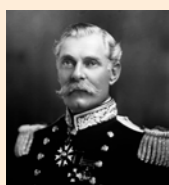


# Government House Then and Now



Lord Islington

Government House is the official residence of the Governor-General, the representative of the Queen of New Zealand. It was designed in the office of the Government Architect, John Campbell, the designer of Parliament Buildings, principally by his assistant, Claude Paton. Built between 1908 and 1910, it is one of New Zealand's most nationally significant heritage buildings. Lord Islington (1910-12) was the first Governor to live in the House.



Construction

As well as being the home and office of the Governor-General, it is also a venue for important events, including State Welcomes for visiting Heads of State, investiture and credentials ceremonies and the swearing in of new governments. It also plays a key role as a place where Their Excellencies engage with a wide range of community organisations. Members of the Royal Family, Heads of State and other distinguished guests often stay at the House when making official visits to New Zealand.



Construction

Government House has eight guest suites, a self-contained apartment for the Governor-General and family, as well as a ballroom, conservatory, sitting rooms, service rooms, kitchens and a wing of offices.

The House has a floor area of more than 4,200m<sup>2</sup> and is located on 12ha of grounds. As well as the Gatehouse, other buildings and facilities include a tennis court and pavilion, a small swimming pool, a World War II-era bomb shelter, and several residences and garages.



Government House

In 2008, after almost a century of use, the House closed for major strengthening and refurbishment costing more than \$40 million. The Conservation Project involved seismic strengthening, removal and replacement of the roof and the stucco panels, removal of asbestos, repainting the exterior in heritage colours, improved disabled access, and the replacement or upgrading of the water, wastewater, storm water, power, gas, communication, heating, lighting and fire protection systems. There were significant changes to the interior layout to improve functionality and enhanced standards in the guest suites, and also significant upgrades to outbuildings and improved exterior layout of the surrounding grounds.



Reflecting pool

The House was reopened by the Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand, Governor-General, on 24 March 2011.

# New Zealand's Governor-General

The Governor-General is appointed on the recommendation of the Prime Minister to serve as the representative of the Queen of New Zealand. The Governor-General is a non-partisan symbol of unity and leadership, with the holder of the Office fulfilling important constitutional, ceremonial and community leadership roles. As New Zealand is a constitutional democracy, neither the Governor-General nor the Queen take an active or initiating role in the executive functions of Government, and by convention they almost always act on the advice of Ministers.

In the more than 160 years since the first Governor, William Hobson, was appointed, the role has changed as New Zealand has evolved from a dependent colony to an independent nation. The Governors and early Governors-General were appointed by the British Government to not only undertake the duties of the Sovereign, but also to represent its interests and those of the British Empire. With the adoption of the Statute of Westminster in 1947, New Zealand became a fully independent nation and the role of Governor-General formally changed to being the Sovereign's representative.

Until the late 1960s, the Governors-General were from the British military or aristocracy. From the appointment of the first New Zealand-born Governor-General in 1967, the first Māori in 1985, the first woman in 1990, and the first of Asian and Pacific descent in 2006, the role has continued to evolve. Their backgrounds have been equally diverse, with previous careers as judges, military officers, an ombudsman, a mayor, an archbishop, a surgeon, a diplomat and a farmer and prime minister. Governors-General have increasingly travelled abroad, promoting national interests and representing New Zealand at major international events.

From an agent of a once global empire, the Governor-General of the 21st Century is a New Zealander who represents the Head of State in New Zealand, and New Zealand to the rest of the world.

## OPEN DAY VISITOR INFORMATION

This guide will assist you on your visit to Government House. If you need help, just ask one of our staff wearing distinctive t-shirts. Here are a few things to remember: No food or drink is allowed inside Government House. Last entry is 3.30pm and final visitors should depart by 4.30pm. Please do not take baby strollers into the House. Take care as you walk around the House and use the handrail on the stairs. Take care in the grounds as some of the tracks are uneven. Please carry backpacks or place them on your front. Unless otherwise advised, there are no restrictions on photography. Enjoy your visit! For more information about Government House, visit [www.gg.govt.nz](http://www.gg.govt.nz)



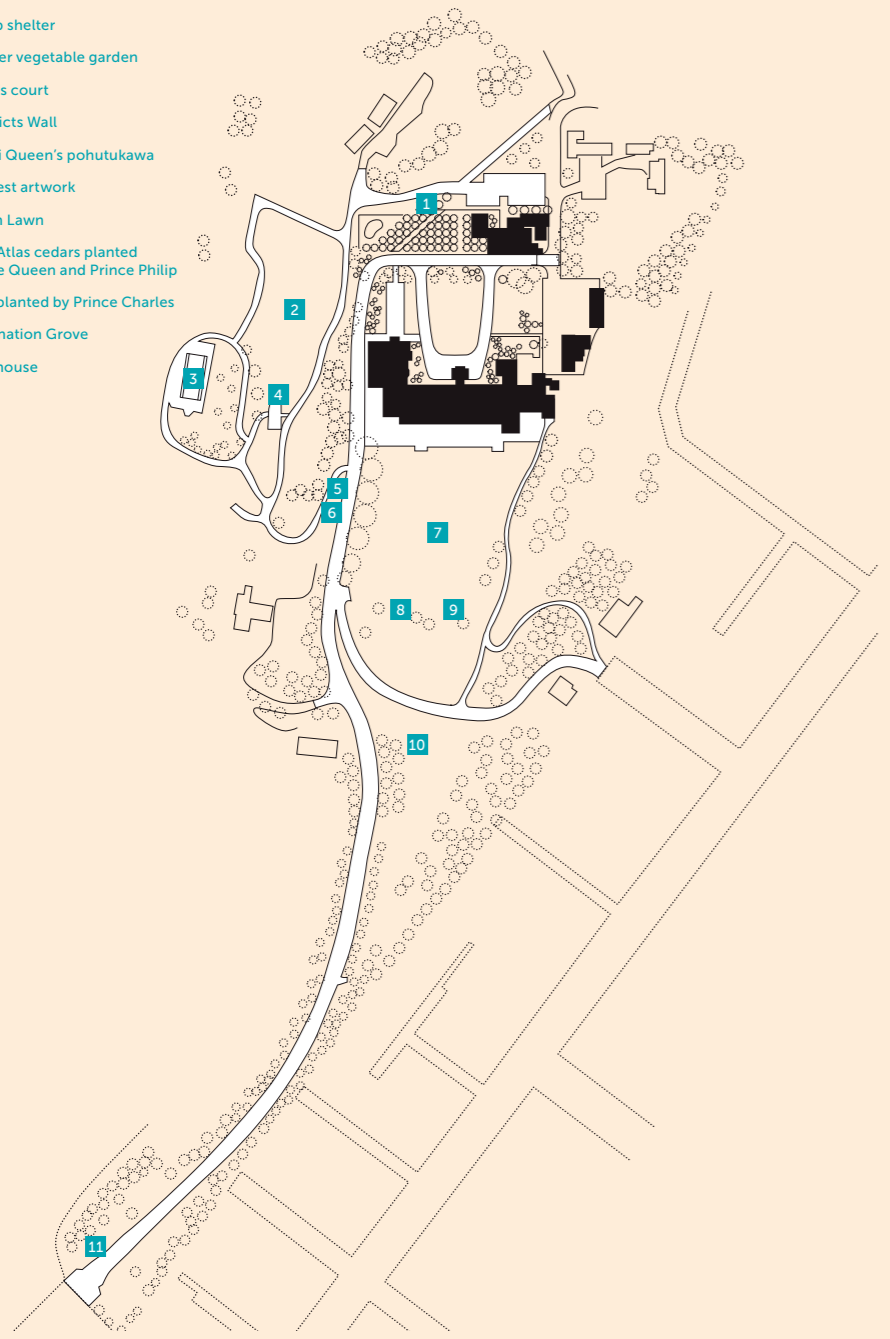
# Government House The official residence of the Governor-General of New Zealand

**VISITORS GUIDE**  
[www.gg.govt.nz](http://www.gg.govt.nz)



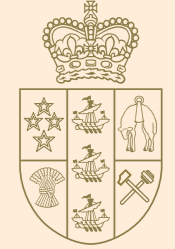
# Exterior

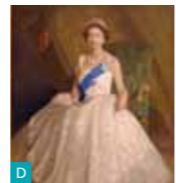
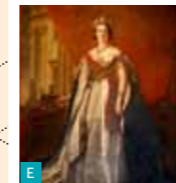



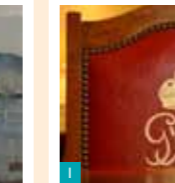
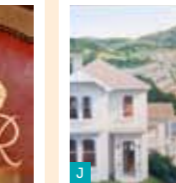
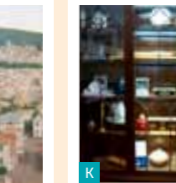
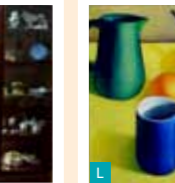
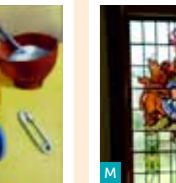
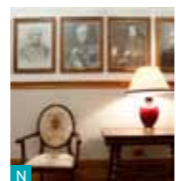
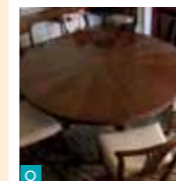
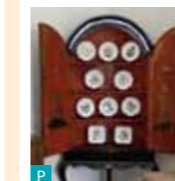
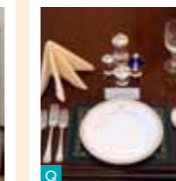
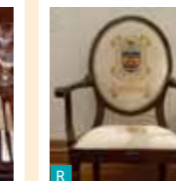
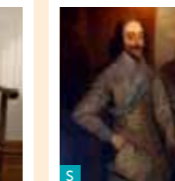
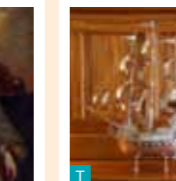
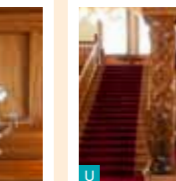
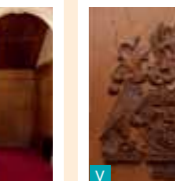
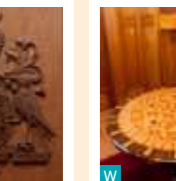
- 1 Bomb shelter
- 2 Former vegetable garden
- 3 Tennis court
- 4 Convicts Wall
- 5 Māori Queen's pohutukawa
- 6 Tu West artwork
- 7 North Lawn
- 8 Blue Atlas cedars planted by the Queen and Prince Philip
- 9 Tree planted by Prince Charles
- 10 Coronation Grove
- 11 Gatehouse



# Interior

**THE ROOMS AT A GLANCE**  
 The Ballroom is used for large dinners, investiture ceremonies and receptions while the Ballroom kitchen is used as a finishing kitchen and servery for dinners and receptions. The Bledisloe Conservatory is used for informal lunches and morning and afternoon teas. The Blundell Room is used for small receptions, credentials ceremonies for new Ambassadors and meetings with Heads of State. The Council Room is where the Executive Council met until the mid-1970s and is now used as a library and for meetings. The Fergusson Room is the study for the Governor-General's spouse while the Hobson Room is the Governor-General's study. The Liverpool Room is used for meeting dignitaries and senior officials, usually over morning or afternoon tea. The Galway Suite is one of eight guest suites for visiting dignitaries. The Fitzroy Room is a small dining room while the Norrie State Dining Room seats 26 on the long-table. The Taupaepae is the official entrance to the House.



 D Queen Elizabeth II painting	 E Queen Victoria painting	 F Blüthner grand piano	 G Charles Clerke painting	 H Day and Night screen	 I King George VI chairs	 J Sir Peter Siddell's painting of Wellington	 K Display cabinets of official gifts	 L New Zealand art	 M Stained glass windows with Royal Coat of Arms
 N Governor-General portraits	 O Circular dining table by David Kirkland	 P Japanned cabinet	 Q Dining table	 R Women's Institute chair tapestries	 S Portraits donated by Lord Norrie	 T Silverware: Galleon from King of Spain	 U Carved pillar facings (pou)	 V Coats of Arms	 W Marquetry table by Anton Seuffert

