



## Fact sheet 'Loyal and Unshakeable'

St Helena has been a British island since 1659. Cromwell and Charles II granted charters giving the East India Company the right to rule the island on England's behalf. The 1673 Charter gave the islanders and their descendents the same rights and as if they were born in England. For almost 200 years the Company invested in the island because of its important strategic role in protecting English trade.

In 1834 the island became the responsibility of His Majesty's Government. It continued to play a key role in British affairs, providing the base for stamping out the Atlantic slave trade in the 1840s.

Governance became more democratic in 1968 when the first general election was held. The Governor is appointed by the Foreign Office to work with the appointed Secretary and Treasurer and the elected Legislative Council Members. As a Dependent Territory, St Helena continues to rely heavily on UK financial support.

The cultural relationship with Britain is evident in the Georgian architecture of Jamestown, cricket leagues, organizations like the Scouts and the excitement caused by Royal visits.

In 1981 the Nationalities Act changed Saints' status. Since then, Saints have been lobbying to reinstate the right to abode in England and to regain British passports. The motto 'Loyal and Unshakeable' affirms that, although Saints have a strong local identity, their national identity is British.