



Architects Registration Board
eBulletin : November 2015

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Chair's Message

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the November eBulletin.

We have lots happening as we enter December. The retention fee collection period is underway, many of you have already paid or have taken advantage of our new text and calendar reminder services. In addition to this, we have launched our [architects' election website](#) and have already received a significant number of enquiries. We were pleased to welcome a number of prospective candidates as observers to the 19 November

Board Meeting and to a briefing session later that day. At this session we provided information on the role of ARB and what it means to be a Board member. If you are interested in being a Board Member you can find more information [here](#).

At the Board meeting we took stock of ARB's work over the autumn period, reviewing the [Operational Activities Report](#). Furthermore, we approved a revised version of our [Consultation Policy](#) which builds on the best practice approaches used by other regulators and will make it easier for respondents to submit their views. This represents excellent progress towards one of the objectives we set in the 2015 business plan to review our commitment to transparency. Additionally, the Board reviewed progress against the actions set following the 2014 Board Effectiveness Review and pledged to undertake a similar evaluation for 2015.

We also had a very constructive discussion about [ARB's progress under its Equality Scheme](#) which has seen us conducting an equality and diversity survey to collect data from registrants. We now hold data for around 35% of the Register. We will be publishing aggregate information shortly although personal information relating to individuals is, of course, held confidentially and is never disclosed. As a statutory regulator, we collect this data to help us make informed decisions

and ensure our policies and procedures do not create barriers. Additionally, this data may inform the work of our stakeholders, who are also keen to understand more information about the profile of the profession.

As we approach the end of the year, please remember to pay your retention fee by 31 December 2015 so as to avoid the additional fees associated with removal and reinstatement. If your contact details have changed please remember you can update them quickly and easily via [online services](#). The staff team are also on hand to respond to your enquiries and can be contacted via email at info@arb.org.uk and via telephone on +44 (0) 20 7580 5861.

Sincere good wishes to you and your families as we enter the festive season.



Make sure you're registered to vote in the architects election

We are in the process of conducting an election for architect Board Members. All those on the Register of Architects are eligible to stand for election and nominations need to include the names of 10 registered architects as supporters.

The nomination period closes on 11 January and voting commences in February.

Please remember that you will need to pay your 2016 retention fee on time, by 31st December 2015, to ensure that you are included on the electoral role of registered architects.

This is essential if you want to:

- Stand for election;
- Be listed as 1 of the 10 required supporters for an architect who is standing for election; and
- Vote in the election.

Feedback from registrants following previous elections demonstrated that we need to make this information clear – you need to be on the Register to participate in the election process which means you need to pay your fee on time. It is also essential that we have up-to-date contact details for you to ensure you

receive all the ballot material which will be sent out by post.

What does being a Board Member involve?

We've had an excellent level of interest from architects who are interested in becoming Board Members, all of them want to know what being a Board Member involves.

Below is a short summary of the role of Board Members and you can read more detailed information including how to stand for election on our designated election microsite [here](#).

- The Architects Registration Board's mandate comes from the Architects Act 1997, which sets out ARB's regulatory remit. The Board's role is to ensure that the organisation delivers on its statutory remit.
- Board Members undertake a fundamentally important public service and are bound to act in the public interest at all times.
- ARB Board Members provide a key governance role, providing oversight and holding the organisation to account.
- The Board Members' Code of Conduct sets out how Board Members must operate and describes the values which underpin their work.
- Those who become Board Members can expect to make an important contribution to the governance of a public body including practical matters such as the implementation of legislation and oversight of policies and finances.

If you are thinking of standing as a candidate and would like to arrange to speak to Beatrice Fraenkel, the Chair of the Board, or if you would like any further information please email Emma Matthews at architectselection@arb.org.uk.



NEW RETENTION FEE TEXT REMINDER SERVICE

New retention fee text reminder service

Below, we outline how this new service will operate and how you can sign up to take advantage of it.

We have launched a new retention fee text reminder service. Reminders will be sent out to those architects whose retention fees remain outstanding towards the end of December. This is a free service which is in place for all registrants who have provided us with a mobile number. If you haven't provided us with a mobile phone number you can do so by logging on to [registrants' services](#).

We have developed this service in response to registrants' feedback, many architects advised us that they had experienced problems receiving emails and hadn't seen reminders. Registrants made the point that they wanted to be able to receive fee reminders whether they were in the office or at home. Consequently, we are also asking architects to provide us with a secondary, personal email address, to which reminder messages can be sent.

You can pay your fee at any time up to close of business on 31 December 2015. The quickest and easiest way to pay is [online](#). We have also developed a set of Q&As to provide you with more information about the 2016 retention fee, to read this click [here](#). We are

always happy to help with enquiries, you can reach us via email at info@arb.org.uk or you can call us on +44 (0) 20 7580 5861.



Prescription of Qualifications

At the last Board meeting on 19 November 2015, the Board considered an application from a body seeking to renew prescription of its qualification under the Architects Act 1997.

The Board decided that prescription of the following qualification should continue until May 2020:

Coventry University BSc (Hons) Architecture

The Board also considered applications from Higher Education institutions which wished their qualifications to be prescribed under the Architects Act 1997 for the first time. In line with its Procedures for the Prescription of Qualifications, the Board considered the responses to the consultations it had undertaken.

It decided that the following qualification should be prescribed from January 2016 until January 2020:

Open University/Hull School of Art and Design BA (Hons) Architecture

And that the following qualification should be prescribed from November 2015 until September 2018:

University of Dundee

Master in Architecture with Urban Planning

For further details, please see the 'Qualifications' section of ARB's website, www.arb.org.uk/infomation-prescription-of-qualifications



Periodic Review Update

The Government's review into the regulation of architects and the role of the Architects Registration Board is still underway. We understand that the final report has now been through its internal and external checks, and have been advised by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that the report will go to the Minister during the week commencing 23 November 2016.

The first phase of the periodic review finished in November 2014, this stage covered the fundamental question of whether there was a case for continued statutory regulation of architects. The Government concluded that there was a case for continued light-touch regulation based on protection of title.

The review then moved into phase two which has involved the Government conducting

a detailed analysis of two key regulatory functions. These are setting the standards of entry to the profession (which is often referred to as the prescription process) and ARB's professional standards function (which deals with the Code of Conduct and the complaints process). It is the report into phase two which DCLG are currently working on and which we understand will be submitted to the Minister shortly.



How to avoid complaints

Dealing with a complaint that has been made to the ARB can be a time-consuming and stressful process for architects. Being aware of common pitfalls can help avoid a complaint being made about you to the ARB.

Ensure you have written terms of engagement – You should issue written terms before you carry out any work, and include everything set out under Standard 4 of the Code of Conduct.

Communicate – Make sure that your client understands every stage of the project, and manage their expectations about what your role involves.

Declare all conflicts of interests – Conflicts of interest should be declared to your client at the outset of the appointment. It is advisable to record any declarations in writing and you should obtain your client's written consent

before you continue to act in that capacity.

Delegate and supervise – If there is a lot of work, delegation is important to avoid delays. Remember that all architectural work must be under the control and management of an architect, who should be prepared to supervise and intervene as necessary.

Maintain Professional Indemnity Insurance – Make sure that cover is adequate and appropriate for your work, and notify insurers as soon as you become aware of a potential complaint or dispute. You should ensure you have insurance for any architectural work you carry out, including any undertaken outside of your main employment.

Deal with complaints locally – Try to resolve complaints and disputes yourself at an early stage, to prevent it escalating. Have a written complaints procedure, answer complaints as quickly as possible, don't let the dispute get personal and engage in alternative dispute resolution where appropriate.

Watch our video on how to avoid complaints [here](#).



Misuse of title on LinkedIn and online directories

On 2 November 2015, Mr Liam Ward of Ward Design, Magherafelt, Northern Ireland was ordered to pay a total of £2,500 in fines and

costs after he was convicted for misusing the title 'architect' in breach of the Architects Act 1997.

A District Judge of the Magherafelt Courthouse heard that Mr Ward had used the title on social media and online directories despite there being no registered architect at the practice at that time. Mr Ward had failed to amend the offences even though he had received warnings from the ARB. The District Judge decided to fine Mr Ward £1,000, and ordered him to pay a further £1,500 to ARB in costs.

If you are interested to read more about ARB's misuse of title prosecutions please click [here](#).



Grand Designs

We exhibited at Grand Designs Live at the NEC in Birmingham from 8-11 October 2015. We received a very positive response from members of the public and handed out around 800 copies of our popular ['Meeting your architect'](#) form. We were also visited by architects and students who welcomed our attendance at this event. We answered various questions from all stakeholders and gave advice on a range of matters.

Many visitors asked about finding an architect and we were able to demonstrate the online Register, and to explain the benefits of using an architect. The architects who stopped at

our stand were pleased that we were at the show to inform visitors about the protected title and the statutory Register.

As part of our core regulatory focus to inform and protect the public, we are planning to exhibit at Grand Designs Live and two of the Home Building and Renovating Shows in 2016.

**Check an architect
is registered**



**Visit our online
register.**