[Introducing the Government Geography Profession Leadership Team](#)

David Wood

Deputy Director Environmental Analysis, Defra

Head of the Government Geography Profession

I'm David Wood and I'm the Head of the Government Geography Profession (GGP). At Defra, I lead a multi-disciplinary team to build the evidence base to inform our ambitious environmental policies, including the 25 Year Environment Plan, net zero and Environmental Land Management. I'm also strategic lead for the cross-Defra Group data science centre of excellence where we're developing our data science capability.

I've been privileged over the last 3 years to be the first head of the Profession and have really enjoyed working with my dedicated deputies who you'll hear from below, and other volunteers to grow the profession from a standing start to where it is today. There are a lot of initiatives we have put in place to support members, from monthly webinars to an annual conference, awards and a career framework. But I know there is a lot more we can do! This includes supporting members with mentoring opportunities and creating a members directory, but also focusing on entry routes into the profession to bring in new and diverse talent, and to start thinking around guidance and standards.

Jon Pickstone

Strategic Director (Economy) for Hammersmith & Fulham Council

GGP role: Development of strategy and operating models, and chairing the Cross Government Geographers Group.

I'm responsible for supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth across Scotland's places and communities.

Geographers provide understanding of how and why processes play out differently from place to place, at scales from local to global. I'm keen to maximise the benefits of geographers in analysis, policy and delivery by developing our skills, community, impact and recognition.

Clare Hadley

Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Ordnance Survey

GGP role: Develop the GGP within Local Authorities, blue light services and local level public bodies.

At the Ordnance Survey, I ensure that we understand who our key external stakeholders are and coordinate our engagement.

The GGP is one of the few Government Professions that is not restricted to Civil Servants, and I am keen to make it relevant and accessible to all Public Sector workers.

Ian Coady

Geospatial Adviser, FCDO

GGP role: Defining the Profession offer and growing membership.

I support developing countries in strengthening their geospatial data systems and ensuring UK Foreign Policy is built on robust geospatial data.

I hope the Profession can provide increased networking opportunities and defined career pathways for geographers, as well as advocate for the power of geographic data.

Patrick Rickles

Head of Digital Skills and Innovation, North Sea Transition Authority

GGP role: Diversity and Inclusion, Design, Communications and Platform

Technology.

I recently started at the OGA and will focus on establishing a digital academy for upskilling colleagues on spatial and non-spatial technologies. I will also be experimenting with cloud technologies and scripting languages to innovate with geospatial artificial intelligence and machine learning.

I believe the Profession should be representative of wider society, inclusive and welcoming of geographers from all different backgrounds. I want the Profession to support those early in their careers through mentorship, learning and sharing training and job opportunities.

Claire Edwards

Manager – Natural Capital Ecosystem Assessment, Natural England

GGP role: Promoting value of geography in the delivery of government policy.

In Natural England, my role is to manage a team of geospatial experts involved in the Natural Capital Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA) Pilot and lead on building data analysis capability in the NCEA programme.

I would like to see the Government Geography Profession be recognised for its approach to diversity and inclusion, building a strong membership base across the across the UK, providing numerous entry points for geographers to work in the public sector.

Rollo Home

Head of Propositions and Product Management, Ordnance Survey

GGP role: Develop the GGP within Local Authorities.

At the Ordnance Survey, I ensure a pipeline of future geospatial products and services that are fit for the rapidly evolving public sector demands.

Local Authorities are pioneers of adoption of geospatial analysis. There is significant learning to be gained from Local Authorities' success stories and the sharing of best practice. We want the Profession to be able to support individuals develop themselves, offer career support, on-line resources and backing for formal accreditations.

Ian Spencer

Senior Civilian Geographer and Geospatial Analyst, Ministry of Defence

GGP role: Professional standards and accreditation.

My primary role at the Ministry of Defence is as one of the Deputy Heads of the UK's National Centre for Geospatial Intelligence. I ensure the delivery of global assured geospatial and environmental information, products and services to a wide range of users in the MoD.

In the future I hope that where geographic support and advice is required, it is provided by appropriately qualified and accredited professionals. If we achieve that, future members of the profession will be able to have a rich and varied career across government without losing their geography anchor.

Brian Vinall

Flood Forecasting Centre Operations Manager, Environment Agency / Met Office

GGP role: Lead geographer for the Environment Agency; Outreach.

In a joint partnership between the Environment Agency and the Met Office, I manage the team delivering 24/7 flood guidance and advice for emergency responders in England and Wales.

My ultimate ambition is for someone studying geography to be told by their career advisor what fantastic opportunities there are for geographers as a career in Government and the Civil Service.

Steven Campbell

Head of Spatial Analysis and Area Briefings, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

GGP role: Ensuring geography and location are part of policy within government.

I'm Head of Spatial Analysis and Area Briefings at MHCLG.

I'd like the Profession to continue to grow and establish itself amongst the existing professions, so it is recognised across government in the same way that statistics and economics are presently.

Alistair Edwardes

Head of Spatial Data Science, Defra

GGP role: Lead on professional standards, guidance and tools.

I recently joined the Environment Analysis Unit in Defra having previously worked at the ONS Data Science Campus. I head up a team working on spatial data science, aiming to bring new approaches to bear for working with geospatial data on cross cutting environmental policy problems.

I want to see good practise produced that will support consistency in geospatial analysis across the public sector. I want to see standards and frameworks for the geography profession embedded within those of the Analysis Function, in order to cement its position and ensure that geographic skills and knowledge are represented in multi-disciplinary analysis.