

Activity Plan 2018



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 2018. This year the Society begins taking forward its new strategy. The framework remains the same, but with new priorities. In particular the RSS wishes to focus on recruiting, retaining and engaging members, and in growing our presence in the 'data **science**' field.

From a back-office point of view, the coming year will be dominated by work to move to a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, culminating in launch in mid-2019. The new system will allow more personalised member content and a better user experience. The RSS will also begin the process of upgrading the interior of its building.

The rest of this document outlines our workplan for 2018 in more detail.

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 2018, we will continue working to influence the UK government and other stakeholders to support **effective** use of statistics in the **public** interest.*

1.1 Policy, research and campaigns

In 2018, we will continue to promote the **effective** use of statistics and data, and the conditions needed to enable this. Through our policy and public affairs activities, we will demonstrate to policymakers and others the importance of statistics in society, and articulate how they can help, including by acknowledging or addressing the recommendations outlined both in our Data Manifesto and our responses to consultations. We will strive to understand new and emerging issues and to develop a prominent and timely public voice regarding important developments of strategic interest to the RSS.

We will reach out to members to involve them in consultations, campaigns and policy-focused events and ensure that we support varied levels of commitment. We will proactively report our activities and relevant achievements to our membership and wider audiences. We will continue to support our sections active in policy work to influence aspects of UK government policy of strategic importance to the Society

In 2017, we made the case to the Office of National Statistics (ONS) for new UK legislation to support data-sharing to facilitate necessary innovations ahead of the 2021 Census. We will build on this in 2018 by supporting greater data-sharing for official statistics and for research in the public interest, including in the adoption of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and development of data-sharing from health and social care. We will pursue stronger support for the development of ethics and public trust in statistical and analytical fields, and call for access to administrative data and statistics at regional levels and in the devolved nations. We will monitor the implications of the UK's exit from the EU regarding skills, investment and data access for scientific and analytical fields. We will also continue our campaign for legislation to end the late registration of deaths in England and Wales.

We will work with our Honorary Officer for National Statistics and National Statistics Advisory Group to continue regular liaison with the UK Statistics Authority. We will advocate strong user

engagement in the ONS following the planned handover of the StatsUserNet website. Our working group with the Royal Economic Society will seek to support the programme of change recommended for ONS by the Independent Review of Economic Statistics (the Bean Review).

We will work with our Vice President for Education and Statistical Literacy and Education Policy Advisory Group to continue to highlight the importance of education pathways to support a strong foundation of statistical and data skills across the curriculum, including technical and vocational education. For more on our work and priorities in this area, see Section 2.5.

With our Vice President for Academic Affairs and our Academic Affairs Advisory Group, and in collaboration with the Council for Mathematical Sciences, we will continue to support contact with key research funding bodies, learned societies and universities across the UK in support of statistics as an academic discipline. See Section 4.1 for more details.

Our International Development Section will maintain an active interest in the sustainable development goals and the 'data revolution' for development.

We will work with the Nuffield Foundation and other bodies to set up a new Convention on Data Ethics to support a conversation around the ethical issues presented by digital data, artificial intelligence, algorithms and other new technologies.

1.2 Public affairs, press, external-facing events

We will engage in a range of public affairs activities to help expand our influence, enact our policy agendas and build links with decision-makers and influencers. We will hold roundtables, parliamentary events and other policy-influencing events throughout the year, as well as our annual President's Dinner and Statistical Excellence Award Ceremony.

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 and the House of Commons Library.

We will maintain our proactive and reactive engagement with the media, and aim to increase year-on-year press coverage of the RSS and its activities. In this, we will work closely with our President David Spiegelhalter and with our Vice President for External Affairs, Jen Rogers. We will continue to draw upon our Statistical Ambassadors and increase our number of expert media speakers. We will expand our social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and use our Statslife website as a vehicle for thought-leadership and hosting debates. We will keep in touch with non-members through newsletters with updates on our policy and influencing work. At the end of 2017 we will have piloted our 'Statistic of the Year' project which we hope will garner media interest and it is our intention to run this again in 2018.

We will maintain a strategic events programme of at least six high profile public events, including the annual Cathie Marsh Memorial Lecture and the Beveridge Lecture which will be delivered by Will Moy, director of Full Fact.

Through our External Honours Panel, we will nominate statisticians and others who support the communication and use of statistics for recognition through civil honours.

1.3 Awards for statistical excellence

Following a review in 2016, our awards for statistical excellence will continue across existing categories for pharmaceutical statistics, official statistics, journalism and early-career writing. We will continue to seek appropriate sponsors for the awards. We will also consider opportunities for creating a new data science award in partnership with other bodies.

1.4 African Institute for Mathematical Sciences

In 2016, the RSS developed a partnership with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS). This is facilitated through our International Development Section. During 2018 we intend to provide financial support to enable three RSS fellows to volunteer as tutors on AIMS courses at the various AIMS centres in Africa. This work is in association with Taylor and Francis and the American Statistical Association.

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 2018, we will work to encourage and support more Fellows to be engaged with our statistical literacy and education work and build on our achievements in education and in improving statistical literacy in professions.

2.1 Statistical literacy

Statistical literacy activities are key to the Society's work. Through these, we highlight the value of number and data skills to the wider public. Our work with statistics users also encourages wider public involvement in statistics. We will continue to strive to improve statistical literacy for all in everyday life, to increase statistical literacy in employment and to develop the role of statistics within public culture.

To meet our goals around developing statistical literacy in everyday life, we will continue to work primarily through education policy and practice (see Section 2.5). We will continue to engage with organisations like National Numeracy and the British Academy to highlight the need for statistical literacy as part of the numeracy and functional skills agendas.

Our activity 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 the short-term immediate need and to seek ways to create institutional and structural change.

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, leisure and in wider culture. We will encourage our Sections, Local and Study Groups 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 through the provision of resources and professional development activities.

We will scope a project to produce an online statistical glossary which would then underpin guides for a wide range of audiences.

2.2 Parliamentarians and policymakers

We will continue to encourage statistical literacy in policymaking, building on our work in 2017 to establish support for training in parliament and previously with the House of Commons Library, POST, the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly and Civil Service Learning. In 2018, we will investigate extending the work to parliamentary select committees.

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 our Statistical Ambassadors Programme and professional development opportunities.

'Fake news' and 'post-truth' were themes that emerged in 2017. We will continue to highlight how statistical understanding can contribute to the strong verification of facts in the media and thus produce higher quality reporting to inform the wider public.

2.4 Law

We will work with our Statistics and the Law Section and with organisations that support legal training to improve the understanding and use of statistics in the administration of justice.

2.5 Education policy and practice

Our education strategy emphasizes that everyone should be able to use and interpret data and statistical information to benefit their everyday lives and careers and to engage in the democratic process. We also promote the data skills as an important requirement of the digital economy, the importance of which has been acknowledged by recent UK public policy initiatives.

We will continue to advocate for the role of statistics within subject disciplines in schools and higher education, building on the existing evidence base. In 2017 we saw the start of the final tranche of the reformed A level subjects in England, including AS and A level Statistics and Mathematics, and the publication of Sir Adrian Smith's Review into post-16 mathematical education. In the wake of this, we will liaise with and support relevant bodies such as the Royal Society's Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education and the Joint Mathematical Council, to advocate appropriate pathways for participation in statistics, including within post-16 technical education and for a strong foundation in mathematics. We will continue to monitor and influence delivery and implementation of the curriculum and will respond to policy consultations issued by government, parliament and teaching bodies. We will support our members to work in similar ways in Wales and Scotland. At Higher Education level, we will continue to work with the British Academy-hosted High Level Strategy Group for Quantitative Skills and with Q Step Centres. With sufficient volunteer input, we anticipate that teaching statistics to non-statistics undergraduates will be a regular theme for discussion at our conferences and other forums.

We will continue to press our key policy message that society needs sufficient teachers with an appropriate knowledge of statistics and how it applies to their discipline, and who can teach data handling and statistics. To help address teacher capacity, we will encourage teacher recruitment through our partnership with the Department of Education-funded Mathematics Teacher Training Scholarships scheme. We will also monitor activity addressing teacher capacity.

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

We will continue to help our Fellows to volunteer to support teaching and learning in schools and to engage with young people, to benefit statistical education and careers promotion (see Section 3.6). Our William Guy Lecturer, Dr Jeff Ralph, will deliver a series of lectures to schools. We will select our 2018-19 William Guy lecturer in early 2018. We will continue to offer support to our members who are STEM Ambassadors through our Young Statisticians Section and volunteers from the wider Fellowship. We also offer good practice guidance and advice, drawn from our membership, for other schemes, including Nuffield Research Placements Scheme, the Royal Institution's Mathematics Masterclasses and Inspiring the Future (see section 3.6).

We will increase the take-up of resources by teachers through our free e-teacher membership scheme, which brings together individuals experienced in teaching statistical concepts to share ideas, advice and good practice. We will provide online events for e-teachers, drawing on the skills and knowledge within the e-teacher network.

2.6 Significance magazine

In 2018, we will produce six issues of Significance, in partnership with the American Statistical Association and our publisher, Wiley. We will maintain high quality content on the Significance website, while working to further integrate the publication's print and online offerings. We will make more of the archive of Significance content available through our Significance mobile app. We will also trial sending a new member communication alongside Significance magazine in the post to RSS fellows.

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

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 Africa, China and Latin America. This will help us to reach new contributors in these markets and broaden the international flavour of Significance's editorial coverage.

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 2018, the main priority in delivering the RSS strategy will be to build on the successful outcome of the professional affairs strategy review with a range of follow-up activities, including a plan to increase employer engagement.

3.1 Strategy

During 2018, we will develop and implement work packages to promote the professional pathway to Chartered Statistician (CStat), including the competence-based application route for the CStat award (introduced in 2017), the establishment of an employer forum and other activities to strengthen engagement with employers.

3.2 Professional Membership

We will continue to deliver the ongoing management and promotion of our professional awards, and will implement strategies to encourage existing and non-members to apply for professional status, with the aim of increasing the conversion rate from GradStat to CStat status. The Chartered Statistician Revalidation process will run as in previous years, with around 30 CStats due to submit their CPD records for assessment in 2018.

We will have a full activity plan for the successful Professional Statisticians' Forum. This will include web-based meetings, which attracted large numbers of participants in 2017.

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. The annual revalidation process for Chartered Scientists (of whom there are around 195) will run as in previous years.

3.3 Accreditation

In April 2017, we launched a new RSS accreditation scheme for Honours and Master's degree programmes. During 2018 our team of assessors will undertake desk-based assessments and visits to institutions, to evaluate applications for accreditation. We will seek to promote the scheme more widely and encourage new partners to apply. We will continue to review and develop our approach to standards at Levels 2 to 5 of the qualifications framework.

The Accreditation Advisory Committee will oversee the accreditation application process and allow us to work collaboratively with education providers to help develop the quality and increase the relevance of programmes to students. The Committee will ensure that there is continuous review of the accreditation criteria and underlying standards.

3.4 Training and professional development

In 2018, we will focus on increasing the number of face-to-face, public and commissioned training courses that we offer as well as continuing to offer online training. Our ongoing strategy is to deliver professional-level courses for our members and expand our course offerings to non-statisticians by both subject and industry. To this end, we will develop additional courses and invest in marketing these to a broader audience. We will look at packaging courses to provide learning pathways, initially focused on data science.

3.5 Data Science

We will consider the opportunities for developing professional support for the data science community. We will consider what role the RSS can play in supporting the data science community and in particular our role in working with employers. This could include new accreditation for data scientists, conducted in partnership with other bodies. We will also build our training offering in this space, building on the success of our Introduction to Machine Learning course in 2017. We will also look at the possibility of building a code of conduct for data science, led by our Data Science Section.

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 2018.

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. Our volunteer-led hands-on resources project will also produce more resources and training in 2018, following a successful first year in 2017.

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 2018 compared with the end of 2017.

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 2018, 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 monitor and influence issues relating to statistics within academia, through our Academic Affairs Advisory Group and the Council for the Mathematical Sciences. We are keen to ensure consistency in the level of funding as the UK plans to exit the EU and as the funding landscape changes as a result of the formation of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

We will liaise with Research Councils and the new UKRI, both directly and through the Council for the Mathematical Sciences. We will continue to take a strong interest in how education funders recognise the importance of sustaining the statistics discipline within a 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 STEM for Britain (a poster competition in Parliament for early-career research scientists, engineers, technologists and mathematicians), Voice of the Future (a parliamentary event for younger academics) and Parliamentary Links Day (an event bringing parliamentarians and scientists together).

4.2 Journals

We will edit and produce four issues of Series A, five issues of Series B and five issues of Series C (3,500 pages, plus one-for-one papers to mirror those for which authors have paid

for open access). We will strive to reduce the times between submission of manuscripts and decisions to their authors. To do this we will continue to administer and develop the journal online submission and peer review system and provide administrative support for Editors, Associate Editors and referees as required. On acceptance of papers, we will strive to maintain rapid publication online before assignment to specific issues of the journal.

Following the establishment of our Discussion Meetings Committee in 2017, we will begin to rebuild the prestigious programme of papers presented and discussed at the Society. We will also publish in our journals the papers presented at Discussion Meetings.

The journals provide the RSS with income that we use to cross-subsidise our activities. The finances of the recent contract with Wiley will give us some certainty of income for the period 2017–2022 through the annual guaranteed payments. However, 'open access' policies and pressures on institutional library budgets in the UK and worldwide remain a threat to the additional revenue that may be gained from the Society's publications. We will therefore continue to review, together with our publisher Wiley, new subscription models and the use of technologies to add value to existing content to generate income. Wiley's promotional and marketing strategies are aimed particularly at emerging economies, and we will collaborate with them in their campaigns and in other ideas. We will carefully monitor the effects of open access and the development and application of these new technologies.

On the wider question of open access to data, our publications will collaborate with the new Data Science Section on issues affecting them in developing a strategy for influencing policy and decision-making in areas such as privacy, data sharing, data ethics and training.

In 2017, we moved 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, in 2017 we collaborated with Wiley to launch of a new publication hub site for the RSS. In 2018 we will work with Wiley to develop this site further to provide virtual issue collections of papers on specific themes across the series. In addition, the journals will continue to produce special issues within series.

We will continue with our virtual Journal Webinar events and seek sponsorship for this programme. We have also partnered with the American Statistical Association in a new 'peer community in computational statistics' and shall monitor the progress of this initiative.

4.3 Conference and events

Our annual international conference will take place in Cardiff in September 2018. We aim to consolidate on the record attendance of around 600 attendees at the 2017 Conference and further increase income from sponsors and exhibitors, with the goal of having the total income covering our full costs and generating a small surplus. For our 2018 conference, we will continue the fully-streamed format initially adopted in 2015 and aim to develop the rapid-fire talk sessions that were trialled in 2017. Alongside this, we will undertake planning for our 2019 and 2020 conferences with the intention of sourcing venues which can accommodate a further expansion in attendee numbers.

We will continue to build on the programme of half-day and evening events on topical issues that we have held over the past couple of years, and will continue to explore event partnerships to promote the Society to wider audiences and extend our geographical presence beyond London.

We will look to further develop content-sharing from events, including video and livestreaming, with consideration given to providing premium content for Fellows.

The RSS will support the organisation of an event with the Fisher Memorial Trust in Edinburgh to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of Fisher's seminal 1918 paper.

In recent years, we have hosted a range of data science events held by other institutions. We will continue with this as is feasible.

4.4 Honours

We presented our 2017 medals and prizes at the RSS international conference in Glasgow in September. We are seeking fresh nominations for the 2018 awards, which will be presented in Cardiff in September 2018. The honours up for award in 2018 are: Guy Medals in Gold, Silver and Bronze, the Bradford Hill Medal, Honorary Fellowship, the Research Prize the West Medal, the Howard Medal and the Barnett Award.

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 to deliver further membership benefits through defined discounts.

Consideration will be given to the creation of special interest groups in key areas that are not currently covered by existing Sections, and Local Groups in regions that are not represented.

Our Honorary Officer for Sections will produce an annual report to Council on the work of the Sections based on the new activity records.

We will continue to work towards smoother running of the Sections and groups through to share good practice across Sections and Local Groups, biannual meetings of Section and group officers and induction webinars for new officers.

We will encourage sections to consider how they might respond to public interest issues in their area of expertise. In particular, we will encourage sections to think about the issue of the use and understanding around p-values, and what they might do to improve this.

Our Quality Improvement Section will continue its work with the United Kingdom Accreditation Service on administering 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 2018 we expect the scheme to receive approval from UKAS, which should result in an increase in activity in the scheme.

4.6 Archive

We will continue to maintain our 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 2018, we will continue implementing the membership strategy, with priority given to retaining existing members and recruiting new members and to have more Fellows volunteer for the Society or through the initiatives it promotes.

5.1 Membership strategy: member retention, recruitment, engagement and benefits

We will continue to implement the key strands of our membership strategy, which covers the period 2015-2018. Given that member retention and recruitment are critical to the health and development of the Society, we will continue to monitor and develop relevant benefits, raise awareness of the value of these and communicate them to members at appropriate stages of their careers.

We will introduce a new subscription renewals model in late 2018 whereby members will renew annually on the date on which they join: anniversary subscription renewal. The current membership year runs from 1 January each year, regardless of the point in the year at which a member joins the RSS.

Member retention

Activity around member retention will continue to focus on making all members feel valued and part of a community, reflecting our goal to remain a relevant and valuable body. Member engagement is a key element of this work and has been covered separately below.

Our aim is to reduce attrition from its current rate of 9% to 7% or below by 2018. However, the number of members leaving is still too high. Throughout 2018 we will undertake research to help us gain more insight into why members are leaving and what, if anything, we can do differently to ensure that our members value -- and therefore renew -- their membership. Further research will seek to identify the points at which members are most vulnerable to leaving the Society, so that we can direct our efforts into higher contact at these times.

We will develop and implement the following campaigns to support members, demonstrate value for money and attract lapsed members to reinstate their membership:

- A new member-focussed communications plan concentrating on communicating member benefits, for example 'how to get the most out of your journal'
- A sponsorship programme for members in financial difficulty
- Lapsed member campaign
- Premium pricing for non-member access to services, including introducing paywalls for some online content
- Continue to profile our existing engaged members and feature them in our web news to demonstrate how and why they got involved in the RSS and the value to them of belonging to the statistics community

Member recruitment

We will continue to develop and implement campaigns to recruit new members to the Society:

- Develop a network of member ambassadors who will help promote membership
- Incentivise sections and local groups to promote membership at their meetings
- Continue our e-Student recruitment campaign which has grown from 300 to over 2,000 e-Students in two years: this is one of the pipelines for future members although still too early to measure conversion rates
- Develop new communication and engagement tools to help convert e-student members into paying members
- Increase the number of corporate partners from 12 to 24
- Introduce additional member events, such as careers evenings, to attract potential new members

- Promote the new competence-based route to professional membership (CStat), which has proven to attract new members
- Relaunch the member referral scheme, encouraging existing members to recruit others into the community
- Introduce *pro-rata* subscription payments for members in their first year of membership

Member engagement

As a member-led organisation, the RSS draws heavily on volunteer efforts from our members to increase the scope and scale of our public benefit. We will continue to grow engagement with our members as volunteers in our work through a wide range of opportunities, including serving on Council (our Trustee body), in local groups, Sections and other working groups. We will also 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.

An important route to achieving an engaged and energised membership is through strengthening our Sections and local groups, and empowering them to undertake activities that promote our goals and attract new members. Our Member Engagement Manager will support Sections and local groups and will seek ways to substantially increase the involvement and interaction of members by making it easier to volunteer with the RSS. This will help us to achieve our objectives of increasing membership within the UK and across the world.

We will continue to publish our member bulletin, which is disseminated electronically to all members and which keeps them engaged and informed about the latest news and membership benefits, 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 member offers. We will also continue to email our electronic events bulletin to members every two or three months. This includes an updated list of all RSS events and related events that will be of interest to members.

During 2016 and 2017, we ran activities targeting 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 data science events. Following the success of these initiatives, in 2017 we established our own Data Science Section. This should be fully operational by the start of 2018 with a programme of meetings and activities to attract more members of this fast-growing community.

Member benefits

We will use data from an extensive membership survey (conducted in December 2016) to review benefits and deliver more relevant services to members at specific points of their membership lifetime. Our work in this area will include carrying out gap analysis and developing new or exclusive member benefits if needed.

5.2 Statisticians for Society

The Society will encourage statisticians to get involved in charitable activity. We have support from the Big Lottery Fund for a two year project to increase statisticians volunteering. In particular we will trial actively matching our volunteers to pro bono opportunities. We will also continue working with Pro Bono Economics to match our volunteers to opportunities that arise through them. We will encourage RSS fellows to join the boards of charities. And we will signpost to other volunteering opportunities, including with partners such as DataKindUK, Statistics without Borders and the Operational Research Society.

5.3 Local groups

In 2018, our local groups will hold a varied programme of meetings throughout the UK. Further, we will start a new programme of work with local groups to support their engagement with potential new members. We will support any new groups where there are sufficient Fellows to make them sustainable.

5.4 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, Royal Economic Society
- 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; Social Research Association; 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 (newspapers, television) and new (blogs, Twitter and other social media)
- 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 TechUK, which represent 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 2018 our priority will be the development of a new Customer Relationship Management system for launch in mid-2019.

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. Journals and training have both performed well: the new journals contact is delivering the expected income and training achieved its 2018 income target in 2017. Our membership targets were ambitious, and Section 5.1 outlines new strategies for membership growth in 2018, which all members of staff will be focused on delivering. We will continue to pursue what fundraising

and sponsorship opportunities we can, given our limited resources. Our Executive Committee will maintain oversight on how we are achieving our goals in each of these areas.

6.2 Budgets

The budget for 2018 is essentially a 'balanced' one. It does, however, also contain two elements funded by reserves towards major projects: the new CRM system and refurbishment of the building interior.

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 our Council on the overall strategy in this area.

6.4 Funding, business development, marketing

Our marketing focus in 2017 was mostly on building our training business and growing conference revenue.

In 2018, these two areas will continue to be a priority, but we also intend to apply marketing resources to promoting the Society in general and to specific products such as the journals, Significance magazine, other RSS events (including those run by sections and local groups), as well as to promoting chartered status to employers and on fundraising campaigns.

Given the extent of the free content the RSS now produces, it is timely to commoditise that content. In partnership with the membership team (see 5.1 above), we will create a clear distinction between services that members enjoy as part of their membership package, and those that non-members can pay to consume (for example, videos of events).

6.5 Building

We are planning to upgrade and decorate our office spaces and in 2018 we will introduce a rolling programme of internal decoration for future years. We are also planning a major refurbishment and development of our public spaces.

The YMCA immediately next door continue their demolition and re-building project, while the re-development of Finsbury Tower directly opposite our main entrance has been granted planning permission, so it is likely that there will continue to be some noise and disruption around the building in 2018

6.6 Venue hire

The venue hire business will be re-launched on completion of the re-development work of the YMCA building next door and the proposed internal redevelopment project.

6.7 Information technology

The primary goal for 2018 is to begin the process of replacing our IMIS membership database with a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

We intend to base our specification on detailed Business Process Modelling, and all RSS departments are contributing to this. We plan to deliver the project in phases and it will include replacing various IT systems that do not currently integrate well with our existing database.

Through the CRM we will deliver streamlined processes, task automation, deep systems integration and sophisticated analytical and reporting facilities. We will take on board new data

protection requirements (as required by the General Data Protection Regulation), concerns about data security and develop advanced auditing capabilities.

The new CRM will be member-focussed with each individual record collecting data on interests, event attendance, communications with Errol Street and more. This data will allow us to proactively target members with information relevant to their interests and help us make their interactions with us quick and easy by bringing existing manual processes online.

This project will be the largest that we have ever undertaken and will impact every area of the organisation. We will front-load the work and do everything possible internally before we involve any contractor to avoid costs spiralling out of control. Our plan for 2018 is to:

- Finalise Business Process Modelling
- Develop a wish-list of features that determines needs *versus* wants
- Complete and internally sign-off a detailed CRM specification
- Investigate CRM options and meet with other organisations who have recently implemented a new CRM
- Tendering: fit-gap analysis of CRM *versus* specification. Determine amount of bespoke work required and perform a cost/benefit analysis.
- Determine project phases
- Work with chosen supplier to implement core membership functionality
- Testing: User acceptance, technical, data protection, auditing, finance
- Plan and resource 2019 work schedule

As well as the CRM project, we will continue to improve our audio-visual capabilities and keep our IT infrastructure up-to-date and secure.

6.8 Staffing, human resources, benefits, pensions

Staffing currently stands at around 24 full time equivalent posts. In 2018, we expect to take on a further 2 – 2.5 staff to support the CRM project. These will be temporary roles and will cease after the CRM project has been completed in 2019. Otherwise, staffing is expected to remain relatively stable, and we would expect any other additional roles to be funded through new funding. The part-time training administrator role will be reviewed in 2018 depending on the growth in the training area of work.

We will continue to invest in the skills of staff through training and development, via external courses and other mechanisms. In addition, we continue to invest in the health and wellbeing of staff through activities such as a series of resilience workshops and Pilates classes.

Our staff handbook and associated policies continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.

The RSS Final Salary Pension Scheme Trustees was closed to new accruals at the end of 2016. We will review the administrative arrangements for the scheme and consider the option of moving management to a Corporate Trustee.

6.9 Governance

The Society's main governance committees will meet as scheduled in 2018. 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 a short note of our annual achievements to highlight the successes of the Society in a stimulating and accessible way.

Elections to Council will take place through electronic ballot.

We will take a thorough look at our governance documents, including our bye-laws, to ensure that they best meet the needs of the Society, and that they are future-proofed and accurately reflect our business processes.

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. We will also develop a set of indicators for trustees to be able to review progress against the new strategy.

6.11 Diversity

Following a benchmarking programme in 2017, the Society's Diversity, Equality and Inclusion working group will continue its programme of work in 2018, including to embed diversity within the RSS and to address diversity in the wider statistical community.