

Chartered Archaeologist: Principles for progression of the sector

Contents:

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Professional Progress: The last 40 years and the next 40](#)
3. [Doing it right: The vote and beyond](#)

1. Introduction:

The vote on whether CIfA will proceed with the development of Chartered Archaeologist opens online on the 25 March. This is a major culmination of the work that has been done over the past five years, since the Institute received its Royal Charter. During this time, we have consulted with members and sought to develop a proposal which is

- appropriate and attractive for our members,
- accessible and relevant to a wide range of professional archaeologists,
- proportionate in the demands placed on applications and available resource, yet able to meet objective standards set by the Privy Council,
- and which will deliver genuine improvements to excellence in the profession

At the heart of the proposal is CIfA's continued mission to champion professionalism in archaeology, to improve standards, and improve recognition for archaeologists. Before the vote opens we would like to explore this reasoning and why we are confident that enabling the delivery of Chartered Archaeologist represents the natural next step in the development of the profession.

2. Professional progress: The last 40 years and the next 40

When those who were to become the founding members of the Institute of Field Archaeologists gathered in 1982, the discipline of archaeology was very different to what it is today. Over the following 4 decades, archaeology has matured rapidly as a profession.

The establishment of a professional institute for the nascent profession of archaeology helped to chart the development of standards while the profession was transitioning to a system of comprehensive protections for archaeology in the planning system in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Since then CIfA has driven the creation of ever-improving standards, has seen a revolution in the development of technical practices, and the establishment of new professional identities, recognition, and acceptance of archaeology as a facet of the development process.

Archaeology now works alongside other professions on development sites and in other contexts across the profession – the equal to other professions with whom we work in terms of education, skills, standards, health and safety, and behaviour.

It is perhaps easy to forget this long term development in the context of day-to-day challenges of lack of recognition, difficult client relationships, and comparatively poor pay and conditions. ClfA recognises all of these challenges. As a professional institute we play an important part in tackling these issues and must work closely with trade unions (Prospect) and the trade associations (FAME) to do so.

Progress can be slow. But the way that ClfA attempts to influence this is by continuing to pursue ClfA's main objectives; to improve excellence, enhance professionalism in the sector by developing standards, improve people, and provide an authoritative voice for archaeology to government and client-sector stakeholders.



Continuing to make a difference in this endeavour is precisely why ClfA is pursuing the introduction of Chartered Archaeologist. The proposals provide a way to raise standards and improve processes, and create a new and improved platform on which we can engage with client sectors to improve perceptions of archaeologists. Improving perceptions of the quality of archaeological work again gives us an opportunity to change expectations about the value of archaeological work, improving its market valuation.

In this sense, you do not need to be Chartered for Chartered Archaeologist to have benefits for you, in terms of the good that it has the potential to do for the whole profession.

Of course, actually capitalising on the opportunities of Chartered Archaeology is not going to be as easy as simply voting for the proposal in April. It will require years of work to

- embed improvements to standards and compliance
- engage client sectors
- work to ensure that more clients use accredited professionals
- encourage more archaeologists to seek accreditation

There are no quick win solutions and no silver bullets. But we are confident that Chartered Archaeologist will help in each of these areas and play a part in the continuation of the last 40 years of development of the profession.

Chartership is something which become an additional tool for both the Institute and its members. It will help to establish new equitable relationships, provide a way to objectively improve perceptions of archaeologists, while also increasing standards. It will encourage more people to join the profession and help to set clearer pathways for professional development.

In 1982, archaeologists set up a Professional Institute with these ambitions, and in 2019 we intend Chartered Archaeologist to be the next step in continuing to deliver progress.

3. Doing it right: The vote and beyond

The vote on the Chartered Archaeologist proposal is now very soon. We hope that members feel that they have had an opportunity to engage, but we know that there is a lot more to do.

On the 26 April accredited members will be formally voting to enable CifA to petition the Privy Council to amend CifA's by-law. This wording change will be sent out with the EGM papers on 25 March. If passed at the vote, this wording will not be subject to further change.

However, it is important to recognise that at this stage, a great deal remains to be developed. The proposal document circulated with the EGM resolution outlines how we envisage Chartered Archaeologist will be assessed and the criteria against which applications will be measured. If members vote in favour of the resolution, a detailed implementation plan will be developed in consultation with members. This will also include the development of supporting guidance to help members in all branches of the profession apply for Chartered Archaeologist.

We will not rush Chartered Archaeologist in after a positive vote. We need to take time to adequately prepare, understand demand, develop and organise appropriate systems, such as recruiting appropriate validation committees, and establishing processes by which to assess the first tranche of Chartered Archaeologists. We may also wish to consult and explore more detailed cost modelling options, based on feedback from members that we have received. We have ideas and options for all of these issues, but we are aware that some people are concerned by the potential for implementation to be difficult. We strongly advise members to contact us if they have specific concerns.

If members vote in favour of the resolution and our petition to the Privy Council is approved, there will need to be an implementation phase in order to research demand, to develop the appropriate systems and to recruit and train assessors in order to deliver Chartered Archaeologist, and this will take time.

We hope that members share our enthusiasm for the potential of the proposal to benefit the whole profession, and that they will support the proposal in April and continue to engage with CifA to make a success of the implementation after the vote.

For further information about CifA's Charter and the Chartered Archaeologist proposals, visit www.archaeologists.net/chartered or email chartered@archaeologists.net.