

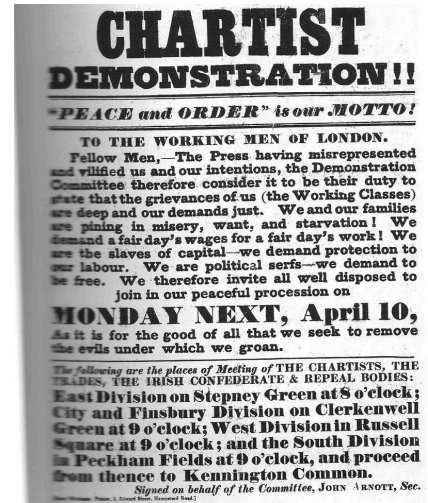
L7: The Chartists - Aims, Methods and Impact

The Chartists were a group of people in the 19th century who wanted to bring about political changes to help **working-class** people have more **power and rights**. They had three main aims: universal suffrage, secret ballots, and annual elections.

Universal suffrage means that they wanted everyone, including working-class people and women, to have the right to vote. At that time, only wealthy men who owned property were allowed to vote. The Chartists believed that everyone should have a say in choosing their government, no matter how much money they had or where they came from.

The second aim was to have **secret ballots**. This means that when people voted, their choice would be kept private. Before the Chartists, voting was often done in public, and people had to announce their choice out loud. This made it difficult for many people to vote freely, as they might be worried about backlash or pressure from others. Having secret ballots would make voting more fair and ensure that people can vote for who they truly want without fear of consequences.

Lastly, the Chartists wanted to have **annual elections**. This means that they wanted elections to happen every year instead of every few years. They believed that more frequent elections would keep politicians more accountable to the people. It would give the people the chance to choose new leaders if they were not happy with the current ones.



To achieve these aims, the Chartists used various **methods**. They organised **rallies** and **public meetings** where they would discuss their goals and spread their ideas. They also collected signatures on **petitions**, which were like letters signed by many people who supported the Chartists' cause. They would then present these petitions to the government to show the widespread support for their demands. Additionally, they even went on **strike** and held protests to make their voices heard.

Overall, the Chartists were a group of people who fought for equal voting rights, privacy in voting, and more frequent elections. They believed that everyone should have a say in how their country is run, no matter their social or economic background. Their efforts played a significant role in the development of democratic rights that we enjoy today.

Short-Term Impact of the Chartists	Long-Term Impact of the Chartists
Increased awareness of issues and problems affecting the working class.	The Representation of the People Act (1867) and further electoral reform.
Influenced public opinion and political debate about making reforms to democracy.	Extension of the franchise to include a greater amount of the population.
Formation of the People's Charter and Chartist movement.	Introduction of the secret ballot and equal electoral areas.
	Improved working conditions and labour rights for workers influenced by the Chartists.

Challenges faced by the Chartists:

- Opposition from the ruling elite and established political parties
- Suppression of protests and strikes by authorities
- Divisions within the Chartist movement itself
- Lack of media coverage and limited resources for organising

<p><u>Interpretation 1: The working-class view of the Chartists</u></p> <p>B. Wilson, <i>The Struggles of an Old Chartist</i> (1887):</p> <p>The Chartists would be referred to by ugly names, for example 'the unwashed'. What they wanted was a voice in making the laws they were called upon to obey; they believed that taxation without representation was deeply unfair, and ought to be resisted. The Chartists were the true pioneers in all the great movements of their time.</p>	<p><u>Interpretation 2: Middle-class feels on the Chartists</u></p> <p>Archibald Alison - Philosopher (1839)</p> <p>The working-classes have now proved themselves unworthy of that extension of the franchise which they demand; they are simple and ill-informed men... What the working-classes understand by political power, is just the means of putting their hands in their neighbour's. This lack of understanding shows just how dangerous and poor of a decision it would be to grant them the vote.</p>
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Writing Frame:

Interpretation 1 shares the view that the Chartists were...

The detail in the interpretation that tells me this is...

On the other hand, Interpretation 2 shares the view that the Chartists were...

The detail in the interpretation that tells me this is...

*The interpretations have different views because... **(ORIGIN)***

For example...

This is significant because...

Challenge:

Which interpretation is more useful based on your knowledge of the Chartists?