

## CHARTER SONG

Words and Music by John Kirkpatrick in 2023

Written and composed for the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the granting of the Town Charter to Bishop's Castle

The song comes in several sections. The tempo stays the same throughout.

- It starts with a brass fanfare – 16 bars. This is based on one of the tunes believed to be unique to The Bishop's Castle Town Band, which sadly has not appeared for some years. This tune is referred to by its members as "Sausage".
- Then a four bar link on accordion leading into the singing. On the synthesised recording the accordion link is represented by a solo vocal sound.
- There is a verse/chorus section with three verses, followed by a four bar accordion link each time. On the synthesised track there is only one verse/chorus. All three verses can be heard on the individual vocal tracks.
- There are the usual four parts for the choir. The top line is called "Tune" rather than "Soprano" as there will be mixed male and female voices on the parts.
- After the third verse and chorus the link is different, leading into the extract from an anthem in praise of Queen Elizabeth I by her court composer William Byrd
- The four parts expand into five, with two alto lines,
- Two lines on accordion introduce the "Bells" section, sung to peals of the six church bells in St John the Baptist Church.
- Then a double reprise of the chorus
- The brass come in again at the end on the final chorus.

### *Verses*

1. The bishop in his castle, five hundred years or more  
All through the town and the country round, the bishop's word was law  
But now the times are altered, the town has been set free  
Set free within this year of grace of Fifteen Seventy-Three

*Chorus:*           Vivat Regina, Long live our noble Queen  
                          The liberties she's granted us we ne'er before have seen  
                          The town of Bishop's Castle can a free borough stand  
                          By word of Royal Charter, signed by the Royal Hand

2. For now we have a council of burgesses fifteen  
To keep the town in order for the mighty and the mean  
A Town Hall for the meetings, a gaol for waifs and strays  
A court of law for justice, oh, now to the Queen give praise
3. Each year when up comes Michaelmas, on that last Monday morn  
Elections shall be counted in, the sacred oath be sworn  
A new-found corporation to serve another year  
And a Bailiff there to lead the town in all that we hold dear

***William Byrd section***

Oh Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our Queen  
To rejoice in Thy strength.

*(Sing these lines twice)*

***Bells section***

*Two peals on accordion*

Long live our noble Queen  
God save our glorious Queen  
Her Majesty serene  
Long live our noble Queen

*Two peals on accordion*

We've burgesses fifteen  
In red and white and green  
The Bailiff is but one  
He is our finest son  
Two sergeants with a mace  
They take their rightful place  
A constable, a clerk  
They too will make their mark  
And other lower officers

*Two peals on accordion*

Long live our noble Queen *(four times)*

*Chorus:* Vivat Regina, Long live our noble Queen  
The liberties she's granted us we ne'er before have seen  
The town of Bishop's Castle can a free borough stand  
By word of Royal Charter, signed by the Royal Hand

*(Sing twice, repeat last line)*