

Charter, granted by James I
3rd August 1604

James, by the Grace of God, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all to whom these our present Letters shall come, Greeting. Know ye that we considering that our Borough of Clifton Dartmouth Hardness in our County of Devon is a Borough and Port near the Sea ancient and very populous and being willing that here after a certain true & indoubted manner in the same Borough of & upon the keeping of our Peace & the Government and ordering of our people may thee always be had & that the Borough aforesaid always in future Times may be and remain a Borough of Peace and Quietness to the Fear & Terror of evil men & for the preservation of good men and also that our Peace & other Acts of Justice & which do belong unto Peace and Justice without any delay & detriment there may be firmly kept & done & hoping that if the Major Bailiff & Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid shall enjoy great Liberties & Priviledges by our Grant then heretofore they have had then to the Services which may be employed & shewed unto us our Heirs & Successors they will think themselves to be more specially & strongly bound and to the intent that with the greater care & diligence they may employ those their services for us of our special Grace & of our certain knowledge & meer motion we have granted & for us our Heirs & Successors do Grant to the foresaid Major, Bailiffs and Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid and their Successors that the Major & Recorder of the same Borough for the time being during the Time & Times in which they in their Offices of Major & Recorder by the Borough aforesaid shall happen to be & the last Predecessor of the said Major from time to time being & their successors & every Person which now is or hereafter shall be the last or next foregoing Major of the said Borough for the time being & in the same Borough inhabiting or resident hereafter for ever be & shall be our Justices & that every of them be and shall be our Justice & of our heirs & Successors to conserve & keep & to cause to be kept & maintained the Peace in the same Borough & within the Limits Precincts & Liberties of the same & in & throughout the Parish of Townstall in the County of Devon extending as well within as without the said Borough & Liberties of the same & also to keep & correct & cause to be kept & corrected the Statutes of Artificers & Labourers weights & measures within the Borough & Parish aforesaid & Liberties & Limits of the same or of either of them without any other Mandate Commission or Warrant from us our heirs or successors to be had & obtained.

And that the said Major & Recorder and the said last Predecessor or next precedent Major of the Borough aforesaid for the time being & their successors or any two of them (of whom the said Major or Recorder of the Borough aforesaid for the time being we will have to be one) may have & shall have full power & authority to inquire of all & singular murders, manslaughteres & other Felonies whatsoever. And also of

forestalling, regrating, engrossing & other transgressions, trespasses, evil deeds and other inferior faults, defects, contempts, offences and articles whatsoever within the Borough & Parish aforesaid limits, precincts & liberties of them or of either of them done, moved or committed. And also to hear & determine all and singular the same offences & articles whatsoever within the Borough & Parish aforesaid the limits, precincts & liberties of the same or of either of them done, moved or committed (murders, manslaughter & felons & other offences and faults confirming the loss of life or members only excepted) which be for any keepers & justices of the same Peace in any County of our Realm of England by the Laws and Statutes of the same Kingdom ought or may be inquired, heard or determined yet so that the said Major & Recorder & the foresaid last Predecessor or next precedent Mayor of the Borough aforesaid for the Time being & their successors or either of them to the determining of any murder, manslaughter or Felony of of any other matters touching life or members within the Borough & Parish aforesaid Limits Precincts & Liberties of the same or of either of them without the special commandment of us our heirs & successors in any sort hereafter may not proceed. And we will & for us our Heirs and Successors firmly by these presents injoining do command that no keepers or justices of the Peace or any ministers or Officers of us our Heirs or Successors appointed or to be appointed to hear & determine trespasses, misprisions and other inferior misdeeds, offences & contempts in our County of Devon of for or concerning the premises or any or either the articles whatsoever belonging or appertaining to the Office or Function of Justices of the Peace within the said Borough or Parish the Limits, Liberties & Precincts of the same for what cause soever growing or happening of themselves by any means hereafter do intromit nor any one of them do intromit unless only of for & concerning Treason, Murder, Manslaughter, Felony or other Things or Matters touching or concerning the Loss of Life or Members and this by a special Command or Commission of us our Heirs or Successors to that purpose & in that behalf to be made and directed unto them. And further we will & by these presents for us our Heirs & Successors do Grant unto the aforesaid Major Bayliffs and Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid and their Successors that the Major Recorder & the aforesaid last Predecessor or next precedent Major & their Successors or any two of them (of whom the Major & Recorder of the Borough aforesaid for the time being we will have to be one) by their Warrant in writing may be able & may Command send and commit all & all manner of Person & Persons from time to time taken or to be taken arrested or to be arrested within the Borough or Parish aforesaid the Liberties or Precincts of the same for any Treasons, Murders, Felonys or any other Misdeeds or Causes whatsoever for which they ought lawfully to be imprisoned unto our Gaol in the County of Devon from time to time as often as it shall seem unto them necessary or fit thereby by the keeper of the Gaol aforesaid for the time being to be received obtained and safely kept until by due proceeding of Law they may be delivered as other Justices of the Peace

within the County of Devon do or are accustomed to do any Statute Act or Ordinance to the Contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding. And further we will & for us our Heirs & Successors we Grant unto the aforesaid Mayor Bailiffs and Burgesses of the said Borough & their successors for ever that the Major of the Borough aforesaid for the time being & the Masters or those of the Common Council of the Borough aforesaid for the time being called together to those twelve of the most honest & discreet Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid for the time being if they will be present or the greater part of the same Major Masters or those of the Common Council & twelve Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid for the time being to them as is aforesaid being called of whom the Major of the Borough aforesaid we will to be one in the Guildhall of the same Borough or in any other convenient place within the same Borough as often as it shall seem unto them needful and necessary in that behalf being in that Sort assembled & gathered together shall have & by these presents may have full Authority Power and Ability to institute, constitute ordain, make & establish from time to time such Laws, Institutions, Statutes, Ordinances & Constitutions as unto them or the greater part of them (of whom the Major of the Borough aforesaid for the time being we will have to be one) shall seem to be good wholesome profitable, honest & necessary according to their sound discretion for the well ordering and governing of the Major Bayliffs & Burgesses & of all and singular other Inhabitants or residents of the said Borough or Parish aforesaid & of all Officers, Ministers, Artificers & Residents whatsoever within the said Borough or Parish aforesaid for the time being and for the declaration in what Manner and Order the aforesaid Major Bayliffs and Burgesses & all other & singular Ministers, Officers, Artificers, Inhabitants & Residents of the Borough aforesaid & of their Doings, Services & Apprenticeship in their Offices, Functions Ministry, Trades & Businesses within the Borough aforesaid & the Liberties thereof for the time being shall behave demean & use themselves & otherwise for the now profitable publick good, common profit, & good Government of the Borough aforesaid & the vitualling of the said Borough. And also for the better preservation government disposing, letting granting of the lands, tenements, possessions, revenues & hereditaments to the aforesaid Major Bayliffs & Burgesses & their successors given & granted assigned or hereafter to be granted, given or assigned & all other causes and things whatsoever touching or any way concerning the State, Rights & Intents of the same Borough & that the Major of the Borough aforesaid for the time being & the Twelve Masters or those of the Common Council of the said Borough for the time being called together as is aforesaid to those twelve of the Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid for the time being or the greatest part of them (of whom we will that the Major of the Borough aforesaid for the time being to be one) as often as they shall institute make, ordain & establish such laws Institutions, Ordinances and Constitutions in form aforesaid such & such like punishments, pains & penalties by imprisonment of body or by fines & amerciaments or by both of them

against & upon all Delinquents against such Laws, Institutions, Statutes, Ordinances & Constitutions or any one or more of them as & which to the same Major Masters or those of the Common Council and to the twelve of the Burgesses to the Borough aforesaid for the time being called unto them as is aforesaid or to the greater part of them (of whom the Mayor of the Borough aforesaid for the time being we will to be one) according to their sound discretions necessary & requisite for the observation of the aforesaid Laws, Ordinances & Constitutions shall seem to be best to ordain, limit & provide and the same fines & ameracements may lay & have to the use of the aforesaid Major Bayliffs & Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid for the time being without any impediment of us our heirs & successors or of any one or more of our Officers or Ministers and this without any account or any other thing thereof to be given to us our heirs & successors. And all & singular which Laws, Ordinances, Constitutions, Statutes & Institutions so as is aforesaid to be made we will & do firmly enjoyn for us our heirs & Successors to be observed under the Penalty in them to be contained yet so as that such Laws, Ordinances, Institutions & Constitutions be not repugnant & contrary to the Statutes & Laws of our Realm of England. And further of our larger special Grace & mear motion we have granted and confirmed and by those presents for us our Heirs & Successors do Grant & Confirm to the aforesaid Major Bayliffs & Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid & their Successors all & singular so many so great the same such & such like Lands, Tenements & Hereditaments, Customs, Libertys, Priviledges, Franchises, Immunities, Exemptions & Jurisdictions, Fairs, Markets, Tolls, Propertys, Customs of Cheats, Fines, Amerciaments & other Profits whatsoever as many as great such as & which the Major Bayliffs and Burgesses of the Borough aforesaid or their predecessors or any of them by what Name or Names soever or by what Incorporations soever or by Pretence of what Incorporation soever heretofore had used or enjoyed