

Press release: Environment Agency uncovers landscape with laser mapping

The Environment Agency has announced plans to map England's entire landscape by 2020, using the data to assess flood risk and inform conservation work.

Using aircraft equipped with laser scanners, the Environment Agency will map all 130,000km² of the country, including rivers, fields and national parks – equivalent to 32 million football pitches.

As well as being used to understand flood risk, the data will also be made available for free to the public and industry to be used by archaeologists, environmental and urban planners, and even gamers to make accurate 3D models of the landscape.

Currently about 75 per cent of the country is mapped but with only sporadic coverage of upland areas. The new project, beginning over winter, will cover all of England's national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs) and sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) such as the Peak District and the Yorkshire Dales.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency, said:

This ambitious project will enhance our understanding of England's unique natural features and landscape, helping us to better understand flood risk, plan effective defences and fight waste crime.

I'm pleased we are able to gather, use and share such valuable data to contribute to environmental improvements and conservation. It's just one of the many ways the Environment Agency is using technology to help people and wildlife.

The Environment Agency has been using lidar – light detection and ranging – technology for 20 years to better understand flood risk. Maps are created by aircraft equipped with laser scanners, which measure the distance between the aeroplane and the ground. The data collected can then be used to plan flood defences across whole river catchments. It also helps environment officers spot sudden changes in the landscape that could indicate illegal waste dumping – in 2014 eight people in Cornwall were fined for [dumping 4,500m³ of waste](#), which was discovered using lidar data.

Other organisations across the Defra group also use the data to help improve the environment – Natural England uses it to assess wildlife habitat and Forestry Commission use it to understand more about the country's tree cover.

In 2015, the Environment Agency made 11 terabytes of lidar data – equivalent to 3 million MP3 songs – available for free to the public as open data. Since

then, the data has been downloaded more than 500,000 times. The data has even [helped archaeologists uncover lost Roman roads](#) in the north of the country.

The new data will also be better quality than ever before, as the Environment Agency will map the whole country at 1m resolution by 2020. This means using the most up-to-date laser technology to reveal the features and details of the terrain more clearly.

For more information on how the Environment Agency collects and uses Lidar data, check out our [blog](#).

You can also follow the Environment Agency's Geomatics team on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

News story: Permanent Secretaries knighted in New Year's Honours

They join a number of current and former Home Office staff who have received honours this year.

Sir Philip joined the Home Office in April 2017 after five years as Permanent Secretary at the Department for Transport. He previously worked at the then Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Ofcom, HM Treasury and in the private sector for Morgan Stanley. In April 2015, Sir Philip became the Civil Service Disability Champion.

Sir Mark led the Home Office for over four years until he was appointed by the Prime Minister to be the National Security Adviser in April 2017. Prior to joining the Home Office he held a number of high-profile roles at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, serving as British Ambassador to Afghanistan and the Prime Minister's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Also receiving a knighthood is the department's former Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Sir Bernard Silverman FRS. He took up his post in April 2010 providing scientific advice and support to three Home Secretaries and their ministers across the full range of Home Office policy areas. Prior to joining the Home Office he undertook work for a number of other government departments and public bodies, and has had a distinguished career in academia as a statistician.

A further 19 current and former Home Office employees have received honours.

Responding to the news, Sir Philip Rutnam said:

Congratulations to all those at the Home Office who have been recognised. It is a testament to their significant contribution to

the department and their ongoing commitment to keeping our citizens safe and our borders secure.

I am deeply honoured and humbled to be included among those honoured. The award reflects the outstanding support and collaboration of colleagues throughout my career in the Civil Service.

Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath

- Philip Rutnam, Permanent Secretary. For public service.

Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George

- Mark Sedwill, National Security Adviser, Lately Permanent Secretary. For services to UK national security.

Knight Bachelor

- Professor Bernard Silverman, Lately Chief Scientific Adviser. For public service and services to science.

Officers of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

- Nick Drinkal, Deputy Director, Border Force. For services to border security in Calais and Dunkirk.
- Stephen Lamb, Lately Director of Returns Preparation, Immigration Enforcement. For services to improving immigration systems.
- Bernard Lane, Tackling Crime Unit, Crime, Policing and Fire Group. For services to community safety and reducing crime.

Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

- Claire Chippington, Deputy Director, Border Force. For services to border security.
- Gail Crouchman, Border Force. For services to border security and prevention of modern slavery.
- Karyn Dunning, Head of Detained Casework, Immigration Enforcement. For services to asylum and humanitarian operations.
- Julia Farman, Head of the European Intake Unit, UK Visas and Immigration. For public service.
- Mark Jefferson, Lately National Deep Rummage Team Immingham, Border Force North Region. For public service.
- Adrian Treharne, Capabilities and Resources. For services to people with disabilities in the public and charitable sectors.

British Empire Medal (BEM)

- Annwen Johnson, Crime Policing and Fire Group. Correspondence Manager, HM Treasury. For service to diversity and inclusion.
- Dean Milton, Assistant Director, Immigration Enforcement. For voluntary service to young people and charitable fundraising.

- Jo-Ann Moran, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism. For services to people with disabilities in the public sector.
 - Alex Oliver, HM Passport Office North East. For services to charity and the community in Durham.
 - Manju Rajawat, Border Force. For services to border security.
 - Asish Soni, Capabilities and Resources. For voluntary and charitable services to homeless people in London.
 - Deviesh Tankaria, Assistant Director, Border Force. International Youth Chairman, Sathya Sai International Organisation. For voluntary services.
 - John Thompson, Detection Technology Management Unit, Border Force South and Europe. For services to border security.
 - Martin Thompson, Border Force. For services to border security.
 - Kerstin Wheeler, Border Force Intelligence. For services to preventing modern slavery and protecting vulnerable people.
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News story: Scottish people recognised in New Year Honours

Following on from the publication of the New Year Honours list, Scottish Secretary David Mundell passes on his congratulations to Scottish honourees:

“I am pleased to see the New Year Honours 2018 recognise some of Scotland’s most deserving volunteers, community leaders and public figures.

“From the achievements of prominent sporting greats such as Mark Beaumont to the inspirational local heroes of our communities whose tireless dedication, commitment and compassion benefit so many across the length and breadth of Scotland, it is right that we mark their dedication and commitment.

“I congratulate each and every recipient on their award – they truly deserve their recognition today and our thanks and praise for their contribution.”

For the full Honours list, please go to this [page](#).

Press release: The New Year’s Honours list 2018

The list covers every nation in the UK. In Kirkwall, Orkney, Margaret Jamieson receives a BEM (British Empire Medal) for her support of local community projects through the Blue Door charity shop. In Falmouth, Cornwall,

Geoffrey Evans receives an MBE for his wide-ranging contribution to the community, including over 40 years' service as a local councillor.

The list includes people who have given their lifetimes to supporting others. Among a wealth of people who have given sustained service to others, two recipients stand out for the length of their contribution. Both are 101 years old: Lt Col. Mordaunt Cohen receives an MBE for his services to Second World War education and Helena Jones receives a BEM for her services to young people and the community in Brecon, Powys. At 18 years old, Lucia Mee is the youngest person on the list. She receives a BEM for services to promoting public awareness about organ donation.

Awards include a knighthood for author Michael Morpurgo, a damehood for businesswoman Vivian Hunt, a knighthood for musician Richard Starkey aka Ringo Starr, a knighthood for singer-songwriter Barry Gibb, a damehood for dancer Darcey Bussell, a damehood for Cathy Warwick, outgoing Chief Executive of the Royal College of Midwives, a damehood for microscopist Professor Pratibha Gai, a damehood for theatre producer Rosemary Squire, a CMG for former astronaut Helen Sharman, a CBE for author Jilly Cooper, a CBE for Head of Women's Cricket Clare Connor, a CBE for DeepMind founder Demis Hassabis, a CBE for actor Hugh Laurie, a CBE for ex-British Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman, an OBE for PR consultant Lynne Franks, an OBE for England's Women's Cricket Team captain Heather Knight, an MBE for hip hop artist Richard Cowie aka Wiley, and an MBE for Paralympian athlete Stefanie Reid.

Following the centenary year of the Order of the British Empire and the Order of the Companions of Honour, this honours list continues to demonstrate the breadth of service given by people from all backgrounds and ethnicities.

In total 1,123 people have received an award:

- 981 candidates have been selected at BEM, MBE and OBE level: 318 at BEM, 452 at MBE and 211 at OBE
- 70% of the recipients are people who have undertaken outstanding work in their communities either in a voluntary or paid capacity
- 551 women are recognised in the List, representing 49% of the total
- 9.2% of the successful candidates come from a BAME background
- 5% of the successful candidates consider themselves to have a disability (under the Equality Act 2010)

The centenary year of the Order of the Companions of Honour

2017 has marked the centenary of the Order of the Companion of Honour (CH). Following nine appointments in the Birthday Honours List 2017, the independent committees have now recommended author and historian Lady Antonia Fraser and broadcaster Melvyn, Lord Bragg of Wigton to join the Order. Together with historian and Warder of St. Antony's College Oxford, Margaret Mcmillan, who is recognised with a CH on the Diplomatic Service and Overseas List, the Order now has its full 65 members for the first time since its institution in 1917.

Women

At the highest levels (CBE and above), awards include a damehood for Rosemary Squire, co-founder of the Ambassador Theatre Group, one of the UK's foremost theatre producers as well as making a wider voluntary contribution to promotion of the Arts. A CBE goes to Chairman of the Black Cultural Archives, Dawn Hill for her pivotal contribution to recording and celebrating Black history and heritage in the UK. There is an OBE for PR consultant Lynne Franks, whose professional expertise has been put to use promoting causes including social responsibility, women in business and tackling violence against women.

Philanthropy

Philanthropy recommendations include a CBE for Jane Hamlyn, Chairman of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, which gives grants to help people overcome disadvantage. An OBE goes to Richard Mintz, who has supported a range of causes over the last 50 years. And at MBE, Rosemary Cadbury is recognised for her philanthropic support of a wide variety of community and charitable activities in the West Midlands.

Local communities

In total, 70% of awards in the New Year Honours List will go to people who have undertaken outstanding work in or for their local community, following the Prime Minister's strategic steer that she would like more honours to go to people contributing to society and their communities. Awards include:

- an OBE for Aina Khan, for the protection of women and children in unregistered marriages
- an MBE for community volunteer Afrasiab Anwar, for services to building community cohesion in Burnley, Lancashire
- an MBE for Susan Coates, who took her first leadership role in the Girlguides aged 18 and who has now spent five decades supporting girls and young women across south west England
- an MBE for Sara Fitzsimmons, who co-founded and now directs SiMBA (Simpsons Memory Box Appeal) to support bereaved families at the Simpsons Maternity Ward at the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh
- a BEM for Thomas Allen, whose support of the community in Donemana, Co. Tyrone has been widespread and unstinting over 50 years
- a BEM for Alyson Williams, Child and Youth Officer at Swansea Community Farm, who also participates in restorative justice programmes to reduce youth reoffending
- a BEM for Henry Arnold, tailor to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who in his spare time volunteers to support the Royal Marines Cadet Corps in Plymouth
- a BEM for Scott Watkin from Ryde, Isle of Wight, who teaches people with learning disabilities about eye care
- a BEM goes to Christine Pratt, who has been Director of Blurton Community Hub in Stoke-on-Trent since 2010, working to create a stronger

and safer community for residents

The Prime Minister provided a strategic steer to the Main Honours Committee that the honours system should support children and young people to achieve their potential, enhance life opportunities, remove barriers to success and work to tackle discrimination. Among the awards that reflect these priorities are:

- a knighthood for Alan Wood, lately Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services at Hackney Council
- a CBE for Nick Whitfield, Chief Executive of Achieving for Children who has acted as Children Services Commissioner in Sunderland and Reading
- an OBE for David Canning, a teacher who is Northern Ireland Coordinator of Project Children, a cross-community project which has facilitated 23,000 young people from opposing sides of the community developing team building skills
- an OBE for Naomi Marek, Chief Executive of Sky Badger, whose innovative work has provided online support to over 695,000 families who have children with disabilities or special educational needs
- an OBE for John Shallcross, whose voluntary service over 30 years to fundraise for youth clubs in disadvantaged areas has benefited young people across north east England
- an OBE for Bartholomew Smith, who founded the Amber Foundation to support young homeless and unemployed people
- an MBE for Tunji Akintokun, founder and co-director of Your Future, Your Ambition which aims to inspire children and young adults from ethnically diverse backgrounds to study science, technology, enterprise and maths (STEM) subjects

Education

Around 11% of honours are for work in education. The Education Committee has recommended a damehood for Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool, Professor Janet Beer and a knighthood for Timothy Melville-Ross, Chairman of the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Other senior awards in education include a CBE for Vice-Chancellor of the University of Winchester Joy Carter, a CBE for Principal of Gateshead College Judith Doyle, and a CBE for Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, Professor Richard English. An MBE goes to Paul Berman, Chair of Trustees at Wargrave House School in Merseyside, which supports development of life skills in children on the autistic spectrum.

Health

Health sector recipients make up 10% of all honours. There is a rich breadth of vocations recognised. There is a Knight Grand Cross for medical scientist Sir Keith Peters; a damehood for Chief Executive of the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust, Jackie Daniel, a damehood for the outgoing President of the Royal College of Surgeons, Clare Marx and a damehood of the outgoing Chief Executive of the Devon Success Regime and Sustainability and Transformation Plan, Angela Pedder. A CBE goes to Chair of

the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust Michael Giannasi and an MBE to Neelam Farzana, who in 2007 set up The Listening Service to address a gap in provision of mental health support for the BAME community.

Industry and the economy

Industry and the economy make up 11% of this honours list. The Economy Committee recommended a damehood for Scottish businesswoman Susan Rice and a knighthood for Northern Irish businessman and founder of WrightBus William Wright. A CBE goes to Chief Executive of the Wesley Clover Corporation in South Wales, Professor Simon Gibson and to Timothy Rix, Managing Director of family-run Hull-based J R Rix and Sons Ltd.

A number of entrepreneurs and those supporting entrepreneurship are also recognised, including a knighthood for tech investor and philanthropist Ken Olisa and a CBE for co-founder of The Lakes Distillery Nigel Mills. An MBE is awarded to Elizabeth Tappenden, founder of In to Biz Ltd., which supports small business start-ups on the Isle of Wight through training programmes. In the technology sector, awards include a CBE for President of techUK Jacqueline de Rojas and a CBE for Dana Tobak, Chief Executive Officer of Hyperoptic.

Married couple Chrissie Rucker, founder of The White Company, and Nicholas Wheeler, founder of Charles Tyrwhitt Shirts, receive OBEs for their respective services to retail.

Science and technology

Science and technology recipients make up 3% of the List. There is a knighthood for volcanologist Professor Robert Sparks, a knighthood for psephologist Professor John Curtice, a CBE for Deputy Director of the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute, Professor Caroline Dive, a CBE for statistical epidemiologist Christl Donnelly, and an OBE for Suranga Chandratillake, General Partner at Balderton Capital.

Sport

Awards for sport make up 4% of the total recipients. A number of awards celebrate the success of women's cricket. There is a CBE for Director of Women's Cricket Clare Connor, an OBE for the Captain of the World Cup winning England Cricket Team, Heather Knight, an OBE for Head Coach Mark Robinson, an MBE for World Cup 2017 Player of the Tournament Tammy Beaumont and an MBE for World Cup 2017 Player of the Final Anya Shrubsole. Elsewhere there is an OBE for Sarah Lewis, Secretary General of the International Ski Federation. Sue Anstiss, founding director of the Women's Sport Trust and co-founder of the Women's Sport Trust charity, receives an MBE for her support of women's and grassroots sport. Awards for grassroots sport include a BEM for David Woodward, whose voluntary service to youth sport includes being the driving force in establishing a youth hockey coaching network in Rotherham and Sheffield.

The arts, music and dance

In the arts, there is a CBE for co-founder and Director of the Hay Literary Festival, Peter Florence and an OBE for Hay Festival Chair, Revel Guest Albert. In music there is a CBE for President of the Royal College of Music, Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood, an OBE for Sarah Alexander, Chief Executive of the National Youth Orchestra and an OBE for singer-songwriter Marc Almond. There are CBEs for actresses Julia McKenzie and Susan Hampshire, as well as for playwright Peter Nichols. An MBE goes to Lucille Briance, founder of the London Children's Ballet.

And there are awards to recognise the success of Hull City of Culture 2017, including a CBE for Chief Executive and Director Martin Green and OBEs to Chair Rosie Millard and Executive Director Francesca Heygi.

Law and order

In Law and order, the awards include a knighthood to Craig Mackey, Deputy Commission of the Metropolitan Police Service and an OBE to Jackie Hewitt-Main, CEO of The Cascade Foundation, which supports prisoners with learning needs to develop the skills they need for their future lives. A BEM is awarded to Violet Atkinson, who volunteers with Northumbria Police to educate young people about road safety and the consequences of dangerous driving.

Parliamentary

The Parliamentary and Political Service Committee has recommended a damehood for Cheryl Gillan, MP for Chesham and Amersham, and a CBE for Jo Swinson, MP for East Dunbartonshire. An OBE goes to Ealing Councillor Ranjit Dheer.

Finally, there is an MBE recommended for Deborah Brownson, who has spent the last ten years raising awareness about autism. She wrote the innovative book 'He's not Naughty! A Children's Guide to Autism' which has helped children, families, schools, medical professionals and businesses all over the world.

The honours system continues to recognise those doing extraordinary things to support their community and reinforce civic life across the UK. It is built on/relies on nominations put forward by members of the public and we urge everybody to nominate the person in their lives that they think deserves an honour. We continue to see inspirational action by people up and down the country – and not least in response to significant events such as the Grenfell Tower fire, or recent terrorist attacks.

Press release: Britain's first

astronaut and Professor of Space Physics receive New Year's honours

Dr Helen Sharman.

The New Year's Honours list recognises the achievements of a wide range of extraordinary people across the country. Helen Sharman is appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) for services to science and technology educational outreach, while Michele Dougherty is awarded a CBE for services to UK Physical Science Research.

Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

"The UK is a global leader in science and research because of the achievements of extraordinary people.

"When the Cassini spacecraft plunged into Saturn in September with the world watching, it carried an instrument built in the UK by a team led by Michele Dougherty. As the UK's first astronaut, Helen Sharman is already an inspirational figure and has dedicated much of her life to inspiring the next generation through education and outreach. I'm delighted to congratulate them both."

Since becoming Britain's first astronaut in 1991, and the first woman to visit the Mir space station, Helen Sharman, a member of the Association of Space Explorers, has carried out a huge number of outreach activities to inspire young people. She has supported educational charities and is the patron of Spacelink Learning Foundation and the President of the Institute of Science and Technology.

Helen, who was awarded an OBE for her pioneering work in 1993, works full-time at the Department of Chemistry, Imperial College London. During Tim Peake's Principia mission she supported the UK Space Agency's education and outreach activities with public appearances, media appearances and events with schools.

Michele Dougherty, a Professor of Space Physics at Imperial College London, is recognised by the UK Science Council as one of the top 100 UK scientists for her work on planetary physics and for her role in encouraging young women into science. She is distinguished for her scientific leadership role on the Cassini-Huygens space science mission, which explored Saturn and its moons.

Michele Dougherty. Credit: Imperial College London.

She has contributed significantly to the work of the UK Space Agency, by chairing its Science Programme Advisory Committee from 2014 to 2016. In 2017 Michele became only the fifth woman to receive the Royal Astronomical Society's Gold Medal, its highest honour, for her contribution to the national and international space physics community.

Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

“I would like to congratulate Helen and Michele on behalf of everyone at the UK Space Agency.

“They have made huge contributions to the space community and provided inspiration for thousands of young people across the country.”

Read more about [New Year's Honours 2018.](#)