

ARB Business Plan

2021

Aims and Purpose

ARB's primary purpose is to deliver the Architects Act, and the Board has identified two aims from the Act which underpin our core work:

To protect the users and potential users of architects' services:

We will protect the users and potential users of architects' services by regulating architects so that the public can be confident that architects are appropriately qualified. We will raise the public's awareness of the Register.

To support architects through regulation:

We will maintain and publicly demonstrate the status of architects as competent, qualified professionals, and we will regulate use of the title "architect". We will raise awareness of the Architects Code of Conduct and Practice and the need to maintain competence.

Strategic Objectives

In addition to our core work, the Board has identified four strategic objectives for delivery in the years 2019-2021. The work we have planned for 2021 will enable us to deliver those objectives. We will in parallel be developing our plans for 2022 and beyond. The strategic objectives are:

- Having a fit for purpose Architects Register
- Maintaining strong relationships
- Planning an effective exit from the European Union
- Organisational Excellence

Strategic Projects

Since the 2020 business plan was prepared the environment in which ARB operates has shifted. ARB's response to these significant changes in the regulatory and professional landscape has therefore been encapsulated in five key projects which we commenced in 2020 but will be taking forward in 2021/2022. The key projects are:-

- Engage with the public, the profession and our stakeholders to review the competencies required for architects, and how they can best be acquired and maintained
- Support architects and relevant stakeholders through the changes required after the UK's exit from the EU
- Ensure we continue to recognise high quality qualifications, by reviewing and modernising our prescription processes
- Respond to the challenges of significant technical changes facing the profession, including the Climate Emergency and building safety reform
- Modernise our professional conduct rules and processes

Our Focus

Our strategic projects will help to shape the future of how we regulate the profession. We want to learn from our stakeholder experiences and so we need to ensure we actively engage and communicate what we are doing. This knowledge will help us design how we regulate and deliver our services in the 21st century and will allow stakeholders to hold us to account.

We will produce plans setting out how we will deliver these areas of work and we will report regularly on our progress. These plans will allow us to engage with our sponsoring government department to ensure that opportunities to improve the Architects Act are maximised.

We'll evaluate the outcomes using a range of quantitative and qualitative measures, reported through the KPQs.

The business plan items below incorporate the five strategic projects referred to above as well as areas where we are continuing to transform the delivery of our core work.

Having a fit for purpose register

We will undertake a review of the requirements for entry to and retention on the Architects Register, by:

- **Reviewing the competencies required for entry to and the routes** by which individuals can gain access to the Register of Architects
- Establish a regime to **monitor architects' competence** so as to provide assurance to the users of architects' services and support the profession
- Working with government and others to influence and support opportunities for **legislative change**

We have set out below the steps we will take in 2021 to help achieve these objectives.

Area of Work	Goals for 2021
Engaging with the public, the profession and our stakeholders to review the competencies required for architects, and how they can best be acquired and maintained	Complete the research and initial engagement to determine what skills and competencies future architects must have to gain entry to the Register
	Establish the competencies required of architects
	Consult on proposals to change the routes to registration
Development of ARB's approach to ensuring that those remaining on the Register maintain their competence throughout their careers	Devise and consult on our plans to monitor the competence of architects
	Develop a regulatory model to support the monitoring of competence across the profession
Continue to actively engage with Government to ensure that the Act remains sufficiently flexible to respond to future technical and political developments	Continue to advise and engage with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding legislative changes, to ensure that opportunities to improve the Act are maximised
	Engage fully with the Periodic Review conducted by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Undertaking a fundamental review of the way in which ARB prescribes qualifications	Continue our radical review of the way in which the Board prescribes UK qualifications

Maintaining Strong Relationships

We will continue to build strong relationships with the public, the profession and other key stakeholders, by:

- **Raising awareness** of the Register of Architects
- **Communicating the value** of ARB's regulatory role
- Communicate **regulatory expectations** to the profession

We have set out below the steps we will take in 2021 to help achieve these objectives.

Area of Work	Goals for 2021
Through effective and impactful communications and engagement, raise awareness of the value of statutory regulation of architects	Establish a strategy to continue building long term and positive relationships with stakeholders
Proactively engage with the public, the profession and other key stakeholders to encourage feedback	Implement agreed actions arising from the 2019 Stakeholder Engagement Survey and establish future communications needs
	Re-engaging those on the Register who we have not been in contact with for a long period of time
	Define how we will better use the data and insights from engaging and seeking feedback
Engage and collaborate more closely with the professional bodies representing architects in the UK and internationally	Collaborate on joint statements to ensure a more informed profession and impact of messaging
	Engage on our key projects and actively seek supportive statements from those we engage with to maximise impact
Communicate the effectiveness of ARB's regulatory role	Devise a new approach to engage with our stakeholders setting out what, when and how we communicate and engage at local, national and international levels
	Establish new outcomes focussed Key Performance Questions to measure and evaluate our performance and how we communicate and engage with it

Planning an effective exit from the European Union

We will continue to respond to the UK's changing relationship with Europe and the Rest of the World in a way which continues to protect consumers and supports architects through regulation, by ensuring that ARB is able to **operate effectively** beyond the Implementation Period.

We will also continue to explore our relationship with our international counterparts and seek to **build stronger relationships** with them.

We have set out below the steps we will take in 2021 to help achieve these objectives.

Area of Work	Goals for 2021
Ensuring that effective systems are in place beyond the end of the UK/EU Implementation Period, to support individuals, practices, and stakeholder organisations	Establish a robust communications plan that ensures that appropriate advice and support reaches those impacted by EU exit
	Ensure key policy decisions are taken so that any revised legislation is delivered effectively
	If a 'no deal' EU exit happens, roll-out the plans which have been developed for this eventuality
	If a deal is secured, continue to develop and roll out plans for this eventuality
Exploring post EU-exit opportunities and establish strong working relationships with international counterparts	Actively engage with international counterparts, and where appropriate, develop agreements to facilitate the registration of appropriately qualified individuals

Organisational Excellence

We will deliver efficiencies and improve performance in a way that does not sacrifice accessibility, by:

- Maintaining high standards of **Corporate Governance**, to ensure that ARB has the robust processes, policies and procedures in place required for business to be conducted in an effective way which is in line with the principles of public life
- Delivering an **Information Technology** strategy which will provide efficiencies both in cost and time
- Maintaining **Organisational Capability** and improve performance

We have set out below the steps we will take in 2021 to help achieve these objectives.

Area of Work	Goals for 2021
Corporate governance	Review governance arrangements and effectiveness process to that they remain effective and identify areas for continuous improvement
	Ensure ARB's committees are populated with members who have relevant experience and expertise
	Redesign Board papers to support more effective, transparent decision making
Information Technology	Strengthen cybersecurity to mitigate risk and protect the organisation's data
	Develop and refine workflow and reporting systems to facilitate the efficient delivery of the organisation's objectives and IT strategy, and to ensure compliance post EU Exit
	Deliver improvements to ensure that our technological services meet the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations when they impact on ARB
	Migrate appropriate systems into cloud-based systems
Maintain organisational capability and improve performance	Deliver ARB's strategic objectives on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
	Undertake a fundamental review of the internal training and performance framework to ensure that the organisation's staff are skilled, supported and competent to deliver in their roles
	Review and improve the performance framework for external providers to ensure highest quality of service
Modernise our professional conduct rules and processes	Modernise our rules, policies and guidance to ensure that our disciplinary procedures remain fair and efficient

