

Position of the Lord Great Chamberlain following the demise of the monarch

Request:

Since the 1999 reforms, the holder of the office of Lord Great Chamberlain has been an ex officio member of the House of Lords. Given the peculiar arrangement for the succession to the office of Lord Great Chamberlain, with various people having hereditary "shares" in the office, I would like to know:

- 1) Who is presently expected to hold the office after the Demise of the Crown?**
- 2) How is the choice made? From what I have read the office is held every alternate reign by the Marquesses of Cholmondeley (as he holds a 1/2 share), but how are those with smaller shares dealt with?**
- 3) Is it possible for a woman to perform the roles of the office, or must she appoint a deputy?**

Response:

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOIA") provides a right of access, subject to specified exemptions, to recorded information held by a public authority. In the case of the House of Lords, the rights of access apply to recorded information held by the House of Lords Administration.

1) Who is presently expected to hold the office after the Demise of the Crown?

The House Administration holds recorded information on who is "presently expected" to hold the office, as per your question. The House Administration understands that the next Lord Great Chamberlain is expected to be Lord Carrington. However, it should be noted that the process of determining this appointment is quite unique and the decision does not rest with the House Administration.

2) How is the choice made? From what I have read the office is held every alternate reign by the Marquesses of Cholmondeley (as he holds a 1/2 share), but how are those with smaller shares dealt with?

The House Administration holds this information. This information is set out in a 2005 publication entitled "The Office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England v.1: An historical and modern study" by A. J. Baker, which you should be able to borrow from your library service. The book is also available for purchase on the Amazon website. We would refer you in particular to Chapters 1 (pages 5-9), 5 (pages 34-36) and 6 (page 37).

As this information is already publicly available, we consider it exempt under section 21 of the FOIA, which provides an exemption from the duty to disclose information which is reasonably accessible by means other than making an FOI request.

As your question is of an historical nature, there is likely to be other information publicly available for you to consult outside the framework of the FOIA. The following links, to House of Lords library briefing notes and an article on the Debrett's website, may be of assistance to you.

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2015-007/LLN-2015-007.pdf>

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2010-007/LLN-2010-007.pdf>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20140106031947/http://www.debretts.com/people/royal-family/the-royal-household/great-officers-of-state.aspx>

3) Is it possible for a woman to perform the roles of the office, or must she appoint a deputy?

The House Administration does not hold the answer to your question in recorded form. However, there may be information relevant to this question contained within the publication referred to above.