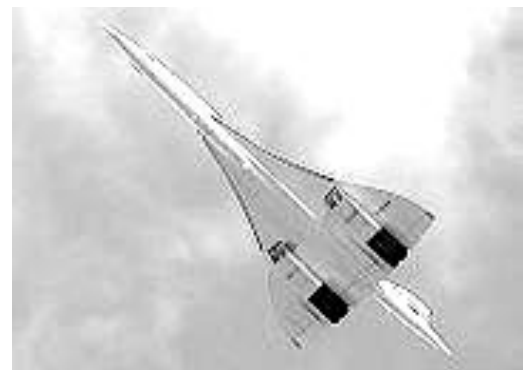


Competition from Liverpool from c. 1760, the disruption of maritime commerce through wars with France (1793) and the abolition of the slave trade (1807) contributed to the city's failure to keep pace with the newer manufacturing centres of the North of England and the West Midlands.

While Bristol's economy is no longer reliant upon its port, the city is the largest importer of cars to the UK. And the hi-tech sector is important as well, with 400 micro-electronics and silicon design companies, as well as the Hewlett-Packard national research laboratories. Bristol is the UK's seventh most popular destination for foreign tourists, and the city receives nine million visitors each year.

In the 20th century, Bristol's manufacturing activities expanded to include aircraft production at Filton, by the Bristol Aeroplane Company, and aero-engine manufacture by Bristol Aero Engines (later Rolls-Royce) at Patchway.

In the 1960s Filton played a key role in the Anglo-French Concorde supersonic airliner project. Concorde components were manufactured in British and French factories and shipped to the two final assembly plants, in Toulouse and Filton. The British Concorde prototype made its first flight on 9 April 1969. In 2003 British Airways and Air France decided to



cease flying the aircraft and to retire them to locations (mostly museums) around the world. On 26 November 2003 Concorde 216 made the final Concorde flight, returning to Filton airfield to be kept there permanently as the centrepiece of a projected air museum.

The major aerospace companies in Bristol now are BAE Systems, Airbus and Rolls-Royce, all based at Filton. Another important aviation company in the city is

Cameron Balloons, a manufacturer of hot air balloons. Each August the city is host to the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, one of Europe's largest hot air balloon events.

The city is famous for its music and film industries, and was a finalist for the 2008 European Capital of Culture.

The city's principal theatre company, the Bristol Old Vic, was founded in 1946 as an offshoot of the Old Vic company in London. Its premises on King Street consist of the 1766 Theatre Royal (400 seats), a modern studio theatre called the New Vic (150 seats), and foyer and bar areas in the adjacent Coopers' Hall (built 1743). The Theatre Royal is a grade I listed building and was the oldest continuously operating theatre in England. The Bristol Hippodrome is a larger theatre (1981 seats) which hosts national touring productions, while the 2000-seat Colston Hall, named after Edward Colston, is the city's main concert venue.

Since the late 1970s, the city has been home to bands combining punk, funk, dub and political consciousness, the most celebrated being The Pop Group. Ten years later, Bristol was the birthplace of a type of English hip-hop music called trip hop or the "Bristol Sound".

Bristol is home to two major institutions of higher education: the University of Bristol, a "redbrick" chartered in 1909, and the University of the West of England, formerly Bristol Polytechnic, which gained university status in 1992. The city also has two dedicated further education institutions, City of Bristol College and Filton College, and three theological colleges, Trinity College, Wesley College and Bristol Baptist College. It has the country's second highest concentration of independent school places, after an exclusive corner of north London. The independent schools in the city include Colston's School, Clifton College, Clifton High School, Badminton School, Bristol Cathedral School, Bristol Grammar School, Redland High School, Queen Elizabeth's Hospital (the only all-boys school) and Red Maids' School, which is the oldest girls' school in England and was founded in 1634 by John Whitson.

In 2005, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer recognised Bristol's ties to science and technology by naming it one of six "science cities", and promising funding for further development of science in the city, with a £300 million science park planned at Emerson's Green. [5]

Scotland



Population: 5,144,200

Area: 78,772 km²

Capital: Edinburgh

Largest city: Glasgow

Demonym: Scottish

Patron saint: St. Andrew

Motto: In My Defens God Me Defend

The Scots, like the Welsh, get annoyed if you call them English. And this is quite understandable, as Scotland has its own history and traditions. The Romans tried to conquer Scotland several times, but they were not successful. Later, the Norman kings of England tried to do the same and they, too, were defeated by the Scots. One Scottish king even became king of England.

Scotland is famous for its beautiful countryside. The loneliest and wildest parts of Scotland are in the Highlands. This is an area of high mountains, the highest in Britain in fact. The climate is rough, and few trees can grow here because of the winds and the weather.



Most of Scotland's heavy industry is in the south. Here the land is flatter, and so it is also better for farming. Scotland's capital, Edinburgh, is on the southeast coast. Tourists from all over the world come here to visit the castle on a rock high above the city, and Holyrood Palace.

Because of its high mountains Scotland even has skiing resorts. This is Aviemore in the Cairngorms. It is about two hours by car from Aberdeen, where Fiona Macmillan lives.

When Anja was in Aberdeen, Mr and Mrs Macmillan took the two girls on a tour of the city and told them the story of "black gold":

"For a long time Aberdeen was mainly known for its university and fishing industry. Today it is the centre of the Scottish oil industry. When oil was found under the North Sea in 1970, thousands of people came here to work on the rigs. As the oil industry grew, the harbour and the airport became too small, so they had to make them bigger. Then they had to build a heliport for the helicopters that fly over the sea to the oil. When we go down to the harbour, you'll be able to see the supply ships."

[3], [4]

A tour of Scotland

Of course, Fiona wanted to show Anja some interesting places in Scotland. So they decided to go on a youth hostel tour. They talked about their plans with the Macmillans one evening and they discussed three possibilities. The first was to go on a bike tour and visit Loch Ness, where they hoped to see "Nessie", the Loch Ness Monster ...

Most people have heard stories about Nessie. Well, it is possible that there is a whole family of Nessies in the dark waters of Loch Ness – perhaps ten or twelve of them. Of course people say: "Why don't they catch one? Then we will know whether everything is a joke or not. "Well, it is not easy to catch a monster. The lake is the longest in Britain – 24 miles long – and it is nearly a thousand feet deep. The water is so dark that the divers cannot see anything when they go down. As you can imagine, it is not very difficult to hide down there.

First they could go by train to Inverness. From there they could...

Another possibility was to go on a walking tour in the Cairngorms. They could then also see the Highland Games. These games are over a thousand years old and take place in many parts of Scotland during the summer. Scotland's strongest men come together for different competitions. One of the most popular competitions is tossing the caber. That means the men must lift a tree trunk and throw it into the air. There is also lots of dancing and music. And everybody wears kilts and other Scottish clothes.

The third possibility was to visit the Isle of Skye. There are about 800 Scottish islands and Skye is one of the largest and most beautiful. It was here on Skye where Bonnie Prince Charlie once hid after his army had been defeated by the English.

In 1707 Scotland and England became one country: the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Before that they were two independent countries with their own parliaments. Some Scots, especially in the Highlands, were not happy that the government was now in London and not in Edinburgh. The Highlanders believed that a member of the Scottish royal family, a Stuart, should be king of England and Scotland, and they wanted an independent Scottish parliament again. Their last hope was in 1745 when Charles Edward Stuart - or Bonnie Prince Charlie as he is often called – led an army against the English. The



last battle was at Culloden, six miles from Inverness. But the English with an army of 9,000 men easily defeated the 5,000 Highlanders. After the battle, the English tried to find the prince and kill him. But a Scots woman, Flora MacDonald, hid him in her house. She gave Charlie an Irish passport and some women's clothes. Charlie then travelled with Flora to the coast as her servant, Betty Burke. There he and Flora took a boat to Skye, where he hid in a cave. The English looked everywhere for him. They even offered £30,000 for information where Prince Charlie was, but not one Scotsman said a word. From Skye he later sailed to France. He never came back to Scotland again. Today Bonnie Prince Charlie is still a popular hero in Scotland. And some Scots still think of Culloden as the place where they lost their independence.



Edinburgh



Population: 457,830

Area: 259 km²

Demonym: Edinburghian

Nickname: Auld Reekie (Scots for Old Smoky), Embra, Athens of the North or Auld Greekie, Aneda or Edina (Latin for Edinburgh), Dunedin, Britain's other eye (by Ben Jonson), and yon Empress of the North (Sir Walter Scott)

Motto:



Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. It is the seventh largest city in the United Kingdom and the second largest Scottish city after Glasgow. Edinburgh is one of Scotland's 32 local government council areas.

Located in the south-east of Scotland, Edinburgh lies on the east coast of the Central Belt, near the North Sea. Vast collection of Medieval and Georgian architecture makes it one of the most picturesque cities in Europe.

It has been capital of Scotland since 1437 and is the seat of the Scottish Parliament.

Edinburgh is well-known for the annual Edinburgh Festival, a collection of official and independent festivals held annually over about four weeks from early August. The number of visitors attracted to Edinburgh for the Festival is roughly equal to the settled population of the city. The most famous of these events are the Edinburgh Fringe (the largest performing arts festival in the world), the Edinburgh Comedy Festival (the largest comedy festival in the world), the Edinburgh International Festival, the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, and the Edinburgh International Book Festival.

The city is one of Europe's major tourist destinations, attracting 1 million visitors a year, and is the second most visited tourist destination in the United Kingdom, after London.

The origins of Edinburgh can be traced back to the 7th century; the Castle Rock, then known as "Lookout Hill" was the foundation point. On the hill Edwin of Northumbria a powerful Christian king founded the fortress to secure the northern part of his territory against invasion.

In the 10th century, the Scots captured the position. Then in the 12th century a small town flourished at the base of the castle known as Edinburgh. Edinburgh flourished both economically and culturally.

The Monarch wished to stamp his identity on Edinburgh. George Street, Frederick Street, Hanover Street, Queen Street, Prince's Street, Castle Street these names were also allocated to Streets.

They promoted the idea of Britishness, and led Great Britain and the British Empire into a golden age of economic and social reform and prosperity. Edinburgh became a major cultural centre, earning it the nickname "Athens of the North", as well as the rise of the Scottish/British intellectual elite in the city.

The historic centre of Edinburgh is divided into two parts the Old Town to the south and the New Town to the north.

The Old Town has preserved its medieval plan and many Reformation-era buildings. Large squares mark the location of markets or surround public buildings such as St Giles Cathedral, the Law Courts and the Royal Museum of Scotland.

The New Town was an 18th century solution to the problem of an increasingly crowded Old Town. In 1766 a competition to design the New Town was won by James Craig, a 22-year-old architect. The principal street was to be George Street, which follows the natural ridge to the north of the Old Town. Princes Street and Queen Street are the other main streets. Princes Street has since become the main shopping street in Edinburgh, and few Georgian buildings survive on it.

A popular residential part of the city is its south side, comprising a number of areas including Saint Leonards, Marchmont, Haymarket, Polwarth, Newington, Sciennes, The Grange, Bruntsfield, Morningside, and Merchiston.

Leith is the port of Edinburgh. With the redevelopment of Leith, Edinburgh has gained the business of a number of cruise liner companies which now provide cruises to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands.

Culturally, Edinburgh is best known for the Edinburgh Festival. This is in fact a series of separate events, which run from the end of July until early September each year. The longest festival is the Edinburgh International Festival, which first ran in 1947. The International Festival centres on a programme of theatre productions and classical music performances, theatre companies and orchestras.

The Edinburgh Fringe has become the largest arts festival in the world, with 1867 different shows being staged in 2006, in 261 venues.

Alongside these major festivals, there is also the Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, the Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival, and the Edinburgh International Book Festival.

The Edinburgh International Science Festival is held annually in April and is one of the most popular science festivals in the world.

Edinburgh has the strongest economy of any city in the UK outside London. The economy of Edinburgh and its hinterland has recently been announced as one of the fastest growing city regions in Europe. Education and health, finance and business services, retailing and tourism are the largest employers.

Banking has been a part of the economic life of Edinburgh for over 300 years with the invention of capitalism in the city, with the establishment of the Bank of Scotland in 1695.

Manufacturing has never had as strong presence in Edinburgh compared with Glasgow; however brewing, publishing, and nowadays electronics have maintained a foothold in the city.

Tourism is an important economic mainstay in the city. Tourists come to visit such historical sites as Edinburgh Castle, the Palace of Holyroodhouse and the Georgian New Town.

The University of Edinburgh was founded by Royal Charter in 1583, and is the fourth oldest university in Scotland, after St Andrews, Glasgow and Aberdeen. New buildings were constructed around George Square, where the heart of the university remains.

Queen Margaret University was founded in 1875 as a women's college, and today specialises in healthcare, theatre, media, hospitality and business.

Edinburgh has a long literary tradition going back to the Scottish Enlightenment. Edinburgh produced philosopher David Hume and the pioneer of economics, Adam Smith. Writers such as James Boswell, Robert Louis Stevenson, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Sir Walter Scott all lived and worked in Edinburgh. J K Rowling, author of the Harry Potter novels, is a resident of Edinburgh. Edinburgh has also been declared the first UNESCO City of Literature.

Scotland has a rich history of science and Edinburgh has its fair share of famous names. James Clerk Maxwell, the founder of the modern theory of electromagnetism, was born here and educated at the Edinburgh Academy, as was the telephone pioneer Alexander Graham Bell. Other names connected to the city include Max Born, physicist and Nobel laureate; Charles Darwin, the biologist who discovered natural selection; David Hume a philosopher, economist and historian; James Hutton, regarded as the "Father of Geology"; John Napier inventor of logarithms; and Ian Wilmut the geneticist involved in the cloning of Dolly the sheep just outside Edinburgh. The stuffed carcass of Dolly the sheep is now on display in the National Museum of Scotland. [3]

Aberdeen



Population: 202,370

Area: 184.46 km²

Demonym: Aberdonian

Nickname: Granite City, Oil Capital of Europe, Silver City by the Golden Sands, Flower of Scotland

Motto: Bon Accord (French for "Good Agreement")

The River Don and the River Dee flow into the North Sea about two miles apart. Over the past 1500 years the angle between them has slowly been developed into Scotland's third city, Aberdeen. The Granite City, The Flower of Scotland, The Silver City by the Golden Sands...Aberdeen wears its titles with pride. A prosperous cosmopolitan city, with a historical old town, and whose speech retains the Scots idiom as part of everyday communication.



This city of granite, established during the reign of Malcolm III (1058-

93) the intellectual. Lay at the northern end of today's city, on the south bank of the River Don. This probably existed in Roman times. This area is now better known as Old Aberdeen or Aulton ("Old Town").

The city saw bad times as well as good. There were two serious fires in the 1200s. The castle was destroyed, and its English defenders killed, by Robert the Bruce in 1308. Edward III of England badly damaged Aberdeen in 1336, and the Black Death arrived in 1350.

1495 was a significant year in the city's history as King's College was established. About a hundred years later the Protestant Marischal College was created. However the two colleges were united in 1860 with the formation of the University of Aberdeen.

By 1639 Aberdeen was the second largest city in Scotland after Edinburgh.

But after each setback Aberdeen first recovered and then resumed its steady growth. The real cause of this growth lay in its importance as a port. This dated back as far as its use by Romans to support their army at the time of the battle of Mons Graupius. By 1300 Aberdeen was an important wool exporting port, and had established strong trading links with Germany and the Baltic. It also featured

increasingly as a port for the shipment of goods around the coast of Britain and to the northern isles.

Connected to its port was Aberdeen's importance as a centre for the fishing and shipbuilding industries. In the 1400s Aberdeen was Scotland's leading exporter of salmon. By the 1820s the focus had shifted to whaling with 20 ships based in the new, enlarged and much improved harbour. More harbour improvements followed over the following decades. In 1870 there were over 200 fishing boats based in Aberdeen, many catching herring.

By 1914 the fishing boats had changed from sail to steam and increased in size, and their number had increased to 250. A range of industries had also grown up in the city to handle the huge amount of fish being landed. One very early spin-off from the harbour was the creation in 1498 of the Aberdeen Shore Porter's Society, whose lorries can still be seen on roads of the north east over 500 years later. In the 1980s the increasing demands on Aberdeen's harbour space for oil exploration and support vessels led to the migration of much of the fishing fleet up the coast to Peterhead.



The first of Aberdeen's shipyards began in 1790, and they concentrated

mostly on vessels to be based in and around the port. These ranged from fishing and whaling boats to the later steamers, coasters and coal carriers, and the activity continued until the city's last shipyard closed in 1988. The glorious exception to a history of worthy but unspectacular ships was during a short period in the 1850s and 1860s when a number of high speed sailing clippers were built in Aberdeen.

Some things don't change. You cannot escape the sea here, not since it was founded as a Royal burgh back in 1124. The influence of the harbour is everywhere (as are the gulls!), and the harvest of the North Sea continues. Where once streamlined clipper ships left the slipways for the China tea trade, now oil executives from all over the world drive to their comfortable homes in the suburbs.

The city is the largest manufacturing centre in the north: paper, chemicals, machinery and textiles are an important aspect of the Northeast economy. Grey granite was quarried at Rubislaw quarry for more than 300 years, and used for paving setts, kerb and building stones, and monumental and other ornamental pieces.



Aberdeen granite was used to build the terraces of the Houses of Parliament and Waterloo Bridge in London. Quarrying finally ceased in 1971.

Traditional industries such as fishing and farming still flourish in and around the city but Aberdeen's buoyant modern economy is fuelled by the oil industry, earning

the city a new epithet as 'Oil Capital of Europe'. As befits its status as Oil Capital, Aberdeen has, since 1973, held Offshore Europe - one of the world's premier offshore oil and gas events. Taking place every two years, this major exhibition and conference is renowned for providing access to some of the most advanced thinking in exploration and production techniques.

Today's Aberdeen is a surprising mix of contrasts, many founded in its rich and complex history. The main streets with their stunning, if austere, granite buildings remain hugely impressive. The harbour is probably larger and busier than it has ever been. Old Aberdeen shows its heritage and is home to the University of Aberdeen, one of two universities in the city. The other is Robert Gordon University. To the east of the city lies the open ground of The Links, complete with the new home of Aberdeen Football Club: and a long and increasingly attractive and undeveloped beach. Other contrasts are, like the harbour, oil-related. These include the many new headquarters buildings for oil companies around the edges of the city: and Aberdeen airport, whose oil-rig bound helicopter traffic has turned it into one of the busiest airports in the UK.



Aberdeen has much to offer in the way of entertainment and leisure. The city centre has several busy shopping malls as well as a wide choice of nightclubs, wine bars, traditional pubs and restaurants. The city ranks third in Scotland for shopping.

The traditional shopping streets are Union Street and George Street which are now complemented by designer boutiques, major chain-stores, charity shops and shopping centres, notably the Bon Accord-St Nicholas Centre and The Mall Trinity. The city has a thriving nightlife and cinema-goers have plenty of choice. There are miles of golden beaches, dunes and cliffs close by, all of which give shelter to great colonies of seabirds and winter migrants. The nearby Cairngorm Mountains offer superb opportunities for hillwalking, mountaineering and skiing, and rivers such as the Dee, the Don, the Ythan and the Ugie offer fishing, rowing and canoeing as well as breathtaking scenery. And finally, some of the best whisky distilleries in Scotland are close to hand.



Where other cities resort to grass, Aberdeen employs petal-power. One top attraction is the Winter Gardens in the Duthie Park, home to the stunning Rose Mountain. Even in the depths of winter, the aptly-named Winter Gardens provide colour and scent. At one hectare, it provides what some say is the largest area under glass in Europe. Aberdeen has won the 'Britain in Bloom' competition many times and has taken its floral pulling power on to the European stage. The statistics are all

there: two million roses, eleven million daffodils, three million crocuses.

Culturally, Aberdeen caters for all tastes. His Majesty's Theatre, a magnificent Edwardian building, attracts international companies performing ballet, theatre, opera and light entertainment. The concert halls regularly feature classical, contemporary and rock concerts. Exceptional museums and an art gallery, including the University's museums and collections, display the visual arts and local heritage. Balmoral, the Royals' Highland residence, is of course not far away in the beautiful countryside of Royal Deeside.

The city's award-winning Maritime Museum brings the history of the North Sea to life through multi-media displays and exhibitions. The popular Lemon Tree venue, with its café-bar atmosphere, attracts an exciting mixture of contemporary theatre, dance, stand-up comedy and music. [4], [5]



Glasgow



Population: 620,000

Area: 175.5 km²

Demonym: Glaswegian

Nickname: Second City of the British Empire

Motto: Let Glasgow Flourish

Humane irreverence more than the big ships, Glasgow's greatest export.

William McIlvanney

It is difficult to explain the growth and the importance of Glasgow. It has never been a capital or a residence of Kings, it is on a site that was not easily defensible, and although on a major river it didn't originally have a natural harbour. But despite this, Glasgow had already been through two booms and two busts by the time it established itself in the 1800s as the second city of the British Empire and the shipbuilding capital of the world: and as, by far, Scotland's largest city.

There's nowhere quite like Glasgow. It's real. It makes an impact. And it's certainly one of the friendliest places on earth. You can't be standing at a bus shelter for more than five minutes before someone engages you in conversation. Glaswegians love to talk. And they love a bit of earthy wit.

Glasgow's origins lie with a Christian missionary called Mungo, or Kentigern, who established a church here. By AD600 St Mungo was the Archbishop of the Kingdom of Strathclyde, whose Kings resided at Dumbarton Castle. It is usually thought that the name Glasgow comes from St Mungo's description of the community that grew up here as Clas-gu or "dear family".

Glasgow grew from the medieval Bishopric of Glasgow and the later establishment of the University of Glasgow, which contributed to the Scottish Enlightenment. From the 18th century the city became one of Europe's main hubs of transatlantic trade with the Americas. With the Industrial Revolution, the city and surrounding region grew to become one of the world's pre-eminent centres of engineering and shipbuilding, constructing many revolutionary and famous vessels. Glasgow was known as the "Second City of the British Empire" for much of the Victorian era.

Daniel Defoe visited the city in the early 18th century and famously opined in his book *A tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, that Glasgow was "the cleanest and most beautiful, and best built city in Britain, London excepted."

This spectacular growth was based on the development of heavy industries using raw materials from the central belt of Scotland and, in particular, on the remarkable development of the shipyards along the length of the River Clyde.

Glasgow suffered during the depression of the 1930s, but this was only a precursor to the eventual demise of most of the Clydeside shipbuilding industry in the 1960s and 1970s.

Today's Glasgow has in large measure recovered from this third disaster, and has been referred to as the world's first post-industrial city. It has done so painfully, slowly, and very unevenly, and still has some of the most deprived areas in Scotland. But no visitor to Glasgow can fail to feel the vitality and energy with which it entered the third millennium. Today it is one of Europe's top twenty financial centres and is home to many of Scotland's leading businesses. Glasgow forms the western part of the Silicon Glen high tech sector of Scotland. A growing number of Blue chip financial sector companies have significant operations or headquarters in the city.

Nowadays Glasgow has the largest economy in Scotland and is a bustling and cosmopolitan city in which art and culture play an integral part in daily life and in the business and wealth of the city. No visit is complete without seeing the Burrell Collection of art and antiques, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, the Museum of Transport and the People's Palace and Winter Gardens.

Glasgow is also famed for its diverse and exciting architecture. Little remains of the medieval city which, apart from the cathedral and Provand's Lordship, was swept away in major redevelopments in the 1800s. Many of the city's most impressive buildings were built with red or blond sandstone, but during the industrial era those colours disappeared under a pervasive black layer of soot and pollutants from the furnaces, until the Clean Air Act was introduced in 1956. In recent years many of these buildings have been cleaned and restored to their original appearance. What takes some getting used to is Glasgow's feel: in some lights the tall buildings and grid pattern make it seem more American than Scottish.

The city is notable for architecture designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Mackintosh was an architect and designer in the Arts and Crafts movement and the main exponent of Art Nouveau in the United Kingdom, designing numerous noted Glasgow buildings such as the Glasgow School of Art, Willow Tearooms and the Scotland Street School.

Another architect who had an enduring impact on the city's appearance was Alexander Thomson. Thomson produced a distinctive style of architecture based on fundamentalist classicism that gave him the nickname "Greek". Examples of Thomson's work can be found over the city, with notable examples including the Holmwood House villa and St. Vincent Street Church.

The buildings reflect the wealth and self confidence of the residents of the "Second City of the Empire". Glasgow generated immense wealth from trade and the industries that developed from the Industrial Revolution. The shipyards, marine engineering, steel making, and heavy industry all contributed to the growth of the city. At one time the expression "Clydebuilt" was synonymous with quality and engineering excellence.

Glasgow today, to some extent, still has a Victorian face with many grand buildings of that era and graceful parks like Kelvingrove and the Botanic Gardens.

However, there's been a tremendous amount of architectural development and since 1990 when Glasgow was the 'European City of Culture' it has become renowned for its flourishing culture and design and in 1999 the city was crowned as the UK's City of Design and Architecture.

As the adopted home of much of Scotland's art, media and culture, Glasgow is home to three universities: the University of Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian University, and the University of Strathclyde (which has a high profile in the business world), as well as to the internationally famous Glasgow School of Art and Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama. Glasgow University was founded in 1451 to become Scotland's second seat of learning after St. Andrews. The University contributes enormously to the intellectual life of the city and indeed to international research. Glasgow is home to a student population in excess of 168,000, the largest in Scotland and second largest in the United Kingdom.

But it's not only cultural riches and diversity that gives the city a pulse. Glasgow today is known as a fashion centre and it's a brilliant place to shop, eat out and dance the night away. Up-market shopping is concentrated around the newly developed Merchant City, Sauchiehall Street, Princes Square, Buchanan Galleries, the Italian Centre and Byres Road. There may no longer be an Empire of which to be the second city but Glasgow today is well known as the UK's second biggest retail centre after London. With all of this going for it maybe, for once, the marketing slogan of "Glasgow – Scotland with style" is apt. [4], [1]

The story of St. Alban

During the first and second centuries neither the Romans nor the British were Christians. In Verulamium, for example, the Romans and the British each worshipped their own pagan gods in their own temples. And in other parts of the Empire, the Romans tolerated all the different pagan religions. But with Christianity it was different. The Romans persecuted all the men and women who followed this religion, not only in Rome, but all over their Empire. One day in the year 209, a Christian priest arrived at Verulamium. His name was Amphibalus and he was hiding from Roman soldiers. A man called Alban gave him shelter in his house. Alban is was British and a pagan, but he was moved when the priest talked about his religion. Finally he, too, decided to become a Christian. When the Roman soldiers heard that the priest was hiding in Alban's house, they came to look for him.

They marched down the narrow streets towards Alban's house and knocked loudly on the wooden door. Alban wanted to save the priest's life, so he quickly put on the priest's cloak and ran out of the house. The soldiers followed him until they caught him. And so the real priest, Amphibalus, was able to escape.

The soldiers took Alban to a Roman judge. When the judge asked Alban who he was, he said "I am Alban. I worship the true God who created all things." The judge ordered Alban to give up the Christian religion. But Alban refused. He ordered Alban to kill an animal and offer it to the Roman gods, but still he refused. So the Romans tortured him and finally he was sentenced to death.

It was the custom in those days that Christians were killed by gladiators or wild animals in a large arena. But this was not possible with Alban. He was rich and what was more important: although he was British, he was also a Roman citizen. On June 22nd in the year 209 Roman soldiers marched Alban out of Verulamium to a hill half a mile from the city walls.

Stories say that so many people followed Alban from the town that they could not all cross the bridge over the river. Alban stopped, looked up to heaven and the river suddenly went dry, and so they were all able to cross over. When the executioner saw this, he threw his sword on the ground and refused to kill Alban. He wanted to so die instead of Alban or with him.

From the river Alban walked to the top of the hill. It was a beautiful day in early summer and the ground was covered with flowers of many different colours. There Alban asked God for some water and a fountain suddenly came up from the ground. Then Alban was executed, and so he became the first Christian martyr who died for his religion in Britain. But the man who executed him was punished. As 60 Alban's head fell off, the executioner's eyes fell from his head and onto the grass.

The soldier who had refused to kill Alban was also executed. But the judge was so surprised when he saw what had happened that he stopped 65 persecuting Christians. In fact, after Alban's death Christians were never persecuted in Britain again, and the site of Alban's execution became a place that Christians remembered. First they built a simple wooden church. Today the cathedral stands on that site.

Northern Ireland



Population: 1,741,600

Area: 13,843 km²

Capital: Belfast

Largest city: Belfast

Demonym: Northern Irish

Patron saint: St. Patrick

Motto:

Northern Ireland is a country which is part of the United Kingdom, lying in the northeast of Ireland. Northern Ireland consists of six of the nine counties of the historic Irish province of Ulster. In the UK, it is generally known as one of the four Home Nations and is the only one that is not located on the island of Great Britain.

Northern Ireland was established as a distinct administrative subdivision of the United Kingdom on 3 May 1921 under the Government of Ireland Act 1920.

Northern Ireland was for many years the site of a violent and bitter ethno-political conflict between those claiming to represent Nationalists, who are predominantly Roman Catholic, and those claiming to represent Unionists, who are predominantly Protestant. In general, Nationalists want the unification of Ireland, with Northern Ireland joining the rest of Ireland and Unionists want it to remain part of the United Kingdom. Protestants are in the majority in Northern Ireland, though Roman Catholics represent a significant minority.

Protestants consider themselves British and Catholics see themselves as Irish but there are some who see themselves as both British and Irish.

The campaigns of violence have become known popularly as The Troubles. The majority of both sides of the community have had no direct involvement in the violent campaigns waged. Since the signing of the Belfast Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement or the G.F.A.) in 1998, many of the major paramilitary groups have either been on ceasefire or have declared their war to be over.

The area now known as Northern Ireland has had a diverse history. From serving as the bedrock of Irish resistance in the era of the plantations of Queen Elizabeth and James I in other parts of Ireland, it became the subject of major planting of Scottish and English settlers after the Flight of the Earls in 1607.

Northern Ireland has devolved government within the United Kingdom. There is a Northern Ireland Executive together with the 108 member Northern Ireland Assembly to deal with devolved matters with the UK Government and UK Parliament responsible for reserved matters. Elections to the Assembly are by single transferable vote with 6 representatives elected for each of the 18 Westminster constituencies.

People from Northern Ireland are British citizens on the same basis as people from any other part of the United Kingdom. Additionally, they may be recognised as citizens of the Republic of Ireland.

The 1998 Belfast Agreement between the British and Irish governments provides that:

it is the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, and accordingly [the two governments] confirm that their right to hold both British and Irish citizenship is accepted by both Governments and would not be affected by any future change in the status of Northern Ireland.

Ulster (Ulaidh) is strictly the historic province of Ulster, six of its nine counties are in Northern Ireland. The term "Ulster" is widely used by the Unionist community and the British press as shorthand for Northern Ireland. In the past, calls were made for Northern Ireland's name to be changed to Ulster. This proposal was formally considered by the Government of Northern Ireland in 1937 and again in 1949 but no change was made.

The Province (an Chúige) refers literally the historic Irish province of Ulster but today is used widely, within this community, as shorthand for Northern Ireland. United Kingdom Government documents (when referring to England and Scotland as countries and to Wales as "The Principality", typically refer to Northern Ireland as "the Province". The BBC, in its editorial guidance for Reporting the United Kingdom, states that "the province" is an appropriate secondary synonym for Northern Ireland, "Ulster" is not. It also deprecates the use of the term "British" in favour of "people of Northern Ireland", and the term "mainland" when referring to Great Britain in relation to Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland economy is the smallest of the four economies making up the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland has traditionally had an industrial economy, most notably in shipbuilding, rope manufacture and textiles, but most heavy industry has since been replaced by services, primarily the public sector. Tourism also plays a big role in the local economy. More recently the economy has benefited from major investment by many large multi-national corporations into high tech industry. These large organisations are attracted by government subsidies and the skilled workforce in Northern Ireland. Despite the presence of many multi-national corporations, the largest employer in the country is the Government.

Education in Northern Ireland differs slightly from systems used elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Unlike most areas of the United Kingdom, in the last year of Primary school, children can sit the eleven plus transfer test, and the results determine whether they attend grammar schools or secondary schools. This system is due to be changed in 2008 amidst some controversy.

Belfast



Population: 276,459

Area: 115 km²

Demonym: Belfastian, Belfaster

Nickname: Linenopolis

Motto: Pro tanto quid retribuamus (Latin for "In return for so much, what shall we give back?")

Belfast is the capital city of Northern Ireland and the seat of government in Northern Ireland. It is the largest urban area in Northern Ireland and the province of Ulster, the fifteenth-largest city in the United Kingdom and the second largest city in Ireland.



The name, Belfast, is the anglicised version of the Irish Béal Feirste, which translates as "Mouth of the (River) Farset". This term refers to the sand bar that formed where the River Farset met the River Lagan at what is now Donegall Quay and flowed into Belfast Lough, which became the hub around which the city developed.

Belfast has been the capital of Northern Ireland since its establishment in 1921 following the Government of Ireland Act 1920. Since its emergence as a major city, it had been the scene of various episodes of sectarian conflict between its Roman Catholic and Protestant populations. These opposing groups in this conflict are now often termed republican and loyalist respectively, although they are also referred to as 'nationalist' and 'unionist'. The most recent example of this is known as the Troubles - a civil conflict that raged from c.1969 to the late 1990s. Belfast saw the worst of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, particularly in the 1970s, with rival paramilitary groups forming on both sides. The city suffered disruption, conflict, and destruction during the Troubles, but later underwent a period of calmness and growth.

A village in the 17th century, this robust northern metropolis of nearly half a million people has much in common with Liverpool and Manchester, those breezy cities across the Irish Sea. Belfast was the engine-room that drove the whirring wheels of the industrial revolution in Ulster.

When the population of Belfast town began to grow in the seventeenth century, its economy was built on commerce. It provided a market for the surrounding countryside and the natural inlet of Belfast Lough gave the city its own port. The port supplied an avenue for trade with Great Britain and later Europe and North America.

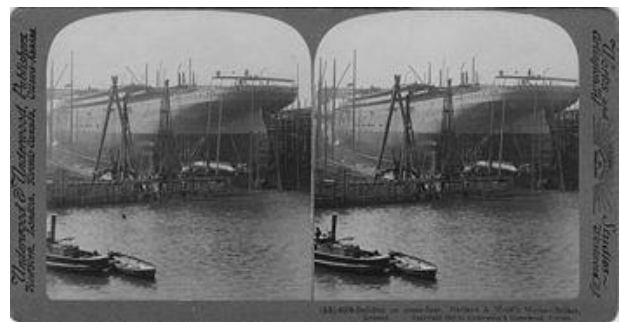
In the mid-seventeenth century, Belfast exported beef, butter, hides, tallow and corn and it imported coal, cloth, wine, brandy, paper, timber and tobacco. Around this time, the linen trade in Northern Ireland blossomed and by the middle of the eighteenth century, one fifth of all the linen exported from Ireland was shipped from Belfast. The present city however is a product of the Industrial Revolution. It was not until industry transformed the linen and shipbuilding trades that the economy and the population boomed. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Belfast had transformed into the largest linen producing centre in the world, earning the nickname "Linenopolis".



Short Brothers plc is a British aerospace company based in Belfast. It was the first aircraft manufacturing company in the world. Now known as Shorts Bombardier it works as an international aircraft manufacturer located near the Port of Belfast.

Unless you approach Belfast from the sea you cannot help but come upon the city suddenly because of its fine setting: a 'Hibernian Rio' as one writer has called it, ringed by high hills, sea lough and river valley. The Giant's Ring, a 5000-year-old henge, is located near the city, and the remains of Iron Age hill forts can still be seen in the surrounding hills.

The city is flanked on the north and northwest by a series of hills, including Divis Mountain, Black Mountain and Cavehill thought to be the inspiration for Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels. When Swift was living at Lilliput Cottage near the bottom of the Limestone Road in Belfast, he imagined that the Cavehill resembled the shape of a sleeping giant safeguarding the city.



Belfast is located at the western end of Belfast Lough and at the mouth of the River Lagan making it an ideal location for the shipbuilding industry that once made it famous. When the Titanic was built in Belfast in 1912, Harland and Wolff had the largest shipyard in the world.

Belfast expanded very rapidly from market town to industrial city during the course of the nineteenth century. Because of this, it is less an agglomeration of villages and towns which have expanded into each other, than other comparable cities, such as Manchester or Birmingham. The city expanded to the natural barrier of the hills that surround it, overwhelming other settlements.

Today the city and the river front are again being transformed. Much of the city centre is now pleasantly pedestrianized, with benches where you can sit and listen to the street musicians.

There are many exuberant Victorian and Edwardian buildings with elaborate sculptures over doors and windows. Stone-carved heads of gods and poets, scientists, kings and queens peer down from the high ledges of banks and old linen warehouses.

Belfast remains segregated by walls, commonly known as “peace lines”, erected by the Army after August 1969, and which still divide fourteen neighbourhoods in the inner city.

Custom House Square is one of the city's main outdoor venues for free concerts and street entertainment. The Gaeltacht Quarter is an area around the Falls Road in West Belfast which promotes and encourages the use of the Irish language. The Queen's Quarter in South Belfast is named after Queen's University. The area has a large student population and hosts the annual Belfast Festival at Queen's each autumn. It is home to Botanic Gardens and the Ulster Museum, closed for major redevelopment until 2009. The Golden Mile is the name given to the mile between Belfast City Hall and Queen's University. Taking in Great Victoria St, Shaftesbury Square and Bradbury Place, it contains some of the best bars and restaurants in the city. Since the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, the nearby Lisburn Road has developed into the city's most exclusive shopping strip. Finally, The Titanic Quarter covers 0.75 km² of reclaimed land adjacent to Belfast harbour, formerly known as Queen's Island.

Belfast's population is evenly split between its Protestant and Catholic residents. These two distinct vibrant cultural communities have both contributed significantly to the city's culture. Throughout the Troubles, Belfast artists continued to express themselves through poetry, art and music. In the period since the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, Belfast has begun a social, economic and cultural transformation giving it a growing international cultural reputation.

Belfast is the home of The News Letter, the oldest English language newspaper in the world still in publication. The city is also the headquarters of BBC Northern Ireland.

Belfast has two universities.

Queen's University Belfast was founded in 1845 and is a member of the Russell Group, an association of 20 leading research-intensive universities in the UK. It is



one of the largest universities in the UK with 25,231 undergraduate and postgraduate students spread over 250 buildings, 120 of which are listed as being of architectural merit. The University of Ulster, created in its current form in 1984, is a multi-centre university with a campus in the Cathedral Quarter of Belfast. The Belfast campus has a specific focus on Art and Design and Architecture. The Jordanstown campus concentrates on engineering, health and social science. Belfast Metropolitan College is a large further education college with several campuses around the city. [1],[2]

Encore for Shakespeare's dramatic potion

Scientists have recreated the notorious Jove potion from William Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to celebrate the launch of the Royal Shakespeare Company's latest production of the play.

The Royal Shakespeare Company, known as the RSC, challenged another RSC – the Royal Society of Chemistry - to try to reproduce Shakespeare's enchanting love potion.

In the play, the potion is administered to a sleeping Titania (queen of the fairies) by Puck, a mischievous sprite working for Oberon (king of the fairies). The potion is supposed to make Titania fall in love with the first person she sees after she awakes.

As the tale goes, she falls for the hapless weaver Bottom who is wearing a donkey's head for his part in a play being practised by a group of amateur actors. Bottom then inadvertently becomes a pawn in the love games of Oberon and Titania.

The Royal Society of Chemistry researched the Shakespeare text to discover the flower described in the play. Then, leading international fragrance house Quest International brought its knowledge, experience and understanding of the chemistry of plants, flowers, herbs and shrubs to the creation of the liquid which was given the working title of Puck's Potion.

Pictured are Dominic Cooper, who plays Puck, and Yolanda Vazquez, who plays Titania, from the RSC production at Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, English Midlands, where Puck's Potion made its first public appearance.

Scientist Charles Sell, a fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, and leading perfumer Clare Dal Zotto from Quest discovered that there is mention in the play of a popular herbal remedy of the time called Love In Idleness, one of many synonyms for the plant *Viola tricolor* which is also known as Heart's Ease.

Viola tricolor produces many different components including *Violine* which is reputed to be a physiologically active ingredient. The medicinal properties of the herb have caused it to be used as an alternative remedy for asthma, epilepsy, bronchitis and various other ailments and diseases of the heart, hence the name Heart's Ease.

The plant has a wintergreen odour but is not a flower that is used by the fragrance industry. The main violet used in perfumery is a different plant but from the same family, *Viola odorata* (or sweet violet), of which both flowers and leaves are used in perfumery, and have a gentle scent.

The flower has the characteristic soft Parma violet smell and the leaves contain an oil with a quite different green note. The violet is traditionally known as the flower of love and devotion.

Quest created Puck's Potion taking inspiration from Heart's Ease and Sweet Violet. The finished perfume contains a hint of tangerine, combined with the zest of fresh bergamot, blended with white pepper, clove, citrus and soft woody musk notes. At its heart, the potion contains violet, rose and jasmine.

Dr Charles Sell, head of organic chemistry at Quest and a leading expert in the science of smell and taste, said: "This was a fascinating project on which to work.

There are scores of references to plants and herbs in Shakespeare who was obviously very knowledgeable about their real and mythical potency."

Association football (soccer)

“Am I so round with you, as you with me,
That like a football you do spurn me thus?”

Soccer was known in England as football until the end of the 19th century. In 1863 the London Football Association was founded and later, to distinguish between the two existing forms of football in England, one was called "rugby" and the other "association." The "association*" was reduced to "assoc," and finally abbreviated to its present designation of "soccer". Association football, or soccer is one of the most popular games in the British Isles played from late August until the beginning of May.

Soccer/football is believed by many to have had its origin in the Roman Empire. An old volume on "Sports and their Origin," published in 1618, shows six Romans kicking a round object resembling a ball, and according to the notation on the page on which this illustration appears one can find this description: "The above depicts the origin of football". Hence, it would seem that, contrary to the general impression that soccer football is a purely British sport, it had its origin in Rome and was introduced to the ancient Britons by the Roman legions. (The Romans had a game in which the "follis," a large inflated ball, was used. The follis was a handball.)

Soccer/football, therefore, has developed down through the ages from a crude to a highly skilled and scientific sport. It is now regulated by rules governing both the game and the players: for example,

- the playing area is outlined by a white line, and flags are placed in each corner; the sidelines are known as the touch lines, and the end lines as the goal lines;
- regulation shoes are high laced ones, cleated with leather or rubber to protect the player against slipping;
- eleven players make up a soccer team: a team is composed of a goalkeeper, two backs, three half-backs and five forwards;
- the main objective is to put the ball through the opponent's goal and under the crossbar. This is called a goal and scores one point;
- various kinds of kicks are awarded one team because of infringements of rules by the other: free kick, penalty kick, goal kick and corner kick.

Soccer found a warm spot in the heart of the common people. Though opposed by kings and queens, it defied and survived the law; attacked by the pens of writers, it has outlived them all, for it is now played under the same rules all over the civilised world.

On April 13, 1314, Edward II issued a proclamation forbidding the game as leading to a breach of the peace "for as much as there is great noise in the city caused

by hustling over large balls, from which many evils might arise which God forbids, we commend and forbid, on behalf of the king, on pain of imprisonment, such game to be used in the city in the future”.

Edward III, James III and Queen Elizabeth also forbade the game.

In China, for example, association football is called “Tsu chu”. “Tsu” may be translated as “to kick the ball with feet”, and “chu” as “a ball made of leather, and stuffed”.

The Greeks had a word for the game episkyros.

Rugby

Rugby is a British invention. Though it is popular primarily in the British Isles, it also is played everywhere, including the Eastern and Western coasts of the USA.

The modern game of rugby football originated accidentally. In 1823, William Ellis, a student at Rugby College, England, was involved in a soccer game. Play then being limited strictly to kicking. Ellis, chagrined over his failure to kick the bouncing ball, picked it up and carried it down the field. Ellis was subjected to a great deal of criticism because of his act. But the news of his run with the ball got around and certain players felt that the option of kicking or running with the ball might add interest to the contest, and it was adopted forthwith.

In 1839, when the Ellis play was mentioned, the custom was to refer to it "that play at Rugby" and eventually it was called as "Rugby's game." During the next few years, other schools adopted the game. At the outset, it was strictly a school game. Oxford University officially adopted the game only in 1869. Ellis, the man who started it all, was an almost forgotten figure for many decades. Then the tremendous popularity of the game convinced the authorities at Rugby College that Ellis should be honoured. As a result, a small monument was erected on the Rugby campus, bearing this inscription:

This stone

Commemorates the exploit of
William Webb Ellis

Who with a Fine Disregard for the Rules of
Football ‘as Played in his time’

First Took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive
feature of

The Rugby Game.

AD 1823.

– The rugby ball is oval; when a player is injured, no one is permitted to substitute for him; no teammate is allowed to be ahead of the man possessing the ball.

Golf

Golf is one of the most rapidly growing sports, particularly in the US and the Far East. It is a game of discipline, hope and despair. It is universally accepted, that the Scots invented the game of golf. And this game has played a conspicuous role in the history of Scotland for many centuries. Golf is known to have first enjoyed popularity about 1440. James II prevailed upon Parliament to enact a rule during the month of March, making it unlawful for anyone to play at “golfe”. The king regarded the game as a waste of time since at that time there was constant fear of invasion by enemies of the British Isles and bows and arrows being the chief weapons of warfare in that era, wanted to encourage archery practice.

The game fascinated Mary, the daughter of James V and later on, when she became Queen of Scots in 1542, she played golf openly, and the sport advanced thereafter. During her reign, there was founded the most famous of golf courses – St. Andrew’s of Scotland – which came into existence about 1552. Now the St. Andrew’s course is one of the most outstanding in the world, it 6,883 yards in length.

The first golf tournament took place in 1860, at the Prestwick Course in, Scotland. This, in time, became known as the famous British Open. A belt was put up as a prize and the belt was to become the personal property of the man winning thrice. Willie Park and Tom Morris were the golfers. Park won the title in 1860 and in 1863 becoming the first recognised champion. Morris won in 1861 and 1862. They met again in 1864 and Morris was the winner.

In 1865 another tournament was arranged and competition was “open to anyone,” which is how the event came to be known as the “Open Championship”. At the time, there was no real distinction between amateurs and professionals. The “Open” meant that play, which previously had been limited to Scotland and which included, chiefly, the players at Prestwick, could be visited by anyone who cared to enter the competition.

In 1899 the US invented the rubber golf ball and golf players began to employ this new ball. The beginnings of golf in America are not clearly recorded. At first, there were organisations in the USA that functioned as “golf clubs” throughout the eighteenth century. The Charleston “City Gazette” of October 13, 1795, carried this advertisement:

“Notice – the anniversary of the Golf Club will be held on Saturday next, at Harleston’s Green, where members are requested to attend at one o’clock”.

The story of golf – the actual game – in the USA, begins in the 1880s, when Joseph Mickle Fox, a Philadelphian, learned about golf on a trip to Scotland in 1884 and introduced the game at his summer home in Foxburg Golf Club in 1887. The club still in existence today, is probably the oldest one in the United States.

During the larger part of the existence of golf in the USA, it had very little public appeal. Amateur players were for the main part, the members of a club which had its own courses. Professionals were few in number and were made up mainly of trainers

and teachers.

A new sensation came at the beginning of the 20th century, when there was a substantial increase in public interest in the game. People who knew about the game only vaguely suddenly had a desire to play. Some joined the clubs; in some cities public courses were laid out. There were approximately 5,800 golf courses in America before the outbreak of World War II.

Today there are some 8 million male and female golfers in the USA.

Cricket

The game has spread from the British Isles and it is a leading British sport. Cricket is played on a comparatively small scale in the USA. Cricket in England, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, is a sport for the masses as well as the classes. Cricket is the English national sport played in summer. When the English say: “that’s not cricket”, it means “that’s not fair”, and “to play the game” means “to be fair”.

While all evidence points to the fact that the English were the first inventors of the game, some historians think that the name “cricket” is derived from “croquet”, a game that was popular in France before the beginning of cricket. They believe that the English borrowed the idea and perfected it into modern cricket. There is a French word *criquet* pronounced “krick kay” and this bears out the fact that France created the game and named it. However, cricket was unknown in France through the years when it was gaining great favour in England around the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Other historians, while insisting that cricket originated and developed in England, do not know the approximate date when it first was played, where it was played or how it gained its name. The origin of cricket is still in dispute. Some believe that cricket was a development of a “club ball”.

The progress of the game was slow. In 1620 Oliver Cromwell was denounced because he had participated in the “disputable game of cricket”. Cricket won a great victory in 1748, and the court decided: “Cricket is a very manly game, not bad in itself, but only bad in the ill use made of it by wagering more than ten pounds on it, wagering being bad, and against the law”.

Cricket is played by two teams of 11 each. One team must bat and the other team must field. When the first team finished batting, the second team must begin. The batsman must all the time guard his “wicket”, three pieces of wood which are pushed into the ground. The game is not very fast moving and can last for more than a day.

King Coal

Britain was the first and most important industrial country in the world. There were more factories and machines in Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century than

anywhere else in Europe. And many of these were in the North of England. The reason was that the North of England was rich in coal. So the factory owners built their factories near the coal mines. Then towns grew around the factories and mines, and people came in order to look for work. Today you can still see these small industrial towns with their narrow terraced houses, as here in Hebden Bridge near Halifax.

Life was not easy for the people who lived and worked here. The towns were dirty because of the smoke that came from the factories, and the countryside was badly polluted. At work there were few laws to protect the people. Either they worked in the dangerous conditions, or they lost their jobs. Wages were not good either. In fact they were often so low that parents had to send their children to work in the factories or coal mines. This was one of the most terrible things in the nineteenth century in Britain: children who were only ten years old or even younger worked 12 or 13 hours a day. Because children were much cheaper for the factory owners, it was sometimes only the children in a family who had jobs. The parents were often out of work.

Holidays and customs

Try to imagine a year without holidays. How boring that would be! In Britain and in Germany, as of course in all other countries, there are a number of special days during the year. Something exciting often happens on these days — and sometimes you need not go to school. The British also have their own customs. Some of them are almost the same as those in Germany, others are different.

February 14th is Valentine's Day. On this day people send cards, little presents or flowers to somebody they love. They do not write their names on the cards, so the person must guess who sent them. Sometimes the cards have funny rhymes.

April 1st is April Fool's Day. People play tricks on their friends on this day. Even the newspapers and television have their April Fool's joke. It can be great fun to find the article or programme that looks serious — but isn't! But in Britain you must not play tricks on people after 12 o'clock.

At Easter children in Britain get chocolate Easter eggs as presents from their parents and relatives. Sometimes cards are sent, but other presents are not usually given.

October 31st is Halloween. But it is not a Christian festival. It goes back to Celtic times, when the end of summer and the beginning of winter was celebrated. Many strange things might happen on Halloween: witches may fly through the air and dead people may come back from their graves — or so people say. In the evening young people often have Halloween parties. They are usually great fun. The girls put on witches' clothes and the boys come as ghosts or monsters.

November 5th is Guy Fawkes Night. All over the country, people build bonfires and burn a figure of Guy Fawkes. This custom goes back to a historical event. In 1605 a man who was called Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the King of England in the

Houses of Parliament. But the king's guards caught Guy Fawkes first. Later he was executed in the Tower of London. About a week before Guy Fawkes Night, children make their guy from old clothes and newspapers. Then they carry their guy through the town and ask people for a "penny for the guy". They collect the money for fireworks. Fireworks are an important part of Guy Fawkes Night. (There are no fireworks on New Year's Eve in Britain.)

Christmas time starts early in Britain. In the weeks before Christmas, people send cards to everybody they know, and when they receive cards, they hang them on all the walls. British people put up their Christmas trees many days before the real holiday, Christmas Day. Father Christmas, or Santa Claus, brings his presents late on Christmas Eve. He usually comes down the chimney and the children find their presents in the morning. Christmas dinner with turkey and plum pudding is the main meal of the holiday.

Christmas and New Year are also a time for parties. In Scotland, New Year's Eve is called Hogmanay. It is the most important holiday in the year for many Scots. People leave their doors open, and if you go in you will always get a glass of whisky (if you are old enough!).

300-year anniversary of the first newspaper

Ink well: an old photograph of Fleet Street (circa 1890), the former home of the British newspaper industry, London. A lamp displaying the name Press Association can be seen to the left and St Paul's Cathedral can be seen in the distance.

Fleet Street was named after a sewer (Fleet ditch) and has admittedly created a few stinks in its time - but it has managed to play host to 300 years of news production in the centre of London.

In March 1702 the first newspaper was printed there and the Daily Courant survived for 33 years until 1735 when it was merged into the Daily Gazetteer.

The 300th birthday was marked by an exhibition (featuring copies of the Daily Courant) and a church service attended by the Prince of Wales at the "journalists' church" of St Bride's off Fleet Street. The special service at St Bride's was attended by 25 chairmen and chief executives of newspapers as well as a host of national newspaper editors past and present.

Although no newspapers are produced in Fleet Street any more, it is still the haunt of many a journalist. Reuters, the international news agency, retains its world headquarters at 85 Fleet Street which it bought from the Press Association after the United Kingdom news agency moved to another part of London in the mid-1990s.

Further up the street the only other news-related offices are those of the London bureau of Scotland's Dundee Courier and Evening Telegraph, and Agence France-Presse -AFP - the third largest news agency in the world.

Acknowledging the paradox of his position, as the subject of many news stories, the Prince of Wales said that for three centuries the Press had been "awkward,

cantankerous, cynical, bloody-minded, at times intrusive, at times inaccurate and at times deeply unfair and harmful to individuals and to institutions".

But Prince Charles said he also wanted to redress the balance and pay tribute to the "very real good" done by newspapers and magazines.

He said: "From time to time you get things wrong - everyone does. But most of the time you are seeking to keep the public informed about developments in society, to scrutinise those who hold or seek positions of influence, to uncover wrongdoing at a national level, in business or in local communities, to prick the pomposity of the overbearing, and a point sometimes forgotten to entertain us."

Prince Charles also expressed gratitude and "surprise" for the way in which newspapers had given his sons, Prince William and Prince Harry, as much privacy as possible.

"Growing up is not easy - when was it, I wonder? But I suspect our modern world makes it even more difficult and they, along with others, have been through times of immense difficulty and tragedy," he said.

The Prince also used the occasion to rally support for the Queen's Golden Jubilee. In his first public comment on the anniversary he paid tribute to his mother's dedication and service over 50 years on the throne.

"I think perhaps all of us need at the time of coincidence of anniversaries- your 300th and the Queen's 50th- to wonder what more each of us can do to correct the genuine ills in our society and create a climate which leads to ever more of us feeling that Britain IS a great country to which we can give our love and loyalty," he concluded.

Rupert Murdoch, chairman of News International, gave a short speech, in which he said British newspapers were "without peer" in the world, adding: "We can take heart that, without us, Britain would be measurably less free."

After the third reading, given by Lord Deedes of the Daily Telegraph, Daily Mail chairman Lord Rothermere paid a special tribute to the victims of 11 September and the journalists who lost their lives covering the war in Afghanistan that followed.

The anniversary was accompanied by an exhibition, promoted by the London Press Club, in the nearby St Bride's Institute, with more than 1,00 exhibits recording Fleet Street's status as the former home of British journalism.

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