

Press release
12 May 2020

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12.00pm, Tuesday 12 May 2020

Collaborating to accelerate change

Landscape Institute launches climate and biodiversity action plan alongside 2029 'net zero' pledge

'To use all means within the scope of the Landscape Institute to respond to the biodiversity and climate emergencies.'

The Landscape Institute (LI) has announced its action plan to spearhead the landscape sector's collective response to the climate change and biodiversity crisis.

President Adam White FLI, Honorary Secretary Romy Rawlings CMLI and Chief Executive Dan Cook made the announcement to members during the LI's leadership webinar on Tuesday 12 May. It follows the LI Board's declaration in June 2019 of a climate and biological diversity emergency; a public commitment to real, tangible action.

The plan references many actions that are already underway. In 2019, the Committee on Climate Change called on the LI and other professional bodies to step up their efforts in helping the UK meet its obligations:

"...challenging the relevant professional bodies (such as the Landscape Institute [...]), to increase their level of engagement with members regarding climate change, and to improve the training, guidance and professional accreditation they offer"¹

'This action plan builds on the work of the profession's leaders and members, the LI employee team, and the climate and biodiversity panel,' said Romy Rawlings. 'As part of our regulatory responsibilities, there will be new requirements on both the LI as an organisation and, over time, our members and registered practices.'

¹ Committee on Climate Change 2019, *Progress in preparing for climate change - 2019 Progress Report to Parliament*, Committee on Climate Change, 10 July 2019, <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/progress-in-preparing-for-climate-change-2019-progress-report-to-parliament/>

‘Our plan is a commitment to collaboration across our sector. We hope to influence others to move more quickly on climate and biodiversity action, just as we are by supporting our members in delivering high-quality sustainable, biodiverse and climate-resilient projects.’

Landscape critical to climate and biodiversity results

‘Last year, the Landscape Institute took the step of declaring an emergency,’ said Adam White. ‘We knew as a profession that we needed to take action, and fast. Alongside the action plan today, we’re also announcing our commitment as an organisation to become net zero by 2029, our centenary year.’

‘Landscape professionals are uniquely positioned to tackle this crisis head on. For years we have worked with nature, designed green infrastructure, and enhanced communities - respecting the past while being mindful of the future. We have the power to design, plan and manage resilient places and restore natural habitats, and be low carbon when we do so.’

‘It’s also vital that we reward success across our profession in taking action. That’s why we have introduced new categories for this year’s Landscape Institute Awards - including a *Sir David Attenborough Award for Enhancing Biodiversity*, and an *Excellence in Tackling Climate Change Award*.’



Sir David Attenborough was guest of honour at the LI's 2019 Awards ceremony

‘We can make a difference,’ concluded Adam. ‘The time to deliver is now.’

The action plan has four pillars of activity, each relevant to an aspect of the Institute's role as a professional body:

- i. **Equipping the profession** to provide solutions to the emergencies
- ii. **Regulating and monitoring** the sector to encourage greater sustainability
- iii. **Advocating** for measures to address the emergencies with governments and industry
- iv. **Leading** through our own sustainable business operations

A long-term commitment

'We want to be certain that our actions have helped to better safeguard life of all kinds on this planet - not just for now, but for the future too,' said Dan Cook.

'We want to encourage other built and natural environment professions to consider their approach to tackling the global crisis, and to embed sustainability, climate resilience and biodiversity in their CPD, standards and regulations.

'This plan represents a significant undertaking that will transform how we operate as we move toward net zero in 2029. The backdrop of the current COVID-19 pandemic is no reason to delay the urgency of this issue. I am proud to say that many of these actions are already resourced, underway, or even delivered. It has even accelerated our shift to digital delivery. This will enshrine climate and biodiversity action as the major priority for the LI and the landscape profession, and inform our advocacy to government and industry for many years to come.'

Major commitments approved the LI Board of Trustees include:

- **Reducing the LI's corporate carbon footprint to net zero by 2029**, the year of our centenary.
- **Policy, influencing and practice:** New policy development on issues such as Environmental Net Gain and acceleration of technical guidance on issues such as embodied carbon in hard and soft landscape materials.
- **Professional Standards:** New draft Global Ethical Principles for the Landscape Profession and a new draft LI Code of Practice (to be consulted on later this year), both referencing sustainability and the climate and biodiversity emergencies.
- **CPD:** Our new CPD policy takes effect on 1 July 2020, requiring professional members to dedicate at least five out of 25 hours' CPD activity to skills related to climate resilience, sustainability and biodiversity.
- **New entry requirements:** We are now consulting on entry standards for future LI members that include a range of biodiversity, climate, resilience and sustainability-related skill sets.
- **Celebrating the profession's contribution:** New LI Award 2020 categories include the *Sir David Attenborough Award for Enhancing Biodiversity* and the *Excellence in Tackling Climate Change Award*. New judging criteria that include sustainability have been introduced.
- **Training and support:** A new programme of CPD days, webinars and local branch events will increase focus on key climate and biodiversity topics.

About the LI's declaration on the climate & biodiversity emergencies

[In making its declaration last year](#), the LI promised to improve member awareness of the actions they can take to tackle and adapt to these twin emergencies. In particular, the Institute undertook to demonstrate how it - and the wider built environment profession - can contribute to the government commitment to reduce UK greenhouse gas (GhG) emissions to net zero before 2050.

The science has been abundantly clear: we must take immediate action to mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss. In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that to limit the rise in global temperatures this century to below 1.5 degrees Celsius, carbon dioxide emissions would need to fall by 45% by 2030. In 2019, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) showed that up to one million species could be lost in coming decades, more than ever before in human history.

These crises are explicitly linked, and there is a strong interrelationship between climate change, biodiversity loss, and human wellbeing. The landscape sector is at the juncture of these issues, and our response must address the existential threats to all three. Landscape professionals can help mitigate climate change – by reducing their own footprint, by creating places that encourage low-carbon lifestyles, and by building resilience into our environments to help them adapt to already-inevitable climate shifts.

Available for media interview

Dan Cook, Landscape Institute Chief Executive

Adam White FLI, Landscape Institute President

Romy Rawlings CMLI, Landscape Institute Honorary Secretary

To arrange interviews, please contact LI Head of Policy and Insight Benjamin Brown or Policy and Influencing Manager Theo Plowman on **+44 330 808 2230**, or email climate@landscapeinstitute.org or policy@landscapeinstitute.org.

[Read the climate and biodiversity action plan here](#)

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About the Landscape Institute

The Landscape Institute (LI) is the chartered body for the landscape profession and is the professional home for all landscape practitioners including landscape scientists, landscape planners, landscape architects, landscape managers (including parks and places), and urban designers. It is an educational charity that promotes the art and science of landscape practice. The LI's aim, through

the work of its members, is to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for the public benefit.

www.landscapeinstitute.org