

## THE CROWN OFFICE

### Clerk of the Crown

1. The Clerk of the Crown in Chancery is an ancient office dating back many centuries and the role is regarded as integrally bound with the exercise of functions under the Great Seal of the Realm; a seal used to indicate the Sovereign's approval of State documents. There are four lines of accountability, namely:

- The Lord Chancellor: some of the Clerk's duties, especially in relation to the Great Seal, are carried out under the direction of the Lord Chancellor.
- The House of Commons: The Clerk is an Officer of the House and has statutory responsibilities in relation to the election of its members.
- House of Lords: The Clerk is an Officer of the House, with responsibilities for summoning Peers to Parliament, and has the rights of a Clerk at the Table (exercised occasionally on Royal Assent or prorogation).
- The Crown: The Clerk is appointed by the Crown and, for example, has duties in relation to the Coronation and the Court of Claims, as well as duties in relation to the Great Seal.

2. The Clerk is appointed by The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister and is, by convention, the post is held by the Permanent Secretary to the Lord Chancellor. Other than attending various ceremonial events, the role of Clerk of the Crown takes up only a small proportion of the Permanent Secretary's time.

### Head of the Crown Office and Deputy Clerk of the Crown

3. The Head of the Crown Office works directly to the Permanent Secretary in her constitutional role as Clerk of the Crown in Chancery and supports the Lord Chancellor in his constitutional role as Keeper of the Great Seal of the Realm. She also acts as Deputy Clerk of the Crown in the absence of the Clerk of the Crown. The Crown Office carries out the functions of the Clerk of the Crown and the Lord Chancellor relating to the issue of Letters Patent under the Great Seal, Writs for Parliamentary elections and to members of the House of Lords, and all Senior judicial and ecclesiastical appointments. The Office also organises certain ceremonial events on behalf of the Lord Chancellor. The Crown Office is staffed by the Head of the Crown Office (1 day per week), one full-time Band C (HEO equivalent) and two full time Band D's (EO equivalent).

### Crown Office Functions

4. The preparation of Letters Patent includes:

- (a) the drafting of Warrants for the signature of the Sovereign
- (b) the production of Letters Patent for Great Sealing
- (c) the production of the Patent Roll entry
- (d) the insertion of Gazette notices
- (e) subsequent correspondence

5 The following are examples of some of the documentation prepared for sealing:

Diocesan Bishops, Bishops Suffragan, Deans, Canons  
Crown and Lord Chancellor Church Livings  
All Senior Judicial appointments in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Queen's Counsel  
Lord-Lieutenants and Lieutenants  
Kings of Arms and Heralds  
Charters  
Proclamations  
Royal Assent Commissions  
Royal Commissions for the House of Lords  
Issue of writs of summons to peers  
Issue of writs to returning officers for general election and any subsequent by-elections  
Consent to Royal Marriages  
Life Peerages  
Amendment to Canon (Church) Law

## 6. Main Responsibilities

### Head of the Crown Office (Clerk of the Chamber)

- To support the Lord Chancellor and Clerk of the Crown (Permanent Secretary) in delivering their priorities and responsibilities with particular regard to their respective constitutional roles in relation to Parliamentary, State and Church business. To act as Registrar of the Peerage and Baronetage.
- To ensure all ceremonial events involving the Lord Chancellor and Permanent Secretary are executed efficiently.

### Deputy Head of the Crown Office (Assistant Clerk of the Chamber) (Band C)

- To prepare Royal Warrants and Licences, transfers of Arms etc under the Lesser Seal.
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- To prepare Royal Warrants and Letters Patent for appointments under the Great Seal for Parliamentary appointments, Supreme Court Judges, College of Arms etc.
- To act as Assistant Registrar of the Peerage and Baronetage. To examine Peerage and Baronetcy succession claims and to maintain and upkeep the two Official Rolls.
- To deal with the result of Peers' by-elections and issue the necessary Writ.
- Create and process Purchase Orders. Ensure stock levels of vellum, Judges Boxes and Pouches are kept up and place orders for more when required.
- To manage the process of Queen's Consent to Royal Marriages, Warrants of Precedence etc.
- To prepare Letters Patent for Lambeth degrees; registration of overseas notarial faculties granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and collection of fees. Registration and sealing of Full Powers.
- To prepare Commissions for Royal Assent to Bills and Church of England Measures.

- To organise the timetable and oversee the process of election and appointments of Diocesan Bishops and prepare the briefing for the Homage ceremony.
- To oversee the process of perfecting Charters of Incorporation and Supplemental Charters.
- To oversee the assessment of stamps and coins petitions and the organisation of Crown Office ceremonials
- To deputise as necessary for the Head of the Office.

#### Admin Officer (Band D)

- To prepare Warrants etc in respect of all ecclesiastical appointments. Issue of writs summoning bishops to the House of Lords; liaising with CPD, No. 10 and artists, as necessary. Proofreading and maintaining records.
- To prepare Royal Warrants and Letters Patent etc in respect of Lord-Lieutenants, Senior Judiciary (High Court and below) and new Life Peer's.
- To organise the annual Lord Chancellor's Breakfast in Westminster Hall; up-dating guest lists; issuing invitations; liaising with Abbey officials etc.
- To organise the ceremony for swearing in new Queen's Counsel; up-dating guest lists; issuing invitations; liaising with the RCJ etc.
- To draft any Warrants, Letters Patent and Patent Roll entries in respect of all appointments not done by Deputy head of the office.
- On-going preparation for general election; checking and up-dating writs database etc. Periodic handling of House of Commons by-election writs.
- To deputise as necessary for the Deputy Head of the Office

#### Admin Officer and Sealer (Band D)

- To prepare the Warrants in respect of Tribunal and Junior Judicial appointments.
- To organise the ceremony for the Lord Mayor Elect to receive The Queen's approbation, liaising with officials of the City of London, and preparing guidance for the Lord Chancellor and Clerk of the Crown.
- To prepare the Warrants and Patent Rolls for Royal Charters in conjunction where necessary with the Privy Council Office.

- To prepare the Patent Rolls for Proclamations.
- To assess the Stamp and Coin designs from the Crown Dependencies and either refer on to the Palace for approval or request amendments to the designs from the issuing jurisdiction.
- To produce impressions of the Great Seal of the Realm; to plait cords attaching seals to documents and ensuring the use of the correct colours of the sealing compounds used and likewise the correct cords.
- To produce Seals for the Great Seal of Northern Ireland, Garter King of Arms, Exchequer and Duchy of Lancaster as required.
- General support to head of the office as required. Assisting with judges' guests and with ceremonies generally.

## Crown Office Structure March 2021

### ORGANISATION CHART CROWN OFFICE House of Lords

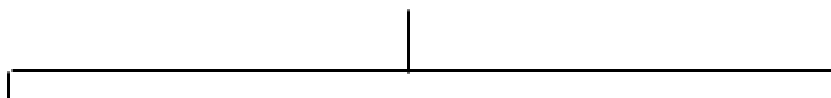
**Antonia Romeo**  
Permanent Secretary  
Clerk of the Crown



**Ceri King**  
Deputy Clerk of the Crown  
Head of Crown Office  
Band A



**Elaine Chilver**  
Office Manager  
Band C



Admin Support and Sealer  
Band D

Admin Support  
Band D

## Crown Office Portfolios

### Head of the Crown Office

Lead on constitutional matters  
Great Seal and Clerkship of the Crown  
Parliamentary and General Election  
Ceremonials

### Office Manager

Hereditary and Succession claims  
Peerage and Baronetage Rolls  
Judicial appointments – Supreme Court Judges  
Heralds and other State appointments  
Elections Returning Officers / Peers  
Royal Assent to Bills  
Set-up Purchase Orders  
Royal Marriages

### Admin Support

Senior Church appointments  
Lord Chancellor's Church appointments  
Crown Livings Queen's appointments  
Judicial appointments – High Court and below  
Lord-Lieutenants  
New Life Peers  
QC appointments  
Lord Chancellor's Breakfast  
Databases

### Admin Support and Sealer

Judicial appointments – Circuit bench and below  
Lord Mayor – City of London  
Great Sealing  
Proclamations and Charters  
Stamps and Coins