



Representing Drainage  
Water Level & Flood Risk  
Management Authorities

# ADA BUSINESS PLAN

## **2020-2023**

## ROLE

**ADA** is the membership organisation for drainage, water level and flood risk management authorities in the United Kingdom, with over 230 members. Our members include Internal Drainage Boards, Regional Flood & Coastal Committees, Local Authorities and National Agencies, as well our Associate and Individual Members who are contractors, consultants and suppliers to the industry.

## FUNCTION

Established in 1937, ADA's function is to watch over, support and promote the interests of drainage, water level and flood risk management authorities at a national and parliamentary level, providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and discussions, and to disseminate information of common interest. ADA's water level management community is built upon interaction and connections made between our members.

## VISION

In the context of a changing climate, our vision is of a society that understands the importance of drainage, water level and flood risk management, the need to adapt to climate change and improve society's resilience and how ADA and its members can contribute to safer, sustainable and prosperous communities and an enhanced environment.

## PURPOSE

Our purpose is to champion and campaign for the sustainable, collaborative delivery of water level and catchment management, offering guidance, leadership and support to water level management in the UK, whilst informing members of the public about our members' essential work.

One of our key objectives will be to influence the Government, especially Defra, lobbying Government and other public and national and local bodies to understand and act appropriately in relation to water level management in the UK.

We aim to continually develop and improve our services, by building connections between our members and strengthening our representational role for the benefit of our members and society and ensuring the development and protection of ADA members' interests.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its Executive Summary in 2017, ADA published its business plan for the period 2017 to 2020. Many of the objectives set out then have been completed whilst others are ongoing and remain relevant to our plans for the future.

Our plans for the next three years include a number of new objectives, both strategic and operational, that aim to continue to enhance the value of ADA to our membership and the wider industry whilst recognising the need to promote adaptation and resilience to the effects of a changing climate.

One of our prime objectives will remain influencing the Government, especially Defra, and others to understand and act appropriately in relation to ADA members' interests.

We are mindful of future changes to legislation that may result from the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. We intend to maintain our strong links with the European Union of Water Management Associations (EUWMA).

We have consulted widely with our membership to ensure that the objectives set out in this plan are in line with their own objectives and we are confident that they can be achieved in a timely and cost-effective manner.

This Business Plan sets out our objectives, how we will achieve them, who will be responsible for their implementation and, if not continuous, a time frame for completion.

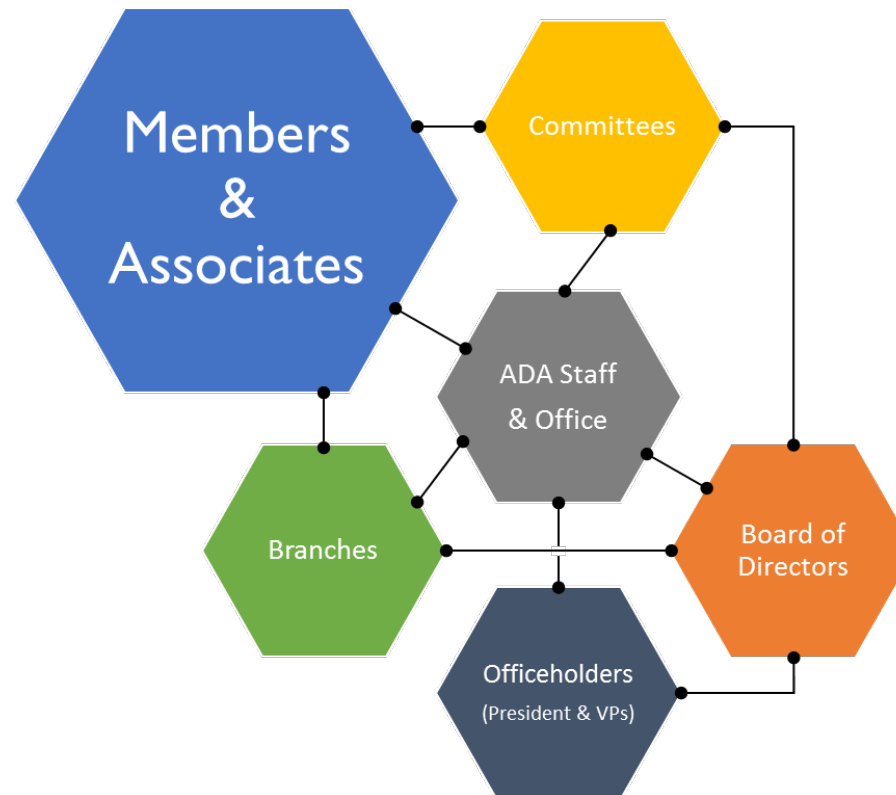
Measures of Success against each objective will be reported by the Chief Executive and verified by the Policy & Finance Committee.

# ORGANISATION

In April 2014, ADA transferred into a company limited by guarantee with a Board of Directors, re-constituted its Branches and updated the terms of reference of its specialist committees.

In April 2015, the Board appointed a new Chief Executive, Innes Thomson, and he is directly responsible for the employment of staff and for running the ADA office and producing the ADA Gazette.

## Organisation of association



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Directors of the Board consist of the Chair of ADA, Chairs of the two Committees each who also act as Vice Chairs of the Board, one member from each of the ten regional Branches, one member representing the Environment Agency, one member representing the Local Authorities and one member representing the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees. Details of the operation of the Board and its Board members are set out in the ADA Board & Committees Guide published on ADA's website.

## STAFF & OFFICES

At the start of 2020, ADA directly employs a small team of six staff comprising of: the Chief Executive, a Technical Manager, a Technical Officer, an Administration & Membership Support Officer (part time), a Communications & Events Officer (part time), and a Publications & Media Officer (full time).

The staff team are also able to rely on the assistance from a number of volunteers drawn from ADA's Committees and the Professional Supporters Network, helping in areas such as finance, event management and representing ADA at meetings on a national and regional level.

ADA's current offices are at the Rural Innovation Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, and are now at optimum capacity for the number of staff engaged. ADA also rents document storage space at Stoneleigh Park. ADA and the Board may consider changes to office accommodation or storage during the period of this Business Plan, as required.

## BRANCHES & COMMITTEES

ADA has ten regional branches bringing together bodies and groups involved in water level management in their area. Each Branch appoints a Director to ADA's Board. Branches pass up local views and issues to ADA's Board and pass down the decisions of the Board to members, as well as working with ADA staff and Committees to share news and best practice. Each Branch operates with its own constitution, which can be found under the Branch section of the ADA website.

ADA's Committees are appointed to advise the Board of Directors on specialist areas and assist and direct ADA's work on behalf of its members. Where vacancies arise, ADA's Members are invited annually to nominate candidates to become members of the committees and appointments are made for periods of up to three years. Details of the operation of the main Committees (Policy and Finance; Technical and Environmental; Chairman's) are set out in the ADA Board & Committees Guide published on ADA's website.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Association's membership is made up of Internal Drainage Boards, Local Authorities, National Agencies, Regional Flood and Coastal Committees, Individual and Associate Members (commercial organisations). In recent years the number of internal drainage boards has decreased due, mainly, to amalgamations of small boards in order to form bigger, often more effective and efficient bodies.

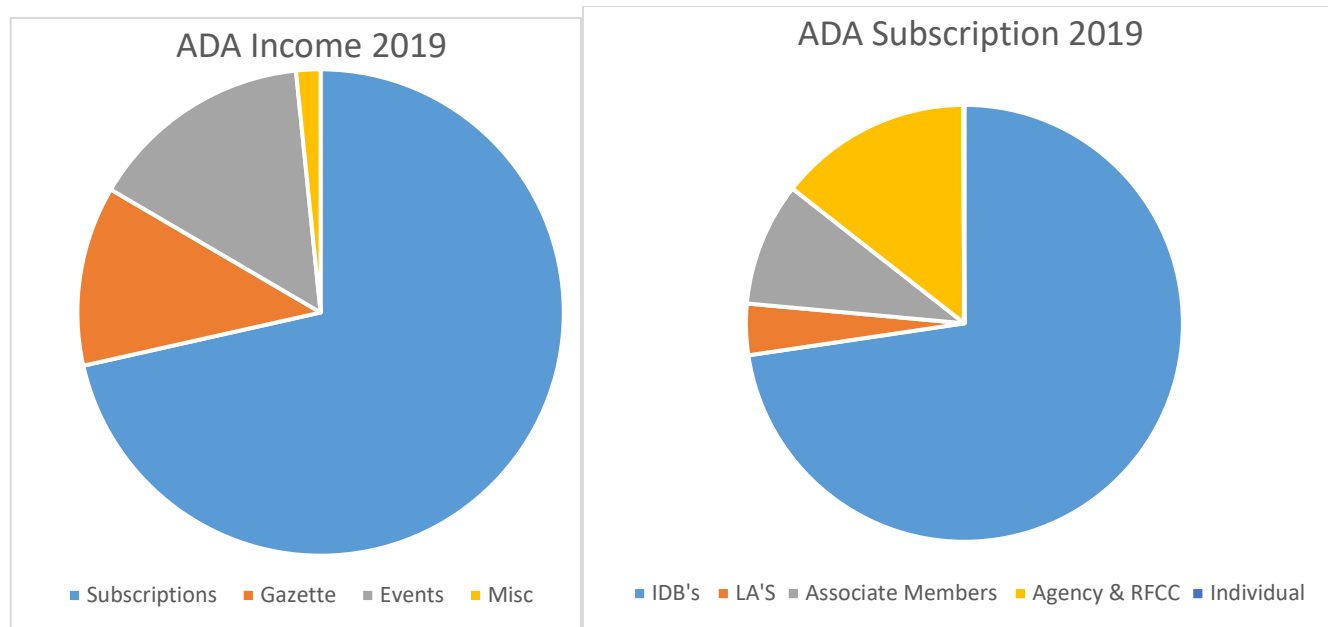
In Wales, following the amalgamation of Internal Drainage Board operations under the control of Natural Resources Wales, Internal Drainage Districts and advisory groups are still very active and promoting their interests is vital to helping achieve our strategic objectives.

In Scotland, recent legislation, in which the role of ADA was noted, has been enacted, recognising the Pow of Inchaffray Drainage Commissioners and giving rise to the potential for the creation of other similar bodies.

In Northern Ireland, ADA continues to support the Department of Infrastructure, which retains responsibility for drainage functions.

## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

ADA’s gross income for the previous year to December 2019 was £384,330, with 71% of its income coming from member subscriptions. During the same period the ADA Gazette advertising contributed net income of 12%, with the Conference, FLOODDEX and other sundry income contributing 17%. This business plan recognises the continuing need to increase the diversity of income sources and gradually reduce reliance on just subscription income. The graphics below show income details for 2019.





As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, ADA's cash reserves were £233,517.

During the period of this Business Plan, the Board have agreed that ADA will maintain cash reserves amounting to the funds needed to wind up the organisation in a controlled way over a six month accounting period. Any wind-up process would include for the strategic reduction of staff to a minimum operating level, maintaining basic office space and functions, ceasing publication of the ADA Gazette and downsizing the annual conference and AGM to the minimum requirements as per ADA's Memorandum & Articles.

Calculated against actual 2019 figures, the amount of reserves estimated to be required for a wind-down operation is of the order of 60% of subscription fees for the year and ADA will endeavour to maintain that level of reserves available at all times.

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2020 - 2023

REF	DETAIL	HOW OBJECTIVE WILL BE ACHIEVED	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>S1</b>	Develop strong and productive relationships and partnerships as appropriate with politicians, Government, regulators, Government Agencies, asset owners, professional institutions and societies, and organisations with related interests.	Regular meetings with a range of politicians from the principal parties, other organisations, including monthly liaison with the EA, meeting with Defra 2 - 4 times per year and updates provided to the ADA Board and Members via ADA Branch meetings. Explore and develop potential collaborative working arrangements with other organisations which lead to the enhancing of ADA's standing and reputation.	Ongoing	Chair/ Vice Chair/CEO Tech. Manager
<b>S2</b>	ADA to provide policy leadership within the flood risk, land drainage and water management sectors.	Annually appraise and set consistent policy objectives that contribute to the sustainable and collaborative delivery of catchment-based water level management by ADA's members. To be delivered through work of ADA staff, officeholders, Committee work streams and wider membership.	Annual	Board of Directors and Committees
<b>S3</b>	ADA to engage with and participate fully in, and receive feedback from ADA Branch events and meetings, and provide standing Agenda items to update Branches on national issues.	Generate close liaison with Branch Secretaries to ensure a two-way exchange of information between ADA and its Branches. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, CEO or Technical Manager to attend ADA Branch meetings.	Ongoing	Chair/ Vice Chair/CEO Tech. Manager
<b>S4</b>	Through membership of EUWMA, examine the policy and processes of other Water Management Authorities across Europe to the benefit of members, and establish and promote beneficial collaborations in research and development.	Continuing engagement with EUWMA, including commitment to retain links/relationships post UK exit from EU, including facilitating study tours and other learning exchanges between IDBs and EUWMA Member Boards.	Ongoing	Chair/ Vice Chair/CEO Tech. Manager

<b>S5</b>	Promote and support the delivery of relevant actions and activities associated with the updated National Flood Risk Management Strategy as approved by Parliament, with specific recognition of the need to adapt and be resilient to a changing climate.	Working closely with ADA members to promote the delivery of actions and activities resulting from the publication of the agreed National FCRM Strategy and take a lead by planning in this period how ADA can itself conduct its business to a carbon-neutral target date.	Ongoing	Chair/ Vice Chair/CEO Tech. Manager
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## OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES 2020 - 2023

REF	DETAIL	HOW OBJECTIVE WILL BE ACHIEVED	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>O1</b>	Publish and maintain comprehensive and up-to-date standard/model policies and guidance to assist Members with aspects of their work.	Ensure that a relevant suite of standard/model policies is published on ADA’s website, with periodic review carried out by ADA Officers, reporting to the Committees.	Ongoing	ADA Staff
<b>O2</b>	Actively seek feedback from the membership about issues they would like ADA to focus on.	Develop and use structured feedback processes in conjunction with more informal discussions with members to ensure that ADA’s activities reflect the general consensus of wishes from its members.	Annual	CEO/Tech. Manager
<b>O3</b>	Building on the GIS mapping work of the last business period, develop a comprehensive database of IDB statistics to assist with the promotion of IDB work.	Completion of a functional, accurate database with the possibility of creating an interactive map application on ADA’s website	Dec 2021	Tech. Manager
<b>O4</b>	Work with IDBs to ensure acceptable levels of statutory compliance and governance.	Identify non-compliance issues and work directly with those members to help them gain compliance using member networks, training & special advisors.	Ongoing	Tech. Manager
<b>O5</b>	Undertake annual key industry benchmarking from data provided in statutory Annual Returns and Reports.	Use information gathered from annual IDB I questionnaire, and to develop additional information requests as necessary.	Annual	CEO/Tech. Manager & Committee sub-groups

<b>06</b>	Provide training packages for new IDB Board Members.	In consultation with ADA Committees, produce relevant training material, including PowerPoint presentations, for both new and existing Board Members.	Ongoing	Committee sub-groups/CEO/Tech. Manager
<b>07</b>	Provide and maintain a comprehensive and up-to-date website with social media links and mobile device functionality.	Website, twitter feed and news items will be published as necessary, with content regularly updated and refreshed by ADA staff.	Ongoing	ADA Staff
<b>08</b>	Publish the ADA Gazette four times a year.	Ongoing programme of production, advertising revenue to cover cost of production and publication. Staff time costs to be built into overall Gazette costs.	Quarterly	ADA Staff
<b>09</b>	Provide an “ADA News Stream” email service to members in the months where a Gazette is not published.	Compile an update of industry relevant news items and circulate to all members and other interested parties.	8 per year	Tech. Manager
<b>010</b>	Review and rationalise other ADA published material, template letters and documents, information booklets, etc. and maintain content and branding to current standards.	Ongoing programme of updating existing and producing new publications, as appropriate, focussed on the public and for use at shows and other relevant events, and for use by members in communication with others.	Ongoing	ADA Staff
<b>011</b>	Hold an Annual General Meeting annually, which may or may not be combined with a conference event.	An AGM is required under ADA’s Memorandum & Articles and should aim to highlight the work of ADA to members and others.	Annual	CEO & ADA staff
<b>012</b>	Hold other events to typically include a trade exhibition, ministerial/senior civil servant visits, political receptions, member technical meetings, host EUWMA meetings.	To typically include trade events, (annual or bi-annual depending on demand), Local Authority event(s), IDB Clerks & CEO event(s), site visits, receptions for political leaders and civil servants, and to support Branch-organised live demonstrations.	Ongoing	CEO & ADA staff



<b>013</b>	At least 95% of IDBs are members of ADA.	To review and demonstrate the levels of member benefits in relation to the fees paid, seek feedback from non-members, and report to the July Board meeting.	Annual, July	CEO
<b>014</b>	Increase the diversification of ADA membership and seek to grow membership income by 5% per year over the business plan period.	Review subscription rates and benefits for members, reporting to the July Board meeting. Actively promote and seek new members through direct approach or collaborative arrangements.	Annual, July	Board/Chair/CEO/ Tech. manager
<b>015</b>	ADA to organise a rota of Board and Committee Meetings with consistent times and venues at least twelve months in advance.	ADA meeting dates, times and venues for forthcoming year to be included in annual Conference Reports.	Annual Q4	ADA Staff
<b>016</b>	Chairman's Group to oversee ADA Business Management and progress.	Chairman to manage a small group of ADA Board members as required, to review progress of the objectives and the general running of the organisation.	As required	ADA Staff
<b>017</b>	Chairman's Group to review ADA Staff performance.	Chairman to manage a small group of ADA Board members to meet annually to review staff performance and set salaries and allowances for the following year.	Annual Q1	Chairman
<b>018</b>	ADA to carry out administrative and membership services for ASA.	ADA to provide services as set out in the agreed Service Level Agreement to the satisfaction of ASA.	Ongoing	CEO
<b>019</b>	ADA to research the means by which IDBs might, independently and with other Risk Management Authorities, address climate change and carbon output.	ADA to gather information in respect of adaptive and mitigation measures proposed in similar sectors and advise IDBs and other members how they might consider introducing real applications themselves	Ongoing	Committee sub-groups/CEO/Tech. Manager