

Queen's pay could hit £45m thanks to Crown Estate

By Gordon Rayner CHIEF REPORTER

THE Queen could be in line for a 6.5 per cent increase in her taxpayer-funded income to £45.6 million – amounting to a 47 per cent increase in the space of just five years.

Rising profits for the Crown Estate – on which Her Majesty's income is calculated – mean that she will receive £42.8 million in the current financial year, up from £40.1 million last year.

That figure could rise yet higher

after the Crown Estate announced bumper profits of £304.1 million for 2015-16. Under the terms of the Sovereign Grant, which replaced the Civil List in 2012, the Queen receives the equivalent of 15 per cent of Crown Estate profits from two years previously, which would amount to £45.6 million for the 2017-18 financial year.

However, the funding formula will be reviewed this year by the Prime Minister, the Chancellor and the Keeper of the Privy Purse, Sir Alan Reid,

meaning the 15 per cent figure could be cut. It cannot, however, go below the £42.8 million being paid to the Queen this year. In 2012-13 the Queen was given £31 million by the taxpayer, meaning her income from the public purse will have gone up by 47 per cent by 2017-18 if the formula stays the same.

Buckingham Palace said the Royal family now costs 62p per year for every citizen of the United Kingdom, up from 58p last year. A spokesman also said two thirds of the increase in the Queen's

62p

The cost of the Royal family per year to each person in the United Kingdom, up from 58p last year

income was being spent on reducing a backlog of repairs to royal palaces. The Queen's total income for 2015-16 was £54 million, comprising £40.1 million

from the taxpayer and £13.9 million from property rental and charges for using royal buildings and facilities for functions. Total spending was £53.7 million, including £19.5 million on staff wages, £16.3 million to maintain the royal palaces and other buildings, and £4 million on travel.

Figures released by Buckingham Palace showed that the most expensive journey by a member of the Royal family last year was the Prince of Wales's visit to the Balkans with the Duchess of

Cornwall by charter flight in March which cost £94,409. Sources also disclosed that the royal train's days are numbered. Engineers are looking at ways of extending the life of the rolling stock, but said that it could be scrapped in "five to ten years". The train costs around £600,000 a year to maintain.

Meanwhile, the Prince of Wales's income rose by 3.1 per cent as his aides admitted the effects of the Brexit could affect his Duchy of Cornwall income in future years.

Arthritis may be eased by 3D-print cartilage patches

◆ Arthritis sufferers could be spared pain in the future after scientists were able to create cartilage patches for worn joints using a 3D printer.

Researchers used cow cartilage to grow cells in thin tubes. Once removed from the tubes, the cartilage strands were used for 3D bioprinting. After about half an hour, the "printed" cartilage patch stuck together well enough to be moved to a laboratory dish. Eventually the strands fully attached and fused together, the researchers wrote in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

Cartilage cannot repair itself so being able to print working tissue to the exact shape could allow damaged joints to be fixed. A transplant using cow cartilage would require drugs to suppress the immune system to avoid rejection, but it is hoped that the patches could be printed using a patient's own cartilage cells, grown from stem cells.

Dr Ibrahim Ozbolat, who led the study at Pennsylvania State University in the US, said: "Those who have osteoarthritis in their joints suffer a lot. We need a new alternative treatment for this."

Cartilage is a good tissue for bioprinting because it consists of only one cell type and contains no blood vessels, he added.



ANDREW MATTHEWS/PA WIRE

On song

Prince Harry and Joss Stone, the singer, were at the Brit School in Croydon, south London, to watch members of the Basotho Youth Choir rehearse for tonight's Sentebale fundraising concert in Kensington Palace Gardens, London, which will also feature Coldplay.

Carrot sharpeners in demand as 70s nostalgia flares

◆ Carrot "sharpeners" are on course to become the next kitchen fad as nostalgia for the 1970s inspires a new way to impress guests at retro dinner parties.

The gadget, which looks like a giant pencil sharpener, transforms raw vegetables into curly shavings used to decorate 70s-style dishes such as prawn cocktail or avocado salad.

In the past 10 days, eBay has reported a tenfold increase in sales and listings of the device, starting from "Buy it Now" prices of as little as 99p. Lakeland, which sells a version for £9.99, has seen a 15 per cent increase in sales over a similar period.

Retro food trends are emerging as householders are choosing to decorate homes with bold patterned wallpapers and carpets, and mustard yellow furnishings.

A Lakeland spokesman said: "The trend for healthy eating has been gathering momentum for several years now. Clever tools to help with healthy food preparation continue to grow in popularity, with spiralizers now at the top of Lakeland's best sellers list and other kitchen tools also proving hugely popular."

"Products like the Karoto are fun and also help customers add professional looking garnishes to their home made dishes quickly and easily."