

# Bid for return of city status

**Councillor wants to petition Queen**

**by Luke Hollands**

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A CAMPAIGN is calling for Rochester's historic city status to be reinstated.

In the year 1211, when the Mongol hordes were sweeping across Asia and Magna Carta was four years from being drafted, Rochester was officially named a city.

But centuries later, in 1998, an administrative slip meant it was removed from the Lord Chancellor's list of cities and became a humble town.

Now Cllr Craig Mackinlay (Con), who represents River ward, is calling for a petition to be presented to the Queen asking for Rochester to become a city once more.

Cllr Mackinlay said: "It's time for all to work together to regain the title that is rightfully ours."

He has received backing from the Mayor of Medway, Cllr David Carr, who said: "I am taking a keen interest, as are other senior members of the council, to put



**Rochester Castle and inset, Craig Mackinlay**

right this dreadful wrong and to regain the prestige of city status that is historically ours."

One key factor in the campaign is the argument that Rochester should be a city because it has a cathedral and a castle. Cyril

Baldwin, chairman of the Pickwick Club, said: "I could never understand why city status was lost. How can we have one of the most impressive castles in the country and a cathedral and not be called a city?"