

International COVID-19 response heroes feature in Birthday Honours 2021

- the Queen's Birthday Honours has recognised 129 people for their exceptional service to the UK overseas or internationally
- awards recognise extraordinary people across a range of fields
- recipients include the British scientist Dr Michael Houghton, who discovered the Hepatitis C virus and the Irish vaccinologist Professor Adrian Hill, Director of The Jenner Institute in Oxford

The [Overseas and International Birthday 2021 Honours List](#) published today, recognises 129 extraordinary people in a wide range of fields. These include business, charity and voluntary work, culture, development, education, foreign policy, health, security and sport.

Among those receiving awards this year is Dr Michael Houghton who receives a Knighthood for services to medicine and Professor Adrian Hill who receives an honorary Knighthood for services to science and public health.

The award to Professor Hill is one of a number that [recognise outstanding healthcare contributions overseas and internationally](#) as part of the COVID-19 response. These include honorary OBEs awarded to Professor Teresa Lambe at the Jenner Institute and Professor Massimo Palmarini at the University of Glasgow for their work in the development of vaccines. Honours are also awarded to those who have given exceptional support to British nationals overseas during the pandemic.

Further information about recipients receiving knighthood level awards is included with the [Overseas and International List](#).

Sir Philip Barton, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Head of the Diplomatic Service, said:

I congratulate everyone receiving an honour and thank them for their hard work and years of service. The UK's impact around the world depends on exceptional people like those recognised in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. We are grateful for their outstanding contribution.

Lynda Crafter

Head of operations, ZANE (Zimbabwe A National Emergency), receives an OBE for services to British nationals in Zimbabwe.

Lynda Crafter is recognised for an exceptional and sustained contribution to supporting British nationals in Zimbabwe in her capacity as Head of Operations for the UK registered non-governmental organisation ZANE. Since 2007, Mrs Crafter has provided support to vulnerable and elderly British

nationals within care homes and elsewhere in Zimbabwe, who otherwise would have no one to turn to. Her work stretches from assisting the elderly with financial aid, medication and medical procedures to the provision of food to care homes and destitute pensioners living in their own homes, to building links with medical care providers for use in emergencies.

Most recently, she led a UK government funded project to support British nationals in 40 care homes identified at high risk from COVID-19 infection. This involved personally travelling hundreds of kilometres across the country, distributing funds and offering support to administrators, all within a difficult context of lockdown and at significant risk to her own personal safety and health.

On learning of her award, Lynda Crafter said:

I was astonished but delighted to receive news of this award but feel honoured to have recognition of ZANE's team work in Zimbabwe. Were it not for the FCDO grants and our joint project with the British Embassy we would have seen many more COVID-19 infections amongst the care homes in this country.

Amina Plummer

Education Director, The Owl's Nest International School, Accra, Ghana, receives an MBE for services to education and social work in the UK and Ghana.

Originally from Manchester, Ms Plummer spent the early part of her career supporting children, parents, and carers in the diverse community of Moss Side. She went on to work as a lecturer at the University of Salford, with leadership of children and families and social inequalities and human rights modules. As a counselling supervisor for the NSPCC, her master's thesis related to safeguarding with a focus on Africa.

Ms Plummer moved to Ghana in 1999 and in 2007 launched an inclusive international school in Cantonments, teaching a UK curriculum. She has also supported disadvantaged children and families in the local area through both the school and her charity work with street children. In December 2018, the Academic Union in Oxford declared the school one of the 'Best Regional Educational Institutions' and recognized Ms Plummer as one of the 'Educators of the Year'.

On learning of her award, Amina Plummer said:

I am delighted and honoured to receive this award and grateful to those who nominated me. It is wonderful to know that my vocation of 40-plus years is appreciated and recognised. Thank you to everyone who supported me, especially my family, friends, colleagues and most of all the children and their families.

Neil Taylor

Historian and travel author, also receives an MBE for services to UK/Estonia relations.

Neil Taylor is recognised for his outstanding contribution to the UK's bilateral relationship with Estonia. Since Estonia regained independence, he has played a significant and sustained role in the development of cultural relations between both countries. Through the 8 editions of his 'Bradt guide to Estonia', he encouraged intrepid British travellers to rediscover a country and culture that had largely been cut off from Western Europe since the Second World War.

Then in 2018, the Centenary of the first Estonian Independence, Mr Taylor's book 'Estonia: a modern history' was published to much critical acclaim, including in Estonia. In a country where an appreciation and knowledge of the past is essential for understanding the present, Mr Taylor has helped to remind and celebrate the historic connection between the 2 countries and the longstanding UK support for Estonia's independence.

On learning on his award, Neil Taylor said:

I feel very honoured that my modest contribution to British-Estonian relations has been recognised in this way. My work could not have come about without the constant support and enthusiasm from travel trade and publishing contacts in both the UK and in Estonia.

David Alexander Robertson

Manager, Real Kashmir Football Club, India, receives a British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to the community in Kashmir and UK/India relations.

David Robertson, the manager of Real Kashmir Football Club (RKFC), has received a British Empire Medal (BEM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the local community. The award recognises Mr Robertson's outstanding contribution to the sport and the community as head coach of RKFC since January 2017. This included guiding the football team into the I-League – the first time the team has competed at this level. The last season of the I-League saw RKFC attain the highest number of home ground match attendees, averaging 25,000 people per match.

On learning of his award, David Robertson said:

I am absolutely delighted and honoured to have been recognised and awarded this honour for my work in Kashmir. I have enjoyed every minute spent in Kashmir. It has been a real pleasure to have worked and met so many wonderful people. I think of Kashmir as my second home.