



Communities Select Committee
Date of meeting

Magna Carta Programme

Purpose of the report: Performance Management

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Magna Carta Programme, highlighting the work being undertaken to deliver the commemoration of the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. The Official Event takes place on the 15th June 2015 and will be momentous day of celebration, but this is not the only way of marking this occasion. There has also been an art piece commissioned and 'The Freedom Game' – Magna Carta Concert will take place at the Royal Albert Hall on 12th May 2015.

This paper also considers methods of funding and lasting implications to benefit the local area, such as infrastructure improvements and creating a legacy for local residents and visitors alike.

Introduction:

1. The 15th June 2015 will mark the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta by King John in Runnymede.
2. Surrey County Council is providing strategic leadership to the project and is working closely with a wide range of partners to ensure appropriate commemoration activities and events are programmed for residents and visitors alike.
3. The Council aims to raise the profile of the area to attract inward economic investment into the County through the installation of a British Magna Carta art commission; playing host to the official event on the 15th June 2015; delivering an extensive event and education programme and ensuring a legacy of improvements to offer the visitor, and the creation of a culturally branded tourist destination – Magna Carta Country.
4. Cabinet approved a budget of £1,000,000 to support the Magna Carta anniversary. Of the £300,000 allocated for events currently £180,000 has been committed to the events programme and £100,000 has been committed to the Official Event. The cost of the selected art commission

to commemorate the 800th anniversary, for which Cabinet agreed a budget of £700,000, is £405,267.

Magna Carta Art Commission

5. Surrey County Council (SCC) and the National Trust, as the landowners, formed a selection panel, chaired by the Leader of SCC. Hew Locke was selected from a competitive tendering exercise to undertake the art commission to mark the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta.
 - 5.1 Hew Locke was born in Edinburgh in 1959 and from 1966- 1980, he resided in Georgetown, Guyana; he currently lives in London. Hew obtained a BA Honours Degree in Fine Art (1988) studying in Falmouth and an MA in Sculpture (1994) from the Royal College of Art. In 2000, he won both a Paul Hamlyn Award and an East International Award.
 - 5.2 Hew has undertaken a number of important public art commissions in this country and his work is represented in many collections, including The Government Art Collection, The Tate Gallery collection, The Arts Council of England collection, The British Museum, London and The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds. His work is also visible in private collections and a number of museums and galleries in America.
6. The artist has been inspired by the impact of the Magna Carta's fundamental principles of justice, the basis of common law which has influenced the development of the United States constitution, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and over a third of the world's legal systems.
7. The artwork will be unveiled and will be a highlight of the official commemoration event on 15th June 2015.
8. A community engagement programme will progress over the next few months, with the dedication of this new commission to be one of the main features of the official Magna Carta 800th anniversary event.

Official Event – 15th June 2015

9. The Official Event to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta will take place on 15th June 2015. This will be a prestigious event and will almost certainly be attended by high-profile guests.
10. The event itself will be both commemorative and celebratory in nature. Currently, the running order has yet to be finalised, but it is set to include a processional display of constitutional, civic and ceremonial flags; a welcome from the Master of the Rolls; spiritual music from the Choir of the Church of the Temple; Four Voices – whereby four known

personalities speak about the enduring relevance of Magna Carta; the rededication of the American Bar Association Memorial; and the unveiling of the Magna Carta Art Commission piece created by Hew Locke.

11. Music and performances will be heard, which signifies a change in tone for the afternoon aspects of the Official Event, leading to a more engaging process for attendees. All will be invited to “celebrate, debate and reflect” on the meaning and enduring legacy of the Magna Carta.
12. All guests will also be invited to take part in the LiberTea Picnic. This is a national concept, developed by the Houses of Parliament, in association with the National Trust.

Event Programme

13. Cabinet agreed a budget of £300,000 to support the local Magna Carta events programme. £100,000 has been committed to support the major 800th anniversary event on Runnymede Meadows on 15th June 2015; £180,000 has been committed to events that are confirmed and/or are still in planning stage with stakeholders, based on the offer of support from SCC; and £20k remains unallocated.
14. SCC have made contributions to a range of commemorative activities and initiatives across the county including:
 - 14.1 An Eight Centuries of Magna Carta Giants Picnic Event took place on 15th June 2014 to mark the 799th anniversary and this was a great success. The event involved a community parade with school children, performance, dance and song and a community picnic to end.
 - 14.2 An exhibition created by SCC – and involving a loan of the facsimile of the Lincoln Magna Carta - will tour across Surrey Libraries and the Surrey History Centre (Woking) from early January to March 2015: and will continue as a Magna Carta 800 exhibition tour to other libraries and venues around Surrey during 2015.
 - 14.3 An exhibition and events programme at Guildford Cathedral - who have negotiated the loan of a facsimile of the Magna Carta document and a replica seal from Salisbury Cathedral, to be showcased between 8th June and 8th August 2015. The display of the document will form the centre piece of a number of Magna Carta themed events at the Cathedral, which are expected to include concerts, talks, public and educational workshops and other activities staged in partnership with SCC. The Magna Carta theme will also extend into their autumn lecture programme

- 14.4 Great Charter Festival, a major arts, science and debate family and community festival at RHUL on Sunday 14th June 2014, which it is hoped will become a regular Magna Carta anniversary festival. Note – the ambition of the key partners is that this Festival should become a regular event.
- 14.5 High Street Community Banner project coordinated by Egham Museum. This project will display Magna Carta inspired banners created by the community, for display in Egham and Staines High Streets, and Englefield Green, as a public art project.
- 14.6 A contribution towards the costs of the Magna Carta concert at the Royal Albert Hall.
15. Other projects being planned with offers of financial contribution from SCC include:
- 15.1 The American Bar Association International Magna Carta exhibition, which will be in the United Kingdom for six weeks, will be held at either the Surrey History Centre or Woking Library from 15th - 27th June 2015 (and possibly at the Runnymede Borough Civic Offices for two weeks).
- 15.2 Houses of Parliament Magna Carta Community Theatre, which is a touring arts project to connect Magna Carta towns, including Egham. Note- feasibility work being undertaken with Salisbury Playhouse to see if their specially commissioned Magna Carta play can tour to any venues in Surrey.
- 15.3 A high profile project in Egham High Street to take place in the Summer Holidays (July- August 2015).
- 15.4 Surrey History Centre 10th Magna Carta Study Day, with various speakers including Prof. Nigel Saul taking place in May 2015.
- 15.5 Surrey History Centre Magna Carta lecture on 20th June 2015 by Nick Barratt (Producer of the 'Who do you think you are' - "1215 and all that").

An exhibition of work by tutors and students at Sunbury Community Learning centre on the theme of Magna Carta – to shown at the centre, and also to tour to other venues.

16. In addition, SCC funding has been committed to the following:
- 16.1 Smart phone App "Runnymede Explored" which is being developed by Royal Holloway University of London, on behalf of the partnership, to help locals and visitors explore and learn more about the local area. Due for an April 2015 launch, it will be widely promoted by all local stakeholders alongside the Magna Carta trail promotion.

16.2 Funding the temporary appointment of an audience development manager, required as part of the development of the HLF bid, if successful at Stage 1

17. Possible projects under investigation for the remaining balance include:

17.1 Great Charter Magna Carta tapestry project, which is a local craft-skill inspired project, involving Magna Carta quilted images for exhibition, and for use as an educational resource.

17.2 Possible projects with the Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum on the importance of Magna Carta

17.3 Commissioning a facsimile of the 1297 Inspeximus Magna Carta that was sent by a messenger of the Court of King Edward I to the Sheriff of Surrey, to be proclaimed in the county court, and which is now in the possession of the Australian Parliament in Canberra.

17.4 A Surrey and the Magna Carta leaflet to be given to all Surrey residents taking Citizenship.

18. The stakeholders of the Magna Carta Partnership have a major programme of complementary events in planning, including lectures, guided tours, exhibitions, school games, student debates, river pageant, flower festival, theatre shows, music concerts, food and wine festivals, beacon lighting, bell ringing and community processions.

18.1 These events, along with events of other independent event organisers, are centrally recorded and cross promoted as a comprehensive programme for residents and visitors of Surrey and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

18.2 Currently there are 56 events/activities scheduled and 16 events are in planning. *Please note that events, including exhibition and lecture programmes, remain subject to change.*

18.3 Information on these events will be promoted at www.visitsurrey.com/magna-carta.

World Premier of 'The Freedom Game' – Magna Carta Concert at the Royal Albert Hall 12th May 2015
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19. Magna Carta Royal Albert Hall concert: is an exciting new community concert composed by Hannah Conway and directed by Karen Gillingham, with lyrics written by Sir Richard Stilgoe. The world premiere performance will be on Tuesday 12th May 2015. Arts Council England has awarded Surrey Arts a grant of £45,000 towards the development of Magna Carta 'The Freedom Game' project.

20. This specially commissioned work explores the Magna Carta values of democracy, liberty, citizenship and freedom. In the plot, a Surrey family

come under the influence of an evil dictator who attempts to control them and take away their liberties. The children challenge the dictator to play 'The Freedom Game.' Like a computer game, there are a series of 'levels' in which they attempt to win back their freedoms. The piece focuses on the freedoms that we often take for granted, exploring significant events in history that have shaped these. It describes an heroic battle against oppression, often with what seem insurmountable odds.

21. Selected through a series of travelling workshops and auditions taking place over the next few months throughout the county, Surrey Arts are currently recruiting over 1,300 singers and dancers from the age of five to adult. This will be a hugely valuable experience for the participants and their families. The opera will see a diverse mix of people coming together and celebrating the topic of freedom, including one of the country's first 'inclusive' orchestras for young people with SEN and disability. It is hoped that performing at the Royal Albert Hall will give everyone involved a once in a lifetime opportunity that they will not forget. The workshops leading up to the performance will allow the participants not only to develop their vocal skills, but also to grow in confidence and make new friends as well as getting a better understanding of the significance of the Magna Carta.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Legacy Bid

22. In December a legacy bid by the six partners (National Trust, Surrey County Council, Runnymede Borough Council, Royal Holloway University of London, Brunel University and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead) of the Magna Carta Surrey Partnership was submitted to the HLF for approximately £3.3 million. The strategic ambition is to improve access to and around the site; improve visitor facilities and site interpretation and learning facilities/resources; undertake improvement works to the landscape and local network of paths and trails; develop Runnymede and Ankerwycke as a cohesive site; and create a culturally branded destination to celebrate the heritage of the area by marketing it to visitors as Magna Carta Country.
23. Earlier in the year, the HLF declined the previous bid application. The Magna Carta Surrey Partnership is still committed to improve aspects on offer to the visitor at Runnymede and to ensure that its importance and relevance to Magna Carta is fully understood, especially in the context of the 800th anniversary of its sealing. It was appreciated that there is limited funding available to the HLF at any one time and that in July other bids took priority. However, we are reassured by the fact that the partnership were asked to resubmit a first round application in December 2014 and we have been working hard to ensure this complex partnership application has a successful outcome. A decision on this is expected in early March.
24. The aim is to engage our visitors with this special place, and that they know why Runnymede matters. It is an incredibly rich local resource for

recreation and leisure, learning, volunteering, and for engaging others in its history and future, and for why it matters as a place that can speak to a global audience about liberty, the rule of law, of human rights and individual freedom.

25. This project will ensure that Runnymede and Ankerwycke are able to be a source of pleasure, reflection and inspiration in the modern world. In practice, this means making a number of improvements to the conservation, management and interpretation of the landscape and its many features, including its buildings, wildlife, numerous habitats, archaeology, monuments, memorials and the River Thames. The project will utilise existing infrastructure in order to deliver its ambitions which include a wide ranging programme of outreach, educational, participation and volunteering opportunities for the local community and visitors.
26. As a partner, SCC has given strategic support to this bid and has committed to fund the temporary appointment of an audience development manager, required as part of the development of the HLF bid, if successful at Stage 1. The cost of this is included in the £180,000 expenditure.
27. The bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund is part of the Legacy Plan for Runnymede; the 800th anniversary event programme, the official event on 15th June 2015 and the art commission remain unaffected by this decision.

A308 Highway Improvements

28. SCC Highways are currently concluding a number of road and pedestrian safety improvements on the A308, as this issue was subject to many comments from the local community. This cost, circa £300,000, will be met found from the SCC Highways budget. These will be completed early 2015.
29. Three new refuges (islands) and revised road markings have been installed in the section of Windsor Road between the Tea Rooms and the Runnymede Pleasure Ground; their installation was coordinated with the resurfacing work undertaken in the summer. Two of the refuges near the entrance to the National Trust car parks are designed to help pedestrians cross Windsor Road. The other refuge was included together with the revised road markings, as part of a series of wider measures to help encourage the reduction of vehicle speeds.
 - 29.1 The road is subject to a new 40mph speed limit that has been introduced along the section of Windsor Road, which previously had a 60mph speed limit, and a new signalised pedestrian crossing is currently being constructed at one of the busiest pedestrian crossing points, by the National Trust Lodges.
 - 29.2 Signage options have been developed for the gateway features which will support the new 40mph speed limit, by encouraging lower vehicle speeds, as well as giving identity to the area.

29.3 Note – as part of the Major Schemes bids made to the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership on 30 September 2014, a funding bid has been confirmed for major improvements to the Runnymede roundabout. Some preparatory work will be commenced during April and May 2015, but work will be suspended during the summer for the anniversary commemorations and will recommence in September 2015.

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Recommendations:

30. To note the content of the report and to request a further update at the next communities select committee.

Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.

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Sources/background papers: None.