

12 February 2014



Excellent news about the Institute for Archaeologists' Petition for a Royal Charter!

IfA's Petition for a Royal Charter of Incorporation was considered by the Privy Council at its meeting on 11 February 2014, and Her Majesty the Queen was pleased to sign the Order of Grant.

Celebrate now, but save some capacity for later! Several profound formalities need to happen before the new Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) comes into being and the change of name happens, including drawing up the Charter on vellum, signing and the application of the Great Seal. This gives time for IfA to set in train all the processes required to complete this momentous transition.

This decision is a spectacular endorsement of the role of archaeologists. IfA successfully made the case to the Privy Council that archaeology is a clear and distinct discipline working in the public interest.

IfA established that IfA's accredited members subscribe to an ethical *Code of conduct*, have demonstrated their competence and made a commitment to developing their skills through Continuing Professional Development, and are subject to the oversight of their peers – the essential elements of professionalism.

We have also shown the Privy Council that we have robust and fair processes for accrediting individuals and organisations, measuring compliance with standards, and for investigating allegations of unprofessional practice; and we have set out a sound, efficient and transparent structure of governance – the necessary components of any professional institute seeking recognition.

Peter Hinton, IfA's Chief Executive, says:

'If there remained any doubt that archaeology is a profession, uncertainty ends here.'

'Things will be different now. Our influence is massively strengthened. The award of a Royal Charter will not be the end of a process but the best possible opportunity to increase the effectiveness of our campaign to enhance the status of archaeology and archaeologists, to raise standards of archaeological practice and so to give yet better service to clients and the public.'

Jan Wills, Honorary Chair of IfA, says:

'This great news is a tribute to the hard work of this and previous Councils of IfA, their committees, groups and staff, who have over the years created a professional institute with the credibility needed for the granting of a Royal Charter. That the value of archaeology to the public, and our standing as a profession, has been recognised in this prestigious way is a tribute to our members. IfA members will at last attain parity of esteem with other professionals, by being recognised as belonging to a profession served by a Chartered Institute.'

'I hope this momentous occasion will encourage archaeologists who are not members of our Institute to submit an application to become recognised as professionals, and so to participate in further developing the practice of the discipline we love.'

ENDS

Notes

- Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) is the trading name for the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), a company limited by guarantee and registered in England Number 1918782. Its registered office is Miller Building, University of Reading, Reading, RG6 6AB. IFA was founded in 1982 and registered as a company in 1985.
- IfA submitted its petition to the Privy Council after its AGM in October 2013, following a thorough and constructive process of consultation with members and stakeholders.
- The assets and liabilities of IFA will pass to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) when it is formally established.
- At launch, CIfA will be governed by a Board of Directors initially composed of the Executive committee (Officers) of IfA at the time of Charter and two senior staff, who will be guided by an Advisory Council initially composed of members of Council at the time of Charter who are not members of the Executive committee. Both bodies will be supplemented in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, by-laws and regulations.
- IfA's stated purpose is

To 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.

Its strategic plan explains that

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.

These values will guide the new organisation.

- It is not yet possible to state when the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists will be launched. Members will be kept informed.
- Accredited members of IfA are bound by the *Code of conduct* to undertake at least 50 hours of Continuing Professional Development in any two-year period.

Further information

Further information about the IfA and Charter, including the Charter, bylaw and regulations can be found on our webpages at www.archaeologists.net/charter.

The **Institute for Archaeologists** (IfA) advances the practice of archaeology and allied disciplines by promoting professional standards and ethics for conserving, managing, understanding and promoting enjoyment of heritage. Further information about IfA and IfA Standards and guidance can be found at www.archaeologists.net.

Comments and contact

For media enquiries

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If you would like to arrange an interview with Peter Hinton (IfA Chief Executive) or Jan Wills (IfA Honorary Chair of IfA), please email Amanda.Forster@archaeologists.net.

For members' and governance enquiries

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