

# A perfect princess

## Kate's official duties launch was a triumph

**THE champagne corks must have been popping at Clarence House this weekend.**

Kate Middleton's launch into Royal duties was a resounding success.

From the moment she stepped out of a Range Rover on a blustery afternoon in Anglesey to the moment she climbed back into it in an equally blustery St Andrews, her performance was flawless.

Royal officials had carefully monitored and stage-managed this appearance and the choice of venues was canny.

**By Ian Lloyd**  
Royal writer

St Andrews is, after all, the place the future King William V and Queen Catherine met and fell in love.

"It feels like coming home," said the prince, a graduate of 2005, to the 400 undergraduates of 2011 who won ballot tickets to be there.

William wasn't exaggerating. If their privacy there hadn't been so well respected by the locals it's likely their romance would never have even got off the ground.

This was well illustrated on Friday by the words of one couple who braved the chilly

wind to have a word with William and Kate as they left St Salvator's College.

Former St Andrews lecturer Christopher Fraser (70) said he and his wife Mina "used to see him around town, but people didn't bother him". Mr Fraser added, "I saw him in Tesco and my wife once stood beside him in the butcher's and didn't know it was him."

The operations note issued to the press by Clarence House said there would be the opportunity to see the couple leave via North Street. There was no inkling that the walkabout outside would last 35 minutes and that hundreds would have the opportunity to shake Kate's brown leather gloved hand.

It had been the same day before in Anglesey, where the couple are again always left in peace to enjoy another glorious bit of the UK coastline.

Kate is able to shop for William's dinner in yet another Tesco store.

The couple can dine without bother at the White Eagle in Rhoscolyn, where staff confirm William enjoys a burger and chips washed down by a couple of pints.

Kate keeps enviably slim by diluting her wine with spring water and nibbling her fish and salad.

It must have been on evenings like this that the couple planned Kate's debut on the Royal stage. I recall covering Charles and Diana's early walkabouts. Diana would take one side of the street and Charles

the other. As the prince headed to his side, there would be an audible groan, as the disappointed crowd had hoped to meet Diana.

There was none of that in St Andrews, as both the prince and the soon-to-be princess are popular.

This will be a marriage of equals, and they clearly work as a

■ The Royal debut — This was Kate as she stepped from her car to attend a service of dedication for a new RNLI lifeboat at Trearddur Bay Lifeboat Station in Anglesey, North Wales.



## Secrets of the Royal PR tricks

**EVERY royal PR trick in the book was skilfully used in Kate's public appearances.**

Take the media. Kate made eye contact with the cameras time and again. Few royals find that easy. The Queen Mother was fabulous at it, and Camilla is a prime exponent.

However, none of the Queen's children is at ease in front of the lenses. William on his own is only comfortable with official, chosen, photographers. What was striking is how much more relaxed he is with Kate around.

Then there was future princess's fashion. On Thursday she opted for



austerity chic rather than new, wearing the Katherine Hooker herringbone jacket she wore four years earlier at Cheltenham races, which had been carefully shortened for the occasion.

In her feathered silk velvet fascinator she wore the insignia of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, with its Prince of Wales feathers, a flattering reference to the principality, though not as flattering as her clear attempt at mastering the Welsh language for the national anthem.

In St Andrews (left) Kate again used fashion to flatter, by wearing a tailored vibrant red two-piece suit, that not only looked super against the manicured lawns of St Salvator's, but cannily reflected the colour of the gowns worn by the undergraduates.

team, with the prince lightly guiding Kate by the occasional touch on her shoulder and Kate smiling support as he prepared to make his speech.

Then there was that infectious Princess Diana giggle we saw time and again on the two visits.

St Andrews has got in there first with an early wedding present, a thank you to the couple for spearheading its 600th anniversary fundraising appeal.

Not the usual diamond brooch or silver coffee pot but a far more meaningful gift, a £70,000 scholarship, enabling someone from a less privileged background than the Windsors and Middletons to have all the benefits of a Royal education.

It also came with the clear affection from St Andrews to William and his soon-to-be princess.

The feeling of town and gown on Friday were well summed up by university principal Dr Louise Richardson who concluded her speech by wishing them "a life of love, health and happiness".