

# VALUES

## The characteristics of our British national identity

We affirm the fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law, equality of every human being before the law, freedom of speech and the rights of all men and women to live free from persecution.

We affirm as a matter of principle and of historical record that these values originate from Judaeo-Christian belief, thought and practice, which has been foundational in these islands. As such these values have been recognised worldwide as defining our national identity.

The central value in British history and culture, derived from our Judaeo-Christian foundations, is that every human being is created by God of infinite worth and with unique purpose and destiny. Therefore, every man, woman and child is entitled to respect, care, consideration and protection.

Our values, relating to our personal and corporate life, are given substance, and first learned in the family, the original and enduring building block of our society, where mother and father are duly honoured as the primary educators.

Our values embrace respect for the rule of law and equality of all before the law, together with freedom of speech, debate, conscience and religion. Equity has a long and illustrious pedigree for which the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magna Carta is a timely reminder.

Our values embrace the utmost respect for human life and the wellbeing of others, compassion and care for the vulnerable, hospitality and mutual interdependence.

Our values derive from the belief that we are all responsible and accountable for our actions, recognising that there are consequences to all that we say and do. Our values encourage every person to seek the common good over and above personal gain, never insisting on our human rights at the expense of our social responsibilities.

Our values are evidenced in mutual trust, truthfulness and integrity. Our word is our bond within all relationships from the home to the marketplace, in civil society and in government. These are complemented by the attitudes of courtesy, compassion and modesty.

Our values applaud and encourage the virtues of commitment to hard work, steadfastness and reliability, in addition to consideration towards the feelings of others.

British history clearly authenticates the role and benefits of Christian teaching and practice. This is evidenced in the struggles to establish the rule of law and to defeat slavery and the slave trade; the establishment of the rights of conscience and the consistent opposition to intimidation, coercion, corruption, tyranny and oppression; the founding of numerous charitable institutions and the upholding of human dignity through the provision of education, health care and welfare. The essential recognition of the spiritual dimension of life provides the clear principles that lead to the honouring of others irrespective of their personal beliefs.

These values bring hope for all people because they reflect the character of the Creator and the created order. We seek actively to promote these values now as fundamental to the health of our national life and to teach and transmit to future generations their validity and their origin in the Judaeo-Christian foundations of our culture.

We call upon people of all faiths and none to subscribe to these values and to affirm and confirm them in daily life, general profession, teaching, and government.

*Drafted following a meeting in the House of Lords of 22 Christian leaders from different traditions, chaired by Professor Lord Alton of Liverpool, this statement was the subject of a special Consultation in the House of Commons on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015. Following this it was simultaneously presented at Buckingham Palace for Her Majesty, The Queen, and at 10 Downing Street for the Prime Minister.*

Further information: Maranatha Community, [www.maranathacommunity.org.uk](http://www.maranathacommunity.org.uk), 0161 748 4858