**NON CONFORMIST TIMELINE – 1694-1921**

**1500s** *London Population c. 50-75,000*

1509: Henry VIII ascended to the English throne at the age of 17

1517: Non conformist Martin Luther nailed a copy of his *Ninety-Five Theses* (a protest against clerical abuses)to the door of All Saint’s Church in Saxony, instigating the Protestant Reformation

1529: Henry VIII summoned Parliament to deal with the annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, bringing together those who wanted religious reform

1531: The English Reformation began when an assembly of the Church of England bishops and clergy agreed to recognize Henry VIII as sole protector and Supreme Head of the Church and clergy of England

1534: The Act of Supremacy was passed, declaring King Henry VIII as the head of the Church in England. From this point the Church of England replaced Catholicism as the established state religion

1538: The Anglican Church began keeping Parish records of baptisms, marriages and burials

1554: The Act of Supremacy was repealed by King Henry VIII’s daughter Queen Mary I

1558: The Act of Supremacy was reinstated by Mary's Protestant half-sister, Elizabeth I, when she ascended to the throne. Elizabeth declared herself Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

1559: The Act of Uniformity passed, making it a legal obligation to go to church every Sunday

**1600s** *London Population c. 200,000*

1640: Non conformist congregations began producing registers of births, marriages and deaths (previously they were reluctant to produce written evidence of their dissent)

1661-1665: A number of acts collectively known as the Clarendon Code were passed, restricting the civil liberties of non conformists. They were restricted from public office and forbidden from meeting in groups of more than five people

1689: The Act of Toleration was passed, granting freedom of worship to non conformists who had taken an oath of allegiance to the monarch as Supreme Governor of the Church of England. It granted freedom to Protestants but not Catholics or Quakers

**1700s** *London Population c. 550,000*

1703: Non conformist Daniel Defoe was arrested on account of his pamphlet entitled ‘The Shortest-Way with the Dissenters’; within which he ruthlessly satirised both the High church Tories and the dissenters who hypocritically practiced so-called ‘occasional conformity’

1707: England and Scotland’s parliaments convened at the Palace of Westminster to put into effect the Acts of Union, joined the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland

1731: Famous non conformist Daniel Defoe died

1753: Lord Hardwick’s Marriage Act was passed, meaning every marriage had to be performed in a Church of England church, making non conformist marriages unofficial in the eyes of the law

1757: Birth of famous non conformist William Blake, whose artwork and poetry reflected his strong criticisms of the Church of England

**1800s** *London Population 959,300*

1806: Birth of famous non conformist John Stuart Mill

1807: The Slave Trade Act was passed, abolishing the slave trade throughout the British Empire. The act was campaigned for by Evangelical English Protestants who allied with the Quakers

1827: Death of famous non conformist William Blake, who was buried in the Bunhill Fields Cemetery, Islington

1828: The Clarendon Code laws, which restricted the civil liberties of those who refused to pledge allegiance to the Church of England, were repealed

1837: Civil Registration introduced, meaning the state took control of the process of the registration of births, marriages and deaths

1851: Religious census of 1851 revealed that total non conformist attendance was very close to that of Anglicans

1859: John Stuart Mill published his work *‘On Liberty’*, aradical work to Victorian readers which supported moral and economic freedom of individuals from the state

1873: Death of John Stuart Mill

1883: After heavy campaigning from the non conformist liberals, laws preventing child labour were passed