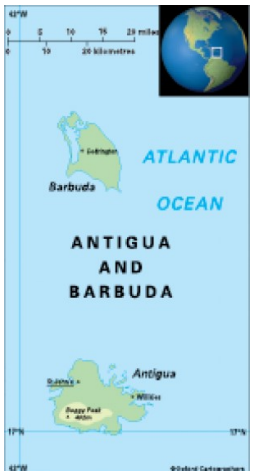
Antigua and Barbuda

Joined the Commonwealth in 1981 - visited by the Queen in 1985

Antigua and Barbuda is a small island nation in the Leeward Islands of the Caribbean

Pop: (2013) 90,000 Capital: St John's Area: 441 sq km

Antigua is a popular tourist destination with cruise ships regularly calling in at the deep water harbour in St John's. The island has a tropical climate and with its indented coastline and coral reefs is reputed to have 365 sandy beaches – one for every day of the year. English Harbour and Nelson's Dockyard on the south-east coast offer safe havens for transatlantic yachts. The country is also an economic centre for off shore financial services. Until 1971, the island produced cane sugar for export.

The island of Barbuda is 40 km north of Antigua. Despite a lack of fresh water, it has exclusive resorts specialising in water sports and is a sanctuary for frigate birds. Redonda, a rocky outcrop 40 km south-east of Antigua, is uninhabited.

English Harbour, Antigua