

# Institute for Archaeologists STRATEGIC PLAN

February 2010

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The following abbreviations are used in this document	
<b>NOS</b>	National Occupational Standards for Archaeological Practice
<b>NVQ</b>	National Vocational Qualification (in Archaeological Practice)
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>HEREC</b>	The Historic Environment Review Executive Committee
<b>NIAF</b>	The Northern Ireland Archaeology Forum
<b>TAF</b>	The Archaeology Forum
<b>BEFS</b>	The Built Environment Forum Scotland
<b>HEG</b>	The Historic Environment Group (Wales)

IfA Strategic and business plan  
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Institute of Field Archaeologists  
University of Reading  
SHES  
Whiteknights  
PO Box 227  
Reading  
RG6 6AB

[www.archaeologists.net](http://www.archaeologists.net)

## PREFACE

This Strategic Plan has been prepared by IfA staff in consultation with IfA members and Council. It provides the IfA with a clear sense of purpose for the next 10 years, as well as guidance for an annually reconstituted Council and for its staff. It provides a framework within which to increase and deploy the IfA's limited resources through an annual business plan and ensures that all parts of the Institute work in an efficient, coordinated and effective way. Progress on the Plan will be reviewed regularly, to inform business plan targets and to ensure that the Plan is still relevant. All IfA projects, initiatives and activities will be focussed on delivering this Plan.

The IfA's Strategic Plan for 2020 has been developed using the current Strategic Plan (2000-2010) as a starting point<sup>1</sup>. A review of our performance against the 2000-2010 Strategic Plan can be found in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 provides a short summary of the IfA's profile now, in 2010, compared with our profile in 1998. Our current Organisation Chart is in Appendix 3.

The Strategic Plan has been developed with a clear understanding of the nature of professions, and the role of professional institutes in society and in the lives of their members.

*Professions are disciplines whose members, whether paid or voluntary, agree to be bound by an ethical code, have demonstrated necessary technical and ethical competence, and are subject to the oversight of their peers.*

Professional institutes provide that code – our *Code of conduct* and supporting by-laws and standards – and promote good practice through the education, guidance and regulation of our professional members. The disciplinary process and its sanctions provide the oversight that underpins an institute's primary function of public and consumer protection, ensuring that clients and society in general receive the best possible service from the profession. Promotion of the interests of its members is a secondary role of a professional institute – though it is an important and valid one where professionals' interests are best served by continual improvement of standards of practice. By remaining focused on this primary function, IfA will seek to strengthen trust in archaeologists at a time when for many professions public trust is lessening..

There are a number of departures from our previous Plan in this new Strategic Plan. These represent a shift in our thinking to reflect a changing world, changing approaches to professional practice and new ways of doing business, and the fact that the IfA itself has grown and evolved over the last ten years. Details of these departures are summarised below with references to the body of the Plan where appropriate.

1. The Plan presents a clear definition of what Archaeologists do and provides a clear identity to promote among the many other disciplines that work in the historic environment.

2. The Plan reflects our strong belief that the primary benefits of IfA membership are recognition and respect as professionals. This is where the focus of the Plan lies (O1, O2). We believe that a key to increasing reward for archaeologists lies in Improving the status of archaeologists and by ensuring accredited, high quality, ethical and businesslike working practices. It continues to be our aspiration that pay for archaeologists will increase, commensurately with the level of skill and service they provide (see S1.5).

3. The Plan places the duty of IfA firmly in the context of the role archaeologists play in society, and in protecting the public interest (standards and ethics). Strategies for developing understanding of this duty are included under our primary objective (O1).

4. Our plan, and our *Code of conduct*, emphasise that the resources of the historic environment are to be put to work responsibly to achieve common benefit, while sustaining those resources for future generations (What archaeologists do p.5). We consider that understanding the role of the historic environment in creating a sustainable world is fundamental to the archaeologist's job. We will support this message through our projects (S1.1), our Standards and guidance and *Code of conduct* (S2.1), through our accreditation process (S4.1) and through partnership working (S5.1).

5. Consideration of chartership, either for individual members, or for the IfA as a whole, will be a priority in this Plan period under O1, through which we aim to establish our status in society better.

6. Another priority will be to communicate better the role of the IfA in maintaining standards and ethics, as well as excellence in the working practices of our members, both within the sector and beyond. A good Communications Strategy (O6) will provide a vital framework for achieving this objective and for ensuring the quality of our products and services, including our publications and events.

7. The new Strategic Plan defines the focus of our role in lobbying and policy work strategies are included (O5) to ensure that we focus our efforts on the promotion of policy that supports accreditation and the need for standards, leading to an environment in which self-regulation of the profession will work.

<sup>1</sup> In contrast to our previous Strategic Plan, we have opted for plain English in the new Plan, talking about 'the role of the IfA' (rather than our 'Mission') 'where we want to be' (in old terms, our 'Vision') and 'how to get there' (our framework of strategies).

## PART ONE: THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2010 – 2020

### OUR VISION AND OBJECTIVES

#### WHAT ARCHAEOLOGISTS DO

Archaeologists study – and care for – the past through its physical remains. These remains whether built, buried, on land or underwater, extraordinary or everyday, magnificent or mundane all contribute to our historic environment. The resources of the historic environment, like those of the natural environment, are for the benefit of everyone in society, today and in the future, and need to be treated with care and expertise. Archaeologists have a unique set of skills to tap into these resources – to find them, to explore them, to manage them and to realise their full potential for education and research, the improvement of our environment and the enrichment of people's lives. We have a duty to society to fulfil this role.

#### WHAT IfA DOES

We promote high professional standards and strong ethics in archaeological practice, to maximise the benefits that archaeologists bring to society, and to bring recognition and respect to our profession.

#### WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 2020

In 2020 all professional archaeologists will have the skills, integrity and versatility to ensure that the study and care of the historic environment brings real benefits to people's daily lives.

To achieve this, we will need to meet the following objectives

- O1** increase understanding of the role of archaeologists in society and improve our status
- O2** inspire excellence in professional practice
- O3** strengthen the relationships between archaeologists across the historic environment and other sectors
- O4** make IfA membership and registration essential demonstrations of fitness to practise
- O5** develop a stronger influence on historic environment policy
- O6** give archaeologists a credible, effective and efficient professional institute

## HOW WE PLAN TO GET THERE

The following strategies (grouped with the objectives to which they relate) provide the structure for our Strategic Plan. The aim of all IfA activities and projects will be to contribute to one or more of these strategies.

- O1 increase understanding of the role of archaeologists in society and improve our status**
  - S1.1 discuss the role of archaeologists in society
  - S1.2 explore the desirability and possibility of chartership
  - S1.3 promote exemplary practice and publicise innovation
  - S1.4 form partnerships with other professional bodies
  - S1.5 achieve parity of respect and reward with comparable professions
- O2 inspire excellence in professional practice**
  - S2.1 define and promote standards and ethics
  - S2.2 encourage intellectual rigour and a research ethos
  - S2.3 advocate training and professional development
- O3 strengthen the relationships between archaeologists across the historic environment and other sectors**
  - S3.1 stimulate knowledge exchange
  - S3.2 broaden our membership to include archaeologists from all parts of the sector
  - S3.3 develop partnerships across historic environment and cognate sectors
- O4 make IfA membership and registration essential demonstrations of fitness to practise**
  - S4.1 strengthen our membership validation and registration processes
  - S4.2 promote the importance of membership and registration
  - S4.3 increase the proportion of archaeologists who are IfA members
  - S4.4 promote the credibility of our disciplinary and complaints procedures
- O5 develop a stronger influence on historic environment policy**
  - S5.1 establish the historic environment agenda more securely within general environmental and other policy
  - S5.2 contribute to a wide range of policy initiatives affecting the historic environment
- O6 give archaeologists a credible, effective and efficient professional institute**
  - S6.1 clarify our image and purpose
  - S6.2 develop and implement a communications strategy
  - S6.3 improve our organisational structure
  - S6.4 enhance our administrative systems
  - S6.5 develop our staff
  - S6.6 generate and manage our resources

Each strategy has been broken down into a number of tasks. These are set out in the following 7 pages. Part 2 of this document provides the Business Plan for year 1 (2010-2011), which provides a schedule for carrying out those tasks considered to be of highest priority.

## OUR STRATEGIES IN DETAIL

### O1 increase understanding of the role of archaeologists in society and improve our status

#### S1.1 discuss the role of archaeologists in society

- commission papers to raise the debate about the boundaries of the profession present and future and expand the vision for archaeology in the modern world (providing clear definitions of the profession, the sector, and the discipline)
- develop thinking (paper or larger research project) on the current role, market need and future of archaeology in society, focusing on the value of archaeological knowledge

#### S1.2 explore the desirability and possibility of chartership

- carry out research to establish the implications of four options for chartership (IfA as chartered institute, forming a chartered body with other institutes, becoming part of or buying into an existing chartered institute, remain unchartered)

#### S1.3 promote exemplary practice and publicise innovation

- develop criteria for excellence in archaeological practice and identify 'beacon' Registered Organisations
- identify exemplary individuals, organisations and practice through daily IfA business and at Conference ('Excellence' list)
- develop relations with exemplary individuals and organisations, encouraging them to get involved in IfA business
- develop IfA's editorial policy to focus on innovation and research as well as on current best practice

#### S1.4 form partnerships with other professional bodies

- develop a list of comparable professional bodies across cognate sectors and internationally
- identify the strategic direction of a selection of bodies most likely to welcome links with archaeology and determine how joint working would help us deliver common objectives
- develop Memoranda of Understanding with other bodies as appropriate

#### S1.5 achieve parity of respect and reward with comparable professionals

- research our professional image, using other professional bodies and a range of external organisations and stakeholders
- review the way IfA makes salary recommendations, and their effectiveness through comparison with other professional bodies
- promote our profession, aspiring to achieve the profile of eg RIBA, RICS or similar comparable organisations (through a Communications Strategy see 6.2)

### O2 inspire excellence in professional practice

#### S2.1 define and promote standards and ethics

- promote professional ethics through a campaign publicising the role and purpose of the *Code of conduct*, in particular our duty to the environment, economy and society
- clarify options and decide whether to pursue accreditation of Standards with BSI
- review and develop IfA standards (including current and new *Standards and guidance*, the *Code of conduct* and by-laws)

#### S2.2 encourage intellectual rigour and a research ethos

- explore the nature of relations between the commercial and academic sectors leading to a plan and models for brokering future academic/commercial partnerships
- actively publicise our new journal
- develop (within our Communication Strategy) a campaign to promote the connection between high quality academic research, innovation and commercial archaeological practice, both within the sector and to buyers of archaeological services outside the sector
- find out what members expect and want from the conference
- develop criteria for the conference success in liaison with both commercial and academic members (to include academic objectives, targets for the profile of speakers and subject material) and market more effectively to all, including to members, non members and those from outside the sector (see S6.6, S3.1)
- examine the role of IfA Groups in taking practice forward over the last 10 years, and develop proposals for alternative ways of drawing on specialist knowledge to inform IfA policy and training initiatives (such as discussion fora)

#### S2.3 advocate training and professional development

- decide how to market Continuing Professional Development (CPD) more effectively
- review the CPD scheme and develop it from an input to an output based scheme
- roll out the Workplace Learning model across the sector through current and additional initiatives for marketing and championing best practice
- produce, implement and review a full business plan, including marketing strategy, for the NVQ Assessment Centre
- ensure that IfA leads involvement in development of the National Occupational Standards (NOS), initiating discussion with those responsible
- establish a system for accrediting courses and other opportunities that contribute to NVQ attainment

**O3 strengthen the relationships between archaeologists across the historic environment and other sectors**

S3.1 stimulate knowledge exchange

- obtain feedback on all publications from members
- use feedback to review the form and content of IfA publications, including the possibility of guest editors for *The Archaeologist* and encouraging contributions from outside the sector
- consider how to improve the conference to attract delegates from industry and other sectors (see S2.2, S6.6)

S3.2 broaden our membership to include archaeologists from all parts of the sector

- through the Communications Strategy (6.2), develop a wider network of potential members
- re-market IfA Affiliate grade to attract non-archaeological professionals
- establish where there is direct 'read-across' from other professional accreditation processes that could provide a fast-track to membership
- make the application process for membership web-based
- market membership using professional bodies identified in S1.4, and our network in other sectors (see S3.3)
- develop a pool of professional Affiliates as IfA 'ambassadors' in other sectors

S3.3 develop partnerships across historic environment and cognate sectors

- identify ambassadors for the IfA through the IfA's network (including from organisations identified in S1.4)
- invite ambassadors to the conference and to Council meetings as appropriate
- use ambassadors to market IfA membership at appropriate levels
- consider ambassadors for a 'blue skies committee' (see S6.3)
- consider an programme of job exchanges within the sector, and encourage the take up of academic fellowships for senior commercially based archaeologists
- promote and pursue synthesis projects, drawing professional and academic participants together, with external funding

**O4 make IfA membership and registration essential demonstrations of fitness to practise**

S4.1 strengthen our membership validation and registration processes

- pursue options for chartership of individual members (see S1.3)
- map the IfA competence matrix to the NOS
- review validation procedures and develop options for improvement
- implement a system of assessors to take a key role in validation
- produce new application forms and handbook to reflect new procedures
- develop the Registered Organisation registration processes, including combining current documentation into a single inspection pack
- obtain input from Registered Organisations across the sector to ensure that the registration and inspection processes apply to all relevant organisations
- expand the pool of Registered Organisation inspectors and ensure appropriate inspectors are allocated to inspections
- develop the Registered Organisation registration criteria
- develop a system for distinguishing Registered Organisations ('beacon Registered Organisations' see S1.2) with a history of excellent performance against registration criteria, and promote them beyond the sector through our Communications Strategy
- publicise Registered Organisation performance in the annual report

S4.2 promote the importance of membership and registration

- draw the results of Strategies S1.1 – S1.5 into marketing and recruitment
- plan an approach to local authorities to promote the Registered Organisation scheme in the light of recent legal advice and the requirements of planning, historic environment policy and guidance
- publicise the importance of MIfA-level membership (or chartered membership, see S1.4), including the range of expertise it represents (see S6.2) using high profile members for endorsement

S4.3 increase the proportion of archaeologists who are IfA members

- clarify the IfA's membership recruitment 'pitch'
- plan and carry out an effective programme of recruitment activities in line with the Communications Strategy
- market to new areas (see S3.2) as identified through the Communications Strategy
- rationalise the offer of subsidiary membership benefits (health, legal etc) using member feedback and a cost analysis, and market as a formal package

S4.4 promote the credibility of our disciplinary and complaints procedures

- publicise the disciplinary process, making clear the importance of clear, supported allegations
- provide better instructions to disciplinary process participants to increase confidence – provide training for panels based on legal advice
- consult past disciplinary investigators to develop guidance to clarify and promote the investigator role
- train an internal Disciplinary manager or outsource disciplinary management

**O5 develop a stronger influence over policy affecting the historic environment**

S5.1 establish the historic environment agenda more securely within general environmental and other policy

- facilitate debate/research (through the conference and other fora) about the contribution of the historic environment to wider agenda
- help to review and redefine the sector's 'policy script' with The Archaeology Forum (TAF), the Historic Environment Review Executive Committee (HEREC), the Built Environment Forum Scotland (BEFS), the Historic Environment Group (HEG) and the Northern Ireland Archaeology Forum (NIAF), defining how the historic environment has the potential to contribute to wider agenda
- make the case through a programme of publicity that professional archaeology has a way to realise this potential and to protect public interest

S5.2 contribute to a wide range of policy initiatives affecting the historic environment

- script the IfA's message to policy makers
- develop our network of politicians and advisors to target with this message (review the list regularly)
- maintain an active role in TAF to increase our effectiveness in Westminster
- develop our role in BEFS, NIAF, HEG and other lobbying bodies across the UK's devolved governments
- explore the development of an influential profile in Brussels
- develop and pursue a 'reform wish-list' identifying legislative reform and new guidance required for policy and implementation changes within current legislation
- publicise the IfA message, criteria for responding to consultations, and 'reform wishlist' to members
- develop criteria for selecting which government consultations to invest time in responding to

**O6 give archaeologists a credible, effective and efficient professional institute**

S6.1 clarify our image and purpose

- establish the IfA 'message' for image promotion and marketing, taking into account debate on the boundaries of professional practice and chartership (see S1.1)

S6.2 develop and implement a Communications Strategy

- use the IfA 'message' (see S6.1, above) to develop a Communications Strategy,
- consider, within marketing initiatives, new methods of delivery
- ensure publications are transmitting the Communication Strategy effectively

S6.3 improve our organisational structure

- review IfA organisational structure to ensure delivery of the Strategic Plan and succession planning
- review governance, including the role of staff, and consider moving to the Professional Associations Research Network (PARN) recommended model
- consider the potential benefits of a 'blue skies committee' (in accordance with the PARN model) with a remit for cross-sectoral working and policy development, in particular
- review the effectiveness of all IfA committees in delivering strategic objectives

S6.4 enhance our administrative systems

- upgrade our financial and quality management systems to enable better document control and review the information management disaster plan
- review our financial and IT service providers on a regular basis for effectiveness and value
- review the information management Disaster Plan

S6.5 develop our staff

- carry out a regular skills needs analysis and audit for Council and staff
- recruit to any new positions identified by the review of the organisational structure
- develop proposals for attracting, motivating and maintaining staff, including the use of financial and other incentives based on performance

S6.6 generate and manage our resources

- review the risk analysis of IfA's current financing, considering in particular the balance of subscriptions/fees and other income in the financing of core (non-project based) activities
- develop business plans for all strands of IfA business including :
  - membership recruitment
  - conference
  - projects
  - NVQ assessment centre
  - course accreditation
  - publications and other services
- consider diversifying income sources by introducing additional business strands (eg other events, products and services, grants, sponsorship, investments)

## **OBJECTIVES WITH TARGETS**

### **O1 increase understanding of the role of archaeologists in society and improve our status**

#### *Targets*

- 1) a minimum of 3 published papers/research on the role of archaeologists in society, directed towards at least 3 different audiences
- 2) feedback is positive on published papers (opinion to be solicited from members and groups)
- 3) exemplary practice is publicized regularly within the profession and beyond through The Archaeologist and in at least three other trade publications each year
- 4) active working partnerships are held with at least two other professional bodies
- 5) stakeholder surveys to be carried out in 2011, 2015 and 2020 show an improvement in professional image and in understanding of the role of archaeologists in society
- 6) by 2020, archaeologists' remuneration is equivalent to those of comparable professionals

### **O2 inspire excellence in professional practice**

#### *Targets*

- 7) our Standards cover a wide range of practice and are acknowledged at high level (eg. in government policy or guidance) as industry benchmark
- 8) we have actively supported more than ten new commercial/academic partnerships (projects or working relationships)
- 9) the journal is recognized and subscribed to by over 750 across the sector
- 10) there is an increase of 100% in conference delegates employed in academia (based on Torquay figures)
- 11) workplace learning is a core principle of 90% of Registered Organisations (proven through the registration process)

### **O3 strengthen the relationships between archaeologists across the historic environment and other sectors**

#### *Targets*

- 12) results of stakeholder surveys 2011, 2015 and 2020 show cross sectoral relationships are improving
- 13) attendance at conference of non-archaeologists is trebled on Torquay figures
- 14) professional affiliates from outside the sector are up by 50
- 15) Council seeks advice at least twice a year from experts outside the sector
- 16) at least 10 requests per year for advice on policy and practice received from outside the sector (requests to be logged)

### **O4 make IfA membership and registration essential demonstrations of fitness to practise**

#### *Targets*

- 17) 100 ROs by 2020 and 4500 members by 2020

- 18) membership of the IfA at the highest level is considered to be a guarantee of expertise equivalent to the highest level of membership at RIBA and ICE (to be gauged through stakeholder survey in 2011, 2015, 2020)
- 19) survey of LPAs requiring or recommending use of IfA accredited practitioners shows trebling between 2011 and 2020
- 20) survey of employers requiring or preferring IfA members shows trebling between 2011 and 2020
- 21) survey of clients and their agents requiring IfA accredited practitioners shows trebling between 2011 and 2020
- 22) the disciplinary process shows improvement against recommendations of external auditors

**O5 develop a stronger influence on historic environment policy**

*Targets*

- 23) 50% of our reform wishlist adopted as policy by government/national assembly
- 24) legal framework, policy and practice considered to have been improved due to IfA consultation responses and work with policy makers (based on stakeholder survey 2011, 2015, 2020)

**O6 give archaeologists a credible, effective and efficient professional institute**

*Targets*

- 25) we have a clear image and identity (as shown through stakeholder survey results)
- 26) staff productivity (to be measured through workplans, timesheets and reviews), is considered good by Council and all projects meet their targets in terms of budget, time and performance
- 27) staff skills audits show roles and responsibilities are appropriate (or being developed) and succession planning is in place
- 28) stakeholder surveys carried out in 2011, 2015 and 2020 show increase in member satisfaction and a greater respect for the work of the Institute