

'Prince Charles could be the last King'

Can the monarchy survive without the Queen? Tomorrow Commonwealth heads are likely to confirm Prince Charles as their new leader when the Queen dies – despite his rapidly waning popularity.



Heir today: The Prince faced terrible opinion polls on last year's anniversary of Diana's death.

Queen Elizabeth II strolls around the gardens of Buckingham Palace with naturalist David Attenborough. They laugh, exchange a few jokes, and the hearts of the nation melt.

"Perfection," one viewer said. The outpouring of public affection that followed a broadcast of *The Queen's Green Planet* on Monday shows that she is as popular as ever after 66 years on the throne.

But the Queen is also an elderly woman. As the **Commonwealth** meets this week to discuss her successor, some are asking whether an institution like the monarchy will last long without its long-time leader.

One issue is the relative unpopularity of her heir, Prince Charles. Only 36% think he has

made a positive contribution to the monarchy, and more than 50% would prefer the crown to go straight to his son William. Many dislike Charles due to his past attempts to interfere in politics.

Things look better for the younger family members. Princes William and Harry were recently voted the most liked members of the Royal family in modern times. However, as society becomes more equal, the public may tire of watching young princes and princesses grow up in lives of **subsidised** privilege.

Most people can't remember a time before the Queen's reign, so her death is bound to be a moment of great change.

But will it signal the end of the monarchy?

We are not amused

No way, say some. Prince William and his family have shown that the monarchy can stay relevant to modern society. Besides, no one really wants a president. A monarchy provides stability and a balance of power. This won't change after the Queen's death.

Yes, others argue. The monarchy is a symbol of inequality that has no place in modern Britain. Prince Charles is unpopular and Prince William has said he doesn't really want to be king. It's time for something new.

Q & A

Q: What do we know?

A: Prince Charles will become king immediately after the Queen's death, but he probably won't

Q: What do we not know?

A: How the nation will respond to Prince

be crowned straight away. The Queen reigned for 16 months before her coronation so the nation could mourn her father.

Charles as king. While polls show he is less popular than other members of the Royal family, his reputation has gradually improved.

YOU DECIDE

Is the Royal family still relevant to British society?

ACTIVITIES

Who is your favourite living member of the Royal family? Write a list of three things that make them a good royal.

SOME PEOPLE SAY...

"As far as we're concerned... we are a normal family."

Prince William

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



WORD WATCH

The Queen's Green Planet – A documentary broadcast on ITV on Monday about the Queen trying to make a global network of protected

forests.

Commonwealth – A body of 53 countries that are mostly former colonies of the British Empire.

Subsidised –

When someone is given money. The Queen will receive more than £76 million from the government this year to pay for the upkeep of royal households and other expenses. However, the Royal family also generates money through tourism.



BECOME AN EXPERT

Read this article on theday.co.uk for links to recommended videos and further reading.

Notes