The story...

Mapping the dead

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burial

Need-to-know language

resting place – the place where someone's remains lie
headstones – large stones at the ends of graves containing personal information
grave – a place, usually in the ground, where someone is buried
cemetery – an area where dead people are buried
decay – the process by which things become gradually damaged or worsen in condition

Answer this...

How fast is Pete's laser backpack?

Watch the video online: https://bbc.in/2QVCwOx

Transcript

Resting place to hundreds of historical figures, Highgate Cemetery is known all over the world - but not everyone here is famous.

Amongst this growing sea of ivy are thousands of headstones - some that haven't been seen in years. For many, this is what makes Highgate beautiful. But finding relatives' graves here can be tricky.

Well, today some of them are being rediscovered through a process of careful clearing, which tries to keep the character of the cemetery. The ivy has been removed from some of these headstones - not only to protect them from decay - but also to allow them to be mapped digitally for the first time.
This is Pete. His backpack uses lasers, which can't be seen, to take three hundred thousand measurements a second. It also has five cameras taking pictures constantly. The information is uploaded online, and eventually a digital map comes to life.

**Tim Viney, Chairman, Atlantic Geomatics**

Highgate is, as you can see, is a pretty tough location. From a mapping perspective, vegetation can be our biggest nightmare. There are paths - but there are also areas that are very difficult to access – so we have to be very careful from a health and safety perspective.

Over the last year, Tim and his team have now mapped more than half the cemetery.

**Ian Dungavell , CEO, Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust**

It's wonderful that new technology can enable us to do this in a way that just isn't possible with old paper records.

Over the next year – there will be more mapping and only the most essential plant clearing, meaning more of this incredible part of London is accessible for generations to come.

**Did you get it?**

How fast is Pete's laser backpack?

It takes three hundred thousand measurements a second.