



Sharon White

Dame Sharon Michele White was born on **21 April 1967** is a **British businesswoman**. She is currently Chair of the **John Lewis Partnership**, having previously held a variety of roles in the Civil Service.

Sharon White was the Chief Executive of the British media regulator Ofcom from March 2015 - November 2019, and was the Permanent Secretary at HM Treasury from 2013 - 2015.



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White was the first black person, and the second woman, to become a Permanent Secretary at the Treasury.

Fitzwilliam College



University College London



Sharon White was born in East London and brought up in Leyton, where she attended the Connaught School for Girls. Her parents emigrated to the UK from Jamaica in the 1950s, when her father was aged 15 and her mother aged 11. She attended Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, from where she received a BA degree in Economics. She later earned an MSc in Economics from University College London.

Sharon White worked for a church in Birmingham before joining the British civil service in 1989. She worked first at the Treasury and later for the British Embassy in Washington, which was where she met her husband Robert Chote. She also worked at the 10 Downing Street policy unit during the Blair government, at the World Bank, and as a director general at the Department for International Development in 2003–09 and then at the Ministry of Justice in 2009–11, and also at the Department for Work and Pensions.

At the Treasury, she supervised a review of the financial management of government and the Treasury's management response to the international financial crisis of 2007–08. She was Director General for Public Spending at the Treasury from 2012 to 2013, and then replaced Tom Scholar as Second Permanent Secretary in 2013. She was the first black person to become a Permanent Secretary at the Treasury, and the second woman after Dame Anne Mueller in the 1980s.



In November 2014, *The Voice* named **Sharon White** the 7th most powerful black person in Britain. **White** has been recognised for her influence as one of the most powerful Black British people in the UK on a number of occasions by Powerlist, topping the 2023 list, as well as regularly ranking in the top 10 since 2016.

In December 2014, it was announced that **White** would be the chief executive of Ofcom from March 2015, replacing Ed Richards as the previous chief executive and Steve Unger as the interim chief executive.

In June 2019, it was announced that **White** would be stepping down from her role at Ofcom to replace Sir Charlie Mayfield as the sixth Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership. **White** succeeded Mayfield during a meeting of the John Lewis Partnership Council on 4 February 2020. It was confirmed that **White** will be awarded an annual salary of



£990,000 for her role at the John Lewis Partnership, a significant increase on her previous salary, which was £341,700 according to data released by Ofcom.

Sharon White was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in the 2020 New Year Honours for public service.

As already mentioned, **Sharon White** topped the 2023 Powerlist, an annual list that aims to provide professional role models for young people of African and African Caribbean heritage. Other prominent black Britons on this year's list include the actor,



writer, and creator of *I May Destroy You*, Michaela Coel, the actor and writer Sir Lenny Henry, and the rapper Stormzy.

55-year-old, **Sharon White**, welcomed the accolade, saying it was an 'incredible honour' to receive this year's Powerlist award. 'My hope is that we can take the serendipity out of social mobility – everyone should have the chance to be who they want to be in life, with their background as a source of pride, not a disadvantage,' she said.

Michael Eboda, chief executive of Powerful Media, the organisation that published this year's list said, '**Dame Sharon White totally deserves to be recognised as the UK's most powerful black Briton**', he added. '**She is an example of true excellence, and this is evident throughout her valuable input and work as chair of John Lewis and her academic and professional journey to date.**'