



Institute of
Chartered Foresters

Promoting Professionalism

Strategic Plan 2019 to 2021



The UK forestry and arboriculture sector is worth £4.3 billion, supporting 64,000 jobs across the UK.* This strategy outlines how the Institute will address the main objectives of its Royal Charter and embrace emerging challenges to the sector over the next three years and beyond.

*GROWN IN BRITAIN, 2018

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Foreword

The world we live and work in is changing. While our role and the high standards we demand for our sector remain the same, we want to increase our drive for excellence and equip our members to inspire others. We need to invest in new strategies to do so, increasing our expenditure to enable growth.

Our corporate strategy for 2019 to 2021 sets out how we intend to do this, using our insights to refocus our priorities over the next three years. Following a decade of continued growth and influence we are aiming to deliver a more ambitious strategy, increasing our membership targets, and improving how we communicate with, support and engage our members.

Through better use of digital platforms and our regional network we will support innovation through knowledge exchange and its impact on members' careers. We will continue to develop our leadership role, with a focus on policy and practice with our professional colleagues, influencing government and inspiring the wider public. We will be an organisation where our staff and members value and support diversity, exploring different pathways to membership including vocational pathways.

Training courses for Continuous Professional Development and national events such as conferences and study tours have helped develop the standing of the Institute within the forest and arboricultural Industry. We will continue to work in partnership with others realising that at a time of continued devolution and post Brexit, the Institute has an increasingly valuable role in providing a national voice.

This strategy is a benchmark for our performance that will be reviewed annually. We all have a responsibility as office bearers, staff and members to play our part in delivering this exciting and challenging new blueprint for continued success.



David Edwards FICFor
President



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Executive Director

Introduction

Many view 2019 to be a year of unprecedented challenge and change for the environment, society and economics and for management of forests and trees in the UK.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) produced its 2018 *Special report: Global Warming of 1.5C*. The report states that, at the current pace of warming, the temperature increase is likely to reach 1.5C before the middle of the century and will result in more frequent, severe and erratic events. Projected impacts on forests include increases in the intensity of storms, wildfires and pest outbreaks, potentially leading to forest dieback. The IPCC has concluded that the window of opportunity for mitigating a rise in excess of 2C is of the order of 10 years.

As a consequence the Institute's Strategic Plan and thinking should also embrace directions reflecting this time scale and the transitional challenges faced by systems and the impact on the environment, society and economics – the three pillars of sustainability.

Sustainability is integral to the Institute's Code of Professional Conduct and requires 'systems thinking' rather than treating in isolation. We know that trees, in the right place, help us to adapt to climate change by reducing surface water flooding, reducing ambient temperature, helping to reduce soil erosion and sequester carbon. This has consequences for Institute policy positioning, our responsibility to society and our approach to adaptation and sustainable management of forests and trees.

Devolution and post Brexit policies have led to individual government proposals for the expansion of woodlands, with devolved governments focusing on more radical action in response to climate change, the need for sustainable sources of renewables, and a solution to the removal of the Common Agricultural Policy.

This will require the Institute to adapt and focus resource proactively on policy positions that advise its strategic thinking, development and in directing support for members' CPD.

The Institute can play a key role in supporting human resource capacity growth, in policy development, industry, research, the technical aspects of timber supply and tree management, all underpinned by a culture of skilled, relevant practice delivered by CPD and wider recognition of the value of professionalism.

The increased need for our members' skills will see increasing demand from employers to meet the needs of policy makers and industry. These trends are already leading to proactive industry partnering with training bodies and higher education institutes and an acceleration of recruitment from technical to managerial roles. The impact of an ageing work force continues to threaten resource availability in the medium term.

The Institute will need to respond at both pace and scale over the next 10 years to these challenges to fulfil its mission and achieve its vision.

By rising to the challenges and with wider and deeper commitment to our Professional Code of Conduct and common standards and compliance, we will help bolster the role and status of the Institute in the longer term.

Our Vision

Chartered status is the goal for all professional foresters and arboriculturists in the UK so that our standards are the key demand from industry with members sought after for their advice and expertise.

Our Purpose





To serve members and society to promote and deliver the sustainable management of trees and woodlands throughout the UK.

Our Values

Integrity, excellence, collaboration, sustainability and transparency form the basis on which we operate and underpin our strategic objectives.



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A strong profession

We will help our members engage with the challenges and opportunities of a changing world, lead and support the highest professional and ethical standards and facilitate collaboration, research and innovation. We will ensure that our profession thrives by attracting and retaining people from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds, by providing access to the education, knowledge and skills to succeed.



Our strategies to achieve this:

1.1 Lead and support professional and ethical standards

Place social purpose, professional standards and ethics at the heart of action and debate about forestry and the profession.

Set and maintain the highest professional standards in collaboration with other national and international professional bodies.

1.2 Attract and retain the best and most diverse talent

Work with Higher Education Institutes and employers to engage the next generation of foresters and arboriculturists in the future of the profession.

Support our members in overcoming the barriers to achieving their potential within the profession.

1.3 Provide access to education, knowledge and skills

Influence and support changes to forestry and arboriculture education to deliver better value, more flexibility and greater integration with the sector.

Provide our members with access to skills and knowledge that support career development, effective practice and successful delivery.

1.4 Help our members engage with the challenges and opportunities of a changing world

Ensure that our members have access to the information, skills and technology to embrace digital opportunities.

Support our members to work around the world to deliver better outcomes for clients, industry and wider society.

Help our members to connect with clients, provide improved services and expand business opportunities.

Facilitate local, regional and national activity by members.

1.5 Build a body of knowledge and facilitate collaboration, research and innovation in practice

Facilitate innovation and improve sector effectiveness and outcomes through research and knowledge sharing.

Enable members, researchers, practitioners and academia to collaborate and share knowledge.

Outcomes

- ▶ A consistent programme of professional development events
- ▶ Online training modules providing members with the skills and knowledge to support career development
- ▶ Growth in students in the UK choosing forestry and arboriculture courses
- ▶ Institute-led professional apprenticeships in forestry and arboriculture
- ▶ Creation of a user-friendly, effective Directory of Consultants to promote forestry and arboriculture professionals to associated industries and the public

A strong voice

We will ensure that forestry and tree professionals are understood and valued by policy-makers, the media and society. We will do this through the expertise of our members, our leadership, advocacy and engagement with stakeholders at all levels. We will base our decisions and policies on sound evidence.



Our strategies to achieve this:

2.1 Develop strong relationships with key political and public policy influencers

Develop a national and international network of supporters of forestry and arboriculture.

Continue to build relationships with other professional organisations.

2.2 Demonstrate the value and breadth of our profession

Create a better understanding of the wide-ranging skillset, impact and contribution of the foresters' role in land management and the arboriculturists' role within the built environment.

Deliver national events that attract diverse audiences to explore and promote new forestry and arboricultural ideas and practice.

Harness the expertise of our members to ensure that politicians, the media, land and environmental professionals and the public understand the impact and value of foresters and arboriculturists.

Support the development of new strategies post-Brexit by working with partners across the land management, urban planning and wood-using industries.

Facilitate debate and encourage the exchange of ideas about forestry and arboriculture and its practice.

Improve society's understanding of our profession.

2.3 Increase our reach into new and diverse audiences

Explore new pathways for membership including through vocational qualifications.

Continue to reach out to new partners to help deliver strategic goals

2.4 Be viewed as leaders on public debates

Develop a more prominent media presence, working increasingly through social media and digital channels, linking with key players to amplify our message.

Provide rapid responses to consultation papers, communicating with members and engaging their views.

Produce position papers on relevant topics, promoting the Institute and its work widely through digital channels.

2.5 Deliver inspiring CPD and knowledge exchange events

Support regional groups to develop events programmes.

Facilitate delivery of high quality training programmes for both members and aspiring members.

Outcomes

- ▶ Institute members being appointed to leadership roles in our sector
- ▶ New campaigns to engage society, public and private sectors
- ▶ Evidence of changes to government policy, regulation or legislation from Institute advocacy
- ▶ Media evidence of Institute leadership
- ▶ Position papers well used across the sector and beyond
- ▶ Well attended CPD events, both nationally and regionally
- ▶ Clear pathways to membership for a diverse profession
- ▶ Demonstration of benefits from strategic partnership alliances

A strong organisation

We will grow our membership base and ensure that our business model supports our vision, purpose and strategy. We will do this by engaging talented and committed staff, enhancing the value of our offer to members and others, generating diverse and sustainable sources of income and striving for operational excellence.



Our strategies to achieve this:

3.1 Identify and grow sustainable sources of income to support our strategic purposes

Recruit and retain members by providing demonstrable value.

Sustainably increase our income through professional development programmes.

Grow and develop sponsorship income for national and regional events.

3.2 Enhance the value of our offer to members and others

Develop and improve our offer to members, and partner organisations providing products and services that are valued.

Listen to our members' needs and use that feedback to continually improve member experience.

3.3 Strive for operational excellence

Review processes to facilitate collaborative working and continuous improvement by pooling resources to prevent duplication.

Create increased value for our members by managing our operations more effectively and efficiently.

3.4 Adapt our operating model

Explore the benefits and opportunities of introducing a vocational pathway to membership.

Create flexibility to enable the Institute to respond quickly to our business needs and take advantage of opportunities.

3.5 Engage, nurture and empower talented staff

Build a high performance environment where talented people are valued and supported.

Create a culture where people work collaboratively, are trusted and are given freedom to decide how to achieve great results by encouraging innovative thinking and exploration of new ideas.

Outcomes

- ▶ Increase in income across a range of sources
- ▶ Sustained growth in membership, including membership progression
- ▶ Increased member satisfaction score
- ▶ Increased membership diversity
- ▶ Growth in the number and range of Institute services
- ▶ Effective representation from empowered members acting as advocates for the Institute
- ▶ Informed and engaged Council members who understand the expectations of the role

Measuring success


This strategy has been developed through partnership working of the Institute's Council, Professional & Educational Standards committee and the secretariat. Our membership was asked to contribute during 2018 and feedback incorporated. It was approved by the Institute's Council in March 2019.

This is the beginning of a three year process of activity and impact. We will use detailed outcomes and measures to hold ourselves to account for the delivery of this strategy. In addition, we are accountable to our membership and other key stakeholders for our performance. We will openly and transparently communicate our progress against this strategy at regular intervals through existing governance mechanisms, and directly to members at our annual general meetings





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