

Congratulations Professor Martin Tangney!

Edinburgh resident, biofuel and sustainability expert Professor Martin Tangney has been awarded an honorary Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE).



The Queen makes honorary awards to non-British citizens on the advice of the UK Foreign Office. The Edinburgh Napier University-based scientist, who hails from County Cork in Ireland, joins a select list of previous Irish recipients that includes F1's Eddie Jordan and the Hollywood actor Pierce Brosnan.

Professor Tangney received his Honorary OBE for services to engineering and energy.

The award-winning innovator is best known for developing a process to convert the residues of the whisky industry into an advanced sustainable biofuel called biobutanol (a direct replacement for petrol) – not only providing a sustainable disposal route for the by-products of one of the country's largest industries, but also integrating renewable fuel production with environmental sustainability and carbon reduction.

He said: "This is an incredible honour that came very much out of the blue and I am humbled to be in the company of some outstanding Irish people who have received an Honorary OBE.

"An honour of this magnitude reflects far more than I could accomplish as an individual and I am very grateful to the many people who have guided and shaped my career, and me as a person, over the years which has resulted in this tremendous recognition."

Prof Tangney is a key figure and prominent international speaker in the renewable energy sector and he has actively informed the policy debate around the world.

He joined Edinburgh Napier University in 2000, and in 2007 he established the UK's first research centre dedicated to the development of sustainable biofuel. The Biofuel Research Centre has achieved international prominence as a portal for the assimilation, integration and dissemination of knowledge and information across national and international academia, industry and Government.



Professor Tangney is a recipient of the Institute for Chemical Engineers International Award of “Innovator of the Year” for his work – an innovation he is now commercialising as the Founder and President of Celtic Renewables Ltd.

The young University spinout company has achieved global recognition and in 2015 was named the “Most Innovative Biotech SME in Europe” at the parliament in Brussels. The groundbreaking company made international headlines last year when an ordinary hire car was driven for the first time powered with the fuel Prof Tangney developed. The new fuel could become a direct replacement for petrol or diesel, and can even be used to make jet fuel.

Dr Mark Hanniffy, Consul General of Ireland in Scotland, said: “I am delighted for Martin on this recognition of his work, which is richly deserved. He is a highly regarded figure in both the academic and the business communities in Scotland, and his work exemplifies the tremendous contribution that the Irish diaspora is making here”.