



Ministerial residences

Standard Note: SN/PC/03367

Last updated: 8 July 2008

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Parliament and Constitution Centre

The Library receives numerous requests for information about ministerial residences, particularly details of costs and entitlement but also historical background. Such information is in the public domain but is scattered around many sources including, in particular, parliamentary questions. This note attempts to draw together some of that information.

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1 List of residences

A list of ministerial residences is given from time to time in answer to parliamentary questions. A recent one was worded as follows:

Mr. Watson: Official residences are assigned to Ministers by the Prime Minister either on grounds of security or in order to allow them to perform better their official duties. Rules on the use of official residences are set out in the "Ministerial Code". Official residences available to Ministers are:

The flats above Numbers **10 and 11 Downing street;**

Flats in **Admiralty House;**

1 Carlton Gardens;

Hillsborough Castle and **Stormont** are available for Ministers in the Northern Ireland Office while on duty in Northern Ireland.

In addition, **Chequers**, **Dorneywood** and **Chevening**, none of which is owned by the Government are also used by Ministers. The **Government House in Pimlico** is no longer required and is in the process of being sold.¹

2 Allocation of residences

In October 2007, a parliamentary answer from Prime Minister Gordon Brown gave details of the allocation of residences among ministers:-

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the grace and favour properties available to members of the Government; and who the current occupants of those properties are. [157812]

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Prime Minister which Ministers occupy each of the official ministerial residences; and which of them (a) pay and (b) do not pay council tax on their official residences. [158074]

The Prime Minister [*holding answer 15 October 2007*]: The flats above numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street have traditionally been the residences of the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer. I currently reside in Number 11 Downing Street and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer resides in Number 10 Downing Street. One of the flats in Admiralty House is currently occupied by my right hon. Friend, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Malloch-Brown). Council tax is paid personally on these official residences by me and both my right hon. Friends. The remaining official residences are currently unoccupied. The ministerial residence in South Eaton Place, Pimlico, is no longer required and it will be sold, with the proceeds going to the Exchequer.

In addition, I have the use of Chequers and my right hon. Friends the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Foreign Secretary, have the use of Dorneywood and Chevening respectively. Council tax in respect of Chequers, Dorneywood and Chevening is a matter for the trustees. Ministers in the Northern Ireland Office have the use of accommodation in Hillsborough Castle and Stormont.²

¹ HC Deb 3 March 2008 c2208W

² HC Deb 17 October 2007 c 1135W

Formerly, the Lord Chancellor occupied an official residence in the House of Lords by virtue of his other role as Speaker of that House. This came to an end when Lord Falconer of Thoroton gave up those duties following the appointment of a Lord Speaker.³

Historical information showing which ministers occupied which residences as at January 1978, January 1988 and January 1998 was given in reply to a Lords parliamentary question on 23 February 1998.⁴

3 Council tax

The question of whether an official residence is deemed to be the main residence of a minister is important in determining who pays the council tax on it. This was explained by the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in a parliamentary answer in June 2000.

All these properties [i.e. the official residences in London] are in council tax banding H. The level and responsibility for payment of council tax is determined on whether the property is the Minister's main or secondary residence. If a main residence, the responsibility for payment of the tax falls to the Minister. If the property is a secondary residence, responsibility for payment falls to the responsible Department. Two Ministers occupying flats in Admiralty House met their own council tax payments, as did I. Departments met the other payments, which were £350 for each property in 1999-2000.⁵

Council tax in respect of Chequers, Dorneywood and Chevening is a matter for the trustees of each residence.

Misunderstandings over council tax liability for ministerial residences occupied by the then Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, were explained in a parliamentary answer on 12 January 2006.⁶ As part of the answer he said that the Cabinet Secretary had put in place procedures to ensure that ministers who are allocated an official residence are given guidance on dealing with their council tax liabilities. A later departmental answer said that:

Guidance is provided on a case-by-case basis taking account of ministers' individual circumstances. It would therefore not be appropriate to disclose such guidance.⁷

The *Ministerial Code* states:

Where a Minister is allocated an official residence, they must ensure that all personal tax liabilities, including council tax, are properly discharged. Ministers should personally pay council tax on at least one property.⁸

4 Income tax

A parliamentary answer from March 2008 included information on the income tax implications of an official residence:

³ See HL Deb 29 March 2006 cWS84

⁴ See, for, example, HL Deb 23 February 2008, c 77W

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld199798/ldhansrd/vo980223/text/80223w05.htm#80223w05_sbhd6

⁵ HC Deb 5 June 2000, c 49-50W

⁶ HC Deb 12 January 2006 cc782-3W

⁷ HC Deb 27 November 2006 c347W

⁸ Cabinet Office, *Ministerial Code*, para 7.10,

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/propriety_and_ethics/ministers/ministerial_code.aspx

Ministers who are allocated official residences pay tax on ancillary services associated with the residences which are provided for use in the private part of the accommodation and which constitute a taxable benefit in kind.⁹

A parliamentary answer from two years before gives further clarification:

Ministers occupying official residences do not pay tax on the living accommodation itself. However, tax is paid on the ancillary services (lighting, heating etc) a sum limited to 10 per cent. of his/her taxable ministerial salary and benefits (if any).¹⁰

5 Other aspects

Ministers do not have **tenancy agreements** relating to their official residences. A parliamentary question on the subject of liability for damage was answered as follows:

Official residences are assigned to Ministers by the Prime Minister either on grounds of security or in order to allow them to perform better their official duties. Rules on the use of official residences are set out in the 'Ministerial Code'. There are no formal tenancy agreements in respect of the use of official residences. The liability for any damage to any of the residences would depend on the circumstances.¹¹

On the subject of **entertainment**, the *Ministerial Code* states:

Government property should not generally be used for constituency work or party activities. A particular exception is recognised in the case of official residences. Where Ministers host Party or personal events in these residences it should be at their own or Party expense with no cost falling to the public purse.¹²

6 Asset values

Asset values for certain ministerial residences are given in the *National Asset Register 2007*. These are:

Admiralty House	1,367 sq metres	£7.758m ¹³
10-12 Downing Street	3,388 sq metres	£7.115m ¹⁴
Hillsborough Castle (incl. contents)		£87.395m ¹⁵

Government House in Pimlico, which has been the London residence of the Home Secretary, is to be sold. A parliamentary answer in March 2008 said that the Department's leasehold

⁹ HC Deb 13 March 2008 cc591-2W

¹⁰ HC Deb 27 March 2006, c832W

¹¹ HC Deb 21 April 2008 c1692W

¹² Cabinet Office, *Ministerial Code*, para 6.2,

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/propriety_and_ethics/ministers/ministerial_code.aspx

¹³ National Asset Register 2007, p16 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E/0/nar2007_chapter2.pdf

¹⁴ National Asset Register 2007, p16 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E/0/nar2007_chapter2.pdf

¹⁵ National Asset Register 2007, p 553 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/8/C/nar2007_chapter14.pdf

interest in the property had most recently been valued at £2.4m.¹⁶ The previous valuation, carried out in 2001, had valued the property at £1.8m.¹⁷

7 Notes on individual residences

7.1 Chequers, Chevening and Dorneywood

Chequers

Chequers in Buckinghamshire was bequeathed to the nation in 1917 by Sir Arthur Lee (later Lord Lee of Fareham), who was then MP for Fareham and Director-General of Food Production. It was to be the official country residence of the British Prime Minister, Lloyd George becoming its first prime ministerial occupant in 1921. The objects of the gift were set out in a schedule to the *Chequers Estate Act 1917*:-

It is not possible to foresee or foretell from what classes or conditions of life the future wielders of power in this country will be drawn. Some may be as in the past men of wealth and famous descent; some may belong to the world of trade and business; others may spring from the ranks of the manual toilers. To none of these in the midst of their strenuous and responsible labours could the spirit and anodyne of Chequers do anything but good. In the city-bred man especially, the periodic contact with the most typical rural life would create and preserve a just sense of proportion between the claims of town and country. To the revolutionary statesman the antiquity and calm tenacity of Chequers and its annals might suggest some saving virtues in the continuity of English history and exercise a check upon too hasty upheavals, whilst even the most reactionary could scarcely be insensible to the spirit of human freedom which permeated the countryside of Hampden Burke and Milton.

Apart from these more subtle influences, the better the health of our rulers the more sanely will they rule and the inducement to spend two days a week in the high and pure air of the Chiltern hills and woods will, it is hoped, benefit the nation as well as its chosen leaders. The main features of this scheme are therefore designed not merely to make Chequers available as the official country residence of the Prime Minister of the day, but to tempt him to visit it regularly and to make it possible for him to live there, even though his income should be limited to his salary.

The 1917 Act provided for a board of ex-officio trustees to administer the estate and trust fund. The board became somewhat unwieldy as its numbers increased to a total of fourteen by 1958. The *Chequers Estate Act 1958* reduced the board to a total of six during the lifetime of Lady Lee (she died in 1967), and five after her death – the Lord Privy Seal, the Prime Minister's nominee, a nominee of the Ministry of Works, the Chairman of the National Trust and the Public Trustee.

As stated above, there is a trust fund but the trustees also receive an annual grant-in-aid from the Government which helps to pay for the maintenance of the house and estate and covers civilian staff costs. This was the subject of parliamentary question in February 2008, as follows:

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what the value is of the payments that have been made to Chequers from the public purse in each year since 1997-98; [176346]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the Chequers Trust Deed. [176347]

¹⁶ HC Deb 17 March 2008 c807W

¹⁷ HC Deb 20 May 2008 c232W

The Prime Minister: On the Chequers grant I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my predecessor (Mr. Blair) on 11 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 54W and 13 February 2003, *Official Report*, column 948W. In addition, I refer the hon. Member to the Freedom of Information release on Chequers, available on the Cabinet Office publication scheme:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/foi/reading_room/topic/chequers.aspx

Figures for addition financial years are set out in the following table:

	<i>Grant (£)</i>
2004-05	980,000
2005-06	900,000
2006-07	950,000

The Chequers Trust Deed is scheduled to the 1918 Chequers Estate Act and was amended and scheduled to the 1958 Chequers Estate Act. Copies are available in the Library of the House.¹⁸

Further information can be found in an earlier answer from January 2007:

Mr. Heald: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what the value of the annual government grant given to Chequers was in 2005-06; [113966]

(2) what the value of the government contribution to the cost of household staff at Chequers, net of VAT refunds, was in 2005-06. [113968]

The Prime Minister: Chequers was established under the Chequers Estate Acts 1917 and 1958 and is administered by independent trustees, who receive an annual grant from public funds towards its maintenance and to cover civilian staff employed at Chequers in accordance with the Acts. Chequers is a grade 1 listed building which the Trustees have a legal obligation to maintain in good repair.

The grant for 2005-06 was £900,000, which covered such major expenditure items as upgrading staff accommodation, renewing leaking underground pipes, relaying paving and driveways, and urgent repairs to brickwork and estate fencing.

In addition, as has been the practice under successive Prime Ministers, the Government also pay for military staff stationed at Chequers, whose numbers have decreased since 1997. The cost for 2005-06 (net of VAT refunds) was £148,571. The cost in 1997 (net of VAT refunds) was £215,191.¹⁹

Details of the Chequers guest list were made available to Norman Lamb MP in January 2005 following a freedom of information request.²⁰ A parliamentary answer in March 2006 listed guests who had attended official dinners at Chequers since 1 May 2005.²¹ Another

¹⁸ HC Deb 18 February 2008 c125W

¹⁹ HC Deb 30 January 2007, c150W

²⁰ See, for example, <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/politics/story/0,6903,1382037,00.html>

²¹ HC Deb 27 March 2006, c 652-3W

parliamentary answer on 25 July 2007 gave a list of guests who had attended official dinners from April 2006 to June 2007.²²

Chevening

Chevening, near Sevenoaks in Kent, was built in the early seventeenth-century and is set in some 3,500 acres of land. It was left to the nation in 1967 by the seventh Earl of Stanhope on condition that it was occupied by either the Prime Minister of the day, a Cabinet Minister or a descendant of King George VI. The Prime Minister has the power to nominate the occupant. The Prince of Wales initially accepted such a nomination in 1974 but subsequently declined. The house has since become effectively the country residence of the Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington having been the first holder of that office to occupy the house.

The *Chevening Estate Act 1959* and *Chevening Estate Act 1987* gave statutory effect to the vesting deed and trust instrument and established a board of trustees responsible for the administering the trust fund and maintaining the house. The board consists of the Lord Privy Seal, two persons appointed by the Prime Minister (at least one of who must be experienced in estate management and forestry), a person appointed by the Secretary of State, the Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum and 'such other persons as are from time to time being appointed by the members holding office.'

From time to time, information has been provided via PQs on the costs of official entertainment at Chevening, but staff costs and other expenditure are borne by the Chevening Trust and so are not included in the FCO's budget. A parliamentary question in June 2006 on official hospitality at Chevening was answered as follows:-

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions hospitality has been offered at Chevening to members of (a) foreign and (b) Commonwealth governments in each year since 2000. [74411]

Margaret Beckett: Official hospitality has been provided to members of foreign governments on the following occasions since 2000:

	<i>Hospitality</i>
30 November 2000	Dinner in honour of President Chirac
17/18 December 2001	Lunch and dinner for UK/Ukraine Conference
22/23 May 2002	Lunch and dinner for UK/Germany Economic Talks
1 February 2003	Dinner for French Foreign Minister
19 January 2004	Dinner for French and German Foreign Ministers

²² HC Deb 25 July 2007 c1110-11W

No official hospitality has been offered to members of Commonwealth governments.

In addition Chevening was used to host a number of meetings of senior officials as part of the G8 process in 2005.²³

The house at Chevening is not open to the public but the garden is opened on occasion for charitable events at the discretion of the trustees.²⁴

Dorneywood

Dorneywood in Buckinghamshire was donated to the nation (through the National Trust) in the early 1940s by Lord Courtauld-Thomson. The house is set in 215 acres and was largely rebuilt after a fire in 1910. James Lees-Milne visited the house on behalf of the National Trust in May 1942. He wrote:-

The house is not up to our standard, although a fairly pleasant red brick building, now swathed in, rather dribbling with, great bunches of wonderful wisteria. The central part is possibly of Queen Anne's time. Lorimer's additions are indifferent in C[ourtauld]-T[homson]'s opinion which I felt free to corroborate. The outbuildings, motor-house, etc have been faked about in half-timbering to look olde-worlde. The green fields close to Burnham Beeches, in which the house stands, should be preserved.²⁵

The gift was made with the object of providing an official furnished residence "...for the use of the Prime Minister of the day or for such other Minister of the Crown or such other specified persons as the Prime Minister might nominate.²⁶ By tradition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is given the use of Dorneywood and, indeed, was allocated to Gordon Brown in 1997. However, he reportedly had little use for it and it became the country residence of the then Deputy Prime Minister (John Prescott) from about 1999 until May 2006. Alistair Cooke, former Deputy Director of the Conservative Research Department, wrote the following in a letter to *The Times* in June 2006:

Sir, the intense interest in the fate of the "key to Dorneywood" (comment, June 5) would have amazed Churchill, who in 1954 became the first person to dispense this piece of prime ministerial patronage.

Then, no one seemed to want it. Anthony Eden lived there briefly, but spent most of his weekends on the telephone to Chequers bickering with Churchill over foreign policy. Harold Macmillan, the next in line, turned it down. Eventually, however, it won the heart of Willie Whitelaw, even though Alan Clark, visiting him in 1986, ticked him off rudely for liking "this dreary redbrick house in flat country."

Clark did, however, concede that "the furniture is good" - quite a tribute from that expert.²⁷

The present Chancellor, Alistair Darling, has the use of Dorneywood as an official residence. However, parliamentary answers have indicated that he and the trustees have made it available to other ministers to use for official engagements.²⁸ As with Chevening, expenditure is borne by a trust and so does not come within the jurisdiction of departmental budgets.

²³ HC Deb 6 June 2006, c 546W

²⁴ HC Deb 12 June 2006, c 884W

²⁵ James Lees-Milne, *Ancestral voices*, Chatto & Windus, 1975, p59

²⁶ Deed of Settlement, 23 June 1944; the Trust Deed dated 9 November 1942 is also available in the Library (Dep 06/1243)

²⁷ Alistair Cooke, "Lower house" (letter), *The Times*, 7 June 2006 p 16

²⁸ HC Deb 19 June 2008 c1187W

When ministers use the house for official government business, the expenses are paid by the department. There is no right of public access to the house but the garden is opened to the public under the National Gardens Scheme at various times of year.²⁹

7.2 Other residences

Admiralty House

Admiralty House was built in the eighteenth century as a residence for the First Lord of the Admiralty. It contains state rooms as well as residential accommodation including the three ministerial flats. Denis Healey found living arrangements “highly inconvenient” when he and his family moved there after his appointment as Defence Secretary in 1964.³⁰ Responsibility for the building was transferred from the Department of the Environment to the Cabinet Office in 1996 when responsibility for buildings was delegated to departments from the then Property Services Agency.³¹

The flats have been assigned to various ministers in recent years and a Foreign Office minister, Lord Malloch Brown, has occupied one of them since August 2007. A recent parliamentary answer gave the following information:

Mr. Watson: One flat in Admiralty House is currently occupied. My right hon. Friend Lord Malloch-Brown occupies the flat which has three or four bedrooms depending on the configuration adopted. The other two flats are currently unoccupied. The last occupants of the flats were my right hon. Friend the former Lord Chancellor (Lord Falconer), who used the flat with one or two bedrooms depending on the configuration adopted, for official entertaining and other engagements, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield (Mr. Hoon) who used the flat with three or four bedrooms depending on the configuration adopted. The floor areas of the flats are 293 sq m, 325 sq m and 241 sq m respectively.³²

1 Carlton Gardens

John Nash’s extension of Carlton House Terrace built in 1830-3. Prince Louis Napoleon (later Napoleon III) lived in exile at No. 1 in 1839-40.

(Encyclopaedia of London).

Various foreign secretaries, including Lords Palmerston and Curzon, chose to live in the houses of Carlton Gardens but No. 1 has been the official London residence of successive foreign secretaries since 1945 when it was acquired on lease from the Crown Estates for Ernest Bevin³³ The property is a grade I listed building comprising state rooms, which are used for meetings, receptions and entertainment, and a self-contained two-floor residential apartment.

Margaret Beckett was the most recent resident of 1 Carlton Gardens but moved out in October 2007.³⁴ The *Financial Times* reported in April 2008 that David Miliband preferred to use his own London home and that 1 Carlton Gardens had therefore been used solely for

²⁹ HC Deb 12 June 2006, c884W

³⁰ Denis Healey, *The Time of my life*, Michael Joseph, 1989, pp 253-4

³¹ HC Deb 30 October 2003 c 322W

³² HC Deb 13 March 2008 cc593-4W

³³ HC Deb 31 January 1997, c 425-6W

³⁴ HC Deb 5 February 2008 c964W

official functions. The article said that it was planned to end the lease on the building and that the Crown Estate and the Foreign Office were in talks although no decision had been taken.³⁵

Downing Street

Ten Downing Street is traditionally the home of the Prime Minister. It was offered by George II as a personal gift to Sir Robert Walpole, who was First Lord of the Treasury and effectively, though not officially, Prime Minister. Walpole declined the gift but accepted the house as a residence for holders of the office of First Lord. He himself took up residence in 1735. The office of First Lord of the Treasury was not then synonymous with that of Prime Minister and the house was as frequently occupied by Chancellors of the Exchequer as by Prime Ministers during the next 100 years. Since A.J. Balfour (PM 1902-05), all Prime Ministers have lived at No. 10 and all have been First Lords.

Eleven Downing Street has been the official residence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer since 1828. The former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, lived with his family in the flat above 11 Downing Street because it was larger than the 10 Downing Street flat. The latter was occupied by Gordon Brown as Chancellor. When Gordon Brown became Prime Minister, he moved into the flat above number 11 and Alistair Darling took over the flat above number 10.³⁶

A parliamentary answer in 2002 set out departmental responsibility for the costs of maintaining the flats and offices in 10 and 11 Downing Street:-

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will set out the methods by which expenditure on the fabric of (a) 10 Downing street and (b) 11 Downing street is (i) formally agreed and (ii) made publicly available. [71794]

The Prime Minister: Expenditure incurred in respect of No. 10 Downing street offices plus the flat at 11 Downing street is included within the overall Cabinet Office budget. Annual budgets, within the departmental limits approved by Parliament, are agreed by the Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary as the Accounting Officer. Actual expenditure against these budgets is recorded in the Cabinet Office resource accounts.

Expenditure incurred in respect of No. 11 Downing street offices plus the flat at 10 Downing street is included within the overall HM Treasury budget. Actual expenditure against these budgets is recorded in HM Treasury's resource accounts.

Accounts for both Departments are published annually and presented to Parliament in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.³⁷

Most parliamentary answers on the costs of maintaining and furnishing the Downing Street complex are prefaced with the following statement:-

The Downing Street complex is maintained to standards appropriate to its Grade 1/2 listed status in consultation with English Heritage. In addition to providing office accommodation the building also fulfills an important representational role.³⁸

As regards entertainment, a Lords parliamentary answer from July 2005 referred to the "increased programme of events" which was then in place for 10 Downing Street:

³⁵ "Miliband to give up London mansion in name of efficiency", *Financial Times*, 14 April 2008, p2

³⁶ 10 Downing Street, Morning press briefing from 18 July 2007, <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page12547.asp>

³⁷ HC Deb 22 July 2002, c 804W

³⁸ See, for example, HC Deb 12 March 2007 c97W

For 2003–04 and 2004–05, the total cost of official entertainment by the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street and Chequers was £99,111 and £160,278 respectively.

These events consist of official dinners and events for foreign leaders and other dignitaries, receptions for business leaders, community and charity representatives and sportsmen and women. In the past few years, an increased programme of events at Downing Street has been introduced in order to give access to as many people as possible, including children's tea parties and regular receptions for a wide cross-section of the community. In addition, in 2004–05, the Prime Minister hosted a reception for British Olympic and Paralympic athletes at an external venue on their return from the Athens Olympic Games.³⁹

A list of official and charity receptions held at number 10 during the financial year 2006-07 was given in a written answer from the Prime Minister on the 25 July 2007.⁴⁰

Hillsborough Castle

Hillsborough Castle is a late eighteenth-century mansion house built by the first Marquis of Downshire. The sixth Marquis sold the estate to the British Government in 1922 after which it became the official residence of the Governor of Northern Ireland. Since 1972, the castle's primary role has been as a residence for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, although it is also used by other Northern Ireland ministers when on duty in the province and is the primary royal residence there. A number of official and charitable functions are held at Hillsborough and it is open to the public for a limited time each year.

A question on running costs was answered as follows by Peter Hain in January 2007:

Mr. Hain: When in Northern Ireland I reside at Hillsborough Castle. The facilities at Hillsborough Castle are also used to provide official hospitality and overnight accommodation for members of the royal family, visiting dignitaries and diplomats. Other activities at the castle include departmental meetings, the annual garden party and citizenship ceremonies. In addition to its use by the Northern Ireland Office and other Government Departments, charities and local community groups can request to use the facilities, generally for fund raising purposes, and the castle and grounds are open at certain times of the year for guided tours.

The overall cost of running Hillsborough Castle in 2005-06 was £4,948,666.27. This includes an amount of £3.1 million for cost of capital.⁴¹

A parliamentary question in April 2008 on the cost of receptions held at Hillsborough Castle received the following answer:

Mr. Woodward: The costs of receptions held at Hillsborough Castle are only available for the last three financial years and are as follows:

	£
2005-06	126,073.39
2006-07	237,295.10

³⁹ HL Deb 21 July 2005, c 261WA

⁴⁰ HC Deb 25 July 2007 c1107-10W

⁴¹ HC Deb 18 January 2007 c1276W

2007-08	211,436.95
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These figures cover a large number of events and receptions in line with my wish, and that of my predecessors, to make Hillsborough Castle as accessible as possible to a cross section of the community. These include people from the emergency services, voluntary groups, charities and local community groups. The largest of these events is the annual garden party, attended by senior members of the royal family.⁴²

Accommodation at both Hillsborough Castle and Stormont is available to ministers when on duty in Northern Ireland.

⁴² HC Deb 21 April 2008 c1385W