Life in the United Kingdom

A Guide for New Residents

3rd Edition

www.futurecitizen.co.uk

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Chapter 1

The Values and Principles of the UK

1.1 Introduction

Britain is a fantastic place to live: a modern, thriving society with a long and illustrious history. Our people have been at the heart of the world's political, scientific, industrial and cultural development. We are proud of our record of welcoming new migrants who will add to the diversity and dynamism of our national life.

Applying to become a permanent resident or citizen of the UK is an important decision and commitment. You will be agreeing to accept the responsibilities which go with permanent residence and to respect the laws, values and traditions of the UK. Good citizens are an asset to the UK. We welcome those seeking to make a positive contribution to our society.

Passing the Life in the UK test is part of demonstrating that you are ready to become a permanent migrant to the UK. This study guide is designed to support you in your preparation. It will help you to integrate into society and play a full role in your local community. It will also help ensure that you have a broad general knowledge of the culture, laws and history of the UK.

1.2 The Values and Principles of the UK

British society is founded on fundamental values and principles which all those living in the UK should respect and support. These values are reflected in the responsibilities, rights and privileges of being a British citizen or permanent resident of the UK. They are based on history and traditions and are protected by law, customs and expectations. There is no place in British society for extremism or intolerance.

The fundamental principles of British life include:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Participation in community life

As part of the citizenship ceremony, new citizens pledge to uphold these values. The pledge is:

> *'I will give my loyalty to the United Kingdom and respect its rights and freedoms. I will uphold its democratic values. I will observe its laws faithfully and fulfil my duties and obligations as a British citizen.'*

Flowing from the fundamental principles are **responsibilities and freedoms** which are shared by all those living in the UK and which we expect all residents to respect.

If you wish to be a permanent resident or citizen of the UK, you should:

- Respect and obey the law
- Respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions
- Treat others with fairness
- Look after yourself and your family
- Look after the area in which you live and the environment

In return, the UK offers:

- Freedom of belief and religion
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom from unfair discrimination
- A right to a fair trial
- A right to join in the election of a government

1.3 Becoming a Permanent Resident

To apply to become a permanent resident or citizen of the UK, you will need to:

- Speak and read English
- Have a good understanding of life in the UK

This means you will need to:

- Pass the Life in the UK test

AND

- Produce acceptable evidence of speaking and listening skills in English at B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference. This is equivalent to ESOL Entry Level 3. You can demonstrate your knowledge of English by having a recognised English test qualification from an approved test centre. For further details on how to demonstrate evidence of the required level of speaking and listening skills in English, please visit the Home Office website.

Important

It is possible that the requirements may change in the future. You should check the information on the Home Office website for current requirements before applying for settlement or citizenship.

1.4 Taking the Life in the UK Test

The Life in the UK test will help prepare you for settling in the UK. The test consists of 24 questions about important aspects of life in the UK. Questions are based on ALL parts of the handbook. The 24 questions will be different for each person taking the test at that test session.

The Life in the UK test is usually taken in English, although special arrangements can be made if you wish to take it in Welsh or Scottish Gaelic.

Note

You can only take the test at a registered and approved Life in the UK test centre. There are about 30 test centres around the UK. You can only book your test online at www.gov.uk/life-in-the-uk-test. You should not take your test at any other establishment as the UK Border Agency will only accept certificates from registered test centres. If you live on the Isle of Man or in the Channel Islands, there are different arrangements for taking the Life in the UK test.

Important

When booking your test, read the instructions carefully. Make sure you enter your details correctly. You will need to take some identification and proof of your address with you to the test. If you don't take these, you will not be able to take your test.

1.4.1 Life in the UK Test Study Guide

Everything that you will need to know to pass the Life in the UK test is included in the *'Life in the United Kingdom: A Guide for New Residents'* handbook. The questions will be based on the whole book, including this introduction, so make sure you study the entire book thoroughly. The handbook has been written to ensure that anyone who can read English at ESOL Entry Level 3 or above should have no difficulty with the language.

The 'Check that you understand' sections are for guidance. They will help you to identify particular things that you should understand. Just knowing the things highlighted in these sections will not be enough to pass the test. You need to make sure that you understand everything in the book, so please read the information carefully.

1.4.2 Where to Find More Information

You can find out more information from the following places:

- The Home Office website (gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/settle-in-the-uk) for information about the application process and the forms you will need to complete.
- The Life in the UK test website (www.gov.uk/life-in-the-uk-test) for information about the test and how to book a place to take one.
- Gov.uk (www.gov.uk) for information about ESOL courses and how to find one in your area.

Check that you understand

- The origin of the values underlying British society
- The fundamental principles of British life
- The responsibilities and freedoms which come with permanent residence
- The process of becoming a permanent resident or citizen

Chapter 2

What is the UK?

The UK is made up of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The rest of Ireland is an independent country.

Figure 2.1: Map of the United Kingdom showing England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

The official name of the country is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 'Great Britain' refers only to England, Scotland and Wales, not to Northern Ireland. The words 'Britain', 'British Isles' or 'British', however, are used here to refer to everyone in the UK.

There are also several islands which are closely linked with the UK but are not part of it: the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. These have their own governments and are called 'Crown dependencies'. There are also several British overseas territories in other parts of the world, such as St Helena and the Falkland Islands. They are also linked to the UK but are not part of it.

The UK is governed by the parliament sitting in Westminster. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also have parliaments or assemblies of their own, with devolved powers in defined areas.

Check that you understand

- The different countries that make up the UK

Chapter 3

A Long and Illustrious History

3.1 Early Britain

The first people to live in Britain were hunter-gatherers, in what we call the Stone Age. For much of the Stone Age, Britain was connected to the continent by a land bridge. People came and went, following the herds of deer and horses which they hunted. Britain only became permanently separated from the continent by the Channel about 10,000 years ago.

The first farmers arrived in Britain 6,000 years ago. The ancestors of these first farmers probably came from south-east Europe. These people built houses, tombs and monuments on the land. One of these monuments, Stonehenge, still stands in what is now the English county of Wiltshire. Stonehenge was probably a special gathering place for seasonal ceremonies. Other Stone Age sites have also survived. Skara Brae on Orkney, off the north coast of Scotland, is the best preserved prehistoric village in northern Europe, and has helped archaeologists to understand more about how people lived near the end of the Stone Age.

Figure 3.1: Stonehenge, a prehistoric monument in Wiltshire, England

Around 4,000 years ago, people learned to make bronze. We call this period the

Bronze Age. People lived in roundhouses and buried their dead in tombs called round barrows. The people of the Bronze Age were accomplished metalworkers who made many beautiful objects in bronze and gold, including tools, ornaments and weapons. The Bronze Age was followed by the Iron Age, when people learned how to make weapons and tools out of iron. People still lived in roundhouses grouped together into larger settlements, and sometimes defended sites called hill forts. A very impressive hill fort can still be seen today at Maiden Castle, in the English county of Dorset. Most people were farmers, craft workers or warriors. The language they spoke was part of the Celtic language family. Similar languages were spoken across Europe in the Iron Age and related languages are still spoken today in some parts of Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The people of the Iron Age had a sophisticated culture and economy. They made the first coins to be minted in Britain, some inscribed with the names of Iron Age kings. This marks the beginnings of British history.

3.1.1 The Romans

Julius Caesar led a Roman invasion of Britain in 55 BC. This was unsuccessful and for nearly 100 years Britain remained separate from the Roman Empire. In AD 43 the Emperor Claudius led the Roman army in a new invasion. This time, there was resistance from some of the British tribes but the Romans were successful in occupying almost all of Britain. One of the tribal leaders who fought against the Romans was Boudicca, the queen of the Iceni in what is now eastern England. She is still remembered today and there is a statue of her on Westminster Bridge in London, near the Houses of Parliament.

Areas of what is now Scotland were never conquered by the Romans, and the Emperor Hadrian built a wall in the north of England to keep out the Picts (ancestors of the Scottish people). Included in the wall were a number of forts. Parts of Hadrian's Wall, including the forts of Housesteads and Vindolanda, can still be seen. It is a popular area for walkers and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Romans remained in Britain for 400 years. They built roads and public buildings, created a structure of law, and introduced new plants and animals. It was during the 3rd and 4th centuries AD that the first Christian communities began to appear in Britain.

3.1.2 The Anglo-Saxons

The Roman army left Britain in AD 410 to defend other parts of the Roman Empire and never returned. Britain was again invaded by tribes from northern Europe: the Jutes, the Angles and the Saxons. The languages they spoke are the basis of modern-day English. Battles were fought against these invaders but, by about AD 600, Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were established in Britain. These kingdoms were mainly in what is now England. The burial place of one of the kings was at Sutton Hoo in modern Suffolk. This king was buried with treasure and armour, all placed in a ship which was then covered by a mound of earth. Parts of the west of Britain, including much of what is now Wales, and Scotland, remained free of Anglo-Saxon rule.

Figure 3.2: The Sutton Hoo helmet, an Anglo-Saxon ceremonial helmet from the 7th century

The Anglo-Saxons were not Christians when they first came to Britain but, during this period, missionaries came to Britain to preach about Christianity. Missionaries from Ireland spread the religion in the north. The most famous of these were St Patrick, who would become the patron saint of Ireland, and St Columba, who founded a monastery on the island of Iona, off the coast of what is now Scotland. St Augustine led missionaries from Rome, who spread Christianity in the south. St Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

3.1.3 The Vikings

The Vikings came from Denmark and Norway. They first visited Britain in AD 789 to raid coastal towns and take away goods and slaves. Then, they began to stay and form their own communities in the east of England and Scotland. The Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in England united under King Alfred the Great, who defeated the Vikings. Many of the Viking invaders stayed in Britain — especially in the east and north of England in an area known as the Danelaw (many place names there, such as Grimsby and Scunthorpe, come from the Viking languages). The Viking settlers mixed with local communities and some converted to Christianity.

Anglo-Saxon kings continued to rule what is now England, except for a short period when there were Danish kings. The first of these was Cnut, also called Canute.

In the north, the threat of attack by Vikings had encouraged the people to unite under one king, Kenneth MacAlpin. The term Scotland began to be used to describe that country.

3.1.4 The Norman Conquest

In 1066, an invasion led by William, the Duke of Normandy (in what is now northern France), defeated Harold, the Saxon king of England, at the Battle of Hastings. Harold

was killed in the battle. William became king of England and is known as William the Conqueror. The battle is commemorated in a great piece of embroidery, known as the Bayeux Tapestry, which can still be seen in France today.

Figure 3.3: Scene from the Bayeux Tapestry depicting the Norman Conquest of England in 1066

The Norman Conquest was the last successful foreign invasion of England and led to many changes in government and social structures in England. Norman French, the language of the new ruling class, influenced the development of the English language as we know it today. Initially the Normans also conquered Wales, but the Welsh gradually won territory back. The Scots and the Normans fought on the border between England and Scotland; the Normans took over some land on the border but did not invade Scotland.

William sent people all over England to draw up lists of all the towns and villages. The people who lived there, who owned the land and what animals they owned were also listed. This was called the Domesday Book. It still exists today and gives a picture of society in England just after the Norman Conquest.

Check that you understand

- The history of the UK before the Romans
- The impact of the Romans on British society
- The different groups that invaded after the Romans
- The importance of the Norman invasion in 1066

3.2 The Middle Ages

3.2.1 War at Home and Abroad

Broadly speaking, the Middle Ages (or medieval period) spans a thousand years, from the end of the Roman Empire in AD 476 up until 1485. However, the focus here is on the period after the Norman Conquest. It was a time of almost constant war.

The English kings fought with the Welsh, Scottish and Irish noblemen for control of their lands. In Wales, the English were able to establish their rule. In 1284 King Edward I of England introduced the Statute of Rhuddlan, which annexed Wales to the Crown of England. Huge castles, including Conwy and Caernarvon, were built to maintain this power. By the middle of the 15th century the last Welsh rebellions had been defeated. English laws and the English language were introduced.

In Scotland, the English kings were less successful. In 1314 the Scottish, led by Robert the Bruce, defeated the English at the Battle of Bannockburn, and Scotland remained unconquered by the English.

At the beginning of the Middle Ages, Ireland was an independent country. The English first went to Ireland as troops to help the Irish king and remained to build their own settlements. By 1200, the English ruled an area of Ireland known as the Pale, around Dublin. Some of the important lords in other parts of Ireland accepted the authority of the English king.

During the Middle Ages, the English kings also fought a number of wars abroad. Many knights took part in the Crusades, in which European Christians fought for control of the Holy Land. English kings also fought a long war with France, called the Hundred Years War (even though it actually lasted 116 years). One of the most famous battles of the Hundred Years War was the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, where King Henry V's vastly outnumbered English army defeated the French. The English left France in the 1450s.

3.2.2 The Black Death

The Normans used a system of land ownership known as feudalism. The king gave land to his lords in return for help in war. Landowners had to send certain numbers of men to serve in the army. Some peasants had their own land but most were serfs. They had a small area of their lord's land where they could grow food. In return, they had to work for their lord and could not move away. The same system developed in southern Scotland. In the north of Scotland and Ireland, land was owned by members of the 'clans' (prominent families).

In 1348, a disease, probably a form of plague, came to Britain. This was known as the Black Death. One third of the population of England died and a similar proportion in Scotland and Wales. This was one of the worst disasters ever to strike Britain. Following the Black Death, the smaller population meant there was less need to grow cereal crops. There were labour shortages and peasants began to demand higher wages. New social classes appeared, including owners of large areas of land (later called the gentry), and people left the countryside to live in the towns. In the towns, growing wealth led to the development of a strong middle class.

In Ireland, the Black Death killed many in the Pale and, for a time, the area controlled by the English became smaller.

3.2.3 Legal and Political Changes

In the Middle Ages, Parliament began to develop into the institution it is today. Its origins can be traced to the king's council of advisers, which included important noblemen and the leaders of the Church.

There were few formal limits to the king's power until 1215. In that year, King John was forced by his noblemen to agree to a number of demands. The result was a charter of rights called the Magna Carta (which means the Great Charter). The Magna Carta established the idea that even the king was subject to the law. It protected the rights of the nobility and restricted the king's power to collect taxes or to make and change laws. In future, the king would need to involve his noblemen in decisions.

In England, parliaments were called for the king to consult his nobles, particularly when the king needed to raise money. The numbers attending Parliament increased and two separate parts, known as Houses, were established. The nobility, great landowners and bishops sat in the House of Lords. Knights, who were usually smaller landowners, and wealthy people from towns and cities were elected to sit in the House of Commons. Only a small part of the population was able to join in electing the members of the Commons.

A similar Parliament developed in Scotland. It had three Houses, called Estates: the lords, the commons and the clergy.

This was also a time of development in the legal system. The principle that judges are independent of the government began to be established. In England, judges developed 'common law' by a process of precedence (that is, following previous decisions) and tradition. In Scotland, the legal system developed slightly differently and laws were 'codified' (that is, written down).

3.2.4 A Distinct Identity

The Middle Ages saw the development of a national culture and identity. After the Norman Conquest, the king and his noblemen had spoken Norman French and the peasants had continued to speak Anglo-Saxon. Gradually these two languages combined to become one English language. Some words in modern English — for example, 'park' and 'beauty' — are based on Norman French words. Others — for example, 'apple', 'cow' and 'summer' — are based on Anglo-Saxon words. In modern English there are often two words with very similar meanings, one from French and one from Anglo-Saxon. 'Demand' (French) and 'ask' (Anglo-Saxon) are examples. By 1400, in England, official documents were being written in English, and English had become the preferred language of the royal court and Parliament.

In the years leading up to 1400, Geoffrey Chaucer wrote a series of poems in English about a group of people going to Canterbury on a pilgrimage. The people decided to tell each other stories on the journey, and the poems describe the travellers and some of the stories they told. This collection of poems is called *The Canterbury Tales*. It was one of the first books to be printed by William Caxton, the first person in England

to print books using a printing press. Many of the stories are still popular. Some have been made into plays and television programmes.

In Scotland, many people continued to speak Gaelic and the Scots language also developed. A number of poets began to write in the Scots language. One example is John Barbour, who wrote *The Bruce* about the Battle of Bannockburn.

The Middle Ages also saw a change in the type of buildings in Britain. Castles were built in many places in Britain and Ireland, partly for defence. Today many are in ruins, although some, such as Windsor and Edinburgh, are still in use. Great cathedrals — for example, Lincoln Cathedral — were also built, and many of these are still used for worship. Several of the cathedrals had windows of stained glass, telling stories about the Bible and Christian saints. The glass in York Minster is a famous example.

During this period, England was an important trading nation. English wool became a very important export. People came to England from abroad to trade and also to work. Many had special skills, such as weavers from France, engineers from Germany, glass manufacturers from Italy and canal builders from Holland.

Figure 3.4: Medieval merchants and traders in England

3.2.5 The Wars of the Roses

In 1455, a civil war was begun to decide who should be king of England. It was fought between the supporters of two families: the House of Lancaster and the House of York. This war was called the Wars of the Roses, because the symbol of Lancaster was a red rose and the symbol of York was a white rose. The wars ended with the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. King Richard III of the House of York was killed in the battle and Henry Tudor, the leader of the House of Lancaster, became King Henry VII. Henry then married King Richard's niece, Elizabeth of York, and united the two families. Henry was the first king of the House of Tudor. The symbol of the House of Tudor was a red rose with a white rose inside it as a sign that the Houses of York and Lancaster were now allies.

Check that you understand

- The wars that took place in the Middle Ages
- How Parliament began to develop
- The way that land ownership worked
- The effects of the Black Death
- The development of English language and culture
- The Wars of the Roses and the founding of the House of Tudor

3.3 The Tudors and Stuarts

3.3.1 Religious Conflicts

After his victory in the Wars of the Roses, Henry VII wanted to make sure that England remained peaceful and that his position as king was secure. He deliberately strengthened the central administration of England and reduced the power of the nobles. He was thrifty and built up the monarchy's financial reserves. When he died, his son Henry VIII continued the policy of centralising power.

Henry VIII was most famous for breaking away from the Church of Rome and marrying six times.

Figure 3.5: Portrait of Henry VIII

The Six Wives of Henry VIII

Catherine of Aragon — Catherine was a Spanish princess. She and Henry had a number of children but only one, Mary, survived. When Catherine was too old to give him another child, Henry decided to divorce her, hoping that another wife would give him a son to be his heir.

Anne Boleyn — Anne Boleyn was English. She and Henry had one daughter, Elizabeth. Anne was unpopular in the country and was accused of taking lovers. She was executed at the Tower of London.

Jane Seymour — Henry married Jane Seymour after Anne Boleyn's execution. She gave Henry the son he wanted, Edward, but she died shortly after his birth.

Anne of Cleves — Anne was a German princess. Henry married her for political reasons but divorced her soon after.

Catherine Howard — Catherine Howard was a cousin of Anne Boleyn. She was also accused of taking lovers and executed.

Catherine Parr — Catherine Parr was a widow who married Henry later in his life. She survived him and married again but died soon after.

To divorce his first wife, Henry needed the approval of the Pope. When the Pope refused, Henry established the Church of England. In this new church, the king, not the Pope, would have the power to appoint bishops and order how people should worship.

At the same time the Reformation was happening across Europe. This was a movement against the authority of the Pope and the ideas and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants formed their own churches. They read the Bible in their own languages instead of Latin; they did not pray to saints or at shrines; and they believed that a person's own relationship with God was more important than submitting to the authority of the Church. Protestant ideas gradually gained strength in England, Wales and Scotland during the 16th century.

In Ireland, however, attempts by the English to impose Protestantism led to rebellion from the Irish chieftains, and much brutal fighting followed.

During the reign of Henry VIII, Wales became formally united with England by the Act for the Government of Wales. The Welsh sent representatives to the House of Commons and the Welsh legal system was reformed.

Henry VIII was succeeded by his son Edward VI, who was strongly Protestant. During his reign, the Book of Common Prayer was written to be used in the Church of England. A version of this book is still used in some churches today. Edward died at the age of 15 after ruling for just over six years, and his half-sister Mary became queen. Mary was a devout Catholic and persecuted Protestants (for this reason, she became known as 'Bloody Mary'). Mary also died after a short reign and the next monarch was her half-sister, Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

3.3.2 Queen Elizabeth I

Figure 3.6: Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I

Elizabeth I was a Protestant. She re-established the Church of England as the official Church. Everyone had to attend their local church and there were laws about the type of religious services and the prayers which could be said, but Elizabeth did not ask about people's real beliefs. She succeeded in finding a balance between the views of the Catholics and the more extreme Protestants. In this way, she avoided any serious religious conflict within England. Elizabeth became one of the most popular monarchs in English history, particularly after 1588, when the English defeated the Spanish Armada (a large fleet of ships), which had been sent by Spain to conquer England and restore Catholicism.

3.3.3 The Reformation in Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots

Scotland had also been strongly influenced by Protestant ideas. In 1560, the predominantly Protestant Scottish Parliament abolished the authority of the Pope in Scotland and Roman Catholic religious services became illegal. A Protestant Church of Scotland with an elected leadership was established but, unlike in England, this was not a state Church.

The queen of Scotland, Mary Stuart (often now called 'Mary, Queen of Scots') was a Catholic. She was only a week old when her father died and she became queen. Much of her childhood was spent in France. When she returned to Scotland, she was the centre of a power struggle between different groups. When her husband was murdered, Mary was suspected of involvement and fled to England. She gave her throne to her Protestant son, James VI of Scotland. Mary was Elizabeth I's cousin and hoped that Elizabeth might help her, but Elizabeth suspected Mary of wanting to take over the English throne, and kept her prisoner for 20 years. Mary was eventually executed, accused of plotting against Elizabeth I.

3.3.4 Exploration, Poetry and Drama

The Elizabethan period in England was a time of growing patriotism: a feeling of pride in being English. English explorers sought new trade routes and tried to expand British trade into the Spanish colonies in the Americas. Sir Francis Drake, one of the commanders in the defeat of the Spanish Armada, was one of the founders of England's naval tradition. His ship, the Golden Hind, was one of the first to sail right around ('circumnavigate') the world. In Elizabeth I's time, English settlers first began to colonise the eastern coast of America.

The Elizabethan period is also remembered for the richness of its poetry and drama, especially the plays and poems of William Shakespeare.

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

Figure 3.7: Portrait of William Shakespeare

Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. He was a playwright and actor and wrote many poems and plays. His most famous plays include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*. He also dramatised significant events from the past, but he did not focus solely on kings and queens. He was one of the first to portray ordinary Englishmen and women. Shakespeare had a great influence on the English language and invented many words that are still common today. Lines from his plays and poems which are often still quoted include:

- Once more unto the breach (*Henry V*)
- To be or not to be (*Hamlet*)
- A rose by any other name (*Romeo and Juliet*)
- All the world's a stage (*As You Like It*)
- The darling buds of May (*Sonnet 18*)

Many people regard Shakespeare as the greatest playwright of all time. His plays and poems are still performed and studied in Britain and other countries today.

The Globe Theatre in London is a modern copy of the theatres in which his plays were first performed.

3.3.5 James VI and I

Elizabeth I never married and so had no children of her own to inherit her throne. When she died in 1603 her heir was James VI of Scotland. He became King James I of England, Wales and Ireland but Scotland remained a separate country.

The King James Bible

One achievement of King James' reign was a new translation of the Bible into English. This translation is known as the 'King James Version' or the 'Authorised Version'. It was not the first English Bible but is a version which continues to be used in many Protestant churches today.

3.3.6 Ireland

During this period, Ireland was an almost completely Catholic country. Henry VII and Henry VIII had extended English control outside the Pale and had established English authority over the whole country. Henry VIII took the title 'King of Ireland'. English laws were introduced and local leaders were expected to follow the instructions of the Lord Lieutenants in Dublin.

During the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I, many people in Ireland opposed rule by the Protestant government in England. There were a number of rebellions. The English government encouraged Scottish and English Protestants to settle in Ulster, the northern province of Ireland, taking over the land from Catholic landholders. These settlements were known as plantations. Many of the new settlers came from south-west Scotland and other land was given to companies based in London. James later organised similar plantations in several other parts of Ireland. This had serious long-term consequences for the history of England, Scotland and Ireland.

3.3.7 The Rise of Parliament

Elizabeth I was very skilled at managing Parliament. During her reign, she was successful in balancing her wishes and views against those of the House of Lords and those of the House of Commons, which was increasingly Protestant in its views.

James I and his son Charles I were less skilled politically. Both believed in the 'Divine Right of Kings': the idea that the king was directly appointed by God to rule. They thought that the king should be able to act without having to seek approval from Parliament. When Charles I inherited the thrones of England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland, he tried to rule in line with this principle. When he could not get Parliament to agree with his religious and foreign policies, he tried to rule without Parliament at all. For 11 years, he found ways to raise money without Parliament's approval but eventually trouble in Scotland meant that he had to recall Parliament.

3.3.8 The English Civil War

Charles I wanted the worship of the Church of England to include more ceremony and introduced a revised Prayer Book. He tried to impose this Prayer Book on the Presbyterian Church in Scotland and this led to serious unrest. A Scottish army was formed and Charles could not find the money he needed for his own army without the help of Parliament. In 1640, he recalled Parliament to ask it for funds. Many in Parliament were Puritans, a group of Protestants who advocated strict and simple religious doctrine and worship. They did not agree with the king's religious views and disliked his reforms of the Church of England. Parliament refused to give the king the money he asked for, even after the Scottish army invaded England.

Another rebellion began in Ireland because the Roman Catholics in Ireland were afraid of the growing power of the Puritans. Parliament took this opportunity to demand control of the English army. In response, Charles I entered the House of Commons and tried to arrest five parliamentary leaders, but they had been warned and were not there. (No monarch has set foot in the Commons since.) Civil war between the king and Parliament could not now be avoided and began in 1642. The country split into those who supported the king (the Cavaliers) and those who supported Parliament (the Roundheads).

3.3.9 Oliver Cromwell and the English Republic

Figure 3.8: Portrait of Oliver Cromwell

The king's army was defeated at the Battles of Marston Moor and Naseby. By 1646, it was clear that Parliament had won the war. Charles was held prisoner by the parliamentary army. He was still unwilling to reach any agreement with Parliament and in 1649 he was executed.

England declared itself a republic, called the Commonwealth. It no longer had a monarch. One of its generals, Oliver Cromwell, was sent to Ireland, where revolt continued and

where there was still a Royalist army. Cromwell was successful in establishing the authority of the English Parliament but did this with such violence that even today Cromwell remains a controversial figure in Ireland.

The Scots had not agreed to the execution of Charles I and declared his son Charles II to be king. He was crowned king of Scotland and led a Scottish army into England. Cromwell defeated this army in the Battles of Dunbar and Worcester. Charles II escaped from Worcester, famously hiding in an oak tree on one occasion, and eventually fled to Europe.

After his campaign in Ireland and victory over Charles II at Worcester, Cromwell was recognised as the leader of the new republic. He was given the title of Lord Protector and ruled until his death in 1658. When Cromwell died, his son Richard became Lord Protector in his place but was not able to control the army or the government. Many people in the country wanted stability. People began to talk about the need for a king.

3.3.10 The Restoration

In May 1660, Parliament invited Charles II to come back from exile in the Netherlands. He was crowned King Charles II of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Charles II made it clear that he had 'no wish to go on his travels again'. He understood that he could not always do as he wished but would sometimes need to reach agreement with Parliament.

During Charles II's reign, in 1665, there was a major outbreak of plague in London. Thousands of people died, especially in poorer areas. The following year, a great fire destroyed much of the city, including many churches and St Paul's Cathedral. London was rebuilt with a new St Paul's, which was designed by a famous architect, Sir Christopher Wren. Samuel Pepys wrote about these events in a diary which was later published and is still read today.

The Habeas Corpus Act became law in 1679. This was a very important piece of legislation which remains relevant today. Habeas corpus is Latin for 'you must present the person in court'. The Act guaranteed that no one could be held prisoner unlawfully. Every prisoner has a right to a court hearing.

Charles II was interested in science. During his reign, the Royal Society was formed to promote 'natural knowledge'. This is the oldest surviving scientific society in the world. Among its early members were Sir Edmund Halley, who successfully predicted the return of the comet now called Halley's Comet, and Sir Isaac Newton.

Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727)

Born in Lincolnshire, eastern England, Isaac Newton first became interested in science when he studied at Cambridge University. His most famous published work was *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* ('Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy'), which showed how gravity applied to the whole universe. Newton also discovered that white light is made up of the colours of the rainbow. Many of his discoveries are still important for modern science.

3.3.11 The Glorious Revolution

Charles II had no legitimate children. He died in 1685 and his brother James, who was a Roman Catholic, became King James II. James favoured Roman Catholics and allowed them to be army officers, which an Act of Parliament had forbidden. People in England worried that James wanted to make England a Catholic country once more. However, his heirs were his two daughters, who were both firmly Protestant, and people thought that this meant there would soon be a Protestant monarch again. Then James's wife had a son. Suddenly, it seemed likely that the next monarch would not be a Protestant after all.

James II's elder daughter, Mary, was married to her cousin William of Orange, the Protestant ruler of the Netherlands. In 1688, important Protestants in England asked William to invade England and proclaim himself king. When William reached England, there was no resistance. James fled to France and William took over the throne, becoming William III in England, Wales and Ireland, and William II of Scotland. William ruled jointly with Mary. This event was later called the 'Glorious Revolution' because there was no fighting in England and because it guaranteed the power of Parliament, ending the threat of a monarch ruling as he or she wished. James II wanted to regain the throne and invaded Ireland with the help of a French army. William defeated James II at the Battle of the Boyne in Ireland in 1690, an event which is still celebrated by some in Northern Ireland today.

There was also support for James in Scotland. An attempt at an armed rebellion in support of James was quickly defeated at Killiecrankie. All Scottish clans were required formally to accept William as king by taking an oath. The MacDonalds of Glencoe were late in taking the oath and were all killed. The memory of this massacre meant some Scots distrusted the new government. Some continued to believe that James was the rightful king. James' supporters became known as Jacobites.

Check that you understand

- How and why religion changed during this period
- The importance of poetry and drama in the Elizabethan period
- About the involvement of Britain in Ireland
- The development of Parliament and the only period in history when England was a republic
- Why there was a restoration of the monarchy
- How the Glorious Revolution happened

3.4 A Global Power

3.4.1 Constitutional Monarchy — The Bill of Rights

At the coronation of William and Mary, a Declaration of Rights was read. This confirmed that the king would no longer be able to raise taxes and administer justice without agreement from Parliament. The balance of power between monarch and Parliament had now permanently changed. The Bill of Rights, 1689, confirmed the rights of Parliament and the limits of the king's power. Parliament took control of

who could be monarch and declared that the king or queen must be a Protestant. A new Parliament had to be elected at least every three years (later this became seven years and now it is five years). Every year the monarch had to ask Parliament to renew funding for the army and the navy.

These changes meant that, to be able to govern effectively, the monarch needed to have advisers, or ministers, who would be able to ensure a majority of votes in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. There were two main groups in Parliament, known as the Whigs and the Tories. (The modern Conservative Party is still sometimes referred to as the Tories.) This was the beginning of party politics.

This was also an important time for the development of a free press. From 1695, newspapers were allowed to operate without a government licence. Increasing numbers of newspapers began to be published.

The laws passed after the Glorious Revolution are the beginning of what is called 'constitutional monarchy'. The monarch remained very important but was no longer able to insist on particular policies or actions if Parliament did not agree. After William III, the ministers gradually became more important than the monarch but this was not a democracy in the modern sense. Only men who owned property of a certain value were able to vote. No women at all had the vote. Some constituencies were controlled by a single wealthy family. They were called the 'pocket boroughs'. Other constituencies had hardly any voters and were called 'rotten boroughs'.

3.4.2 A Growing Population

This was a time when many people left Britain and Ireland to settle in new colonies in America and elsewhere, but others came to live in Britain. The first Jews to come to Britain since the Middle Ages settled in London in 1656. Between 1680 and 1720 many refugees called Huguenots came from France. They were Protestants and had been persecuted for their religion. Many were educated and skilled and worked as scientists, in banking, or in weaving or other crafts.

3.4.3 The Act of Union

William and Mary's successor, Queen Anne, had no surviving children. This created uncertainty over the succession. The Act of Union, known as the Treaty of Union in Scotland, was therefore agreed in 1707, creating the Kingdom of Great Britain. Although Scotland was no longer an independent country, it kept its own legal and education systems and Presbyterian Church.

3.4.4 The Prime Minister

When Queen Anne died in 1714, Parliament chose a German, George I, to be the next king, because he was Anne's nearest Protestant relative. George I did not speak very good English and this increased his need to rely on his ministers. The most important minister in Parliament became known as the Prime Minister. The first man to be called this was Sir Robert Walpole, who was Prime Minister from 1721 to 1742.

3.4.5 The Rebellion of the Clans

In 1745 there was another attempt to put a Stuart king back on the throne. Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie), the grandson of James II, landed in Scotland. He was supported by clansmen from the Scottish highlands and raised an army. Charles initially had some successes but was defeated by George II's army at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. Charles escaped back to Europe.

The clans lost a lot of their power and influence after Culloden. Chieftains became landlords if they had the favour of the English king, and clansmen became tenants who had to pay for the land they used.

A process began which became known as the 'Highland Clearances'. Many Scottish landlords destroyed individual small farms (known as 'crofts') to make space for large flocks of sheep and cattle. Evictions became very common in the early 19th century. Many Scottish people left for North America at this time.

Robert Burns (1759–96)

Known in Scotland as 'The Bard', Robert Burns was a Scottish poet. He wrote in the Scots language, English with some Scottish words, and standard English. He also revised a lot of the traditional folk songs by changing or adding lyrics. Burns' best-known work is probably the song *Auld Lang Syne*, which is sung by people in the UK and other countries when they are celebrating the New Year (or Hogmanay as it is called in Scotland).

3.4.6 The Enlightenment

During the 18th century, new ideas about politics, philosophy and science were developed. This is often called 'the Enlightenment'. Many of the great thinkers of the Enlightenment were Scottish. Adam Smith developed ideas about economics which are still referred to today. David Hume's ideas about human nature continue to influence philosophers. Scientific discoveries, such as James Watt's work on steam power, helped the progress of the Industrial Revolution. One of the most important principles of the Enlightenment was that everyone should have the right to their own political and religious beliefs and that the state should not try to dictate to them. This continues to be an important principle in the UK today.

3.4.7 The Industrial Revolution

Before the 18th century, agriculture was the biggest source of employment in Britain. There were many cottage industries, where people worked from home to produce goods such as cloth and lace.

The Industrial Revolution was the rapid development of industry in Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries. Britain was the first country to industrialise on a large scale. It happened because of the development of machinery and the use of steam power. Agriculture and the manufacturing of goods became mechanised. This made things more efficient and increased production. Coal and other raw materials were needed to power the new factories. Many people moved from the countryside and started working in the mining and manufacturing industries.

The development of the Bessemer process for the mass production of steel led to the development of the shipbuilding industry and the railways. Manufacturing jobs became the main source of employment in Britain.

Richard Arkwright (1732–92)

Born in 1732, Arkwright originally trained and worked as a barber. He was able to dye hair and make wigs. When wigs became less popular, he started to work in textiles. He improved the original carding machine and developed horse-driven spinning mills that used only one machine. This increased the efficiency of production. Later, he used the steam engine to power machinery. Arkwright is particularly remembered for the efficient and profitable way that he ran his factories.

Figure 3.9: Portrait of Sir Richard Arkwright, pioneer of the Industrial Revolution

Better transport links were needed to transport raw materials and manufactured goods. Canals were built to link the factories to towns and cities and to the ports, particularly in the new industrial areas in the middle and north of England.

Working conditions during the Industrial Revolution were very poor. There were no laws to protect employees, who were often forced to work long hours in dangerous situations. Children also worked and were treated in the same way as adults. Sometimes they were treated even more harshly.

This was also a time of increased colonisation overseas. Captain James Cook mapped the coast of Australia and a few colonies were established there. Britain gained control over Canada, and the East India Company, originally set up to trade, gained control of large parts of India. Colonies began to be established in southern Africa.

Britain traded all over the world and began to import more goods. Sugar and tobacco came from North America and the West Indies; textiles, tea and spices came from India and the area that is today called Indonesia.

Sake Dean Mahomet (1759–1851)

Mahomet was born in 1759 and grew up in the Bengal region of India. He served in the Bengal army and came to Britain in 1782. In 1810 he opened the Hindoostane Coffee House in George Street, London. It was the first curry house to open in Britain. Mahomet and his wife also introduced 'shampooing', the Indian art of head massage, to Britain.

3.4.8 The Slave Trade

This commercial expansion and prosperity was sustained in part by the booming slave trade. While slavery was illegal within Britain itself, by the 18th century it was a fully established overseas industry, dominated by Britain and the American colonies.

Slaves came primarily from West Africa. Travelling on British ships in horrible conditions, they were taken to America and the Caribbean, where they were made to work on tobacco and sugar plantations. The living and working conditions for slaves were very bad. Many slaves tried to escape and others revolted against their owners in protest at their terrible treatment.

There were, however, people in Britain who opposed the slave trade. The first formal anti-slavery groups were set up by the Quakers in the late 1700s, and they petitioned Parliament to ban the practice. William Wilberforce, an evangelical Christian and a member of Parliament, also played an important part in changing the law. Along with other abolitionists, he succeeded in turning public opinion against the slave trade. In 1807, it became illegal to trade slaves in British ships or from British ports, and in 1833 the Emancipation Act abolished slavery throughout the British Empire. The Royal Navy stopped slave ships from other countries, freed the slaves and punished the slave traders. After 1833, 2 million Indian and Chinese workers were employed to replace the freed slaves.

3.4.9 The American War of Independence

By the 1760s, there were substantial British colonies in North America. The colonies were wealthy and largely in control of their own affairs. The British government wanted to tax the colonies. The colonists saw this as an attack on their freedom and said there should be 'no taxation without representation' in the British Parliament. Parliament tried to compromise by repealing some of the taxes, but relationships between the British government and the colonies continued to worsen. Fighting broke out between the colonists and the British forces. In 1776, 13 American colonies declared their independence, stating that people had a right to establish their own governments. The colonists eventually defeated the British army and Britain recognised the colonies' independence in 1783.

3.4.10 War with France

During the 18th century, Britain fought a number of wars with France. In 1789, there was a revolution in France and the new French government soon declared war on Britain. Napoleon, who became Emperor of France, continued the war. Britain's navy fought

against combined French and Spanish fleets, winning the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Admiral Nelson was in charge of the British fleet at Trafalgar and was killed in the battle. Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square, London, is a monument to him. His ship, *HMS Victory*, can be visited in Portsmouth. The British army also fought against the French. In 1815, the French Wars ended with the defeat of the Emperor Napoleon by the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo. Wellington was known as the Iron Duke and later became Prime Minister.

Figure 3.10: The Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805

The Union Flag

Although Ireland had had the same monarch as England and Wales since Henry VIII, it had remained a separate country. In 1801, Ireland became unified with England, Scotland and Wales after the Act of Union of 1800. This created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. One symbol of this union was a new version of the official flag, the Union Flag, often called the Union Jack. The flag combined crosses associated with England, Scotland and Ireland.

The Union Flag consists of three crosses:

- The cross of St George, patron saint of England, is a red cross on a white ground.
- The cross of St Andrew, patron saint of Scotland, is a diagonal white cross on a blue ground.
- The cross of St Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, is a diagonal red cross on a white ground.

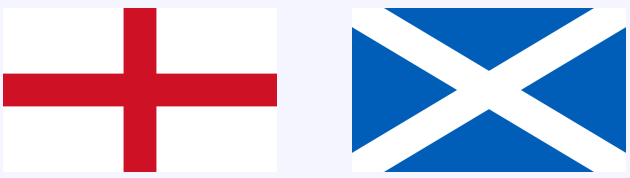

Figure 3.11: The crosses of St George (left) and St Andrew (right)

There is also an official Welsh flag, which shows a Welsh dragon. The Welsh dragon does not appear on the Union Flag because, when the first Union Flag was created in 1606 from the flags of Scotland and England, the Principality of Wales was already united with England.

Figure 3.12: The Welsh Dragon flag

3.4.11 The Victorian Age

In 1837, Queen Victoria became queen of the UK at the age of 18. She reigned until 1901, almost 64 years. Her reign is known as the Victorian Age. It was a time when Britain increased in power and influence abroad. Within the UK, the middle classes became increasingly significant and a number of reformers led moves to improve conditions of life for the poor.

3.4.12 The British Empire

During the Victorian period, the British Empire grew to cover all of India, Australia and large parts of Africa. It became the largest empire the world has ever seen, with an estimated population of more than 400 million people.

Many people were encouraged to leave the UK to settle overseas. Between 1853 and 1913, as many as 13 million British citizens left the country. People continued to come to Britain from other parts of the world. For example, between 1870 and 1914, around 120,000 Russian and Polish Jews came to Britain to escape persecution. Many settled in London's East End and in Manchester and Leeds. People from the Empire, including India and Africa, also came to Britain to live, work and study.

3.4.13 Trade and Industry

Britain continued to be a great trading nation. The government began to promote policies of free trade, abolishing a number of taxes on imported goods. One example of this was the repealing of the Corn Laws in 1846. These had prevented the import

of cheap grain. The reforms helped the development of British industry, because raw materials could now be imported cheaply.

Working conditions in factories gradually became better. In 1847, the number of hours that women and children could work was limited by law to 10 hours per day. Better housing began to be built for workers.

Transport links also improved. Just before Victoria came to the throne, the father and son George and Robert Stephenson pioneered the railway engine and a major expansion of the railways took place in the Victorian period. Railways were built throughout the Empire. There were also great advances in other areas, such as the building of bridges by engineers such as Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806–59)

Brunel was originally from Portsmouth, England. He was an engineer who built tunnels, bridges, railway lines and ships. He was responsible for constructing the Great Western Railway, which was the first major railway built in Britain. It runs from Paddington Station in London to the south west of England, the West Midlands and Wales. Many of Brunel's bridges are still in use today.

Figure 3.13: The Clifton Suspension Bridge, designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, spanning the Avon Gorge

British industry led the world in the 19th century. The UK produced more than half of the world's iron, coal and cotton cloth. The UK also became a centre for financial services, including insurance and banking. In 1851, the Great Exhibition opened in Hyde Park in the Crystal Palace, a huge building made of steel and glass. Countries from all over the world showed their goods but most of the objects were made in Britain.

3.4.14 The Crimean War

From 1853 to 1856, Britain fought with Turkey and France against Russia in the Crimean War. It was the first war to be extensively covered by the media through news

stories and photographs. The conditions were very poor and many soldiers died from illnesses they caught in the hospitals, rather than from war wounds. Queen Victoria introduced the Victoria Cross medal during this war. It honours acts of valour by soldiers.

Florence Nightingale (1820–1910)

Florence Nightingale was born in Italy to English parents. At the age of 31, she trained as a nurse in Germany. In 1854, she went to Turkey and worked in military hospitals, treating soldiers who were fighting in the Crimean War. She and her fellow nurses improved the conditions in the hospital and reduced the mortality rate. In 1860 she established the Nightingale Training School for nurses at St Thomas' Hospital in London. The school was the first of its kind and still exists today. She is often regarded as the founder of modern nursing.

3.4.15 Ireland in the 19th Century

Conditions in Ireland were not as good as in the rest of the UK. Two-thirds of the population still depended on farming to make their living. Many depended on potatoes as a large part of their diet. In the middle of the century the potato crop failed, and Ireland suffered a famine. A million people died from disease and starvation. Another million and a half left Ireland. Some emigrated to the United States and others came to England. By 1861 there were large populations of Irish people in cities such as Liverpool, London, Manchester and Glasgow.

The Irish Nationalist movement had grown strongly through the 19th century. Some, such as the Fenians, favoured complete independence. Others, such as Charles Stuart Parnell, advocated 'Home Rule', in which Ireland would remain in the UK but have its own parliament.

3.4.16 The Right to Vote

As the middle classes in the wealthy industrial towns and cities grew in influence, they began to demand more political power. The Reform Act of 1832 had greatly increased the number of people with the right to vote. The act also abolished the old pocket and rotten boroughs and more parliamentary seats were given to the towns and cities. There was a permanent shift of political power from the countryside to the towns but voting was still based on ownership of property. This meant that members of the working class were still unable to vote.

A movement began to demand the vote for the working classes and other people without property. Campaigners, called the Chartists, presented petitions to Parliament. In 1867 there was another Reform Act. This created many more urban seats in Parliament and reduced the amount of property that people needed to have before they could vote. However, the majority of men still did not have the right to vote and no women could vote.

Universal suffrage (the right of every adult, male or female, to vote) followed in the next century.

In common with the rest of Europe, women in 19th century Britain had fewer rights

than men. Until 1870, when a woman got married, her earnings, property and money automatically belonged to her husband. Acts of Parliament in 1870 and 1882 gave wives the right to keep their own earnings and property. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, an increasing number of women campaigned and demonstrated for greater rights and, in particular, the right to vote. They formed the women's suffrage movement and became known as 'suffragettes'.

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858–1928)

Emmeline Pankhurst was born in Manchester in 1858. She set up the Women's Franchise League in 1889, which fought to get the vote in local elections for married women. In 1903 she helped found the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). This was the first group whose members were called 'suffragettes'. The group used civil disobedience as part of their protest to gain the vote for women. They chained themselves to railings, smashed windows and committed arson. Many of the women, including Pankhurst, went on hunger strike. In 1918, women over the age of 30 were given voting rights and the right to stand for Parliament. Shortly before Pankhurst's death in 1928, women were given the right to vote at the age of 21, the same as men.

3.4.17 The Future of the Empire

Although the British Empire continued to grow until the 1920s, there was already discussion in the late 19th century about its future direction. Supporters of expansion believed that the Empire benefited Britain through increased trade and commerce. Others thought the Empire had become over-expanded. The Boer War of 1899 to 1902 made the discussions about the future of the Empire more urgent. The British went to war in South Africa with settlers from the Netherlands called the Boers. The Boers fought fiercely and the war went on for over three years. Many died in the fighting and many more from disease. As different parts of the Empire developed, they won greater freedom and autonomy from Britain. Eventually, by the second half of the 20th century, there was, for the most part, an orderly transition from Empire to Commonwealth, with countries being granted their independence.

Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936)

Rudyard Kipling was born in India in 1865 and later lived in India, the UK and the USA. He wrote books and poems set in both India and the UK. His poems and novels reflected the idea that the British Empire was a force for good. Kipling was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1907. His books include the *Just So Stories* and *The Jungle Book*, which continue to be popular today. His poem *If* has often been voted among the UK's favourite poems. It begins:

> *'If you can keep your head when all about you*
> *Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;*
> *If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,*
> *But make allowance for their doubting too;*
> *If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,*
> *Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,*
> *Or being hated, don't give way to hating,*

And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise'

Check that you understand

- The change in the balance of power between Parliament and the monarchy
- When and why Scotland joined England and Wales to become Great Britain
- The reasons for a rebellion in Scotland led by Bonnie Prince Charlie
- The ideas of the Enlightenment
- The importance of the Industrial Revolution and development of industry
- The slave trade and when it was abolished
- The growth of the British Empire
- How democracy developed during this period

3.5 The 20th Century

3.5.1 The First World War

The early 20th century was a time of optimism in Britain. The nation, with its expansive Empire, well-admired navy, thriving industry and strong political institutions, was what is now known as a global 'superpower'. It was also a time of social progress. Financial help for the unemployed, old-age pensions and free school meals were just a few of the important measures introduced. Various laws were passed to improve safety in the workplace; town planning rules were tightened to prevent the further development of slums; and better support was given to mothers and their children after divorce or separation. Local government became more democratic and a salary for members of Parliament (MPs) was introduced for the first time.

This era of optimism and progress was cut short when war broke out between several European nations. On 28 June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated. This set off a chain of events leading to the First World War (1914–18). But while the assassination provided the trigger for war, other factors — such as a growing sense of nationalism in many European states, increasing militarism, imperialism, and the division of the major European powers into two camps — all set the conditions for war.

The conflict was centred in Europe, but it was a global war involving nations from around the world. Britain was part of the Allied Powers, which included France, Russia, Japan, Belgium, Serbia and later the United States. The whole of the British Empire was involved in the conflict — for example, more than a million Indians fought on behalf of Britain, and around 40,000 were killed. Men from the West Indies, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada also fought with the British. The Allies fought against the Central Powers — mainly Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire and later Bulgaria. Millions of people were killed or wounded, with more than 2 million British casualties. One battle, the British attack of the Somme in July 1916, resulted in about 60,000 British casualties on the first day alone.

Figure 3.14: British soldiers during the First World War

The First World War ended at 11.00 am on 11th November 1918 with victory for Britain and its allies.

3.5.2 The Partition of Ireland

In 1913, the British government promised 'Home Rule' for Ireland. The proposal was to have a self-governing Ireland with its own parliament but still part of the UK. A Home Rule Bill was introduced in Parliament. It was opposed by the Protestants in the north of Ireland, who threatened to resist Home Rule by force.

The outbreak of the First World War led the British government to postpone any changes in Ireland. Irish Nationalists were not willing to wait and in 1916 there was an uprising (the Easter Rising) against the British in Dublin. The leaders of the uprising were executed under military law. A guerrilla war against the British army and the police in Ireland followed. In 1921 a peace treaty was signed and in 1922 Ireland became two countries. The six counties in the north which were mainly Protestant remained part of the UK under the name Northern Ireland. The rest of Ireland became the Irish Free State. It had its own government and became a republic in 1949.

There were people in both parts of Ireland who disagreed with the split between the North and the South. They still wanted Ireland to be one independent country. Years of disagreement led to a terror campaign in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. The conflict between those wishing for full Irish independence and those wishing to remain loyal to the British government is often referred to as 'the Troubles'.

3.5.3 The Inter-War Period

In the 1920s, many people's living conditions got better. There were improvements in public housing and new homes were built in many towns and cities. However, in 1929, the world entered the 'Great Depression' and some parts of the UK suffered

mass unemployment. The effects of the depression of the 1930s were felt differently in different parts of the UK. The traditional heavy industries such as shipbuilding were badly affected but new industries — including the automobile and aviation industries — developed. As prices generally fell, those in work had more money to spend. Car ownership doubled from 1 million to 2 million between 1930 and 1939. The economist John Maynard Keynes published influential new theories of economics. The BBC started radio broadcasts in 1922 and began the world's first regular television service in 1936.

3.5.4 The Second World War

Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933. He believed that the conditions imposed on Germany by the Allies after the First World War were unfair; he also wanted to conquer more land for the German people. He set about renegotiating treaties, building up arms, and testing Germany's military strength in nearby countries. The British government tried to avoid another war. However, when Hitler invaded Poland in 1939, Britain and France declared war in order to stop his aggression.

The war was initially fought between the Axis powers (fascist Germany and Italy and the Empire of Japan) and the Allies. The main countries on the allied side were the UK, France, Poland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the Union of South Africa.

Having occupied Austria and invaded Czechoslovakia, Hitler followed his invasion of Poland by taking control of Belgium and the Netherlands. Then, in 1940, German forces defeated allied troops and advanced through France. At this time of national crisis, Winston Churchill became Prime Minister and Britain's war leader.

Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

Churchill was the son of a politician and, before becoming a Conservative MP in 1900, was a soldier and journalist. In May 1940 he became Prime Minister. He refused to surrender to the Nazis and was an inspirational leader to the British people in a time of hardship. He lost the General Election in 1945 but returned as Prime Minister in 1951. He was an MP until he stood down at the 1964 General Election. Following his death in 1965, he was given a state funeral. He remains a much-admired figure to this day, and in 2002 was voted the greatest Briton of all time by the public.

During the War, he made many famous speeches:

> *'I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat'*
>
> *'We shall fight on the beaches,*
> *we shall fight on the landing grounds,*
> *we shall fight in the fields and in the streets,*
> *we shall fight in the hills;*
> *we shall never surrender'*
>
> *'Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few'*

Figure 3.15: Winston Churchill, best known for his leadership of the UK during the Second World War

As France fell, the British decided to evacuate British and French soldiers from France in a huge naval operation. Many civilian volunteers in small pleasure and fishing boats from Britain helped the Navy to rescue more than 300,000 men from the beaches around Dunkirk. Although many lives and a lot of equipment were lost, the evacuation was a success. This gave rise to the phrase 'the Dunkirk spirit'.

Hitler wanted to invade Britain, but first needed to control the air. Britain resisted with its fighter planes and eventually won the crucial aerial battle against the Germans, called 'the Battle of Britain', in the summer of 1940. The most important planes used by the Royal Air Force were the Spitfire and the Hurricane. Despite this crucial victory, the German air force was able to continue bombing London and other British cities at night-time — this was called the Blitz. Coventry was almost totally destroyed and a great deal of damage was done in other cities. Despite the destruction, there was a strong national spirit of resistance in the UK. The phrase 'the Blitz spirit' is still used today to describe Britons pulling together in the face of adversity.

Figure 3.16: Allied forces landing on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day, 6 June 1944

The allied forces gradually gained the upper hand. On 6 June 1944, allied forces landed in Normandy (this event is often referred to as 'D-Day'). Following victory on the beaches of Normandy, the allied forces pressed on through France and eventually into Germany. The Allies comprehensively defeated Germany in May 1945.

The war against Japan ended in August 1945 when the United States dropped its newly developed atom bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some British scientists had taken part in the Manhattan Project in the United States, which developed the atomic bomb.

Alexander Fleming (1881–1955)

Born in Scotland, Fleming moved to London as a teenager and later qualified as a doctor. He was researching influenza in 1928 when he discovered penicillin. This was then further developed into a usable drug by the scientists Howard Florey and Ernst Chain. By the 1940s it was in mass production. Fleming won the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1945. Penicillin is still used to treat bacterial infections today.

Check that you understand

- What happened during the First World War
- The partition of Ireland and the establishment of the UK as it is today
- The events of the Second World War

3.6 Britain Since 1945

3.6.1 The Welfare State

Although the UK had won the war, the country was exhausted economically and the people wanted change. In 1945 the British people elected a Labour government. The new Prime Minister was Clement Attlee, who promised to introduce the welfare state outlined in the Beveridge Report. In 1948, Aneurin (Nye) Bevan, the Minister for Health, led the establishment of the National Health Service (NHS), which guaranteed a minimum standard of health care for all, free at the point of use. A national system of benefits was also introduced to provide 'social security', so that the population would be protected from the 'cradle to the grave'. The government took into public ownership (nationalised) the railways, coal mines and gas, water and electricity supplies.

Another aspect of change was self-government for former colonies. In 1947, independence was granted to nine countries, including India, Pakistan and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Other colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific achieved independence over the next 20 years.

The UK developed its own atomic bomb and joined the new North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Britain had a Conservative government from 1951 to 1964. The 1950s were a period of economic recovery after the war and increasing prosperity for working people. The Prime Minister of the day, Harold Macmillan, was famous for his 'wind of change' speech about decolonisation and independence for the countries of the Empire.

Dylan Thomas (1914–53)

Dylan Thomas was a Welsh poet and writer. He often read and performed his work in public, including for the BBC. His most well-known works include the radio play *Under Milk Wood*, first performed after his death in 1954, and the poem *Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night*, which he wrote for his dying father in 1952. He died at the age of 39 in New York.

Clement Attlee (1883–1967)

Clement Attlee was born in London in 1883. After studying at Oxford University, Attlee became a barrister. He later became a Labour MP. He was Winston Churchill's Deputy Prime Minister in the wartime coalition government and became Prime Minister after the Labour Party won the 1945 election. He was Prime Minister from 1945 to 1951. Attlee's government undertook the nationalisation of major industries, created the National Health Service and implemented many of Beveridge's plans for a stronger welfare state.

William Beveridge (1879–1963)

William Beveridge (later Lord Beveridge) was a British economist and reformer. He is best known for the 1942 report *Social Insurance and Allied Services* (known as the Beveridge Report). The report recommended that the government should find ways of fighting the five 'Giant Evils' of Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor

and Idleness and provided the basis of the modern welfare state.

3.6.2 Migration in Post-War Britain

Rebuilding Britain after the Second World War was a huge task. There were labour shortages and the British government encouraged workers from Ireland and other parts of Europe to come to the UK and help with the reconstruction. In 1948, people from the West Indies were also invited to come and work.

During the 1950s, there was still a shortage of labour in the UK. Further immigration was therefore encouraged for economic reasons, and many industries advertised for workers from overseas. For example, centres were set up in the West Indies to recruit people to drive buses. Textile and engineering firms from the north of England and the Midlands sent agents to India and Pakistan to find workers. For about 25 years, people from the West Indies, India, Pakistan and (later) Bangladesh travelled to work and settle in Britain.

3.6.3 Social Change in the 1960s

The decade of the 1960s was a period of significant social change. It was known as the 'Swinging Sixties'. There was growth in British fashion, cinema and popular music. Two well-known pop music groups at the time were The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. People started to become better off and many bought cars and other consumer goods.

It was also a time when social laws were liberalised. The position of women in the workplace also improved. It was quite common at the time for employers to ask women to leave their jobs when they got married, but Parliament passed new laws giving women the right to equal pay and made it illegal for employers to discriminate against women because of their gender.

The 1960s was also a time of technological progress. Britain and France developed the world's only supersonic commercial airliner, Concorde. New styles of architecture, including high-rise buildings and the use of concrete and steel, became common.

Some Great British Inventions of the 20th Century

- The **television** was developed by Scotsman John Logie Baird (1888–1946) in the 1920s. In 1932 he made the first television broadcast between London and Glasgow.
- **Radar** was developed by Scotsman Sir Robert Watson-Watt (1892–1973), who proposed that enemy aircraft could be detected by radio waves. The first successful radar test took place in 1935.
- A **Turing machine** is a theoretical mathematical device invented by Alan Turing (1912–54), a British mathematician, in the 1930s. The theory was influential in the development of computer science and the modern-day computer.
- The Scottish physician John Macleod (1876–1935) was the co-discoverer of **insulin**, used to treat diabetes.
- The **structure of the DNA molecule** was discovered in 1953 through work

at British universities in London and Cambridge. Francis Crick (1916–2004), one of those awarded the Nobel Prize for this discovery, was British.
- The **jet engine** was developed in Britain in the 1930s by Sir Frank Whittle (1907–96), a British Royal Air Force engineer officer.
- Sir Christopher Cockerell (1910–99), a British inventor, invented the **hovercraft** in the 1950s.
- Britain and France developed **Concorde**, the supersonic passenger aircraft. It first flew in 1969 and began carrying passengers in 1976. Concorde was retired from service in 2003.
- The **Harrier jump jet**, an aircraft capable of taking off vertically, was also designed and developed in the UK.
- In the 1960s, James Goodfellow (1937–) invented the **cash-dispensing ATM** (automatic teller machine) or 'cashpoint'. The first was put into use by Barclays Bank in Enfield, north London in 1967.
- **IVF (in-vitro fertilisation) therapy** for the treatment of infertility was pioneered in Britain by physiologist Sir Robert Edwards (1925–2013) and gynaecologist Patrick Steptoe (1913–88). The world's first 'test-tube baby' was born in Oldham, Lancashire in 1978.
- In 1996, two British scientists, Sir Ian Wilmot (1944–) and Keith Campbell (1954–2012), led a team which was the first to succeed in **cloning** a mammal, Dolly the sheep.
- Sir Peter Mansfield (1933–2017), a British scientist, is the co-inventor of the **MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scanner**.
- The inventor of the **World Wide Web**, Sir Tim Berners-Lee (1955–), is British. Information was successfully transferred via the web for the first time on 25 December 1990.

3.6.4 Problems in the Economy in the 1970s

In the late 1970s, the post-war economic boom came to an end. Prices of goods and raw materials began to rise sharply and the exchange rate between the pound and other currencies was unstable. This caused problems with the 'balance of payments': imports of goods were valued at more than the price paid for exports.

Many industries and services were affected by strikes and this caused problems between the trade unions and the government. People began to argue that the unions were too powerful and that their activities were harming the UK.

The 1970s were also a time of serious unrest in Northern Ireland. In 1972, the Northern Ireland Parliament was suspended and Northern Ireland was directly ruled by the UK government. Some 3,000 people lost their lives in the decades after 1969 in the violence of Northern Ireland.

3.6.5 Conservative Government from 1979 to 1997

Margaret Thatcher, Britain's first woman Prime Minister, led the Conservative government from 1979 to 1990. The government made structural changes to the economy through the privatisation of nationalised industries and imposed legal controls on trade union powers. Deregulation saw a great increase in the role of the City of London as an

international centre for investments, insurance and other financial services. Traditional industries, such as shipbuilding and coal mining, declined. In 1982, Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands, a British overseas territory in the South Atlantic. A naval taskforce was sent from the UK and military action led to the recovery of the islands.

John Major was Prime Minister after Mrs Thatcher, and helped establish the Northern Ireland peace process.

Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013)

Margaret Thatcher was the daughter of a grocer from Grantham in Lincolnshire. She trained as a chemist and lawyer. She was elected as a Conservative MP in 1959 and became a cabinet minister in 1970. In 1975 she was elected as Leader of the Conservative Party. Following the Conservative victory in the General Election in 1979, Margaret Thatcher became the first woman Prime Minister of the UK. She was the longest-serving Prime Minister of the 20th century, remaining in office until 1990.

Figure 3.17: Margaret Thatcher, Britain's first woman Prime Minister

Roald Dahl (1916–90)

Roald Dahl was born in Wales to Norwegian parents. He served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. It was during the 1940s that he began to publish books and short stories. He is most well known for his children's books, although he also wrote for adults. His best-known works include *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *George's Marvellous Medicine*. Several of his books have been made into films.

3.6.6 Labour Government from 1997 to 2010

In 1997 the Labour Party led by Tony Blair was elected. The Blair government introduced a Scottish Parliament and a Welsh Assembly (now called the Senedd). The Scottish Parliament has substantial powers to legislate. The Welsh Assembly was given

fewer legislative powers but considerable control over public services. In Northern Ireland, the Blair government was able to build on the peace process, resulting in the Good Friday Agreement signed in 1998. The Northern Ireland Assembly was elected in 1999 but suspended in 2002. It was not reinstated until 2007. Most paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland have decommissioned their arms and are inactive. Gordon Brown took over as Prime Minister in 2007.

3.6.7 2010 Onwards and Brexit

In May 2010, no political party won an overall majority in the General Election. The Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties formed a coalition and the leader of the Conservative Party, David Cameron, became Prime Minister.

The Conservative Party won a majority in the general election of 7 May 2015 and David Cameron remained Prime Minister. The Conservative government called a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union. This was held on 23 June 2016. The UK voted by a margin of 51.9% to 48.1% to leave the European Union. David Cameron was succeeded as Prime Minister by Theresa May on 13 July 2016. She in turn was succeeded by Boris Johnson on 24 July 2019. The UK formally left the European Union on 31 January 2020.

Check that you understand

- The establishment of the welfare state
- How life in Britain changed in the 1960s and 1970s
- British inventions of the 20th century
- Events since 1979

Chapter 4

A Modern, Thriving Society

4.1 The UK today

The UK today is a more diverse society than it was 100 years ago, in both ethnic and religious terms. Post-war immigration means that nearly 10% of the population has a parent or grandparent born outside the UK. The UK continues to be a multinational and multiracial society with a rich and varied culture.

4.1.1 The nations of the UK

The UK is located in the north west of Europe. The longest distance on the mainland is from John O'Groats on the north coast of Scotland to Land's End in the south-west corner of England — about 870 miles (approximately 1,400 kilometres).

Most people live in towns and cities but much of Britain is still countryside. Many people continue to visit the countryside for holidays and for leisure activities such as walking, camping and fishing.

4.1.2 Cities of the UK

- **England:** London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Bristol, Manchester, Bradford, Newcastle upon Tyne, Plymouth, Southampton and Norwich
- **Wales:** Cardiff, Swansea and Newport
- **Northern Ireland:** Belfast
- **Scotland:** Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen

Capital cities

- The capital city of the **UK** is London
- The capital city of **Scotland** is Edinburgh
- The capital city of **Wales** is Cardiff
- The capital city of **Northern Ireland** is Belfast

4.1.3 UK currency

The currency in the UK is the pound sterling (symbol £). There are 100 pence in a pound.

- **Coins:** 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2
- **Notes:** £5, £10, £20, £50

Northern Ireland and Scotland have their own banknotes, which are valid everywhere in the UK. However, shops and businesses do not have to accept them.

4.1.4 Languages and dialects

There are many variations in language in the different parts of the UK. The English language has many accents and dialects. In Wales, many people speak Welsh — a completely different language from English — and it is taught in schools and universities. In Scotland, Gaelic is spoken in some parts of the Highlands and Islands, and in Northern Ireland some people speak Irish Gaelic.

4.1.5 Population

Population growth has been faster in more recent years. Migration into the UK and longer life expectancy have played a part in population growth.

Year	Population
1600	Just over 4 million
1700	5 million
1801	8 million
1851	20 million
1901	40 million
1951	50 million
1998	57 million
2005	Just under 60 million
2010	Just over 62 million
2017	Just over 66 million

The population is very unequally distributed. England makes up around 84% of the total population, Wales around 5%, Scotland just over 8%, and Northern Ireland less than 3%.

4.1.6 An ageing population

People in the UK are living longer than ever before, due to improved living standards and better health care. There are now a record number of people aged 85 and over. This has an impact on the cost of pensions and health care.

4.1.7 Ethnic diversity

The UK population is ethnically diverse and changing rapidly, especially in large cities such as London. There are people in the UK with ethnic origins from all over the world.

4.1.8 An equal society

Within the UK, it is a legal requirement that men and women should not be discriminated against because of their gender or marital status. They have equal rights to work, own property, marry and divorce. Women in Britain today make up about half of the workforce. More women than men study at university. Employment opportunities for women are much greater than they were in the past.

Check that you understand

- The capital cities of the UK
- What languages other than English are spoken in particular parts of the UK
- How the population of the UK has changed
- That the UK is an equal society and ethnically diverse
- The currency of the UK

4.2 Religion

The UK is historically a Christian country. In the 2011 Census, 59% of people identified themselves as Christian. Much smaller proportions identified themselves as Muslim (4.8%), Hindu (1.5%), Sikh (0.8%) and Jewish or Buddhist (both less than 0.5%). Everyone has the legal right to choose their religion, or to choose not to practise a religion. In the 2011 Census, 25% of people said they had no religion.

4.2.1 Christian churches

In England, there is a constitutional link between Church and state. The official Church of the state is the Church of England (called the Anglican Church in other countries and the Episcopal Church in Scotland and the United States). It is a Protestant Church and has existed since the Reformation in the 1530s.

The monarch is the head of the Church of England. The spiritual leader is the Archbishop of Canterbury. The monarch has the right to select the Archbishop and other senior church officials, but usually the choice is made by the Prime Minister and a committee appointed by the Church. Several Church of England bishops sit in the House of Lords.

In Scotland, the national Church is the Church of Scotland, which is a Presbyterian Church governed by ministers and elders. The chairperson of the General Assembly is the Moderator, appointed for one year only. There is no established Church in Wales or Northern Ireland.

Other Protestant Christian groups in the UK include Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Quakers. There are also other denominations, the biggest of which is Roman Catholic.

4.2.2 Patron saints' days

England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each have a national saint, called a patron saint:

- 1 March: St David's Day, Wales
- 17 March: St Patrick's Day, Northern Ireland
- 23 April: St George's Day, England
- 30 November: St Andrew's Day, Scotland

Only Scotland and Northern Ireland have their patron saint's day as an official holiday. While the patron saints' days are no longer public holidays in England and Wales, they are still celebrated with parades and small festivals.

Figure 4.1: Saint George and the Dragon, patron saint of England

Check that you understand

- The different religions that are practised in the UK
- That the Church of England is the established Church in England
- That other religions are practised freely in the UK
- About the patron saints

4.3 Customs and traditions

4.3.1 The main Christian festivals

Christmas Day, 25 December, celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a public holiday. People usually spend the day at home and eat a special meal, which often includes roast turkey, Christmas pudding and mince pies. They give gifts, send cards and decorate their houses.

Figure 4.2: Traditional Christmas celebrations in the UK

Boxing Day is the day after Christmas Day and is a public holiday.

Easter takes place in March or April. It marks the death of Jesus Christ on Good Friday and his rising from the dead on Easter Sunday. Both Good Friday and Easter Monday are public holidays.

The 40 days before Easter are known as Lent. The day before Lent starts is called Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. Easter is also celebrated by people who are not religious — 'Easter eggs' are chocolate eggs given as presents.

4.3.2 Other religious festivals

Diwali normally falls in October or November and lasts for five days. Often called the Festival of Lights, it is celebrated by Hindus and Sikhs and celebrates the victory of good over evil.

Figure 4.3: Diwali, the Festival of Lights, celebrated across the UK

Hannukah is in November or December and is celebrated for eight days, remembering the Jews' struggle for religious freedom. A candle is lit on a menorah each day.

Eid al-Fitr celebrates the end of Ramadan, when Muslims have fasted for a month. Muslims attend special services and meals.

Eid ul Adha remembers that the prophet Ibrahim was willing to sacrifice his son when God ordered him to. Many Muslims sacrifice an animal to eat during this festival.

Vaisakhi (also spelled Baisakhi) is a Sikh festival celebrated on 14 April each year, marking the founding of the Sikh community known as the Khalsa, with parades, dancing and singing.

4.3.3 Other festivals and traditions

New Year, 1 January, is a public holiday. In Scotland, 31 December is called Hogmanay and 2 January is also a public holiday. For some Scottish people, Hogmanay is a bigger holiday than Christmas.

Valentine's Day, 14 February, is when lovers exchange cards and gifts.

April Fool's Day, 1 April, is a day when people play jokes on each other until midday.

Mothering Sunday (Mother's Day) is the Sunday three weeks before Easter. Children send cards or buy gifts for their mothers.

Father's Day is the third Sunday in June.

Halloween, 31 October, has roots in the pagan festival marking the beginning of winter. Young people dress up in frightening costumes to play 'trick or treat'.

Bonfire Night, 5 November, commemorates the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605, when Guy Fawkes and fellow conspirators attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament. People set off fireworks and light bonfires.

Remembrance Day, 11 November, commemorates those who died fighting for the UK and its allies. People wear poppies. At 11.00 am there is a two-minute silence and wreaths are laid at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London.

Figure 4.4: Red poppies worn on Remembrance Day to honour those who died in war

4.3.4 Bank holidays

As well as those mentioned above, there are other public holidays each year called bank holidays, when banks and many other businesses are closed. These are of no religious significance. They fall at the beginning of May, in late May or early June, and in August. In Northern Ireland, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne in July is also a public holiday.

Check that you understand

- The main Christian festivals that are celebrated in the UK
- Other religious festivals that are important in the UK
- Some of the other events that are celebrated in the UK
- What a bank holiday is

4.4 Sport

Sports of all kinds play an important part in many people's lives. Many famous sports, including cricket, football, lawn tennis, golf and rugby, began in Britain. The UK has hosted the Olympic Games on three occasions: 1908, 1948 and 2012. The main Olympic site for 2012 was in Stratford, East London, where the British team finished third in the medal table.

Notable British sportsmen and women

- **Sir Roger Bannister (1929–2018):** First man in the world to run a mile in under four minutes, in 1954.
- **Sir Jackie Stewart (1939–):** Scottish Formula 1 champion, winning the world championship three times.
- **Bobby Moore (1941–1993):** Captained the England football team that won the World Cup in 1966.
- **Sir Ian Botham (1955–):** Captained the England cricket team; held many Test cricket records.
- **Jayne Torvill (1957–) and Christopher Dean (1958–):** Won gold for ice dancing at the 1984 Olympics and four consecutive world championships.
- **Sir Steve Redgrave (1962–):** Won gold medals in rowing at five consecutive Olympic Games.
- **Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson (1969–):** Won 16 Paralympic medals (11 gold) across five Games; won the London Marathon six times.
- **Dame Kelly Holmes (1970–):** Won two gold medals for running at the 2004 Olympic Games.
- **Dame Ellen MacArthur (1976–):** Yachtswoman; in 2004 became the fastest person to sail around the world single-handed.
- **Sir Chris Hoy (1976–):** Scottish cyclist; six Olympic gold medals and 11 world championship titles.
- **David Weir (1979–):** Paralympic wheelchair racer; six gold medals across two Games; six London Marathon wins.
- **Sir Bradley Wiggins (1980–):** In 2012, became the first Briton to win the Tour de France; eight Olympic medals.
- **Sir Mo Farah (1983–):** Won gold in the 5,000m and 10,000m at both the 2012 and 2016 Olympics.
- **Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill (1986–):** Won 2012 Olympic gold in the heptathlon; silver in 2016.
- **Sir Andy Murray (1987–):** Scottish tennis player; Wimbledon champion 2013 and 2016; US Open 2012; Olympic gold and silver 2012.
- **Ellie Simmonds (1994–):** Won Paralympic gold for swimming at the 2008, 2012 and 2016 Games; holds multiple world records.

4.4.1 Cricket

Cricket originated in England and is now played in many countries. Games can last up to five days but still result in a draw. The most famous competition is **the Ashes**, a series of Test matches played between England and Australia.

4.4.2 Football

Football is the UK's most popular sport. The first professional football clubs were formed in the late 19th century. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each have separate leagues. The English Premier League attracts a huge international audience. England's only international tournament victory was at the World Cup of 1966, hosted in the UK.

4.4.3 Rugby

Rugby originated in England in the early 19th century. There are two different types: union and league. The most famous rugby union competition is the **Six Nations Championship** between England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France and Italy.

Figure 4.5: Rugby union, one of the UK's most popular sports

4.4.4 Horse racing

There is a very long history of horse racing in Britain, with evidence of events taking place as far back as Roman times. Famous events include **Royal Ascot**, the **Grand National** at Aintree near Liverpool, and the **Scottish Grand National** at Ayr. There is a National Horseracing Museum in Newmarket, Suffolk.

4.4.5 Golf

The modern game of golf can be traced back to 15th-century Scotland. **St Andrews** in Scotland is known as the home of golf. The Open Championship is the only 'Major' tournament held outside the United States.

4.4.6 Tennis

Modern tennis evolved in England in the late 19th century. The most famous tournament is **The Wimbledon Championships**, the oldest tennis tournament in the world and the only 'Grand Slam' event played on grass.

4.4.7 Water sports

A British sailor, **Sir Francis Chichester**, was the first person to sail singlehanded around the world, in 1966/67. Two years later, **Sir Robin Knox-Johnston** became the first person to do this without stopping. The most famous sailing event is at Cowes on the Isle of Wight. **Rowing** is also popular; the annual Oxford–Cambridge Boat Race takes place on the Thames.

4.4.8 Motor sports

Motor-car racing in the UK started in 1902. A Formula 1 Grand Prix event is held in the UK each year. Recent British F1 world champions include Damon Hill, Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button.

4.4.9 Skiing

Skiing is increasingly popular in the UK. There are five ski centres in Scotland, as well as Europe's longest dry ski slope near Edinburgh.

4.5 Leisure

4.5.1 Gardening

A lot of people have gardens at home and will spend their free time looking after them. Some people rent additional land called 'an allotment', where they grow fruit and vegetables. Gardening and flower shows range from major national exhibitions to small local events. Many towns have garden centres selling plants and gardening equipment. There are famous gardens to visit throughout the UK, including Kew Gardens, Sissinghurst and Hidcote in England, Crathes Castle and Inveraray Castle in Scotland, Bodnant Garden in Wales, and Mount Stewart in Northern Ireland.

The countries that make up the UK all have flowers which are particularly associated with them and which are sometimes worn on national saints' days:

- England — the rose
- Scotland — the thistle
- Wales — the daffodil
- Northern Ireland — the shamrock

Figure 4.6: A traditional English garden, a cherished British pastime

4.5.2 Shopping

There are many different places to go shopping in the UK. Most towns and cities have a central shopping area, which is called the town centre. Undercover shopping centres are also common — these might be in town centres or on the outskirts of a town or city. Most shops in the UK are open seven days a week, although trading hours on Sundays and public holidays are generally reduced. Many towns also have markets on one or more days a week, where stallholders sell a variety of goods.

4.5.3 Cooking and food

Many people in the UK enjoy cooking. They often invite each other to their homes for dinner. A wide variety of food is eaten in the UK because of the country's rich cultural heritage and diverse population.

Traditional foods

- **England:** Roast beef with potatoes, vegetables and Yorkshire puddings; fish and chips.
- **Wales:** Welsh cakes — a snack made from flour, dried fruits and spices.
- **Scotland:** Haggis — a sheep's stomach stuffed with offal, suet, onions and oatmeal.
- **Northern Ireland:** Ulster fry — bacon, eggs, sausage, black pudding, tomatoes, mushrooms, soda bread and potato bread.

4.5.4 Films

Films were first shown publicly in the UK in 1896 and film screenings very quickly became popular. From the beginning, British film makers became famous for clever special effects and this continues to be an area of British expertise. Sir Charles (Charlie) Chaplin became famous in silent movies for his tramp character and was one of many British actors to make a career in Hollywood.

British studios flourished in the 1930s. Eminent directors included Sir Alexander Korda and Sir Alfred Hitchcock, who later left for Hollywood. During the Second World War, British movies played an important part in boosting morale. Later, British directors including Sir David Lean and Ridley Scott found great success both in the UK and internationally.

The 1950s and 1960s were a high point for British comedies, including *Passport to Pimlico*, *The Ladykillers* and, later, the Carry On films.

Some of the most commercially successful films of all time, including the Harry Potter and James Bond franchises, have been produced in the UK. Ealing Studios has a claim to being the oldest continuously working film studio facility in the world. Nick Park has won four Oscars for his animated films, including three for films featuring Wallace and Gromit.

Actors such as Sir Laurence Olivier, David Niven, Sir Rex Harrison and Richard Burton starred in a wide variety of popular films. Recent British actors to have won Oscars

include Colin Firth, Sir Antony Hopkins, Dame Judi Dench, Kate Winslet and Tilda Swinton.

The annual **British Academy Film Awards**, hosted by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), are the British equivalent of the Oscars.

Some famous British films

- *The 39 Steps* (1935), directed by Alfred Hitchcock
- *Brief Encounter* (1945), directed by David Lean
- *The Third Man* (1949), directed by Carol Reed
- *The Belles of St Trinian's* (1954), directed by Frank Launder
- *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), directed by David Lean
- *Women in Love* (1969), directed by Ken Russell
- *Don't Look Now* (1973), directed by Nicolas Roeg
- *Chariots of Fire* (1981), directed by Hugh Hudson
- *The Killing Fields* (1984), directed by Roland Joffé
- *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994), directed by Mike Newell
- *Touching the Void* (2003), directed by Kevin MacDonald

4.5.5 British comedy

The traditions of comedy and satire, and the ability to laugh at ourselves, are an important part of the UK character.

Medieval kings and rich nobles had **jesters** who told jokes and made fun of people in the Court. Later, Shakespeare included comic characters in his plays. In the 18th century, political cartoons attacking prominent politicians — and, sometimes, the monarch or other members of the Royal Family — became increasingly popular. In the 19th century, satirical magazines began to be published. The most famous was *Punch*, first published in the 1840s. Today, political cartoons continue to be published in newspapers, and magazines such as *Private Eye* continue the tradition of satire.

Comedians were a popular feature of British music hall, a form of variety theatre which was very common until television became the leading form of entertainment. Some of the people who had performed in the music halls in the 1940s and 1950s, such as **Morecambe and Wise**, became stars of television.

Television comedy developed its own style. Situation comedies (sitcoms), which often look at family life and relationships in the workplace, remain popular. Satire has also continued to be important, with shows like *That Was The Week That Was* in the 1960s and *Spitting Image* in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1969, *Monty Python's Flying Circus* introduced a new type of progressive comedy. Stand-up comedy, where a solo comedian talks to a live audience, has become popular again in recent years.

4.5.6 Television and radio

Many different television channels are available in the UK. Some are free to watch and others require a paid subscription. Popular programmes include regular soap operas such as *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders*. In Scotland, some Scotland-specific

programmes are shown and there is also a channel with programmes in the Gaelic language. There is a Welsh-language channel in Wales.

Everyone in the UK with a TV, computer or other medium used for watching TV must have a **television licence**. One licence covers all of the equipment in one home, except when people rent different rooms in a shared house and each has a separate tenancy agreement — those people must each buy a separate licence. People over 75 can apply for a free TV licence and blind people can get a 50% discount. You will receive a fine of up to £1,000 if you watch TV without a licence.

The money from TV licences is used to pay for the **BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation)**, the largest broadcaster in the world. Although it receives some state funding, it is independent of the government. Other UK channels are primarily funded through advertisements and subscriptions.

There are also many different radio stations in the UK. Some broadcast nationally and others in certain cities or regions. There are radio stations that play certain types of music and some broadcast in regional languages such as Welsh or Gaelic. BBC radio stations are funded by TV licences and other radio stations are funded through advertisements.

4.5.7 Social networking

Social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter are a popular way for people to stay in touch with friends, organise social events, and share photos, videos and opinions. Many people use social networking on their mobile phones when out and about.

4.5.8 Pubs and night clubs

Public houses (pubs) are an important part of UK social culture. Many people enjoy meeting friends in the pub. Most communities will have a 'local' pub that is a natural focal point for social activities. Pub quizzes are popular. Pool and darts are traditional pub games. To buy alcohol in a pub or night club you must be 18 or over, but people under that age may be allowed in some pubs with an adult. When they are 16, people can drink wine or beer with a meal in a hotel or restaurant (including eating areas in pubs) as long as they are with someone over 18.

Pubs are usually open during the day from 11.00 am (12 noon on Sundays). Night clubs with dancing and music usually open and close later than pubs.

4.5.9 Betting and gambling

In the UK, people often enjoy a gamble on sports or other events. You must be 18 to enter betting shops or gambling clubs. There is a **National Lottery** with draws every week. People under 18 are not allowed to participate.

4.5.10 Pets

A lot of people in the UK have pets. It is against the law to treat a pet cruelly or to neglect it. All dogs in public places must wear a collar showing the name and address

of the owner.

4.6 Arts and culture

4.6.1 Music

Music is an important part of British culture with a rich and varied heritage. **The Proms** is an eight-week summer season of orchestral classical music, including the Royal Albert Hall in London, organised by the BBC since 1927. The Last Night of the Proms is the most well-known concert.

Notable British composers include:

- **Henry Purcell (1659–95):** Organist at Westminster Abbey; developed a distinct British style.
- **George Frederick Handel (1695–1759):** German-born composer who spent many years in the UK and became a British citizen in 1727. He wrote the *Water Music* for King George I and *Music for the Royal Fireworks* for his son, George II. He also wrote an oratorio, *Messiah*, which is sung regularly by choirs, often at Easter time.
- **Gustav Holst (1874–1934):** Wrote *The Planets*, a suite of pieces themed around the planets and the solar system. He adapted *Jupiter*, part of the suite, as the tune for *I vow to thee my country*, a popular hymn in British churches.
- **Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934):** Born in Worcester, England. His best known work is probably the *Pomp and Circumstance Marches. March No.1 (Land of Hope and Glory)* is usually played at the Last Night of the Proms.
- **Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958):** Strongly influenced by traditional English folk music.
- **Sir William Walton (1902–83):** Wrote a wide range of music, from film scores to opera. He wrote marches for the coronations of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. His best-known works include *Facade*, which became a ballet, and *Belshazzar's Feast*, intended to be sung by a large choir.
- **Benjamin Britten (1913–76):** Best known for his operas, which include *Peter Grimes* and *Billy Budd*. He also wrote *A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, which is based on a piece of music by Purcell and introduces the listener to the various different sections of an orchestra. He founded the Aldeburgh festival in Suffolk, which continues to be a popular music event of international importance.

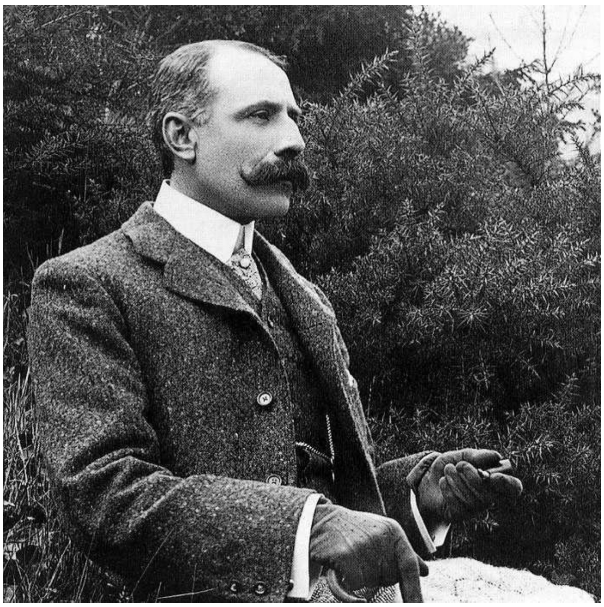

Figure 4.7: Sir Edward Elgar, one of Britain's greatest classical composers

There are many large venues that host music events throughout the year, such as Wembley Stadium, The O2 in Greenwich, south-east London, and The SEC Centre in Glasgow.

Since the 1960s, British pop music has made one of the most important cultural contributions to life in the UK. Bands including **The Beatles** and **The Rolling Stones** continue to have an influence on music both here and abroad. British pop music has continued to innovate — for example, the Punk movement of the late 1970s, and the trend towards boy and girl bands in the 1990s.

Festival season takes place across the UK every summer, with major events in various locations. Famous festivals include **Glastonbury**, the **Isle of Wight Festival** and **Creamfields**. Many bands and solo artists, both well-known and up-and-coming, perform at these events.

The **National Eisteddfod of Wales** is an annual cultural festival which includes music, dance, art and original performances largely in Welsh. It includes a number of important competitions for Welsh poetry.

The **Mercury Music Prize** is awarded each September for the best album from the UK and Ireland. The **Brit Awards** is an annual event that gives awards in a range of categories, such as best British group and best British solo artist.

4.6.2 Theatre

London's West End, also known as 'Theatreland', is particularly well known. *The Mousetrap*, a murder-mystery play by Dame Agatha Christie, has been running in the West End since 1952 and has had the longest initial run of any show in history.

In the 19th century, **Gilbert and Sullivan** wrote comic operas, often making fun of popular culture and politics. These include *HMS Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Mikado*. Gilbert and Sullivan's work is still often staged by professional and

amateur groups. More recently, **Andrew Lloyd Webber** has written shows popular throughout the world, including, in collaboration with Tim Rice, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Evita*, and also *Cats* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

One British tradition is the **pantomime**. Many theatres produce a pantomime at Christmas time. They are based on fairy stories and are light-hearted plays with music and comedy, enjoyed by family audiences. One of the traditional characters is the **Dame**, a woman played by a man. There is often also a pantomime horse or cow played by two actors in the same costume.

The **Edinburgh Festival** takes place every summer in Edinburgh. The Edinburgh Festival Fringe ('the Fringe') is a showcase of mainly theatre and comedy performances, often showing experimental work.

The **Laurence Olivier Awards** take place annually in London, with categories including best director, best actor and best actress.

4.6.3 Art

Works by British and international artists are displayed in galleries across the UK. Some of the most well-known galleries are The National Gallery, Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London, the National Museum in Cardiff, and the Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh.

Notable British artists

- **Thomas Gainsborough (1727–88):** Portrait painter who often painted people in country or garden scenery.
- **David Allan (1744–96):** Scottish painter best known for portraits. One of his most famous works is *The Origin of Painting*.
- **Joseph Turner (1775–1851):** Influential landscape painter who raised the profile of landscape painting.
- **John Constable (1776–1837):** Landscape painter most famous for works of Dedham Vale on the Suffolk–Essex border.
- **The Pre-Raphaelites:** Important 19th-century group who painted detailed pictures on religious or literary themes in bright colours, including Holman Hunt, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Sir John Millais.
- **Sir John Lavery (1856–1941):** Very successful Northern Irish portrait painter whose work included painting the Royal Family.
- **Henry Moore (1898–1986):** English sculptor best known for large bronze abstract sculptures.
- **John Petts (1914–91):** Welsh artist, best known for his engravings and stained glass.
- **Lucian Freud (1922–2011):** German-born British artist, best known for his portraits.
- **David Hockney (1937–):** Important contributor to the 'pop art' movement of the 1960s and continues to be influential today.

Figure 4.8: Tate Britain, home of the Turner Prize for contemporary art

The **Turner Prize** was established in 1984 to celebrate contemporary art. Four works are shortlisted and shown at Tate Britain before the winner is announced. Previous winners include Damien Hirst and Richard Wright.

4.6.4 Architecture

The architectural heritage of the UK is rich and varied. Great cathedrals built in the Middle Ages still stand today, including those in Durham, Lincoln, Canterbury and Salisbury. In the 17th century, Inigo Jones designed the Queen's House at Greenwich and Sir Christopher Wren designed the new St Paul's Cathedral. The Scottish architect **Robert Adam** influenced the development of architecture in the UK, Europe and America. In the 19th century, the medieval 'gothic' style became popular again. As cities expanded, many great public buildings were built in this style. The Houses of Parliament and St Pancras Station were built at this time, as were the town halls in cities such as Manchester and Sheffield.

In the 20th century, **Sir Edwin Lutyens** had an influence throughout the British Empire. He designed New Delhi to be the seat of government in India. After the First World War, he was responsible for many war memorials throughout the world, including the **Cenotaph** in Whitehall, London — the site of the annual Remembrance Day service attended by the King, politicians and foreign ambassadors.

Modern British architects including Sir Norman Foster, Lord Richard Rogers and Dame Zaha Hadid continue to work on major projects worldwide.

Alongside the development of architecture, garden design and landscaping have played an important role in the UK. In the 18th century, Lancelot '**Capability**' **Brown** designed the grounds around country houses so that the landscape appeared to be natural, with grass, trees and lakes. He often said that a place had 'capabilities'. Later, **Gertrude Jekyll** often worked with Edwin Lutyens to design colourful gardens around the houses he designed. Gardens continue to be an important part of homes in the UK.

The annual **Chelsea Flower Show** showcases garden design from Britain and around the world.

4.6.5 Fashion and design

Britain has produced many great designers, from **Thomas Chippendale** (18th-century furniture) to **Clarice Cliff** (Art Deco ceramics) to **Sir Terence Conran** (20th-century interior design). Leading recent fashion designers include Mary Quant, Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood.

4.6.6 Literature

The UK has a prestigious literary history. Several British writers have won the Nobel Prize in Literature, including novelist Sir William Golding, poet Seamus Heaney, and playwright Harold Pinter. *The Lord of the Rings* by JRR Tolkien was voted the country's best-loved novel in 2003. The **Man Booker Prize for Fiction** is awarded annually for the best fiction novel by an author from the Commonwealth, Ireland or Zimbabwe.

Notable authors and writers

- **Jane Austen (1775–1817):** Author of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*.
- **Charles Dickens (1812–1870):** Wrote *Oliver Twist* and *Great Expectations*.
- **Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894):** Wrote *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.
- **Thomas Hardy (1840–1928):** Best-known novels include *Far from the Madding Crowd*.
- **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930):** Scottish doctor and writer, best known for stories about Sherlock Holmes, one of the first fictional detectives.
- **Evelyn Waugh (1903–1966):** Wrote satirical novels including *Decline and Fall* and *Scoop*. He is perhaps best known for *Brideshead Revisited*.
- **Sir Kingsley Amis (1922–1995):** English novelist and poet who wrote more than 20 novels. The most well known is *Lucky Jim*.
- **Graham Greene (1904–1991):** Wrote novels often influenced by his religious beliefs, including *The Heart of the Matter*, *Brighton Rock* and *Our Man in Havana*.
- **J K Rowling (1965–):** Wrote the Harry Potter series of children's books, which have enjoyed huge international success.

4.6.7 British poets

British poetry is among the richest in the world. The Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf* tells of its hero's battles and is still translated today. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* survive from the Middle Ages.

As well as plays, Shakespeare wrote many sonnets and some longer poems. As Protestant ideas spread, a number of poets wrote poems inspired by their religious views. One of these was **John Milton**, who wrote *Paradise Lost*.

Other poets, including William Wordsworth, were inspired by nature. Sir Walter Scott wrote poems inspired by Scotland and the traditional stories and songs from the borders of Scotland and England.

Poetry was very popular in the 19th century, with poets such as William Blake, John Keats, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, Alfred Lord Tennyson, and Robert and Elizabeth Browning. Later, many poets — for example, **Wilfred Owen** and **Siegfried Sassoon** — were inspired to write about their experiences in the First World War. More recently, popular poets have included Sir Walter de la Mare, John Masefield, Sir John Betjeman and Ted Hughes.

Some of the best-known poets are buried or commemorated in **Poet's Corner** in Westminster Abbey.

Some famous lines:

> *'Oh, to be in England now that April's there,*
> *And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning, unaware,*
> *That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf*
> *Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf'*
> — Robert Browning, *Home Thoughts from Abroad*

> *'She walks in beauty, like the night*
> *Of cloudless climes and starry skies,*
> *And all that's best of dark and bright*
> *Meet in her aspect and her eyes'*
> — Lord Byron, *She walks in Beauty*

> *'I wander'd lonely as a cloud*
> *That floats on high o'er vales and hills,*
> *When all at once I saw a crowd,*
> *A host of golden daffodils'*
> — William Wordsworth, *The Daffodils*

> *'Tyger! Tyger! Burning bright*
> *In the forests of the night,*
> *What immortal hand and eye*
> *Could frame thy fearful symmetry?'*
> — William Blake, *The Tyger*

> *'What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?*
> *Only the monstrous anger of the guns.*
> *Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle*
> *Can patter out their hasty orisons.'*
> — Wilfred Owen, *Anthem for Doomed Youth*

Check that you understand

- Which sports are particularly popular in the UK
- Some of the major sporting events that take place each year
- Some of the major arts and culture events that happen in the UK

- How achievements in arts and culture are formally recognised
- Important figures in British literature

4.7 Places of interest

The UK has a large network of public footpaths in the countryside. There are 15 national parks in England, Wales and Scotland. Many parts of the countryside and places of interest are kept open by the **National Trust** in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the **National Trust for Scotland**. The National Trust was founded in 1895 by three volunteers; there are now more than 61,000 volunteers.

4.7.1 UK Landmarks

Figure 4.9: The Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben) and the Houses of Parliament, London

Big Ben is the nickname for the great bell of the clock at the Houses of Parliament in London. The clock is over 150 years old. The clock tower is officially named 'Elizabeth Tower' in honour of Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

Figure 4.10: The Eden Project in Cornwall, one of the UK's most visited attractions

The Eden Project is located in Cornwall, in the south west of England. Its biomes, which are like giant greenhouses, house plants from all over the world. It is also a charity which runs environmental and social projects internationally.

Figure 4.11: Edinburgh Castle, one of Scotland's most iconic landmarks

Edinburgh Castle is a dominant feature of the skyline in Edinburgh, Scotland. It has a long history dating back to the early Middle Ages and is looked after by Historic Environment Scotland.

Figure 4.12: The Giant's Causeway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Northern Ireland

The Giant's Causeway is located on the north-east coast of Northern Ireland. A land formation of columns made from volcanic lava, it was formed about 50 million years ago.

Figure 4.13: Loch Lomond, part of the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park in Scotland

Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park covers 720 square miles in the west of Scotland. Loch Lomond is the largest expanse of fresh water in mainland Britain.

Figure 4.14: The London Eye, a giant Ferris wheel on the South Bank of the River Thames

The London Eye is situated on the southern bank of the River Thames. A Ferris wheel 443 feet (135 metres) tall, it was originally built as part of the UK's celebration of the new millennium.

Figure 4.15: Snowdonia National Park in Wales, featuring Mount Snowdon

Snowdonia is a national park in North Wales covering 823 square miles. Its most well-known landmark is Snowdon, the highest mountain in Wales.

Figure 4.16: The Tower of London, a historic castle and UNESCO World Heritage Site

The Tower of London was first built by William the Conqueror after he became king in 1066. Tours are given by the Yeoman Warders (Beefeaters). People can also see the Crown Jewels there.

Figure 4.17: The Lake District National Park in Cumbria, England

The Lake District is England's largest national park, covering 912 square miles. It is famous for its lakes and mountains and is very popular with climbers, walkers and sailors. The biggest stretch of water is Windermere.

Check that you understand

- Some of the ways in which people in the UK spend their leisure time
- The development of British cinema
- What the television licence is and how it funds the BBC

- Some of the places of interest to visit in the UK

Chapter 5

The UK Government, the Law and Your Role

5.1 Fundamental principles

Britain has a long history of respecting an individual's rights and ensuring essential freedoms. These rights have their roots in Magna Carta, the Habeas Corpus Act and the Bill of Rights of 1689. British diplomats and lawyers had an important role in drafting the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The UK was one of the first countries to sign the Convention in 1950.

Some of the principles included in the European Convention on Human Rights are:

- right to life
- prohibition of torture
- prohibition of slavery and forced labour
- right to liberty and security
- right to a fair trial
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- freedom of expression (speech)

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law. The government, public bodies and the courts must follow the principles of the Convention.

5.1.1 Equal opportunities

UK laws ensure that people are not treated unfairly in any area of life or work because of their age, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexuality or marital status.

5.1.2 Domestic violence

In the UK, brutality and violence in the home is a serious crime. Anyone who is violent towards their partner can be prosecuted. Any man who forces a woman to have sex,

including a woman's husband, can be charged with rape. In an emergency, always call the police.

5.1.3 Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM), also known as cutting or female circumcision, is illegal in the UK. Practising FGM or taking a girl or woman abroad for FGM is a criminal offence.

5.1.4 Forced marriage

A marriage should be entered into with the full and free consent of both people involved. Arranged marriages, where both parties agree, are acceptable in the UK. Forced marriage — where one or both parties do not or cannot give their consent — is a criminal offence. Forced Marriage Protection Orders were introduced in 2008 for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in Scotland in 2011.

5.2 The development of British democracy

Democracy is a system of government where the whole adult population gets a say, either by direct voting or by choosing representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

At the turn of the 19th century, Britain was not a democracy as we know it today. Only men over 21 who owned a certain amount of property could vote. The franchise grew over the course of the 19th century.

In the 1830s and 1840s, a group called the **Chartists** campaigned for reform. They wanted:

- for every man to have the vote
- elections every year
- for all regions to be equal in the electoral system
- secret ballots
- for any man to be able to stand as an MP
- for MPs to be paid

At the time, the campaign was seen as a failure. However, by 1918 most of these reforms had been adopted. The voting franchise was extended to women over 30, and then in 1928 to men and women over 21. In 1969, the voting age was reduced to 18.

5.3 The British constitution

A constitution is a set of principles by which a country is governed. The British constitution is not written down in any single document — it is described as 'unwritten'. This is mainly because the UK, unlike America or France, has never had a revolution which led to a totally new system of government. Some people believe there should be a single document, but others believe an unwritten constitution allows for more flexibility.

5.3.1 Constitutional institutions

The main parts of government in the UK are:

- the monarchy
- Parliament (the House of Commons and the House of Lords)
- the Prime Minister
- the cabinet
- the judiciary (courts)
- the police
- the civil service
- local government

In addition, there are devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that have the power to legislate on certain issues.

Figure 5.1: The Houses of Parliament, seat of the UK government at Westminster

5.3.2 The monarchy

King Charles III is the head of state of the UK and also the monarch or head of state for many countries in the Commonwealth. The UK has a **constitutional monarchy** — the king or queen does not rule the country but appoints the government which the people have chosen in a democratic election. The monarch has regular meetings with the Prime Minister and can advise, warn and encourage, but decisions on government policies are made by the Prime Minister and cabinet.

The King has reigned since his mother's death in September 2022. He is married to Queen Camilla. His eldest son, Prince William (the Prince of Wales), is the heir to the throne.

The King has important ceremonial roles, such as the opening of the new parliamentary session each year. All Acts of Parliament are made in his name. The King also represents the UK to the rest of the world.

The National Anthem

The National Anthem of the UK is 'God Save the King'. The first verse is:

> *'God save our gracious King!*
> *Long live our noble King!*
> *God save the King!*
> *Send him victorious,*
> *Happy and glorious,*
> *Long to reign over us,*
> *God save the King!'*

New citizens swear or affirm loyalty to the King as part of the citizenship ceremony.

Oath of allegiance

> I (name) swear by Almighty God that on becoming a British citizen, I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King Charles the Third, his Heirs and Successors, according to law.

5.3.3 System of government

The UK is a **parliamentary democracy**. Voters in each constituency elect their Member of Parliament (MP) in a General Election. All elected MPs form the House of Commons. The party with the majority of MPs forms the government. If no party wins a majority, two parties may join together to form a coalition.

Figure 5.2: The House of Commons chamber, where elected MPs debate and vote on legislation

5.3.4 The House of Commons

The House of Commons is the more important of the two chambers because its members are democratically elected. MPs:

- Represent everyone in their constituency

- Help to create new laws
- Scrutinise and comment on what the government is doing
- Debate important national issues

5.3.5 The House of Lords

Members of the House of Lords, known as peers, are not elected. Since 1958, the Prime Minister has had the power to nominate life peers. Since 1999, hereditary peers have lost the automatic right to attend. The House of Lords checks laws passed by the House of Commons to ensure they are fit for purpose and holds the government to account.

5.3.6 The Speaker

Debates in the House of Commons are chaired by the Speaker, the chief officer of the House of Commons. The Speaker is neutral and does not represent a political party. The Speaker is chosen by other MPs in a secret ballot.

5.3.7 Elections

MPs are elected at a General Election, held at least every five years. If an MP dies or resigns, a by-election is held in that constituency. MPs are elected through **'first past the post'** — the candidate who gets the most votes is elected.

Check that you understand

- What a constitution is and how the UK's constitution is different from most other countries
- The role of the monarch
- The role of the House of Commons and House of Lords
- What the Speaker does
- How the UK elects MPs

5.4 The government

5.4.1 The Prime Minister

The Prime Minister (PM) is the leader of the political party in power. He or she appoints the members of the cabinet and has control over many important public appointments. The official home of the Prime Minister is 10 Downing Street, in central London, near the Houses of Parliament. He or she also has a country house called Chequers.

5.4.2 The cabinet

The Prime Minister appoints about 20 senior MPs to become ministers in charge of departments. These include:

- Chancellor of the Exchequer — responsible for the economy
- Home Secretary — responsible for crime, policing and immigration
- Foreign Secretary — responsible for managing relationships with foreign countries
- Other ministers ('Secretaries of State') responsible for subjects such as education, health and defence

These ministers form the cabinet, which usually meets weekly and makes important decisions about government policy.

5.4.3 The opposition

The second-largest party in the House of Commons is called the opposition. The leader of the opposition appoints senior opposition MPs as 'shadow ministers'. They form the **shadow cabinet** and challenge the government and put forward alternative policies. **Prime Minister's Questions** takes place every week while Parliament is sitting.

5.4.4 The civil service

Civil servants support the government in developing and implementing its policies. They are chosen on merit and are politically neutral. Their core values are: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

5.4.5 Local government

Towns, cities and rural areas in the UK are governed by democratically elected councils, often called 'local authorities'. They provide a range of services funded by money from central government and by local taxes. Local elections for councillors are held in May every year.

5.4.6 Devolved administrations

Since 1997, some powers have been devolved to give people in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland more control over matters that directly affect them. Policy and laws governing defence, foreign affairs, social security and most taxation remain under central UK government control.

The Welsh government and the Senedd are based in Cardiff. There are 60 members of the Senedd (SMs). The Senedd has the power to make laws for Wales in 21 areas, including education, health, economic development and housing. Since 2011, the Senedd can pass laws on these topics without the agreement of the UK Parliament.

Figure 5.3: The Senedd, home of the Welsh Parliament in Cardiff Bay

The Scottish Parliament was formed in 1999 and sits in Edinburgh. There are 129 members (MSPs). The Scottish Parliament can pass laws on all matters not specifically reserved to the UK Parliament, including civil and criminal law, health, education, planning and additional tax-raising powers.

Figure 5.4: The Scottish Parliament building in Holyrood, Edinburgh

The Northern Ireland Assembly was established after the Belfast Agreement (Good Friday Agreement) in 1998. There is a power-sharing agreement distributing ministerial offices amongst the main parties. The Assembly has 90 elected members known as MLAs. It can make decisions on education, agriculture, the environment, health and social services.

Figure 5.5: Stormont, home of the Northern Ireland Assembly in Belfast

5.4.7 The media and government

Proceedings in Parliament are broadcast on television and published in official reports called *Hansard*. The UK has a free press — what is written in newspapers is free from government control. By law, radio and television coverage of political parties must be balanced and equal time given to rival viewpoints.

5.4.8 Who can vote?

The UK has had a fully democratic voting system since 1928. The present voting age of 18 was set in 1969. Adult citizens of the UK, and citizens of the Commonwealth and the Irish Republic who are resident in the UK, can vote in all public elections.

To be able to vote, you must have your name on the **electoral register**. If you are eligible to vote, you can register by contacting your local council electoral registration office.

People vote at **polling stations** (or polling places in Scotland). The polling station is open from 7.00 am until 10.00 pm on election day. You will be asked for your name, address and photo ID. You take your ballot paper to a polling booth to fill in privately, then place it in the ballot box. You can also register for a **postal ballot**.

5.4.9 Standing for office

Most citizens of the UK, Ireland or the Commonwealth aged 18 or over can stand for public office. Exceptions include members of the armed forces, civil servants, and people found guilty of certain criminal offences. Members of the House of Lords may not stand for election to the House of Commons.

Check that you understand

- The role of the Prime Minister, cabinet, opposition and shadow cabinet
- The role of political parties in the UK system of government
- The role of the civil service and local government
- The powers of the devolved governments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- Who is eligible to vote, how to register, and how to vote
- Who can stand for public office

5.5 The role of the courts

5.5.1 The judiciary

Judges (who are together called 'the judiciary') are responsible for interpreting the law and ensuring that trials are conducted fairly. The government cannot interfere with this. If judges find that a public body is not respecting someone's legal rights, they can order that body to change its practices and/or pay compensation.

5.5.2 Criminal courts

Magistrates' and Justice of the Peace Courts

Figure 5.6: The Old Bailey, London's Central Criminal Court

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, most minor criminal cases are dealt with in a **Magistrates' Court**. In Scotland, minor criminal offences go to a **Justice of the Peace Court**.

Magistrates and Justices of the Peace (JPs) are members of the local community. In England, Wales and Scotland they usually work unpaid and do not need legal

qualifications. In Northern Ireland, cases are heard by a District Judge or Deputy District Judge, who is legally qualified and paid.

Crown Courts and Sheriff Courts

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, serious offences are tried in front of a judge and a jury in a **Crown Court**. In Scotland, serious cases are heard in a **Sheriff Court** and the most serious cases (such as murder) at a **High Court**.

A jury is made up of members of the public chosen at random from the local electoral register. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland a jury has **12 members**, and in Scotland a jury has **15 members**. The jury decides a verdict of 'guilty' or 'not guilty'. In Scotland, a third verdict of 'not proven' is also possible. If the jury finds a defendant guilty, the judge decides the penalty.

Everyone summoned to do jury service must do it unless they are not eligible or can provide a good reason to be excused (such as ill health).

Youth Courts

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, if an accused person is aged 10 to 17, the case is normally heard in a **Youth Court**. Members of the public are not allowed in Youth Courts, and the name or photographs of the accused young person cannot be published. In Scotland, the **Children's Hearings System** is used for children and young people who have committed an offence.

The Old Bailey is probably the most famous criminal court in the world.

5.5.3 Civil courts

County Courts deal with a wide range of civil disputes, including personal injury, family matters, breaches of contract, and divorce. In Scotland, most of these matters are dealt with in the Sheriff Court.

The **small claims procedure** is an informal way of helping people settle minor disputes without spending a lot of money on a lawyer. This procedure is used for claims of less than £10,000 in England and Wales and £5,000 in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

5.5.4 Legal advice

Solicitors are trained lawyers who give advice on legal matters, take action for their clients and represent their clients in court. There are solicitors' offices throughout the UK. Citizens Advice can give you names of local solicitors and which areas of law they specialise in.

Check that you understand

- The role of the judiciary
- About the different criminal courts in the UK
- About the different civil courts in the UK

- How you can settle a small claim

5.6 Respecting the law

Every person in the UK receives equal treatment under the law. Laws can be divided into:

- **Criminal law** — relates to crimes, usually investigated by the police and punished by the courts.
- **Civil law** — used to settle disputes between individuals or groups.

Examples of criminal laws include carrying a weapon, selling drugs, racial harassment, selling tobacco to under-18s, selling alcohol to under-18s, and smoking in enclosed public places.

Examples of civil laws include housing law (disputes between landlords and tenants), consumer rights, employment law, and debt.

5.6.1 The police and their duties

The job of the police in the UK is to:

- Protect life and property
- Prevent disturbances (keeping the peace)
- Prevent and detect crime

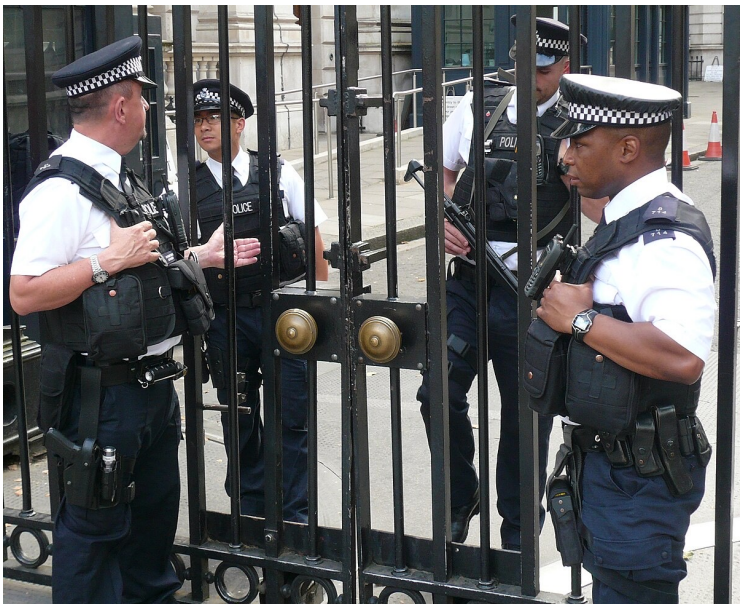

Figure 5.7: Metropolitan Police officers on duty in London

The police are organised into separate police forces headed by Chief Constables. They are independent of the government. In England and Wales, **Police and Crime**

Commissioners (PCCs) are elected by the public to oversee each police force, set priorities and appoint the Chief Constable.

Police officers are supported by **Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)**, who patrol the streets, work with the public and support police at crime scenes.

5.6.2 Terrorism and extremism

The UK faces a range of terrorist threats. If you think someone is trying to persuade you to join an extremist or terrorist cause, notify your local police force. It is important that all citizens feel safe from all kinds of extremism, including religious extremism and far-right extremism.

Check that you understand

- The difference between civil and criminal law and some examples of each
- The duties of the police
- The possible terrorist threats facing the UK

5.7 Taxation

5.7.1 Income tax

People in the UK have to pay tax on their income, which includes wages, profits from self-employment, taxable benefits, pensions, and income from property, savings and dividends.

For most people, the right amount of income tax is automatically deducted by their employer through a system called **Pay As You Earn (PAYE)**. Self-employed people pay their own tax through **self-assessment**, which includes completing a tax return. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is the government department that collects taxes.

5.7.2 National Insurance

Almost everybody in paid work must pay **National Insurance Contributions**. The money raised is used to pay for state benefits and services such as the state retirement pension and the NHS. Anyone who does not pay enough National Insurance Contributions will not be able to receive certain contributory benefits.

A **National Insurance number** is a unique personal account number. All young people in the UK are sent one just before their 16th birthday. A non-UK national living in the UK and starting work will need to apply for a National Insurance number.

5.7.3 Driving

In the UK, you must be at least **17 years old** to drive a car or motorcycle and you must have a driving licence. You need to be at least 16 to ride a moped.

Drivers can use their driving licence until they are 70 years old. After that, the licence is valid for three years at a time.

If you are resident in the UK, your car or motorcycle must be registered at the **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)**. You must pay annual vehicle tax and have valid motor insurance. It is a serious criminal offence to drive without insurance. If your vehicle is over three years old, you must take it for a **Ministry of Transport (MOT) test** every year.

Check that you understand

- The system of income tax and National Insurance
- The requirements for driving a car

5.8 Your role in the community

Becoming a British citizen or settling in the UK brings responsibilities but also opportunities. Shared values and responsibilities include:

- To obey and respect the law
- To be aware of the rights of others and respect those rights
- To treat others with fairness
- To behave responsibly
- To help and protect your family
- To respect and preserve the environment
- To treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, race, religion, age, disability, class or sexual orientation
- To work to provide for yourself and your family
- To help others
- To vote in local and national government elections

5.8.1 Being a good neighbour

When you move into a new house or apartment, introduce yourself to the people who live near you. You can help prevent problems with your neighbours by respecting their privacy and limiting how much noise you make.

5.8.2 Getting involved in local activities

Volunteering and helping your community are an important part of being a good citizen. They enable you to integrate and get to know other people.

5.9 How you can support your community

There are a number of positive ways in which you can support your community and be a good citizen.

5.9.1 Jury service

As well as getting the right to vote, people on the electoral register are randomly selected to serve on a jury. Anyone who is on the electoral register and is aged 18 to 70 (18–75 in England and Wales) can be asked to do this.

5.9.2 Helping in schools

Figure 5.8: Volunteering in schools, helping children with their learning

If you have children, there are many ways in which you can help at their schools. Parents can often help in classrooms, by supporting activities or listening to children read.

Many schools organise events to raise money for extra equipment or out-of-school activities. Activities might include book sales, toy sales or bringing food to sell. You might have good ideas of your own for raising money. Sometimes events are organised by parent-teacher associations (PTAs). Volunteering to help with their events or joining the association is a way of doing something good for the school and also making new friends in your local community. You can find out about these opportunities from notices in the school or notes your children bring home.

School governors

School governors are people from the local community who wish to make a positive contribution to children's education. They must be aged 18 or over at the date of their election or appointment. There is no upper age limit.

Governors have an important part to play in raising school standards. They have three key roles:

- setting the strategic direction of the school
- ensuring accountability

- monitoring and evaluating school performance.

You can contact your local school to ask if they need a new governor. In England, you can also apply online at the Governors for Schools website at www.governorsforschools.org.uk.

In England, parents and other community groups can apply to open a free school in their local area. More information about this can be found at www.gov.uk/set-up-free-school.

5.9.3 Supporting political parties

Political parties welcome new members. Joining one is a way to demonstrate your support for certain views and get involved in the democratic process.

Political parties are particularly busy at election times. Members work hard to persuade people to vote for their candidates — for instance, by handing out leaflets in the street or by knocking on people's doors and asking for their support. This is called 'canvassing'. You don't have to tell a canvasser how you intend to vote if you don't want to.

British citizens can stand for office as a local councillor or a member of Parliament (or the devolved equivalents). This is an opportunity to become even more involved in the political life of the UK. You may also be able to stand for office if you are an Irish citizen or an eligible Commonwealth citizen.

You can find out more about joining a political party from the individual party websites.

5.9.4 Helping with local services

There are opportunities to volunteer with a wide range of local service providers, including local hospitals and youth projects. Services often want to involve local people in decisions about the way in which they work. Universities, housing associations, museums and arts councils may advertise for people to serve as volunteers in their governing bodies.

You can volunteer with the police, and become a special constable or a lay (non-police) representative. You can also apply to become a magistrate. You will often find advertisements for vacancies in your local newspaper or on local radio. You can also find out more about these sorts of roles at www.gov.uk.

5.9.5 Blood and organ donation

Donated blood is used by hospitals to help people with a wide range of injuries and illnesses. Giving blood only takes about an hour to do. You can register to give blood at:

- England and North Wales: www.blood.co.uk
- Rest of Wales: www.welsh-blood.org.uk
- Scotland: www.scotblood.co.uk
- Northern Ireland: nibts.hscni.net

Many people in the UK are waiting for organ transplants. If you register to be an organ donor, it can make it easier for your family to decide whether to donate your organs

when you die. You can register to be an organ donor at www.organdonation.nhs.uk. Living people can also donate a kidney.

5.9.6 Other ways to volunteer

Volunteering is working for good causes without payment. There are many benefits to volunteering, such as meeting new people and helping make your community a better place. Some volunteer activities will give you a chance to practise your English or develop work skills that will help you find or improve your curriculum vitae (CV). Many people volunteer simply because they want to help other people.

Activities you can do as a volunteer include:

- working with animals — for example, caring for animals at a local rescue shelter
- youth work — for example, volunteering at a youth group
- helping improve the environment — for example, participating in a litter pick-up in the local area
- working with the homeless — for example, in a homelessness shelter
- mentoring — for example, supporting someone who has just come out of prison
- work in health and hospitals — for example, working on an information desk in a hospital
- helping older people — for example, at a residential care home

Figure 5.9: Community volunteers working together to support local causes

There are thousands of active charities and voluntary organisations in the UK. They work to improve the lives of people, animals and the environment in many different ways. They range from British branches of international organisations, such as the British Red Cross, to small local charities working in particular areas. They include

charities working with older people (such as Age UK), with children (for example, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)), and with the homeless (for example, Crisis and Shelter). There are also medical research charities (for example, Cancer Research UK), environmental charities (including the National Trust and Friends of the Earth) and charities working with animals (such as the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA)).

Volunteers are needed to help with their activities and to raise money. The charities often advertise in local newspapers, and most have websites that include information about their opportunities. You can also get information about volunteering for different organisations from www.doit.life/volunteer.

There are many opportunities for younger people to volunteer and receive accreditation which will help them to develop their skills. These include the **National Citizen Service** programme, which gives 16- and 17-year-olds the opportunity to enjoy outdoor activities, develop their skills and take part in a community project. You can find out more about these opportunities as follows:

- National Citizen Service: wearencs.com
- England: www.vinspired.com
- Wales: volunteering-wales.net
- Scotland: www.volunteerscotland.net
- Northern Ireland: www.volunteernow.co.uk

Check that you understand

- The different ways you can help at your child's school
- The role of school governors and members of school boards, and how you can become one
- The role of members of political parties
- The different local services people can volunteer to support
- How to donate blood and organs
- The benefit of volunteering for you, other people and the community
- The types of activities that volunteers can do
- How you can look after the environment

5.10 Looking after the environment

It is important to recycle as much of your waste as you can. Using recycled materials to make new products uses less energy and means that we do not need to extract more raw materials from the earth. It also means that less rubbish is created, so the amount being put into landfill is reduced.

You can learn more about recycling and its benefits at www.recyclenow.com. At this website you can also find out what you can recycle at home and in the local area you live in England. This information is available for Wales at www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk,

for Scotland at www.zerowastescotland.org.uk and for Northern Ireland from your local authority.

A good way to support your local community is to shop for products locally where you can. This will help businesses and farmers in your area in Britain. It will also reduce your carbon footprint, because the products you buy will not have had to travel as far.

Walking and using public transport to get around when you can is also a good way to protect the environment. It means that you create less pollution than when you use a car.

5.11 The UK and international institutions

5.11.1 The Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is an association of countries that support each other and work together towards shared goals in democracy and development. Most member states were once part of the British Empire. The King is the ceremonial head of the Commonwealth, which currently has 54 member states. The Commonwealth is based on the core values of democracy, good government and the rule of law.

Commonwealth members		
Antigua and Barbuda	Australia	The Bahamas
Bangladesh	Barbados	Belize
Botswana	Brunei Darussalam	Cameroon
Canada	Cyprus	Dominica
Fiji	Gabon	The Gambia
Ghana	Grenada	Guyana
India	Jamaica	Kenya
Kingdom of Eswatini	Kiribati	Lesotho
Malawi	Malaysia	Maldives
Malta	Mauritius	Mozambique
Namibia	Nauru	New Zealand
Nigeria	Pakistan	Papua New Guinea
Rwanda	Samoa	Seychelles
Sierra Leone	Singapore	Solomon Islands
South Africa	Sri Lanka	St Kitts and Nevis
St Lucia	St Vincent and the Grenadines	Togo
Tonga	Trinidad and Tobago	Tuvalu
Uganda	United Kingdom	United Republic of Tanzania
Vanuatu	Zambia	

5.11.2 The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe has 47 member countries, including the UK, and is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights. It draws up conventions and charters, the most well-known of which is the European Convention on Human Rights.

5.11.3 The United Nations

The UK is part of the **United Nations (UN)**, an international organisation with more than 190 member countries. The UN was set up after the Second World War and aims to prevent war and promote international peace and security. The UK is one of five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

5.11.4 NATO

The UK is also a member of **NATO** (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), a group of European and North American countries that have agreed to help each other if they come under attack.

Check that you understand

- What the Commonwealth is and its role
- Other international organisations of which the UK is a member

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