

First Rolls-Royce chairwoman receives damehood

The first [Rolls-Royce](#) chairwoman said it is a “great privilege” to be given a damehood in the [New Year Honours](#) list.

Dame Anita Frew, 65, one of only 18 women leading boards at Britain’s biggest listed firms, got the top honour for her services to business and the economy.

She was hired as chairwoman at engine maker Rolls last July and holds the same role at chemicals group Croda International. Both Rolls and Croda are FTSE 100-listed firms.

Dame Anita’s appointment at Rolls was a milestone for the group, marking the first time a woman has had the role since it was founded in 1904.

The Scottish businesswoman – whose father and grandfather worked at Rolls’s factory in Glasgow as an engineer and a polisher respectively – said: “It is a great privilege to be recognised in this way.

Read More

- [First woman to run major UK bank receives damehood](#)
- [Boss of Guinness and Johnnie Walker maker handed knighthood](#)
- [Next set to reveal sales dip as ‘squeezed middle’ cut Christmas spending](#)
- SPONSORED

[Cheap holidays: how to travel for less in 2023](#)

“I’m sure that if anyone had told me, as a young girl growing

up in Scotland with a father and a grandfather who worked at Rolls-Royce, that one day not only would I chair that company but would have the honour to be made a dame, I would not have believed it.

I hope that what I have achieved – and still hope to achieve – during my career can help inspire others and show that anything is possible if you have determination and passion

“I’ve been fortunate to chair three great British companies – Rolls-Royce, Croda and Victrex – with world-leading technologies in science and engineering.”

Dame Anita added: “I hope that what I have achieved – and still hope to achieve – during my career can help inspire others and show that anything is possible if you have determination and passion.”

She has held board roles in the UK and globally for the past 20 years, with recent former jobs including deputy chairwoman and senior independent director at Lloyds Banking Group.

Dame Anita has also worked as a director at advertising group WPP, with its founder Sir [Martin Sorrell](#), and had roles at the then Royal Bank of Scotland.

At Rolls, she helped lead the search and appointment of former BP executive Tufan Erginbilgic as chief executive to replace outgoing boss [Warren East](#) when he leaves at the end of 2022 after eight years at the helm.

Dame Anita arrived at Rolls as it emerged from a difficult period, having faced huge hits from the Covid-19 pandemic as airlines were grounded and Rolls-Royce engines remained switched off, which saw it crash to a hefty loss in 2020.

But the group last year returned to profit, recording a £124 million pre-tax profit for 2021 versus a £3.1 billion loss the previous year, thanks to a rebound in demand for long-haul

flights as international travel bounced back.

At the time of her appointment at Rolls, senior independent director Sir [Kevin Smith](#) praised Dame Anita's "wealth of experience" and said her "skills and reputation with investors and government institutions will be invaluable to the group".