

Portals to the past

History of Blue Plaques



- The official Blue Plaque scheme (now administered by English Heritage) originated in 1866 London as a project to mark the homes and workplaces of famous people. It was the first scheme of its kind in the world, and it has indirectly or directly provided the inspiration for many others (like The Physiological Society, Institute of Physics, Royal Society of Chemistry, Royal Society of Biology)
- The Blue Plaques scheme has allowed London locals and visitors to discover where their favourite author, scientist, musician, politician or other well-known name lived or worked. There are around 950 iconic blue plaques spread across London, with a few more in other cities around Britain.

Why Blue Plaques?

To acknowledge and honour the history of physiology



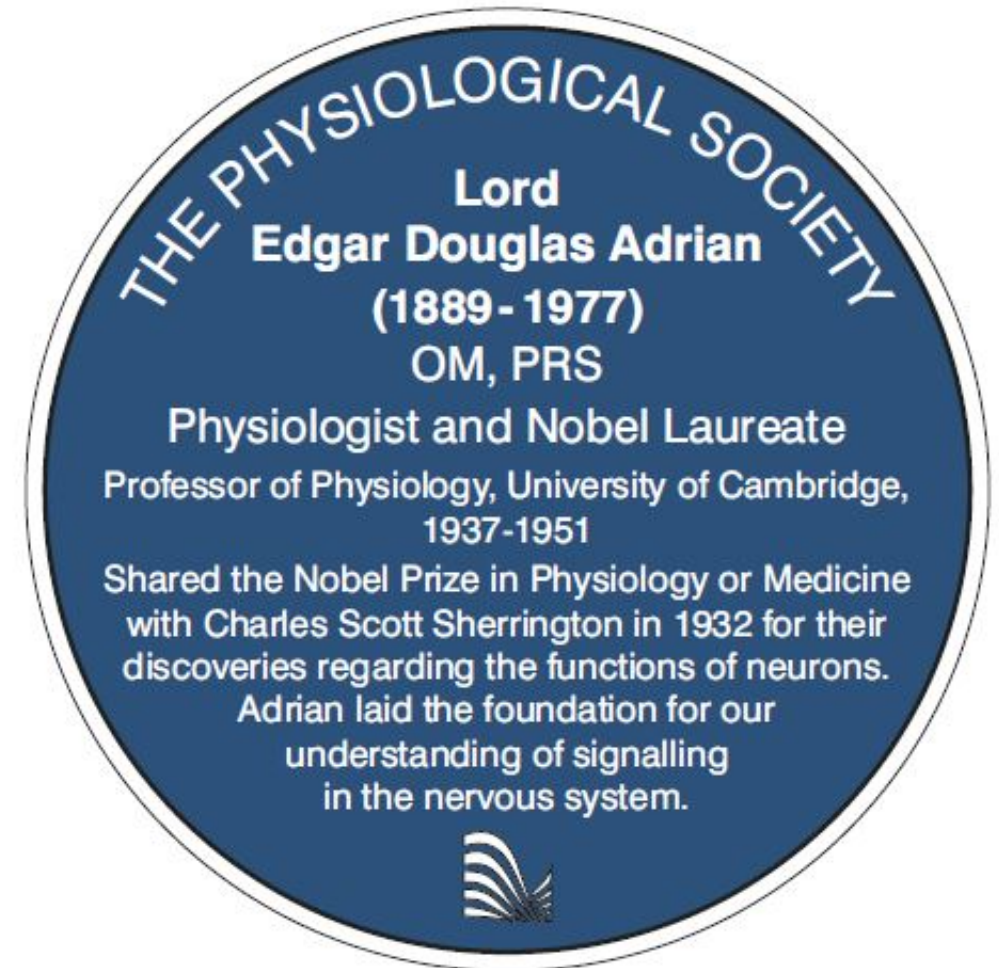
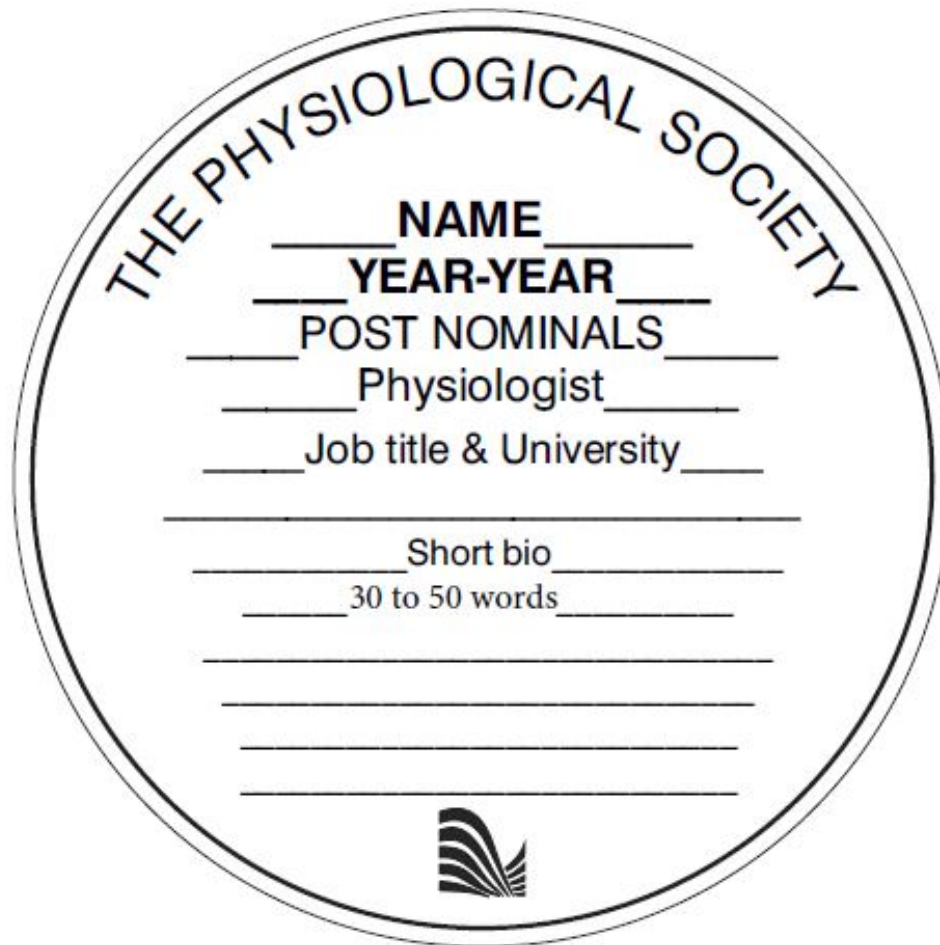
- Part of a wider strategy to raise the profile of physiology with the public
- Celebrates and recognises institutions where distinguished physiologists such as Nobel laureates have made significant contributions to the discipline
- Helps increase the prestige associated with University departments and demonstrates the legacy of physiologists to potential students
- Visual marker of history: connects the past and the present and ensures important historical figures don't drop out of public consciousness

Blue Plaque criteria

Approved by the Board at CL20.19

- Must be recognised as an outstanding physiologist who has contributed to the advancement of the discipline through their discoveries;
- Achieved national or international prominence in physiology and made a notable and lasting contribution to the discipline which have left a legacy beyond their lifetime;
- The nominee should have a direct connection with the proposed academic site of the plaque – the University/laboratory where he/she taught, carried out their work;
- Each nominee must have been dead for 20 years;
- The institution needs to be supportive of the erection of the plaque;
- The plaques must be visible to the general public or by a sufficiently broad range of individuals who may not otherwise have known about the association with the individual.

Blue Plaque template



Important considerations

- It's important the plaque scheme represents people of different genders, social, ethnic and geographic backgrounds
- The first women members of The Society from 100 years ago have been put forward to honour them as ground breakers who were ahead of their time
- The 2022 Blue Plaques should include a physiologist from the Republic of Ireland. It would be ideal to host a Board meeting in Dublin in the summer of 2022 to time with a physiology centenary at Trinity College.
- There needs to be a champion at the agreed institution of placement to assist in gaining the permissions from the relevant bodies: the hardest part of the process is university red tape, especially where departments no longer exist or have been rebadged
- History & Archives provide a background check on all potential Blue Plaque names