

Activity Plan 2017



Introduction

The Society seeks to put 'data at the heart of understanding and decision-making' through its six strategic goals. This activity plan details the planned work during 2017.

There are a number of themes that can be picked out from the overall workplan:

- Membership. The Society wishes to grow its membership, in an era where fewer people seem to wish to 'join' things. We will continue to develop our membership recruitment, retention and engagement and learn what is successful.
- Data science. The rise of data science brings challenges and opportunities for more traditional statistical communities. The RSS is very much a broad church organisation and wishes to engage with and welcome the data science community including through our new Data Science Section.
- External engagement. The Society in recent years has strengthened its engagement with matters of public interest through the media, civil society and government. We plan to build on this, particularly with David Spiegelhalter as incoming President.

These and other themes are covered in more detail in the workplan below.

Strategic Goal One

For statistics to be used effectively in the public interest, so that policy formulation and decision-making are informed by evidence, for the good of society.

In 2017 we will continue working to influence the UK government and other stakeholders to achieve the policy ideas set out in our Data Manifesto.

1.1 Policy, research and campaigns

In 2017 we will continue to influence government policy and legislation on the basis of our working priorities identified in our *Data Manifesto*. We will be active in a range of areas including official statistics, education policy, science and research policy and international development as well as by making the case for statistical experts to be active in policymaking and in the media. There will be a mixture of proactive and reactive work, and we will seek to be agile to respond to new issues as they arise.

We will continue to support RSS sections and groups active in policy work to influence aspects of UK government policy that are of strategic importance to the Society. In keeping with the recommendation of the recent review of sections we will support more sections to engage with government policy if they have an interest in doing so. We will also seek to improve contact with groups and individuals that can support policy input into the devolved nations.

The Society's National Statistics Advisory Group will continue to drive our efforts relating to official statistics. We will continue to engage closely with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) and will support the programme of change recommended for ONS by the Independent Review of Economic Statistics (the Bean Review). We will push for such changes to be broadly applied to address the public interest in having high quality statistical series across the board. We will work with others to make the case for data sharing legislation, including supporting improved data access for ONS to make necessary innovations ahead of the 2021 census. We will continue partnerships with users of statistics including the Statistics User Forum, and will continue pushing the UKSA to embed user engagement in its strategy. This will include the planned handing on of the StatsUserNet website to the UKSA.

With our Education Policy Advisory Group we will continue to advocate the need to work with data across a wide range of subjects taught in UK schools, and will seek to build upon key policy interventions such as the introduction of core maths post-16. For more on our work and priorities in this area, see Section 2.6.

Via our Academic Affairs Advisory Group we will work through the Council for the Mathematical Sciences and with the wider scientific community to consider scientific and research funding agendas and support statistics as a discipline. See section 4.1 for more details.

The RSS International Development Section will maintain an active interest in the agendas relating to the sustainable development goals and the 'data revolution' for development.

The Society has a particular interest in involvement with the emerging data science agenda, and we will hold events and engage with government and other partners on this agenda.

As well as our core areas of work outlined above we will maintain our interest and engagement across a range of themes such as data ethics, evidence informed policy, open data and reproducibility of research.

1.2 Public affairs, press, external facing events

In order to expand our influence and to enact our policy agendas, we will engage in a range of public affairs activity, building links with relevant decision-makers and influencers. We will hold roundtables, parliamentary events, dinners and other policy-influencing events as required throughout the year, as well as our annual President's Dinner.

We will continue to provide the secretariat for the All Party Parliamentary Group on Statistics and to work closely with other relevant parliamentary bodies such as the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) and the House of Commons Library.

Proactive and reactive engagement with the media will be maintained, with an aim to increase year-on-year press coverage of the RSS and its activities. We expect David Spiegelhalter as President to be particularly active in this regard, and we will also continue to draw upon our Statistical Ambassadors. We will increase our social media presence (in particular Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn) and continue to use the Statslife website as a vehicle for thought leadership and for hosting debates. We will keep in touch with non-members through quarterly newsletters with updates on our policy and influencing work.

We will maintain a strategic events programme of approximately six high profile public events, including the annual Cathie Marsh memorial lecture and the President's Address.

1.3 Awards for statistical excellence

Following a review during 2016, it is envisaged that the awards for statistical excellence will continue across existing categories for pharmaceutical statistics, official statistics and press. We will also consider developing one or two new awards, possibly in partnership with other bodies.

1.4 African Institute for Mathematical Sciences

The RSS has a partnership with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS). This project is managed by the International Development Section. During 2017 we expect to assist three RSS fellows to volunteer as instructors on courses at AIMS. We will also explore ways to partner with the American Statistical Association on this project.

Strategic Goal Two

For society to be more statistically literate, so that people's understanding of data, risk, and probability can inform their daily decision-making, leading to better outcomes.

In 2017 we will work to encourage and support more Fellows to be engaged with our statistical literacy and education work and build on our achievements to date in education and in improving statistical literacy in professions.

2.1 Statistical literacy

We will continue to work to improve statistical literacy for all in everyday life, to increase statistical literacy in employment and develop the role of statistics as part of public culture. Our work with statistics users also encourages wider public involvement in statistics.

In order to continue our goals around developing statistical literacy in everyday life we will continue to work primarily through education policy and practice (see section 2.6). We will continue to engage with organisations such as National Numeracy and the British Academy to highlight the need for statistical literacy as part of the numeracy and functional skills agendas. As per the recommendation in our Long Term Strategy Review, we will examine the possibility of providing or promoting a free online training course in statistical literacy, subject to external funding being found.

Our activity to date in increasing statistical literacy in employment has focused on areas where improvements will have wider public benefit: the media, policymakers and parliamentarians and law and education professionals. We will continue to work in these areas to address both the short-term immediate need and to seek ways to create institutional or structural change. In 2017 we will also develop work in one further area, subject to suitable funding and partnership – as noted below, we are seeking funding to develop data skills in charities.

We will continue to raise awareness of the value and importance of statistics and the increasing demand and supply of statistical information in public life – in the media, in leisure and in wider culture. Sections, Local and Study Groups will be encouraged to consider opportunities for wider engagement around their existing activities.

Our efforts to support Fellows to engage with the media and directly with public audiences will also continue by providing resources and professional development activities). We will develop a third cohort of the RSS Statistical Ambassadors' programme by mid-2017, and we will further support this together with the two existing cohorts of early-career statisticians to present at public events and participate in media activities.

2.2 Parliamentarians and policymakers

To meet our goal of developing and encouraging statistical literacy in policymaking we will hold regular training sessions for MPs and their staff in Westminster, as part of the training programme organised by the House of Commons Library. Following on from the September 2016 training session we held at the Welsh Assembly, in 2017 we plan to hold a session for Scottish MSPs and for their staff at Holyrood. We will also continue to emphasise the

importance of statistical literacy and the key role of statistics and evidence in policy-making through our public affairs work (see Section 1.2).

We will explore how we can support local councillors and council officers to be more statistically literate, and what role the RSS can play in promoting an effective use of data at a local authority level including by working with Fellows who are themselves councillors. We are also looking into providing training and support in partnership with the Department of Communities and Local Government, for the nine new authority mayors to be elected in May 2017.

2.3 Journalists

We will promote our free online courses in statistics and science for journalists and maintain our network of volunteer experts in the regions.

We will develop the skills of our Fellows in their interactions with the media, through the Statistical Ambassadors' Programme and professional development opportunities.

2.4 Law

In 2016 we developed a guide with the Advocacy Training Council to encourage barristers and solicitor advocates to increase their statistical literacy, especially as it relates to the examination of evidence. We intend to build upon and expand this work in 2017 including by ensuring dissemination and take-up of the guide (subject to funding). This work will complement and be supported by a programme of events and activities organised by the Statistics and the Law Section to improve the understanding and use of statistics in the administration of justice.

2.5 Charities

We are seeking funding to develop online courses to support charities in basic statistics.

2.6 Education policy and practice

Our education strategy stresses that everyone should be able to use and interpret data and statistical information to benefit their everyday lives, to engage in the democratic process and to apply to their career. Our policy emphasises that statistics is both a process and a way of thinking --and must be taught and understood by students and teachers. Further, we stress that statistics is rooted in the mathematical sciences, is integral to an increasing number of subjects and that it is a modern subject that must be taught and assessed in realistic contexts.

Through our policy and research work, we will continue to advocate for the role of statistics within subject disciplines at school and higher education. Examination and assessment systems must be fit for purpose. As the curriculum in England settles in across all secondary subjects, we will work with relevant bodies such as the Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education (ACME), the Joint Mathematical Council (JMC) and others, to monitor and influence the delivery and implementation of the curriculum. We will respond to policy consultations issued by government, parliament and teaching bodies as they arise. We will also continue to support the call from across the education community for a curriculum body which is independent of Government and sets longer-term goals. We will support Fellows to work in similar ways in Wales and Scotland. We will work with partners to advance understanding and development of statistical literacy and quantitative and data analytical skills. At HE level, we

will continue to work with the British Academy-hosted High Level Strategy Group for Quantitative Skills and with Q Step Centres.

Society needs sufficient teachers with an appropriate knowledge of statistics and of its application to their discipline, and with the ability to teach data handling and statistics effectively within their disciplines. This has been a key theme of our previous policy input to consultations. In 2017, we will encourage school support of teacher development and work with Fellows who are school governors to ensure that teachers are able to undertake skills development. As part of the Society's wider programme of training and accreditation work, we will investigate the feasibility of the RSS offering Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or certifying existing CPD to improve teachers' skills in handling and reporting on educational data as well as classroom skills. To help address key concerns around teacher capacity, we will encourage teacher recruitment through our partnership with the Department of Education-funded Mathematics Teacher Training Scholarships scheme. We will also be monitoring activity that addresses teacher capacity through our education policy activities.

We will work to ensure that high-quality classroom resources are available for teachers and pupils, through a mix of practical activities and leadership. We will work with organisations such as the Royal Geographical Society and the National STEM Centre to share good practice. We will continue to promote our existing resources and seek funding to develop resources for teaching statistical concepts.

We will continue to help our Fellows to engage with young people, in order to benefit statistical education and careers promotion (see section 3.6). Many Fellows already volunteer their time to support teaching and learning in schools. Our current William Guy Lecturer, Professor Christl Donnelly, will deliver a series of lectures to schools. We will select our 2017-18 William Guy lecturer in early 2017. Through our Young Statisticians Section and volunteers from the wider Fellowship, we will offer support to all members who are STEM Ambassadors. We will provide resources for members to help them support the teaching of statistics in schools, drawing on their own expertise and experience. We will provide good practice guidance to our members on working with teachers and students. We will also continue to support our Fellows to work with young people through partnerships with existing enrichment activities such as the Nuffield Research Placements Scheme.

We will increase the take-up of resources by teachers through our e-teacher membership scheme, which brings together those experienced in teaching statistical concepts to share ideas, advice and good practice. The network is open to all teachers free of charge and dissemination of ideas is primarily through electronic means.

We will work to ensure students are aware of the value of studying statistics, through careers promotion work (see section 3.6), policy work advocating for the role of statistics in the school curriculum and wider statistical literacy work stressing the importance of statistics in home and professional life.

2.6 Significance magazine

We will produce six issues of Significance each year, in partnership with the American Statistical Association and Wiley. We will maintain high quality content on the Significance website and in 2017 plan to redevelop the site to stand alone from the RSS Statslife site.

We will seek to increase the circulation of the magazine to non-RSS members through targeted marketing strategies. We will continue to promote a 'partnership package' to allow other societies to offer Significance subscriptions to their members at a reduced cost.

During 2017 more of the archive of Significance content will be made available via the Significance mobile app.

We will continue to develop the Significance commercial proposition by creating opportunities for organisations to support the print magazine and website through advertising and sponsorship.

The Significance editorial board will expand to include international members, drawn from our target markets of China and Latin America. This will help us to reach new contributors in these markets and will broaden the international flavour of Significance's editorial coverage and content.

We will implement data citation standards for the magazine and website and encourage contributors to make their data publicly available.

We will hold Significance events at the Joint Statistical Meetings and at the RSS Conference.

Strategic Goal Three

For a strong body of professional statisticians to maintain and develop the skills they need so that they can critically apply methodology, interpret results and communicate findings.

In 2017, the main priority in the delivery of the RSS strategy will be to conclude the implementation of a strategic review of the professional affairs area of work.

3.1 Strategy

During 2017, we will complete the implementation of the key recommendations which emerged from the Professional Affairs Strategy Review and we will continue to monitor this process as the various elements become embedded.

In the qualifications work strand, one of the key decisions from the review was for us to develop a revised accreditation model to strengthen partnerships with existing HE institutions, in line with other UK professional bodies. In 2017 we will complete the programme of work for this transformation, including the launch of the revised accreditation scheme. (see item 3.4).

We will also implement several recommendations from the strategy review work strand on strengthening the professional pathway to Chartered Statistician (CStat), including the introduction of a competence-based application route for the CStat award.

Looking beyond the conclusion of the professional affairs strategy review, we will develop proposals for subsequent activities in late 2017 and 2018, including a plan to increase employer engagement.

3.2 Professional Membership

In parallel with the implementation of the strategy review recommendations, we will continue to manage and promote our professional membership. Following an internal restructuring, the management of professional membership matters has been repositioned within the membership team, with additional resources for the targeted promotion of the following professional membership grades: Graduate Statistician, Chartered Statistician, and Chartered Scientist.

We will develop our communications strategy to encourage both existing members and non-members to apply for professional status.

We will have a full activity plan for the successful Professional Statisticians Forum, including online meetings, which have attracted large numbers of participants in 2016.

2017 will be the fourth year of the implementation of the Chartered Statistician Revalidation process, with a third cohort submitting CPD records for assessment.

We will continue to offer Chartered Statisticians the opportunity to also become Chartered Scientists. This is an area we are keeping under review to ensure value and impact.

3.3 Examinations

Following the decision to withdraw from offering our own examinations, these will take place for the final time in May 2017. Transition arrangements to provide a route to GradStat status for examination candidates already in the system will come into force after the examinations have been withdrawn.

3.4 Accreditation

In September 2017 we will launch our new RSS accreditation scheme. In preparation, we will recruit and train a team of assessors to undertake visits to institutions, in order to evaluate applications for accreditation.

We will update the accreditation section of the RSS website, enabling us to market our accreditation scheme and the programmes offered by accredited institutions more prominently to potential students.

We plan to establish an Accreditation Advisory Committee with representation from accredited institutions, to allow us to work collaboratively with education providers to develop the quality and increase the relevance of programmes to students.

3.5 Training and professional development

In 2016 we launched a number of new initiatives (online courses, face-to-face courses running in different venues outside London, online bookings and a number of new face-to-face courses) and for 2017 we will review the outcomes of these and plan the 2017 schedule accordingly. Activities will focus on increasing face-to-face training courses and promoting our commissioned and online training courses. Our continued strategy is to deliver professional level courses for our members as well as to expand our offerings to non-statisticians by both subject and industry. As such, additional courses will be developed and investment made to market those courses to a broader audience.

3.6 Careers

We encourage entry to a range of statistical and data careers.

High-quality information to school pupils and career changers is available on our website, and we plan to maintain and develop this further in 2017.

We will continue to provide resources and guidance for Fellows to support them to deliver careers activities at schools and careers fairs across the UK. In response to research evidence that demonstrates the importance of working at primary school age, we will provide further resources for Fellows in 2017. Our volunteer-led hands-on resources project will also produce more resources and training in 2017, following a successful first year in 2016.

We work with Inspiring the Future and the STEM Ambassadors programme to link Fellows with school teachers and students. We will campaign to double the number of Fellows signed up with Inspiring the Future by the end of 2017 compared with the end of 2016.

Strategic Goal Four

For statistics as a discipline to thrive, so that methodology is advanced, applied and made accessible, leading to greater understanding of an increasingly complex world.

In 2017 key priorities in the delivery of the RSS strategy will be implementation of the new approach to Discussion Meetings and a renewed focus on the strategy for the RSS journals.

4.1 Academic affairs

We will continue to monitor and influence issues relating to statistics within academia, through the Academic Affairs Advisory Group (AAAG) and the Council for the Mathematical Sciences (CMS). Particular themes will include making the case for continued investment in the science budget and reviewing the 'people pipeline' to ensure there are enough statisticians through different stages of the academic career path to meet demand. This will be in the context of a changing higher education policy landscape with which we will engage where relevant.

We will continue to liaise with Research Councils and the new UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), both directly and through the CMS. A particular theme for these discussions will be how Research Councils can collectively operate policies that recognise the importance of sustaining the statistics discipline within a very wide range of universities, to the long-term benefit of the natural, biomedical and social sciences. We will engage in parliamentary activity for the mathematical sciences alongside other scientific learned societies. This will include participation in SET for Britain (a poster competition in Parliament), Voice of the Future (a parliamentary event for younger academics) and Parliamentary Links Day (an event bringing parliamentarians and scientists together).

We will also scope potential research projects which may be relevant to informing our academic affairs work, and consider potential funding sources for such research.

4.2 Journals

We will edit and produce four issues of Series A, five issues of Series B and five issues of Series C (3,800 pages minimum), including additional papers to counterbalance papers for which authors have paid for open access. We will also publish in the volumes as many papers presented at Discussion Meetings as may be available. To do this we will continue to administer and develop the journal on-line submission and peer review system and provide administrative support for Editors, Associate Editors and referees as required.

The journals provide the RSS with income that we use to cross-subsidise its activities. In 2016, the publications were put out to a full tender process and Wiley was successful in retaining the business. The finances of a new contract with Wiley will come into force in 2017 and will give the RSS some certainty of income for the period 2017–2022 through the contract's enhanced annual guaranteed payments. Although 'open access' policies continue to be extended both in the UK and worldwide, their effect has not yet greatly adversely affected the journals' income beyond the guaranteed payments, but attrition has continued steadily through a squeeze in institutional library budgets. The RSS will therefore continue to review with the publisher new subscription models and use technologies to add value to existing content to generate income. The publisher's tender bid outlined a robust strategy to

promote the publications in emerging economies and global markets and we will collaborate with them in this strategy and in other ideas contained in their bid. In particular, we will carefully monitor the effects of open access and the development and application of these new technologies.

From 2017 we will move to electronic only journals for RSS members. We will keep under review when to go fully electronic for institutions as well, including how far this will help us increase the number of quality papers we can publish. To make the articles more accessible Wiley is developing a new 'publication hub' site for the RSS. We will publicise this and the RSS journal apps to members.

The journals will consider producing special issues, including across all three series. Series B will trial a blog facility to develop greater online engagement. We will also pilot three or four video animations of articles from Series A and C to see if this can help disseminate findings to a wider audience.

In 2016, the review of our Read Papers programme was completed and its findings presented to Council. In 2017 we will implement the recommendations approved by Council – namely to create a new Discussions Meeting Committee - in order to rejuvenate this important and historical aspect of the Society.

We will continue with our virtual Journal Webinar events each quarter and seek further sponsorship for this programme alongside existing sponsors.

4.3 Conference and events

The annual international conference will take place in Glasgow in September 2017. We intend to continue to grow participation beyond 500 attendees for the main conference and increase the income stream from sponsors and exhibitors. We intend for the conference in the next couple of years to move towards covering its full costs and generate a surplus, and we expect to see further progress towards this target in 2017. For our 2017 Conference, we will continue and develop the fully-streamed format that we initially adopted in 2015. We will consider partnership opportunities in light of the collaboration with the Government Statistical Service conference in 2016. Alongside this, we will undertake planning for our 2018 and 2019 conferences.

We will continue to build on the programme of half-day and evening events on topical issues that we have held at our past two conferences, and will continue to explore event partnerships as appropriate to promote the Society to wider audiences, and to extend our geographical presence beyond London. We will partner again with the Operational Research Society to hold a joint Annual Analytics Summit in June.

The RSS is a special partner of the Joint Statistical Meetings. We will hold a member reception there at the meeting in August 2017 which will be in Baltimore. RSS President David Spiegelhalter will speak at the World Statistical Congress in Marrakech and the RSS will have a presence at other sessions.

4.4 Honours

Our 2016 medals and prizes were presented at the RSS conference in September. Meanwhile, we will be seeking fresh nominations for the 2017 awards throughout the year. The honours up

for award in 2017 are: Guy Medals in Silver and Bronze, Greenfield Industrial Medal, Wood Medal, West Medal, Barnett Award, Research Prize, Chambers Medal and Honorary Fellowship.

4.5 Sections and Special Interest Groups

The Society's sections and special interest groups will continue to hold topical meetings to support learning and discussion. Staff will work with section and group officers to grow income from meetings and in particular to deliver further membership benefits through defined discounts.

2016 saw the implementation of the recommendations of the Review of Sections relating to structures, operational matters and communications. The recommendations of the review concerning ongoing engagement would, however, require a staff member dedicated to member engagement and we currently do not have the funding for this role.

The Honorary Officer for Sections will produce the first of what has become an annual report to Council on the work of the sections, noting any inactive sections and any issues raised by the sections.

Consideration will be given to the creation of special interest groups in key areas not currently covered by the remits of the existing sections.

We will continue to work towards smoother running of the sections through biannual meetings of the sections officers.

Council agreed in 2016 to the creation of a new Data Science Section which will properly launch in 2017. The Statistical Computing Section will also host a network on machine learning, thus developing the Society's strength in this area.

The Quality Improvement Section will continue its work with the United Kingdom Accreditation Service on implementing the RSS ISO 18404 Sector Scheme. This is an innovative project and we hope it will grow into a source of revenue and impact. During 2017 we will pilot the project to better understand the risks and opportunities.

4.6 Archive

We will continue to maintain the archive of RSS materials.

Strategic Goal Five

For an engaged and energised membership and staff to work collaboratively with partner organisations and other stakeholders in meeting these goals, so that the Society can maximise its impact.

In 2017, our main priority will be to continue implementing the membership strategy and to have more Fellows volunteer for the Society or through the initiatives it promotes.

5.1 Membership strategy, services and recruitment

Following the successful delivery of a simplified membership structure in 2015, we have developed and are currently implementing a membership strategy which outlines the steps needed to recruit those who self-define as statisticians as well as the wider community of people who are interested in data and statistics.

The membership strategy covers the period 2015-2018 and has the following key outcomes:

- 8,000 members generating £900k income
- An annual communications plan in operation
- Attrition at 7%
- 15% of members actively engaged in realising the Society's strategic goals
- A segmented membership database
- Relevant and valued membership benefits
- A membership team which is proactive, and which has an outward-facing communications and marketing unit

In 2016, we did not make significant progress towards membership growth and so are reviewing how we can achieve more in 2017. A review by the Executive Committee in October 2016 suggested a number of mechanisms are explored including:

- Helping sections develop a stronger external face;
- Premium pricing for non members to services, including introducing paywalls for some online content;
- Allowing non members to sign up as supporters;
- Focusing recruitment on core (self defining statistical) audiences in academia and government as a first step;
- Pushing CStat as the new routes to professional membership take effect; and
- Exploring affinity group membership deals with other bodies.

In 2016 we launched a new corporate membership package. We will continue to expand our target audiences to statisticians working in industry, data scientists and medical statisticians. We will also target potential members who match the profile of our current members.

Our communications strategy will shift member communications away from a renewals-led process to multi-channel communications to foster a sense of community. We have developed a plan which delivers appropriate messages to the appropriate segments in their preferred way.

We will continue to publish our fortnightly members' bulletin, which is sent out to all members and which keeps them engaged and informed about the latest news and benefits of RSS membership, including information about the RSS Conference, relevant job listings, links to RSS and other training opportunities, information about upcoming events and webinars and details of offers for members. We will also continue to publish our electronic events bulletin, which is emailed to members every two or three months and which includes an updated list of all RSS and related events available or of interest to members.

Activity around member retention will focus on making all members feel valued and part of a community and reflect our drive to remain a relevant and valuable body for our members. In late 2015 we launched a new member benefit in the form of discounts for goods and services. We will continue to monitor this and develop it in light of member feedback.

Membership research will be used to review benefits and deliver more relevant services to members at specific points of their membership lifetime. This will include carrying out gap analysis and developing new or exclusive member benefits if needed. We conducted a survey of members in 2017, benchmarking against the survey conducted at the end of 2012. We will use our 'exit survey' research to identify the reasons why some members leave, and we will work on addressing any issues within our power.

We have developed a series of specific activities to target members of the data science community, including hosting data science meet-up events at Errol Street for little or no cost, developing a potential new data science start-up mentoring scheme and exhibiting at or co-badging data science events. We are also reviewing the potential to set up a data science section, as outlined earlier.

5.2 Membership involvement

The RSS is a member-led organisation that draws on and values the contributions of volunteer members to increase the scope and scale of the Society's public benefit. We will continue to grow our engagement with members as volunteers in our work through a wide range of mechanisms including being on Council, local groups, sections and other working groups.

During 2017 we will find the 'good stories' amongst our membership base and profile our existing engaged members in order to demonstrate why and how they got involved with the RSS.

We will develop and deliver an induction programme that showcases engagement opportunities, services and products and to introduce new members to other members and key 'ambassadors'. We will do this using electronic and social media communications as far as possible, in order to engage with all new members.

We will develop a member champion scheme, where actively engaged members will be encouraged to work with their peers to promote membership and RSS services such as courses and CPD.

We will maintain our Statisticians for Society project which enables statisticians to volunteer their skills for good causes through our partners DataKind UK and Statistics Without Borders.

5.3 Local groups

Local groups will continue to hold a varied programme of meetings throughout the UK. We will work with the groups to support them in delivering all aspects of the new regulations and the revised agreement between the Society and groups, and will support any new groups where there are sufficient Fellows to make them sustainable.

5.4 International

We are an international society with around a quarter of our members living outside of the UK.

We will maintain the international elements of our work which are primarily:

- Journals with a global reach
- An International Development Section concerned with supporting statistics in poorer countries
- Our project with AIMS (see 1.4 above).
- A presence at international statistical conferences, including being a special partner of the Joint Statistical Meetings. We plan to have a presence at the JSM and the ISI World Congress in 2017.

5.5 Wider partnerships

The Society will continue to develop its partnerships with a wide variety of organisations including:

- Other statistical societies such as the ASA, ISI and PSI
- Mathematical societies such as LMS and IMA
- Other learned societies including the Royal Society, British Academy, Institute of Physics, Royal Society of Chemistry, Royal Society of Biology
- Civil society organisations such as Sense About Science, the Alliance for Useful Evidence, Campaign for Science and Engineering and Full Fact
- Research organisations, think tanks and publishers such as the Institute for Government, NatCen Social Research; Wiley and SAGE
- Research Councils and other institutions in the higher education landscape
- Other research funders such as the Nuffield Foundation, Wellcome Trust and Leverhulme
- Government departments, in particular the Cabinet Office which has responsibility for agendas such as data sharing, open data; 'what works' and has a cross cutting Governmental role for statistics
- Official statistics organisations such as the UK Statistics Authority, the Government Statistical Service and the Office for National Statistics
- Politicians from all parts of the political spectrum
- The media, both traditional (e.g. newspapers, television) and new (e.g. blogs, Twitter)
- Education bodies including government policymakers, curriculum bodies, subject associations, exam boards and schools and colleges.
- Organisations from the data science community including the Alan Turing Institute, DataKindUK, and bodies such as TechUK which represent many companies working with data.

Strategic Goal Six

For the RSS to be a financially sustainable and well run organisation, with effective governance and use of technology, so that it will grow in relevance, exert influence and have wider impact.

In 2017 our priority will be to continue focusing on commercial growth, particularly through membership, training and fundraising.

6.1 Commercial growth

In 2015 the Society decided to prioritise four areas of commercial growth to safeguard its business model in the future: journals, membership, training and fundraising. We achieved a good result with our journals contract in 2016. Training developed in accordance with our targets. We will focus on trying new strategies for membership growth in 2017. On fundraising we have managed some limited success with little resource. The Executive Committee will maintain tight oversight on how we are achieving our goals in each of these areas.

6.2 Budgets

The budget for 2017 is a break-even budget. It has been developed more conservatively than the 2016 budget which set relatively high targets for growth.

6.3 Investments

The Society's investments are managed externally by Cazenove Capital Management. The Society's Audit and Risk Committee will continue to oversee the investments and advise the RSS Council on the overall strategy in this area.

6.4 Funding, business development, marketing

In 2017, the business development and marketing focus will continue to be on our training products as there are significant income targets to meet and new products to promote. Marketing support will also be provided to the Membership team to help meet recruitment targets.

There is on-going work to develop relationships with potential sponsors as there is significant unrealised potential here, not just for conference but also for other Society assets.

We will review the new 'direct ask' fundraising initiative conducted in 2016 asking for support for the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) and will determine if this approach can be expanded in 2017. It is anticipated that the new 'Support Us' section on the RSS website will be completed in 2017. The section will promote all forms of support, including providing a payment platform for further fundraising campaigns, dependant on the success of the AIMS campaign referenced above. Legacies have yet to be promoted: this would be to our members only, in tandem with a free will-writing offer. Promotion will be sensitive and targeted.

6.5 Building

We have been informed of new development proposals for buildings around Errol Street: Finsbury Tower which is directly opposite the RSS main entrance is likely to be refurbished

during the summer of 2017. There is also a proposed redevelopment for Lamb's Passage EC1Y 8TE, including the services yard car park which is seeking planning permission. The YMCA next door to the RSS is also planning to demolish the premises and rebuild from late 2016. As a result, we expect there to be some noise and disruption to the area around the building in 2017. We will deal with this as required including strategies such as home-working for staff and the use of other premises for meetings. Any significant costs resulting from such disruptions would be met through our reserves.

We will continue to carry our general maintenance of the building as and when required. In 2017 we will upgrade our phone system. We will also develop a longer term plan for building maintenance, refurbishment and development.

6.6 Venue hire

Given the likely disruption due to building works we will not put much proactive work into the venue hire side of the business, although we will review room hire and catering rates towards the end of 2016 with the aim of increasing those rates in 2017 whilst remaining competitive. Obviously we will maintain a review of the impact of the building works, and bring venue hire back into play as soon as we are able to do so.

6.7 Information technology

With the warranty on our physical servers due to expire in August 2017, we will begin a phased process of moving our core IT infrastructure into the cloud. This will include file, email and SQL servers. This forms part of a wider process of transitioning from IT as a product to a service, which is likely to reduce our external IT support requirements. A move to Office 365 will allow for even more flexible working and potentially allow us to replace our telephone system with internet based Unified Communications– a platform-agnostic combination of telephone, video calling, email and instant messaging.

We have serious concerns about the medium to long term viability of our IMIS database and our over-dependency on a small supplier. Having considered alternatives, Microsoft Dynamics CRM is our preferred replacement. The soon to be released 365 version is deeply integrated with Office 365 and our ability to obtain large charity discounts makes it an attractive proposition.

Business process mapping is a prerequisite to any CRM implementation; we will work with an external specialist to identify ways to streamline our processes. We will also use the opportunity to review the data we hold on our members and determine where the gaps and redundancies are. Going forward we will take a more strategic approach to data analysis to determine how best to serve our members.

We plan to build on our experience with live streaming by purchasing a new camera and lighting for the Lecture Theatre to deliver professional quality online events that can be monetised. Our internet bandwidth will be doubled to ensure it can meet the demands of an increasingly online workplace.

We will explore new ways of exporting financial data from our CRM into Sage to save time on manual processing.

We will extensively update the accreditation section of rss.org.uk to include a searchable directory of universities in the new accreditation scheme, with links to their websites.

We will continue to enhance our business continuity plan (BCP), data protection and IT security. This will include a wide spectrum of advanced penetration testing across network services, Client-side, web application, remote dial-up, wireless security and social engineering. A full BCP take down exercise will allow us to assess our backup and recovery procedures in a live environment.

6.8 Staffing, human resources, benefits, pensions

We expect staffing to stay roughly level in 2017. Staffing currently stands at around 25 full time equivalent posts. Growth could come from new funding that has been earmarked for specific projects. There may also be pressure for staffing growth from our commercial work – e.g. the success of our training programme, or if we decide to move forward with the ISO sector scheme work beyond the pilot stage. Such staffing needs will be kept under review. We will continue to invest in staff skills through providing training and development via external courses and other mechanisms.

Our staff handbook and associated policies were thoroughly updated in 2016 and will be reviewed annually. The RSS has an external HR advisor and we will use their services as and when required. During 2017 we will carry out a periodic external salary benchmarking exercise.

The Society's Final Salary Pension Scheme was closed at the end of 2016 and all staff will have the option of joining the Society's defined contribution scheme from 2017.

6.9 Governance

The Society's main governance committees will meet as scheduled. We expect three Council meetings, three Executive Committee meetings, two Remuneration and Staffing Committee meetings and two Audit and Risk Committee meetings. The Directors of RSS (Services) Ltd will meet twice.

We will produce an Annual Review to highlight the successes of the Society in a stimulating and accessible way.

Elections to Council will take place through electronic ballot. The President's Nominating Committee will meet in early spring to consider the President for 2019/2020.

6.10 Management information

We have a framework of management information for each area of work or project. This is tracked at staff level, and reported to the Executive Director and senior management team.

6.11 Diversity

The Society's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion working group will continue its programme of work in 2017, including to embed diversity within the RSS, and to address diversity in the wider statistical community. This will include launching a small grant scheme for care costs for conference attendance.