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Architects Registration Board

## News Release – 28 October 2013

### **Professional Conduct Committee issues architect with £1000 penalty after finding unacceptable professional conduct**

At a hearing of the Architects Registration Board's Professional Conduct Committee in London on 24 October 2013, Mr Adrian Russell of Bakewell, Derbyshire was found guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and issued with a £1000 penalty.

Mr Russell was alleged to have made representations about the Peak District National Park Planning Authority in correspondence which were inappropriate, offensive and and/or discreditable to the profession; and aggravated this by copying the correspondence to numerous third parties. Additionally it was alleged that Mr Russell made representations that had not been adjudicated upon and that were misleading and inaccurate.

The Committee heard that Mr Russell wrote that named planning officers were lying, cheating, petty, vindictive, and committed illegal acts; that the planning process stunk of corruption, and that the Chief Executive was morally bankrupt. He copied this correspondence to members of the Board of the Planning Authority and to 23 individuals or firms active in planning in the area.

Mr Russell accepted the facts put forward by the Board but denied that his actions amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

The Committee found that while it was entirely proper for Mr Russell to raise his concerns, the manner in which he had done so had crossed the boundary of professional conduct and amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

The Committee had regard to Mr Russell's previously blemish free career, and to his commitment to improve standards in the planning process, but also that he showed no regret for his actions and no insight into the lack of professionalism which his language displayed. Because of this, the Committee concluded a penalty order of £1,000 was the appropriate sanction.

A copy of the Committee's decision can be found [here](#).

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#### **Notes for Editors**

ARB is the statutory body established by Parliament under the Architects Act 1997 to regulate the UK architects' profession in the public interest. The Act requires ARB (among other things) to:

- Maintain the Register of Architects (Section 3)
- Prescribe qualifications for entry to the Register of Architects (Section 4)
- Deal with competence to practise (Section 9)

- Issue a Code which lays down standards of professional conduct and practice (Section 13)
- Regulate use of the title “architect” and prosecute those who use it unlawfully (Section 20)

The PCC is established under Schedule 1, Part II of the Architects Act and is required to consider any report referred to it. The Committee determines whether an architect is guilty of unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence. Where a guilty finding is made, the Committee will consider whether to make a disciplinary order, which means:

- a reprimand
- a penalty order
- a suspension order (to a maximum of 2 years); or
- an erasure order

Money raised by fines imposed by the Professional Conduct Committee is paid to HM Treasury.

Any queries relating to this matter should be directed to [professionalstandards@arb.org.uk](mailto:professionalstandards@arb.org.uk)