

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

1926–2022

Lying-in-State

in Westminster Hall, Palace of Westminster

Parliament welcomes you and all those who wish to pay
their respects to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

*Please take a moment to read this short guide
as it describes the route you will be taking through
the Palace of Westminster today and guidance for your visit.*

The Crown and Parliament

The UK is a constitutional monarchy, which means that our monarch holds a unique place in our democratic institutions. The monarch is Head of State, but only Parliament, with the authority of the Sovereign, can make or repeal any UK law.

Because of this close relationship, and because Parliament represents every corner of the UK, the Palace of Westminster is uniquely placed to both reflect and share in the nation's deep sense of loss at this time.

Queen Elizabeth II and Parliament

Queen Elizabeth II was the longest reigning sovereign in British history. From her accession to the throne in 1952, until her death on 8 September 2022 Her Majesty visited Parliament on many occasions.

Queen Elizabeth II delivered her first Queen's Speech at the State Opening of Parliament on 4 November 1952.

Her Majesty attended all but three State Openings of Parliament during her long reign and on each of these occasions delivered The Queen's Speech in person. The exceptions were in 1959 and 1963, when she was pregnant with Prince Andrew and Prince Edward respectively, and in 2022 when Parliament was opened by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge acting as Counsellors of State on behalf of the Queen.

As you pass in front of the Palace of Westminster, before you reach St Stephen's entrance, you will see a tower with a large archway, the Sovereign's Entrance. This was the entrance used by The Queen when she arrived for State Openings of Parliament and its gateway was designed to be wide enough to allow the Royal Coach to drive through it. The steps leading up from the entrance are known as the Royal Staircase and were the start of the processional route taken by The Queen at each State Opening.

Sovereign's Entrance is situated at the base of the Victoria Tower, the tallest tower in the Palace of Westminster, at 98.5 metres (325 feet) high.

At the opposite end of the Palace of Westminster stands the Elizabeth Tower, recognised around the world as Big Ben's Clock Tower. The Clock Tower was renamed the Elizabeth Tower in 2012 – The Queen's Diamond Jubilee year – as a tribute to Her Majesty and in recognition of her, then, 60-year reign.

You will see other Jubilee tributes to Her Majesty as you exit Westminster Hall at the end of your visit. Consisting of up to 1,500 pieces of stained glass, the Diamond Jubilee window can be seen in the three central panels of the north window in Westminster Hall. Outside Westminster Hall, in New Palace Yard, is the fountain installed in 1977 to commemorate The Queen's Silver Jubilee, and a pair of bronze sculptures of the heraldic beasts of the United Kingdom commemorating Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

Westminster Hall has played a part in the life of Queen Elizabeth II as the venue for giving and receiving Addresses (formal messages) of particular importance from both Houses of Parliament. This happened most recently on 20 March 2012 to mark the occasion of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.



House of Lords 2019 / Photography by Roger Harris

Lying-in-State of Queen Elizabeth II

Lying-in-State describes the formal occasion in which a coffin is placed on view to allow people to pay their respects before the funeral ceremony.

You will enter the Palace of Westminster through St Stephen's Entrance which opens at the foot of a short flight of stairs.

From there you will pass in to Westminster Hall by proceeding down two longer flights of stairs to ground level. **If you require assistance or level access, please ask a member of staff.**

During Lying-in-State, the coffin rests on a raised platform (catafalque) in the middle of Westminster Hall. Each corner of the platform is guarded around the clock by members of the Sovereign's guard of the Household Cavalry, Foot Guards and The King's Body Guards.

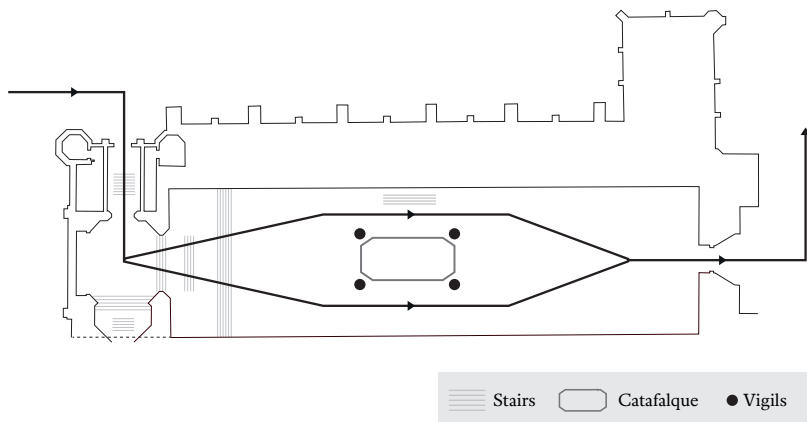
Prior to entering Parliament you will go through search and screening. This is for everyone's safety. **To prepare for this process please place items such as mobile phones, keys, small change, belts, heavy jewellery and watches in to your bag or jacket pocket.** Please also note that prohibited items cannot be returned and will be disposed of in amnesty bins, this includes any liquids or drinks.

In Westminster Hall

Please be aware that filming and photography in Westminster Hall are strictly prohibited on this occasion. Out of consideration for other mourners, we must also ask that you refrain from using mobile phones or other handheld devices while you are on the parliamentary estate, **and devices should remain switched off in your pocket or bag at all times.**

Thank you for your cooperation with this important matter.

As you enter Westminster Hall the queue will divide to pass on either side of the catafalque. **You are asked to keep moving forward at all times while you are in line until you have exited into Parliament Square.** This will greatly help us ensure as many people as possible are able to pay their last respects to Her Majesty.



Departure from Westminster Hall

As you leave you will exit into Parliament Square. **We ask that you move away from the exit as soon as possible to help those following behind you.** Please remember to collect your belongings from the designated collection point before making your onward journey.

