



Subject	Update on ARB's Operational Activities		
Status	Open Session		
Purpose	For Note		
From	Registrar & Chief Executive		
History	Parent Committee	First Submitted	Revision Number
	N/A	15 September 2016	N/A

1. Purpose

To update the Board on ARB's operational activities since the last Board meeting.

For Note

2. Contribution to the Board's Purpose and Objectives

In delivering the Act, ARB's objectives are:

Protect the users and potential users of architects' services, and support architects through Regulation. ARB's Operational Activities Report keeps the Board informed of activities which ensure that ARB meets its purpose and objectives, and delivers against the Business Plan 2016.

3. Key points

Stakeholder Relations

We have been continuing our work building relationships with stakeholders.

Architects Benevolent Society (ABS)

We have a follow up meeting planned with the Architects Benevolent Society (ABS) in September. It follows a series of very positive meetings with the ABS including a half day visit to ARB by the ABS's two welfare officers where they met with representatives from the different regulatory teams within ARB. The follow up meeting will focus on whether there are any opportunities for joint working, particularly relating to registrants facing financial hardship and other problems.

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) asked us to help with sharing their survey into the client perspective with our audiences. We posted messages about this interesting project on social media channels to support this piece of work and we look forward, with interest, to seeing the findings of this exercise.

The Registrar met with Adrian Dobson, Executive Director of Members to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Registrar also had the opportunity to meet Alan Vallance, interim

Chief Executive.

EU Referendum

The outcome of the EU Referendum has of course impacted on our communications activity. We released a statement following the vote and included an article on this subject in the July ebulletin. We also produced a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for registrants and applicants. These have been well received by our stakeholders logging 707 clicks for the statement, 617 for the ebulletin article and 1,033 for the FAQs. We continue to monitor the trade press and construction sector newsletters for relevant information related to the Referendum. We have made contact with other regulators so that we will be in a position to discuss matters of mutual interest at the appropriate time.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)

We attended a briefing session offered by the QAA. The session offered some background to the QAA's revised role and remit, as well as some background guidance on the content and purpose of the Quality Code. Discussion activities were organised to consider the role and purpose of Subject Benchmark Statements, and to try to find areas of overlap between the information sought and considered by the QAA and that sought and considered by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

The session also offered an update as to the potential changes to University quality assurance oversight and regulation, subsequent to the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE's) Review of Quality and Assessment. We will seek to invite representatives from the QAA to provide the Prescription Committee with a post-Committee update session once HEFCE's Review findings have been finalised.

Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture (SCHOSA)

We attended SCHOSA's Summer meeting and gave a presentation updating SCHOSA members on recent developments in relation to ARB and its work. We covered topics such as Brexit, confirming that it was business as usual at ARB in the wake of the Referendum; the review of the UK Routes to Registration; what we know about the 4+2 model of architectural education and training so far and we additionally reiterated the key messages which had been issued in the Head of Qualifications & Governance's recent letter to all Schools of Architecture/Heads of Quality Assurance. The meeting was very well attended and the presentation well received. It also provided the opportunity for SCHOSA members to consider what they wished the Council to cover at the ARB/SCHOSA liaison meeting planned for mid-July.

We additionally hosted one of the regular ARB/SCHOSA Liaison meetings in mid July. We covered the same topics/messages as outlined above at the meeting. Our next liaison meeting will take place in the Autumn.

European Stakeholders – Architects Council of Europe(ACE)/European Network of Architects Competent Authorities (ENACA)

We will have attended the Professional Qualifications Directive (PQD) and Regulatory Questions and Issues Working Group meetings in mid-September. We anticipate that discussions will be focussing on work that ACE has been undertaking to determine how accreditation processes operate across Europe; the Commission's review of the Services Directive; the Commission's on-going review as to whether there are barriers to the provision of services in the construction industry; and Brexit including how schools/students/professionals etc., should be advised. Additional updates will be provided at the Board meeting itself. We are also planning to attend the ACE Finance Committee and General Co-ordination meetings and the next ENACA meeting this Autumn. We are expecting ENACA to discuss the development of guidance regarding the '+2', i.e., the professional traineeship, which is one of the options set out under Article 46 of the PQD. Attending these meetings provide us with valuable networking opportunities following the result of the EU Referendum, as well as gathering important updates regarding the continued implementation of the revised PQD and the review of the Services Directive.

Stakeholders from the consumer and construction sectors

Work has been underway planning for our exhibition stand at the Homebuilding and Renovating Show at the London Excel from 23 – 25 September and the Grand Designs Live show at the NEC Birmingham in October. Our attendance at exhibitions has proved a highly effective way of reaching out directly to a consumer audience. At the last Homebuilding and Renovating Show which took place in Birmingham in April we welcomed 1000 visitors to our stand and distributed in the region of 800 of our popular 'Meeting your architect' forms. We also presented a masterclass and have accepted a follow-up invitation to present a further masterclass at the London Homebuilding and Renovating Show in September.

Equality and Diversity

We recently met with the Chief Executive of Elevation Networks, a youth employment charity that develops the leadership potential in talented young people. We told them about ARB's role and learned about the charity's ethos and work. The charity has offered to share future ARB roles and appointments with its wider network.

Work continues on the planning of our project to review the tone of voice of our correspondence with a meeting being held with a member of the communications team at the General Medical Council (GMC) who worked on the GMC's tone of voice project. The tone of voice project aims to review our correspondence to ensure the tone is balanced and communicates key messages without causing unnecessary distress to the recipient.

Staff information session

The staff group have expressed an interest in gaining an insight into the legislative process including how a Bill becomes an Act and other legislative tools including Statutory Instruments. Consequently, we are in touch with the Parliamentary Outreach office, and

are planning a short staff information session on the legislative steps which have provided us with our statutory remit.

Communicating ARB's work

The 2015 Annual Report was published on 18 July 2016, this Report outlines our regulatory role and sets out how we have delivered against our objectives. Since its launch it has received 1,394 views, an increase on the previous year's month one visits by 8%. Historically, views of the Annual Report tend to climb over time as people use the report as a source of reference information which they refer to as and when they need it thus we will continue to monitor visits over time. We launched the Annual Report via an eblast and press release to registrants and the trade press, this generated some messages on social media (related to the number of female registrants) and one press article. The headline of the article referred to the 'Highest number of architects ever on ARB Register' and included a run-down of the key numbers highlighted in the press release.

There were a number of articles in the trade press relating to Peter Coe's election as Chair, following the departure of Beatrice Fraenkel who stood down as her term as a Board Member came to an end. The resulting articles, including an interview with Beatrice Fraenkel were factual and positive in tone and included information about ARB's regulatory role and commitment to strong governance.

The Head of Professional Standards was a speaker at the Solicitors Regulation Authority's event 'Trust and the market: Rethinking Regulation', where he set out ARB's approach to promoting professional standards.

Code of Conduct

We are aiming to issue the new Architects Code: Standards of Conduct and Practice for it to come into force on 1 January 2017. Work is currently underway to establish how the new Code can be most effectively promoted prior to its publication.

eBulletin

The July ebulletin was well received, the top three articles covered an update following the referendum (which received 617 views), a misuse of title case (which received 572 views) and the ever popular Dear Architect column (which received 557 views), highlighting registrants continued interest in information relating to professional standards matters and our work to protect the title.

Social media

Our more engaging approach to social media has proved successful, we endeavour where possible to include images with social media messages and a member of the team is now able to use design software to produce infographics which enables us to convey key facts about our regulatory role.

On LinkedIn messages covering the Code of Conduct proved popular as did messages containing information about the Annual Report, the Registration Administrator role and the recent misuse of title case. On Twitter messages about the Annual Report again proved popular, people were also interested in the posts about Beatrice's departure and the Open House London festival. Popular messages on Facebook covered the Code of Conduct, the recent misuse of title case, and the photo of the Head of Professional Standards speaking at the Solicitors Regulation Authority's Rethinking Regulation event.

4. Administration of the Register

Accuracy of the Register

The Accuracy project is on-going, with staff amending records when accessing the database as well as the use of dedicated time through cross-team working.

The Registrants services section of the website has recently been amended to allow architects to update their equality and diversity information. We have reviewed the online application portal to ensure all necessary details are provided in the correct format.

Section 11 Project

On 29 February 2016 a letter was sent to 620 architects whose address we were aware was not up to date. We were aware of the majority of these architects due to their annual retention fee invoice being returned. Any architect who currently pays their retention fee by direct debit was sent a letter via their bank on 3 May 2016.

As of 23 August 2016, 496 architects had been successfully contacted and up to date details provided. There are 124 remaining who have not. We have made attempts to contact all of the remaining architects and will continue to do so over the next three months via telephone, LinkedIn, and through internet searches. If any architects have not made contact by 29 November 2016, their name will be removed under Section 11 of the Act.

2017 Retention Fee Collection

Members of the staff team have re-formed the retention fee task group to carefully review the 2016 retention fee collection process and the feedback received. Last year this proved to be a successful initiative and the group's review led to the introduction of a number of changes including the text reminder service, issuing the top ten tips email and establishing a process to deal with the issues raised by the direct debit dormancy period. The group has a number of potential ideas for change, based on the experience of the 2016 retention fee collection process, they are currently exploring these and further improvements will be made to the process. We will be writing again to the relevant professional bodies and associations to seek their help lowering the number of architects removed for non-payment of the fee through their communications with their members.

Prescribed Examination - Independent Examiner and Examiner Recruitment

The recruitment process for Independent Examiners and Examiners is now underway. The advert was placed on 5th September and will close on 7th October. This exercise will provide for a period of overlap during which new Examiners and Independent Examiners can be integrated and develop their skills, as well as receiving support from those serving out the remainder of their term of appointment.

5. Committee Meetings

Professional Conduct Committee – 25 to 27 July 2016

Prescription Committee – 28 July 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 28 and 29 July 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 16 and 17 August 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 22 and 23 August 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 24 and 25 August 2016

Remuneration Committee – 24 August 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 26 and 30 August 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 31 August 2016

Prescription Committee – 8 September 2016

6. Future Meetings and Events

Prescription Committee – 15 October 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 17 to 19 October 2016

Audit Committee – 20 October 2016

Investigations Oversight Committee – 21 October 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 24 and 25 October 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 1 November 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 3 November 2016

Remuneration Committee – 4 November 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 7 to 9 November 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 14 to 16 November 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 21 to 23 November 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 29 November

Professional Conduct Committee – 1 and 2 December 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 6 to 8 December 2016

Professional Conduct Committee – 15 December 2016

Association of Professional Studies Advisers in Architecture (APSAA)

We will be attending APSAA's Autumn Forum in mid-November. APSAA has invited us to give a presentation and participate in the Forum so that we can update APSAA members on our work and the latest developments regarding the review of the UK routes to registration as well as the impact of the EU Referendum and the publication of the Periodic Review Report.

7. Risk Implications

ARB's Operational Activities Report provides the Board with an update on business activities, progress against the Business Plan, as well as highlighting any emerging risks which may impact on delivery.

8. Resource Implications

Staff resources continue to be stretched to capacity. We have recently considered the current structure, to ensure resources are positioned where needed, now and in the future.

9. Communication

The update on ARB's operational activities, updates the Board on ARB's work and any risks which may prevent the delivery of ARB's operations.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

ARB takes equality implications into account in all areas of its work and where appropriate, specific impact assessments are undertaken.