

Frogmore House

Frogmore House is a private, unoccupied residence set in the grounds of the Home Park of Windsor Castle. It is frequently used by the royal family for entertaining. It was recently used as the reception venue for the wedding of The Queen's eldest grandson, Peter Phillips, to Autumn Kelly, in May 2008.

How history shaped Frogmore

The estate in which Frogmore House now lies first came into royal ownership in the 16th century. The original Frogmore House was built between 1680 and 1684 for tenants Anne Aldworth and her husband Thomas May, almost certainly to the designs of his uncle, Hugh May who was Charles II's architect at Windsor. From 1709 to 1738 Frogmore House was leased by the **Duke of Northumberland**, son of Charles II by the Duchess of Cleveland. The House then had a succession of occupants, including Edward Walpole, second son of the Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole.

In 1792 **George III** (r. 1760-1820) bought Frogmore House for his wife **Queen Charlotte**, who used it for herself and her unmarried daughters as a country retreat. Although the house had been continuously occupied and was generally in good condition, a number of alterations were required to make it fit for the use of the royal family, and architect James Wyatt was appointed to the task. By May 1795, Wyatt had extended the second floor and added single-storey pavilions to the north and south of the garden front, linked by an open colonnade and in 1804 he enlarged the wings by adding a tall bow room and a low room beyond, to make a dining room and library at the south end and matching rooms at the north.

After the death of Queen Charlotte in 1818, Frogmore House passed to her eldest unmarried daughter, **Princess Augusta**. It was the house's next occupant, the **Duchess of Kent**, who had been offered Frogmore as her country home by her daughter Queen Victoria in May 1841, who made many alterations however, substantially modernising and redecorating the house to suit her tastes. She used the house regularly until her death 20 years later.

In the second half of the 19th century Frogmore House was used intermittently as the residence of different members of the royal family. **The Princess of Wales (the future Queen Alexandra)** gave birth there to her first child (the Duke of Clarence and Avondale) in 1864, and from 1866 to 1872 Queen Victoria's third daughter, **Princess Helena**, and her husband **Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein** lived in the house before moving to the nearby Cumberland Lodge. During the reign of King Edward VII (r.1901-1910) Frogmore was used by the King's son and daughter-in-law, the **future King George V and Queen Mary**. The latter was instrumental in arranging Frogmore as (in her own words) 'a "family" souvenir museum as well as a museum of "bygones" and of interesting odds and ends'. As Duke and Duchess of York, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth spent part of their honeymoon at Frogmore in 1923.