

# The National CV 2012

## 'Applying for the future'

**Name: Britain**

The United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland, the UK

**Age: 8,000 years an island**

Everyone else is 'overseas' – since the ice melted that covered most of Britain during the Ice Age; sea levels rose, cutting off the Continent

**Capital city: London**

One of the world's oldest capitals; the Greenwich Meridian is 0° longitude; this is the central line of reference for measuring time anywhere on Earth and, along with the equator, location

**Family members: England, Scotland & Wales** are parts of the island known as Great Britain (named to contrast with 'Lesser Britain', on the opposite shore to the south, now known as Brittany); **Northern Ireland** is another part of the island group known as the British Isles, which is made up of more than 1,000 islands

**Overarching statement:** Britain has made the most disproportionate contribution to civilisation of anywhere on Earth, whilst representing less than 0.2% of the world's land and having under 1% of its people at any given time; Britain launched the modern world (constitutional monarchy & parliamentary democracy, science, Age of Reason, industry, second agricultural revolution) and has made many other pioneering contributions (TV, jet engine, antibiotics, World Wide Web, English language); the British are *The Influential Islanders* – and Britain is 'applying for the future'

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**'This sceptred isle, this green and pleasant land of hope and glory'**



**Britain in Brief**

*Summary – Britain has given the world:*

Megalithic Culture (3800-1500 BC), before Sumer & Ancient Egypt

Tin to harden copper for tools & weapons in the Bronze Age (2500-750 BC)

Druidism (BC) & Roman Empire

Christianised by Helen of Britain & her son Constantine the Great (AD 300s)

Wool: AD 700s-1500s, the Middle Ages

Writing standards: Alcuin of York, AD 789

Common law (880s), trial by jury (1166), habeas corpus (1305)

Constitutional monarchy & parliamentary democracy (1600s); reigning, Elizabeth II

Modern science (Royal Society, 1660)

Age of Reason (1680s & 1700s)

Coal & manufactured goods after the Industrial Revolution, which started in Britain c1750; Great Exhibition, 1851

War heroes: Richard the Lionheart, Henry V, Marlborough, Nelson, Wellington, Churchill; fighting tyranny with Allies

Inventions: pencil, dairy ice cream, steam engine, vaccination, postage stamp, jet engine, antibiotics, milk chocolate, sandwich, business suit, modern novel

Ideas: liberty, gravity, evolution, liberal economics, anti-slavery, medical leaps (e.g. scurvy, sanitation, asepsis, nursing), maths symbols (=, x, π), Greenwich Meridian, organised sport, the weekend, names like 'Easter', 'USA' & 'Big Bang'

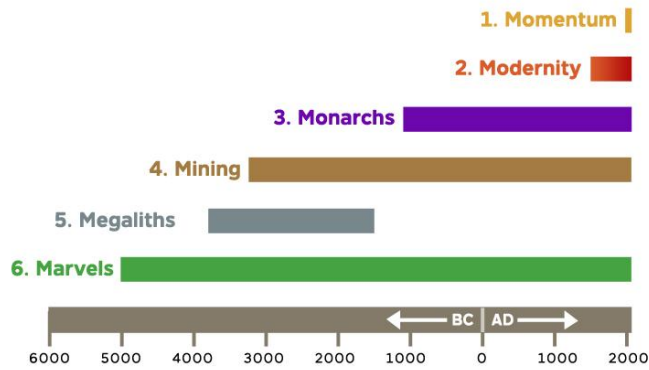
Globalisation: Britain linked up the world (late 1800s) when she was the first global superpower (with history's most extensive empire) & made crucial contributions to the second link-up (1990s), e.g. packet switching, World Wide Web, English

Legends: Giants, St George & the Dragon, Lady Godiva, King Arthur, Robin Hood

Culture: Chaucer, Shakespeare, Austen, Burns, Dickens, Elgar, Constable, Turner; genre & children's fiction, films/TV, pop, art

English as the first world language

# The Influential Islanders



**1. Momentum** (Motion due to the force of history) 2012: Diamond Jubilee, London Olympics, Paralympics; war in Afghanistan (2001-present); fun (Harry Potter, Wallace & Gromit, James Bond 007, Beatles, Red Nose Day); firsts (stem cell bank, solo Pacific oarsman, supersonic car, personal digital assistant, balloon circumnavigation, clockwork radio, bagless vacuum cleaner, World Wide Web, genetic profiling & genomic decoding, cloned mammal – Dolly the sheep – privatisation, National CV); sporting triumphs (Rugby World Cup, 2003, Football World Cup, 1966); new value, *inclusiveness*; traditional values, *freedom, democracy, tolerance, fair play, practicality, individualism & originality, civility, seeing the funny side of things & looking outwards to the world (global destiny)*

**2. Modernity** Britain launched the modern world through (1) science (gravity, atomic theory, evolution, electromagnetism), (2) industry, (3) thinking (the Age of Reason) & (4) agriculture; she (5) linked up the world (globalisation) and gave great ideas about (6) freedom & democracy and (7) humanitarianism & health; also, Britain has been influential through (8) six great wars won, (9) the British Empire (450 years from late 1400s; maritime, trading, liberal), (10) language & culture, (11) invention of modern sport & (12) as a hot spot for firsts (car, 1711, dynamo, 1831, penicillin, 1928)

**3. Monarchs** World's oldest monarchy; 3,000-year history, ~140 kings & queens, representing extraordinary continuity; ancient tradition is of mixed government of regal and democratic; now, a constitutional monarch within a parliamentary democracy; some nations have not allowed women to rule, but Britain has proudest tradition of queens anywhere, to Elizabeth II – today's most Influential Islander – and is personified by a goddess, Britannia

**4. Mining** Longest tradition anywhere of extracting riches from the Earth; Britain was 'Tin Island' in the Bronze Age; copper, the other component of bronze, has also been mined since remote antiquity; pioneered extraction of salt from seawater & deep mines; graphite (for pencils); coal & iron for the industrial revolution, which started in Britain; North Sea oil & gas; recently, Northern Irish gold, Yorkshire potash, Devonian tungsten

**5. Megaliths** 'Great stones' for burial chambers & standing stones; full-on Megalithic Culture by 3500 BC, before Sumer & Ancient Egypt; Britain is a fabulously ancient land; unique chalk hill figures; island had been reinhabited after Ice Age (ended c8000 BC); of ethnic British genes, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> relate to this founder population

**6. Marvels** Unique flood story (Welsh Triads); home of Druidism (literate BC); birth of Christendom (Constantine the Great, half British, decreed Sunday holy); female pope (Joan); Domesday Book (1086); cathedrals; wool trade; wollen business suit (c1860); week-end (Robert Walpole, 1700s); Uranus found (1781); Scotch whisky; 1<sup>st</sup> bottled beer & sparkling wine; dairy ice cream; stilton, cheddar; fine wine appreciation; milk chocolate; sandwich; Western curries; pubs & beer; fish 'n' chips; roast lunch, proper pudding; cup of tea

## Key dates

2015 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magna Carta  
 2001 Human genome decoded, 31% in UK  
 1990s Second globalisation; WWI (1914-18, UK)  
 1982 Falklands War won; Margaret Thatcher  
 1973 Britain enters EU  
 1953 DNA structure solved in UK; Elizabeth II  
 1939-45 WWII won; Winston Churchill; first functional computer, Colossus; George VI  
 1925 Television invented in Britain (J L Baird)  
 1918 British women gain vote  
 1914-18 WWI won; Lloyd George; George V  
 1880-1914 First globalisation (railways, iron steamships, telegraph); Victoria, Edward VII  
 1859 Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*  
 1833 Slavery abolished in British Empire  
 1803-15 Napoleon vanquished (Trafalgar, 1805, Waterloo, 1815); George III (lost US)  
 1776 Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*  
 1759 Best-ever year for British arms; wins in North America, India & Europe; George II  
 c1750 Industrial Revolution starts in Britain  
 1733 Invention of flying shuttle by John Kay  
 1712 Newcomen steam engine, refined Watt 1768  
 1709 Smelting iron with coke (Abraham Darby)  
 1701-14 War of the Spanish Succession won; Blenheim, 1704; Marlborough; Anne  
 1700s Age of Reason (the Enlightenment)  
 1690 John Locke describes rights to life, liberty & property; rulers should serve the people  
 1688 Glorious Revolution; William & Mary; Bill of Rights, 1689  
 1687 Isaac Newton, *Principia* (laws of motion)  
 1670 Juries don't need to convict or say why  
 1666 Great Fire of London; Charles II  
 1660 Royal Society founded; modern science  
 1642-51 English Civil War; Charles I beheaded as traitor, 1649; republic under Cromwell  
 1640 Star Chamber abolished as unjust; accused's right to silence affirmed  
 1564-1616 William Shakespeare; *Holinshed's Chronicles*; Guy Fawkes (1605); Bible (1611)  
 1588 Spanish Armada defeated, Elizabeth I  
 1534 Protestant Reformation, Henry VIII  
 1455-85 Wars of Roses; Richard III killed 1485  
 1415 Agincourt won by Henry V, during Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)  
 1381 Peasants' Revolt; Wat Tyler & Richard II  
 1348 Black Death; Edward III; Order of Garter  
 1200s Science based on evidence; Roger Bacon, first scientist; Henry III, Edward I  
 1265 Elected parliament; Simon de Montfort  
 1215 Magna Carta; John  
 1166 Trial by jury; Henry II  
 1102 Slavery outlawed in England; Henry I  
 1066 Battle of Hastings, William beat Harold  
 973 Coronation Oath, pledging justice; Edgar  
 880s Common law; Alfred the Great  
 789 Alcuin of York standardises writing  
 c670 *Tysilio Chronicle* started by monk Tysilio  
 55 BC – AD 51 Britons resist Romans, then in Roman Empire to AD 410; Boudicca, AD 60  
 390 BC Sack of Rome by Brennus of Britain  
 c420 BC Molmutine Laws; Molmutius  
 c1100 BC Brutus the Trojan names island 'Britain' & founds London; traditional tale  
 2500-750 BC Bronze Age Cornish tin  
 3800-1500 BC Megalithic monuments erected  
 c6000 BC Britain becomes an island