



**1st April 2026-
31st March 2029**

**Strategic Plan
The Royal
Environmental
Health Institute of
Scotland**

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland is a
registered Scottish Charity, No SC009406

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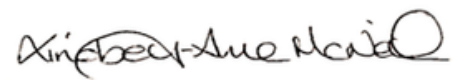
Foreword

I am honoured to present the Institute's Strategic Plan, which sets out our vision, aims, and priorities for the next three years.

The strategic plan is the result of engagement with Members and consultation with the Council. It sets out our key priorities which we aim to achieve over the coming three-year period. The way in which we will do this is detailed in our Annual Development Plan.

Our Approved Training Centres continue to support employers, employees, members of the public and students in schools being healthier and safer in the environment through supported learning and training.

I would like to thank our Members, our Training Centres, our elected Council, the staff, and all stakeholders for their contribution in helping us identify the key direction for the Institute.



Lindsey-Anne McNeil
President of the Institute



Introduction

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, referred to as REHIS, was established in 1983 following the merger of the Royal Sanitary Association of Scotland (founded 1875) and the Scottish Institute of Environmental Health (founded 1973). The Institute was incorporated by Royal Charter in 2001. The Institute is a registered Scottish charity no. SC009406.

The Institute awards the qualification which allows a person to practice as an Environmental Health Officer (EHO) in Scotland. Under the Royal Charter and scheme of continuing professional development (CPD) it awards Chartered Environmental Health Officer (Ch.EHO MREHIS or Ch.EHO FREHIS) status to eligible members.

The Institute is also a long-established awarding body in Scotland for a variety of REHIS Community Training qualifications, many of which have been independently credit rated on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The Institute operates a network of Approved Training Centres throughout Scotland to deliver these qualifications.

Membership of the Institute is open to all persons with an interest in Environmental Health in its widest sense. The affairs of the Institute are managed by a Council, elected annually by members.



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

To see a Scotland where health and wellbeing of communities thrive, supported by the availability of education, training, and qualifications in Environmental Health, and a sufficient, sustainable, suitably qualified, Environmental Health workforce.



Our Mission

We aim to achieve this vision through promoting the advancement of Environmental Health for the benefit of all sectors of the community. We work to the three main objects of our Royal Charter:

- Stimulating general interest in and disseminating knowledge concerning environmental health;
- Promoting education and training in matters relating to environmental health;
- Maintaining, by examination or otherwise, high standards of professional practice and conduct on the part of environmental health officers in Scotland



Our Values

We operate with professionalism, respect, and integrity with ethical and transparent governance.

We collaborate with partner organisations to address challenges and achieve common goals.

We aim to be innovative, resourceful, and responsive to change, operating in a sustainable manner.

We recognise the diversity of people and communities and will not discriminate.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS from 2023-26



- Continued to promote environmental health and public health in Scotland
- Provided strong financial leadership to ensure the Institute remained financially stable and resilient during an exceptionally challenging period
- Led and delivered a landmark programme celebrating the Institute's 150-year anniversary, including the creation of the REHIS 150 tartan, historical timeline, time capsule, and a flagship Forum and walking tour, strengthening member engagement and institutional identity
- Successfully achieved a positive Qualifications Scotland Accreditation Audit, reinforcing confidence in REHIS governance, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance
- Awarded 96,923 candidates with REHIS Training qualifications, delivering nationally recognised learning at scale and strengthening workforce competence across environmental health, food safety, and public health sectors
- Supported over 200 secondary schools to deliver REHIS qualifications, embedding accredited health and food safety education within the school curriculum and creating early, accessible pathways into further learning and employment
- Secured Scottish Government funding to deliver the secondary schools initiative
- Modernised the Institute's operating model by implementing hybrid and online meetings and events, significantly improving accessibility, participation, and organisational resilience
- Introduced hybrid attendance for the Annual General Meeting, enhancing member inclusivity, transparency, and engagement in governance processes.

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- Introduced digital AGM papers as part of a wider move towards more sustainable and environmentally responsible organisational practices
- Awarded 38 new EHOs the REHIS Diploma in Environmental Health and awarded 25 Scottish Food Safety Officers' Registration Board (SFSORB) Higher Certificates
- Expanded access to the Environmental Health profession in Scotland by introducing alternative routes for experienced professionals, addressing workforce capacity challenges where undergraduate completion is not feasible
- Oversaw the accreditation of the new MSc in Environmental Health programmes at Abertay University, strengthening academic partnerships and supporting future workforce development
- Progressed the review of the Royal Charter to its final draft stage
- Initiated a comprehensive review of the Scheme of Professional Practice, ensuring it remains fit for purpose, relevant, and aligned with evolving professional standards
- Awarded Chartered EHO status to 119 eligible members achieving this gold standard accolade
- Working with the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland, established an Ambassadors Network, to attract new entrants into the profession
- Launched the new REHIS Mental Health First aid course in October 2025 to provide participants with the knowledge and skills required for the responsibility of the role of a mental health first aider
- Reviewed and refreshed our services to REHIS members and introduced a Membership Action Plan to combat the reducing membership numbers
- Developed strong working relationships with other stakeholders, including Scottish Government, and Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

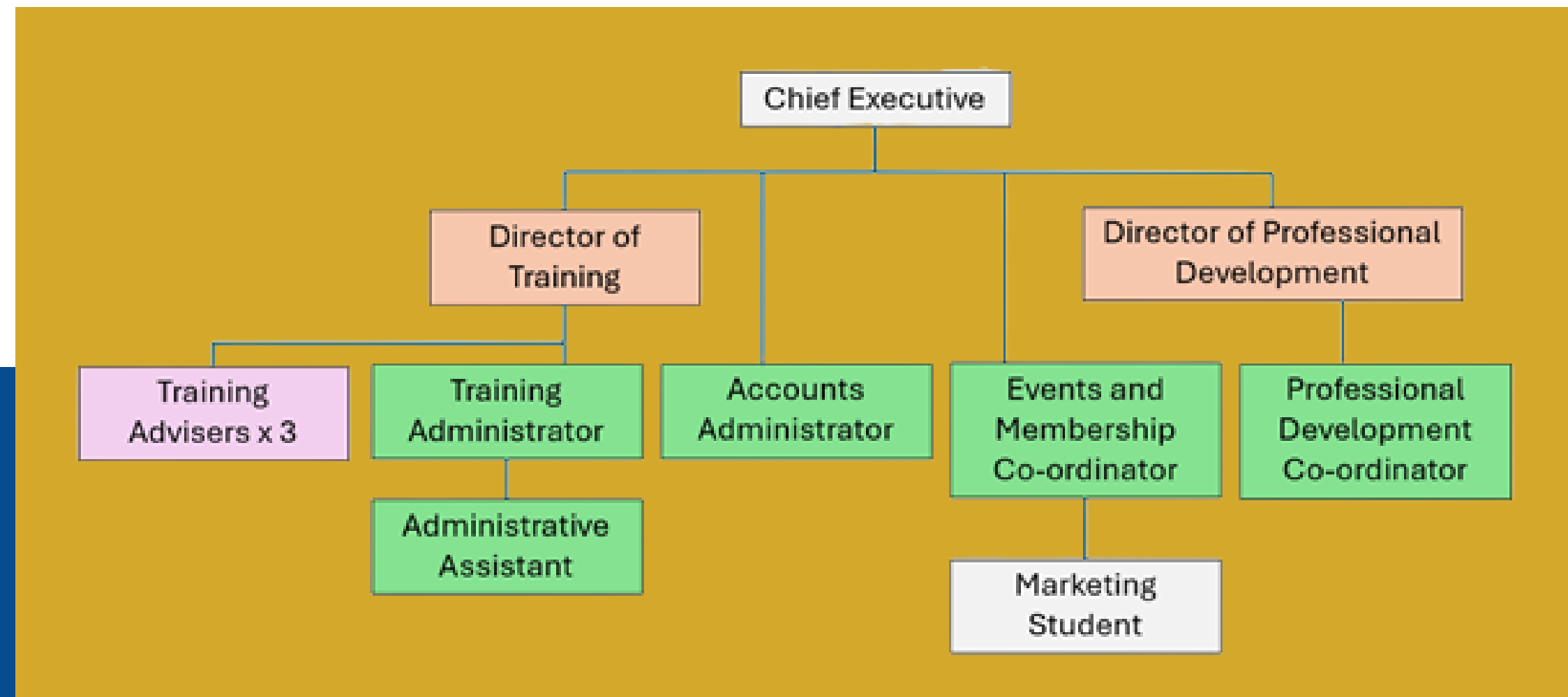
The organisation is governed by the Royal Charter and associated Bye Laws of the Charter. These describe the running of the Institute including the composition and organisation of the elected Council, the organisation and running of the AGM and the administration of Institute Committees. As a registered Scottish charity, the Institute is regulated by the Office of the Charity Regulator (OSCR). The Council, who are all charity trustees, governs the work of the Institute and meets four times per year. The composition of the Council is as follows:

President)
Senior Vice-President) each elected for 1 year
Junior Vice-President)

2 immediate Past-Presidents
Northern Centre Chairperson and Secretary
Southern Centre Chairperson and Secretary

3 EHO (North) Members)
9 EHO (South) Members) each elected for 3 years
6 Others (non EHO) Members)

There are 12 staff members employed by the Institute headed up by the Chief Executive who reports directly to the REHIS Council and President.



Council & Committees

In addition to the four Council meetings each year, Council members sit on at least one Committee and may have additional appointed roles in which they represent the Institute.

Management Committee

- General financial matters
- Public and media relations
- Premises and equipment
- Annual Forum
- Staffing

Membership, Education and Training Committee

- Northern and Southern Centres
- Matters regarding Community Training
- Professional courses
- CPD training provision
- Promotional campaigns for membership of the Institute

Examinations and Professional Standards Committee

- Matters regarding university degree courses leading to entry to the Scheme of Professional Practice
- All matters relating to the Scheme of Professional Practice
- Professional examinations
- CPD Scheme monitoring
- Disciplinary Procedures and Code of Professional Conduct compliance

Scottish Food Safety Officers' Registration Board (SFSORB)

- To determine the standard to be attained by persons applying for the award of qualifications in food law enforcement.

Environmental Health Promotion Committee

- Matters regarding environmental health of a technical nature, with the exception of education, training and professional practice
- Responses to consultations and other similar exercises from Government Departments, and other bodies
- Matters regarding the establishment and organisation of Technical Working Groups
- All Institute publications apart from documents concerning the AGM and the Community Training/Scheme of Professional Practice documents
- Promotional campaigns



Technical working groups

The Institute has well established Technical Working Groups, which focus on work in specific subject areas in the field of Environmental Health. The Chair of each Group is a Member of the Institute and work of that Group is determined by the Terms of Reference and the membership of the Group.

Health and Safety Co-ordinating Group (HASCOG)

HASCOG meets at least four times per year and seeks to share best practice and communicate legislation and guidance change and updates to colleagues working in the field of occupational health and safety enforcement across Scotland. The group membership comprises, as a minimum, representatives from Local Authority health and safety liaison groups across Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Scottish Pollution Control Co-ordinating Committee (SPCCC)

SPCCC meets at least four times per year and seeks to share best practice and communicate legislation and guidance change and updates to colleagues working in the field of pollution control, including air quality, noise and contaminated land across Scotland. The group membership comprises, as a minimum, representatives from Local Authority pollution liaison groups across Scotland, Scottish Government, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Environmental Protection Scotland (EPS).

Public Health and Housing Working Group (PHHWG)

The PHHWG meets at least four times per year and seeks to share best practice and communicate legislation and guidance change and updates to colleagues working in the fields of environmental public health and housing, including all non-food environmental health subject areas not covered by HASCOG or SPCCC. The group membership comprises, as a minimum, representatives from all 32 Local Authority environmental health services in Scotland.

Food Law

In Scotland, in the subject area of food, the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee (SFELC) provides a forum for the discussion of relevant topics, sharing of best practice and guidance and may initiate surveys or projects or co-ordinate specific investigations. This group is administered by Food Standards Scotland and membership includes REHIS, Food Standards Scotland, Local Authority staff, consumer groups, and food industry representatives.

REHIS Community training courses & qualifications

The Institute is an awarding body for a wide range of courses and qualifications which are aimed at the general public as well as industry. The courses leading to these qualifications are presented by suitably qualified registered presenters through a network of over 700 REHIS Approved Training Centres throughout Scotland as well as a number abroad.

REHIS qualifications, are recognised not just in Scotland but nationally and internationally. Many of the courses have been independently credit rated on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The acquired skills help students to work safely in their workplaces but also provide life skills and, for many, first positive learning experiences which will be essential as the economy adapts to the pandemic recovery. The Institute now has 31 standard qualifications available for delivery by Approved Training Centres. The qualifications are split into the following suites:

- Food Hygiene
- Health and Safety
- HACCP
- Control of Infection
- First Aid
- Food and Health
- Licensing



Joint Award Programmes

Where a standard REHIS qualification is not appropriate, REHIS will work with a partner to develop a sector or organisation specific qualification which will be certified by the Institute.

Joint Award partners include:

- Albion - Waste and Resource Management
- Allergy Action - Allergy Awareness
- Cyrenians – Good Food, Good Health
- Clyde Valley shared services
- Food Safety Outdoors Scotland – Campfire Food Safety
- D G Training – Emergency Paediatric First Aid
- Highland Spring – Safety and Hygiene
- Seafish – Food Hygiene, HACCP And Health and Safety
- Seafish Food Authenticity and Integrity Verification
- Seafish – Bivalve Operations and Purification
- The Verdancy Group – Achieving Net Zero
- Tickety Boo – Group Training

Strategic Plan

Development of the Strategic Plan is a three yearly process, undertaken to ensure the focus of the Institute remains on matters most important to the values of the Institute and membership.

In addition to the Strategic Plan, the Institute's Annual Development Plan sets out the key objectives for the year ahead whilst working towards the three-year priorities.

In the Annual Development Plan, it shows the Institute aims to:

- maintain its financial independence and security
- maintain a high level of volunteer involvement
- engage with the membership
- engage with the general public through the short courses and qualifications
- widen the membership to ensure that it maintains a broad interest base
- liaise with, and influence, government on matters affecting environmental and public health policy and legislation
- ensure the high standards of professional practice and conduct on the part of EHOs in Scotland through training, education and CPD
- maintain its positive contribution to UK, European and International Environmental Health through membership of the International Federation of Environmental Health

Based on feedback from the membership and through discussion with the elected Council, the following four priorities form the basis of the Institute's Management Committees strategic plan for 2026 to 2029.



2. Strengthen engagement with Members, Approved Training Centres, and key Stakeholders

By strengthening these relationships, we ensure employers, employees, and the public have access to high-quality, cost-effective training. This engagement supports safer, healthier communities and reinforces our role as a trusted leader in Environmental Health education and practice.

3. Review and clarify the Royal Charter to strengthen the Institute's role and purpose.

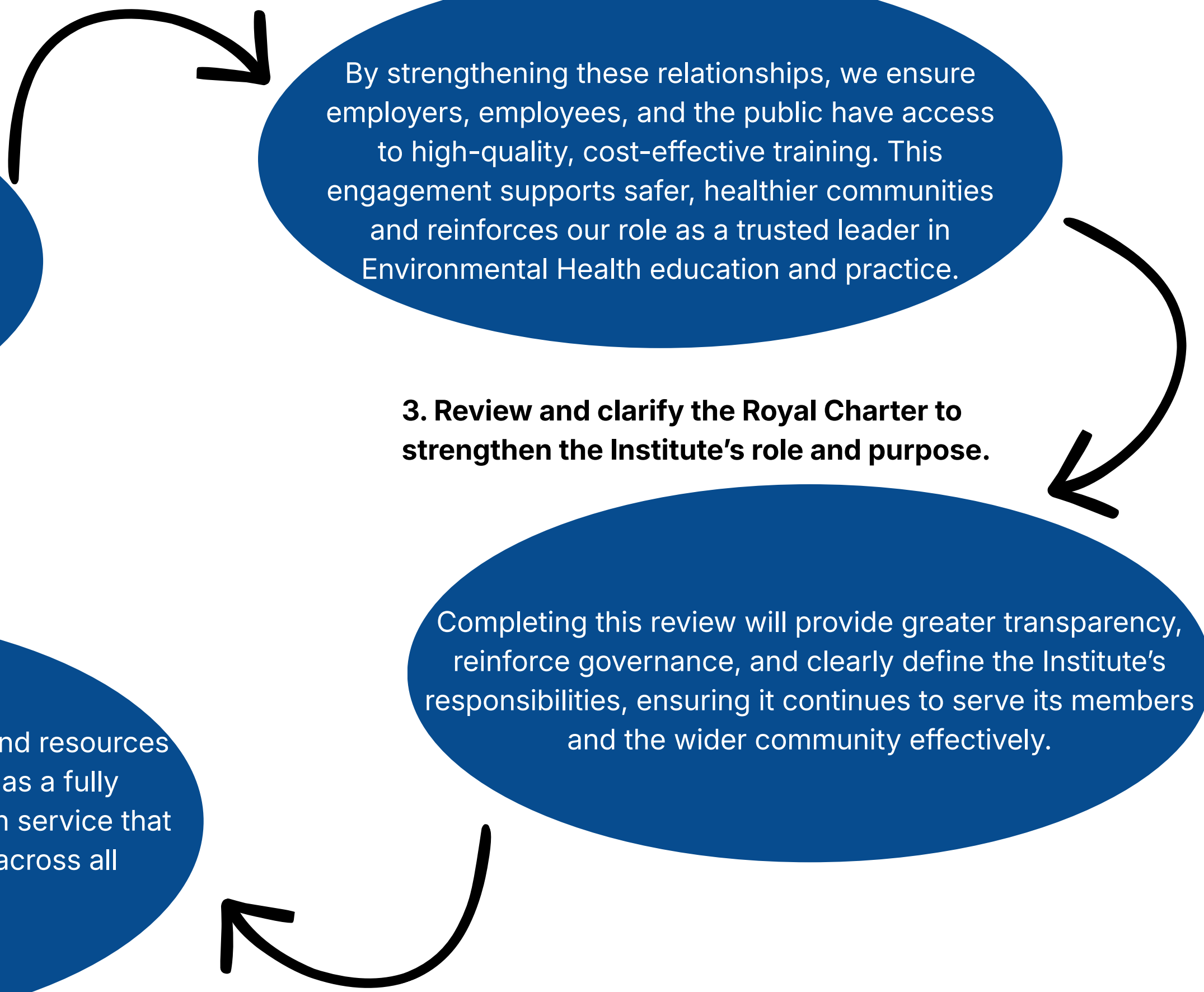
Completing this review will provide greater transparency, reinforce governance, and clearly define the Institute's responsibilities, ensuring it continues to serve its members and the wider community effectively.

4. Enhance the training and development of Environmental Health professionals.

By equipping professionals with the skills and resources they need, we aim to ensure Scotland has a fully resourced, competent Environmental Health service that can protect and promote public health across all communities.

1. To invest in targeted projects

Identify and deliver strategic investment projects that improve operational efficiency and enhance Member services and Approved Training Centres services, strengthening sustainability and restoring the charity to long-term financial stability.



The four priorities of the strategic plan

1. To invest in targeted projects

Identify and deliver strategic investment projects that improve operational efficiency and enhance Member services and Approved Training Centres services, strengthening sustainability and restoring the charity to long-term financial stability.

- Undertake a full cost-benefit and process review of current services to identify inefficiencies, duplication and manual processes (e.g. manual website membership updates), with clear recommendations for automation or system integration.
- Benchmark against comparable professional bodies and charities to identify proven operational improvements and digital best practice, including a review of the website.
- Use structured feedback from Approved Training Centres to prioritise investment in high-impact improvements, such as digitising certificates.
- Expand digital service delivery by investing in enhanced online resources, CPD recording functionality, virtual events and webinars, and streamlined online membership applications to improve accessibility and engagement.
- Modernise and streamline back-office functions through targeted system upgrades, automation, or shared service arrangements to reduce overhead costs and improve organisational resilience.

2. Strengthen engagement with Members, Approved Training Centres, and key Stakeholders

Membership is open to all persons with an interest in Environmental Health in its widest sense including Environmental Health Officers, Food Safety Officers, Community Training Presenters, and those from a range of backgrounds who work in the field of Environmental Public Health.

The work of the Institute relies on enthusiastic active members who contribute to the success of the organisation. We recognise that communication with members, and Approved Training Centres and stakeholders, is vital and we will focus our attention on the following activities:

- Communicate the work of the Institute regularly with members.
- Utilise more online and sustainable means.
- Engage with key stakeholder partners to ensure mutual areas of interest are achieved.
- Enhance our contact network so the work of the Institute is understood more widely.
- Develop our digital capabilities and use new technologies to enhance the work of the Institute.
- Create and provide professional courses and events, relevant to current needs, and by using the various online or hybrid means available.
- Enable the Southern and Northern Regions to engage effectively with members.
- Raise the profile of REHIS Community Training courses and qualifications with the public, industry, and enforcement community to increase uptake.
- Conduct a review and consider re-naming community training to REHIS Business and Community Training?
- Enable the Approved Training Centres to deliver relevant qualifications by various means without compromising standards.
- Invest and support Approved Training Centres by developing further digitised resources based on their requirements.

3. Review and clarify the Royal Charter to strengthen the Institute's role and purpose

The Institute's Royal Charter and Byelaws were granted by the Sovereign on 8 March 2001 on the recommendation of the Privy Council.

To stay relevant the Institute needs to respond to the changing world and ensure it works in time with political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental challenges.

We need to review our governing document to make sure it is right for current day needs and challenges without compromising on the fundamental standards the Institute is renowned for.

We will therefore:

- Communicate and consult with our members the changes to the Royal Charter, take on board feedback and carry out a further review
- Continue engagement with the solicitors on the legalities of reviewing the Royal Charter
- Consider the implications of any changes to the current governance methods
- Collaborate with relevant organisations to support the review of the Royal Charter
- Complete the review of the Royal Charter and implement the necessary changes into REHIS governance and business

4.

Enhance the training and development of Environmental Health professionals

It is essential that the public have the protection of a properly resourced Environmental Health Service staffed by officers trained to a high standard and able to demonstrate their competence. The Environmental Health Profession in Scotland prides itself on the high standards of education and training required of aspiring Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and Food Safety Officers (FSOs).

It is acknowledged the current insufficient number of qualified EHOs and FSOs is of great concern. It is also recognised that the absence of an accredited undergraduate route into the profession, is a significant gap. The Institute is committed to work to improve both these areas.

The Institute will therefore establish various work streams to achieve the following:

- Make more people aware of the exciting and interesting profession of Environmental Health
- Develop digital resources to assist in recruitment campaigns to attract more people to the profession
- Collaborate with partner organisations and stakeholders to increase the profile of the Environmental Health profession
- Promote, the MSc programmes in Environmental Health at Abertay route to progressing towards the Diploma in Environmental Health
- Continue with the alternative route to enter the profession
- Continue with the pathway to register on the Higher Certificate in Food Practice
- Continue to find a replacement BSc degree course or graduate apprenticeship pathway route
- Through working with Scottish Government, encourage educational establishments to introduce an undergraduate qualification
- Retain newly qualified professionals as members of the Institute
- Promote the benefits of being a Chartered EHO as this demonstrates an individual's professional competence and ability which gives confidence to employers and can be an asset for a professional's future career.

CONCLUSION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Institute is committed to the priorities of the three-year Strategic Plan and in doing so produces an Annual Development Plan to assist with shorter term objectives. Progress on both the Strategic Plan and Annual Development Plan is regularly assessed through the Council and Committee structure.

We would like to thank all involved with the Institute: our Members, our elected Council, our Approved Training Centres, and our staff for contributing to the ongoing success of The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Institute

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