

# How do 'professional behaviours' and 'ethical standards' align with wider societal commitments to tackling climate change?

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Hello, everyone

And thank you for your time.

I have 30 minutes to discuss my topic but I am sure you will appreciate that it is a huge subject which could be the basis for a conference in its own right.

Today I would like to look at how or professionalism (ie professional behaviour and compliance with ethical standards) is so closely linked, in my mind, to sustainability in the property sector.

This link between professionalism and sustainability may hopefully sound obvious to most of us here but I would like to explore this relationship and consider 'whats next?'

I would like to say from the outset that I don't wish to sound like I have all the answers and everyone must accept a 'one size fits all' solution. The expressions 'professionalism' and 'sustainability' mean different things in different markets.

My views here today are based on my experiences in the **UK and Irish markets** and

my recommendations are framed in reference to these markets. Lessons can be learned from every market and I would love to learn from lessons already learnt in the Caribbean.

For the purposes of my presentation, I have also focused on the role of '**chartered surveyor**' and **the RICS** as a global representative body.

# How do 'professional behaviours' and 'ethical standards' align with wider societal commitments to tackling climate change?

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1. Introduction - climate change
  2. Societal commitments to tackling climate change
  3. RICS ethical standards & the environment
    - RICS Commitment to society - The Royal Charter
    - Guidance - RICS Rules of Conduct
    - Enforcement of membership standards
    - RICS commitment to the environment
  4. Professionalism and sustainability in the wider marketplace
  5. Summary
  6. Recommendations
- References

Special thanks to:

- Jordan Turner
- Dr Graeme Larsen
- Amanda Lewis

## Background – IPTI/RICS Caribbean Valuation & Construction Conference

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- Presentation made at the 11<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Valuation & Construction Conference in Jamaica on the 2/3 October last.
- This annual conference is organized jointly between RICS and the International Property Tax Institute (IPTI).
- This year, the conference explored the future of valuation and construction, with a special focus on how sustainability and climate change are transforming the industry.
- There were approximately 200 attendees comprising of representatives from key employers, government departments across the islands of the Caribbean and students from the University of Technology (UTECH), Jamaica.
- Justin Sullivan, RICS Vice President, Chris Smith, Chair of the RICS Regional Board for the Americas and Uchi Obe, RICS Governing Council representative for the Caribbean were in attendance. DH represented UCEM at the conference.

DAY 1: MORNING PLENARY SESSION  
Conference Chair: Paul Sanderson

TIME	TOPIC	CHAIR/SPEAKER/PANELIST
8:00 am	Registration	
8:45 am	Opening Remarks and Welcome	Paul Sanderson, Chris Smith, Justin Sullivan
9:05 am	Real Estate Market Outlook Panel	<b>Chair:</b> Elizabeth Stair <b>Panelist:</b> Uche Obi, Susanne Lyon Josephs, Hyacinth Picart, Leslie Jasen Hodge
10:25	Networking Break	
10:45 am	Keynote Address	Carol Dean Archer
11:05 am	Climate Change – Impact on Valuation	Michael Blaschuk
11:30 am	Current State of the Construction Market in Jamaica Panel	<b>Chair:</b> Shardon Haye <b>Panelist:</b> Yaneke Watson, David Cummings, Mark N. Kerr-Jarret, Richard Mullings
1:00 pm	Lunch	

DAY 1: AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:00 pm to 3:30 pm	
<b>SESSION A: VALUATIONS – VALUATION PRACTICE</b> Chair: John Watling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential Risk of doing Appraisals in the Bahamas, <b>Joseph Major</b></li> <li>Natural Disaster Effects on Real Estate and Valuations, <b>John Glen</b></li> <li>Artificial Intelligence Techniques for Comparable Sales, <b>Joseph Wehrli</b></li> </ul>	<b>SESSION B: CONSTRUCTION – LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE</b> Chair: Alexandra Facu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risks in the procurement process in the Caribbean, <b>Martyn Bould</b></li> <li>Charting The Future – The Construction Industry Policy of Jamaica, <b>Michael Robinson</b></li> </ul>
3:30 pm Networking Break	
3:50 pm to 5:20 pm	
<b>SESSION C: DATA AND VALUATION CHALLENGES</b> Chair: Michael Blaschuk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Valuation Challenges in Jamaica, <b>David Thwaites</b></li> <li>Establishing the first Valuation Roll for Trinidad and Tobago Through Geospatial Technologies, <b>Melanie Harris</b></li> <li>Valuation Data Powering the Transition to Net Zero in Ontario, <b>Terri Robertson</b></li> </ul>	<b>SESSION D: LAND ECONOMY</b> Chair: Jermaine Williamson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ALEVS Jamaica Discussion Panel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring the Return on Investment for Properties in Jamaica, <b>Rochelle Miller</b></li> <li>The Implications of Transacting in Foreign Currencies on Investor Returns, <b>Ryan Taylor</b></li> <li>Insurance and the Property Investor, <b>Dondreen Thyme</b></li> <li>Applying the new DCF Guidelines in Caribbean Markets, <b>Tina Beale</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
5:20 pm to 5:45 pm Summary Reports from Sessions A, B, C, D	
5:45 pm to 6:45 pm Networking Reception	

DAY 2: MORNING PLENARY SESSION

TIME	TOPIC	CHAIR/SPEAKER/PANELIST
8:45 am	Summary of Day 1	
9:00 am	Adopting a "Zero Tolerance" Approach – How do Professional Behaviour and Ethical Standards Align with Wider Societal Commitments to Tackling Climate Change?	David Hourihan
9:30 am	The Future of the Profession – Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next Generation of Real Property Professionals</li> <li>Skills, Competencies and Training Requirements</li> </ul>	<b>Chair:</b> Anetheo Jackson <b>Panelist:</b> Seymour Fisher
10:30 am	Networking Break	
10:50 am	Cadastral Index Mapping and Irrigation Water Demand: A Case Study	Silburn Clarke
11:20 am	Unlocking Real Estate Potential: How Lands and Survey Department supports the Cayman Islands Real Estate Market	Uche Obi
11:45 am	Production Digital Twins: An Owners Tool to Navigate Around Obstacles to Protect ROI – A Case Study	Tiffany Hosey
12:15 pm	Lunch	

DAY 2: AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1:15 pm to 2:30 pm	
<b>SESSION E: INSIGHTS AND UPDATES ON RICS STANDARDS AND INITIATIVES</b> Chair: Alexandra Facu Panelists: Chris Smith, Justin Sullivan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing of key activities from across the Americas</li> <li>Update on global initiatives and a view from the incoming RICS President</li> <li>Focus on sustainability and next generation activities</li> </ul>	<b>SESSION F: COMPULSORY ACQUISITIONS</b> Chair and Panelists Hyacinth Picart, Uche Obi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of compulsory acquisition and compensation in the Caribbean</li> </ul>
2:30 pm – Networking Break	
2:50 pm to 4:05 pm	
<b>SESSION G: CONSTRUCTION</b> Chair: Shardon Haye Panelists: David Cummings, Andel Phillips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative Construction Project Financing</li> <li>Challenges faced by the finance sector</li> <li>Due diligence requirements and the nuances of construction cost/project management</li> </ul>	<b>SESSION H: EMBRACING PROGRESS</b> Chair: Chris Smith Panelists: Cadrian Stuart, Susanne Lyon Josephs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of Artificial Intelligence, how the Real Estate world is embracing it, the challenge of 'fear' vs 'embracing' proptech.</li> <li>Review of an AI survey undertaken by Jamaican practitioners, followed by suggestions of how we as an industry – can move forward with AI.</li> </ul>
4:05 pm – Summary Reports from Sessions E, F, G, H	
4:30 pm – End of Conference	



## 1. Introduction – Climate Change

1. Global warming.
2. Extreme and unusual weather patterns.
3. Health risks.
4. The built environment is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases.
5. Furthermore, in the UK, 40% of emissions produced come from residential households.

Government interventions:

- The Climate Change Act.
- The UK government's commitment.
- The Paris Agreement.

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1. Increased temperatures - UK average summer is 1 degree warmer than 50 years ago.

2. UK recorded 40.3 degrees celsius in June 2022 - almost 2 degrees hotter than its previous record but it is not just about heat. Mini earthquakes, tornados and an increase in rainfall by almost 20% have all being witnessed in recent times.

3. There have been studies linking high Co2 levels to asthma symptoms and other respiratory problems.

4. Various respected reports have identified that the built environment is by far, the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. The McKinsey report (2023) revealed that a staggering 14.4 metric gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions come from the built environment. When we look specifically at the UK. The built environment is responsible for approximately 25% of all CO2 emissions.

5. Breaking this down even further- 14% of emissions come solely from household heating systems.

There have been various government Interventions:

1. The Climate Change Act commits the UK Government by law to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050.
2. The UK government set has out their zero-carbon strategy outlining the commitment to net zero by reducing carbon emissions by 41% by 2025, 78% by 2035 and to net zero by 2050.
3. To avoid catastrophic impacts of climate change, an agreement in which 196 countries are signed up (known as the Paris Agreement), states that we must limit global warming to 1.5 degrees.



## 2. Societal Commitments

### UN 17 world Sustainable Development Goals



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#### About the UN Goals

In 2015 the 2030 agenda for sustainable development was adopted by every member state of the UN. The 17 world sustainable goals were created with the aim of peace and prosperity for people and the planet while tackling climate change and working to preserve the oceans and forests.

#### Goal 9 – Industry, Innovation and infrastructure

The goal here is to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

#### Goal 11 – Sustainable cities and communities

This goal is focused on replacing slums, improving access to public transport, improving the air quality in our towns and cities, increase green and/or public spaces in our urban areas and provide better road infrastructure for people. It has 10 targets to be achieved including safe and affordable housing, affordable and sustainable transport systems, inclusive and sustainable urbanization, reduction of the adverse effects of natural disasters, reduction of the environmental impacts of cities and to provide access to safe and inclusive green and public spaces.

#### Goal 13 – Climate Action

Businesses and investors need to ensure emissions are lowered, not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it makes economic and business sense as well.

### **Goal 14 – Life below Water**

Goal 14 is about conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources. Healthy oceans and seas are essential to human existence and life on Earth. According to the UN - Currently, the ocean's average pH is 8.1 which is about 30 per cent more acidic than in pre- industrial times. Ocean acidification threatens the survival of marine life, disrupts the food web, and undermines vital services provided by the ocean and our own food security. Worryingly, marine pollution is reaching extreme levels, with over 17 million metric tons clogging the ocean in 2021, a figure set to double or triple by 2040. Plastic is the most harmful type of ocean pollution. Careful management of resources on land and in our seas is essential if we are to protect our environment. As surveyors we have a huge role to play in this regard in terms of waste produced during the whole life cycle of the properties we develop and maintain.

### **Goal 15 – Life on Land**

Goal 15 is about conserving life on land. It is to protect and restore terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and stop biodiversity loss. Again, we, as surveyors, have an enormous role to play in halting and reversing land degradation and in stopping biodiversity loss.

## 2. RICS ethical standards & the environment

### 1. RICS Commitment to society - The Royal Charter

2. RICS Rules of Conduct
3. Enforcement of membership standards
4. RICS commitment to the environment

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So far in broad terms we have looked at the background.

Now lets looks at the 'professionalism' part of today's presentation.

As a representatative body for over 130,000 surveyors globally what is the RICS's position on professional behaviour and ethical standards in relation to the environment:

To begin with we have

### 1. The Royal Charter

RICS is a Royal Charter body. The Charter is an instrument of incorporation granted by King Charles, which confers independent legal personality on the RICS and it defines its objectives, constitution and powers to govern its own affairs. The Charter requires RICS **to act in the public interest**.

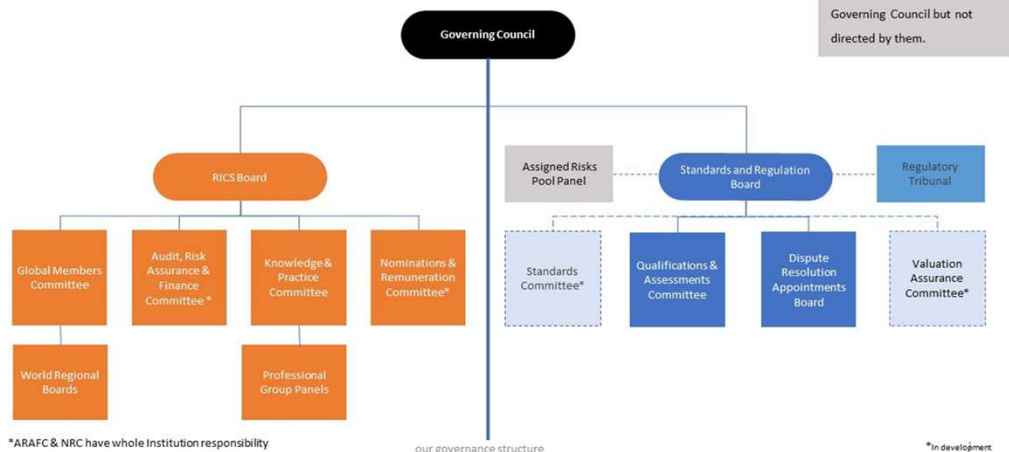
To be a surveyor therefore means having to behave ethically - 'Behaving ethically is at the heart of what it means to be a **professional**'; these ethics

standards distinguishes professionals from others in the marketplace..' (RICS, 2022).

**Behaving ethically** - is, according to the recruitment specialists 'Indeed', a type of working attitude that focuses on making the most moral and good decisions possible.

## 2. RICS ethical standards & the environment

Independent professional regulation is guaranteed through our governance structure



I just thought I would quickly show how the RICS is structured in accordance with its Royal Charter.

You can see that at the top of the tree is the Governing Council.

Governing Council is responsible for approving RICS strategy and vision, overseeing the effective delivery of the strategy' as well as standards and regulation.

Governing Council is also responsible for approving changes to RICS' constitution.

Governing Council is supported by the Executive Board and expert governance bodies populated by active RICS members, RICS employees and independent non-executives.

## 2. RICS ethical standards & the environment

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1. RICS Commitment to society - The Royal Charter

### 2. RICS Rules of Conduct

3. Enforcement of membership standards

4. RICS commitment to the environment

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So RICS members must always act in the public interest

As part of this commitment all RICS members must at all times comply with the RICS 5 rules of conduct.

The latest iteration of these Rules of Conduct came into effect on 2 February 2022. Under this update for the rules of conduct there is:

- A new emphasis on diversity and inclusion.
- Clearer guidance on the use of data.
- A focus on sustainability in professional development to help clients meet climate targets.

### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

#### 2. Rules of Conduct

RICS is required to maintain the usefulness of the profession for the 'public advantage' and that 'surveying' is defined as including 'securing the optimal use of land and its associated resources to meet social and economic needs'.

The RICS - 5 Global Professional and Ethical Standards are:

1. Act with integrity
2. Always provide a high standard of service
3. Act in a way that promotes trust in the profession – 'Sustainable Solutions'
4. Treat others with respect
5. Take responsibility

In the introduction section of the new Rules of Conduct The Royal Charter is referred to. Here the Royal Charter reminds us that RICS is required to maintain the usefulness of the profession for the 'public advantage' and that 'surveying' is defined as including 'securing the optimal use of land and its associated resources to meet social and economic needs'.

Examples of Standards :

1. **Act with integrity** – trustworthy, respect confidential information, not allowing bias, raise conflicts of interest, not offering or accepting bribes.
2. **Always provide a high level of service** – be clear about service provided, act within scope of competence, transparent about fees.
3. **Act in a way that promotes trust in the profession** – understand that being a professional is about your behaviour in public and private.
4. **Treat others with respect** – never discriminate against anybody for whatever reason.
5. **Take responsibility** – for your actions and if something is not right be prepared to question and raise the matter where appropriate.

On sustainability, rule 3 states as an example behaviour that ‘members and firms, when advising clients about projects, **encourage solutions that are sustainable** in that they minimise harm and deliver balanced economic, social and environmental benefits.’

Rule 5 goes on to state that members and firms must act in the **public interest**, take responsibility for their actions and act to prevent harm and maintain public confidence in the profession. This extends to members and firms questioning practices and decisions that they suspect are not right and raise concerns with colleagues, senior management, clients, RICS or any other appropriate person, body or organisation where they believe, in good faith, that it is necessary to do so.

And that includes questioning practises that are maybe no longer or have never been sustainable!

Prior to the update in these rules in 2022 a total of 122 respondents replied to an online consultation regarding the rules. These respondents were asked if they understood the meaning of ‘sustainable solutions’ as referred to in rule 3. Not many replied saying they understood the meaning. There were some suggestions that RICS could make it clearer that ‘sustainable solutions’ related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals or the three pillars of economic, social and environmental impact.

Some respondents felt that advising on sustainability was a crucial element of professional practice and by only using soft words like ‘encouraging’ and focusing on preventing harm, RICS would be seen as outdated.

Other members in the survey were concerned that their clients would see this approach to sustainability as an unaffordable or idealistic ‘luxury’ or that they were being ‘lectured’ too. Others were concerned about how this would be applied where working on controversial projects or where clients had budget constraints.



### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

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1. RICS Commitment to society - The Royal Charter
2. RICS Rules of Conduct
- 3. Enforcement of membership standards**
4. RICS commitment to the environment
5. Professionalism and Sustainability

When looking at the rules it is worth considering the repercussions of ignoring these rules as a member.

So how can these rules be enforced?

### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

#### 3. Enforcement of membership standards

- The **RICS Regulatory Tribunal** has power to issue a disciplinary penalty or sanction to a member if an allegation is found proven by a disciplinary panel.
- The RICS Regulatory Tribunal reports to the **RICS Standards and Regulation Board (SRB)**.
- **SRB** sets standards of conduct (including the RICS Rules of Conduct).
- **SRB** reports to RICS **Governing Council** (the highest governing body within RICS).

The **RICS Regulatory Tribunal** has power to issue a disciplinary penalty or sanction to a member if an allegation is found proven by a disciplinary panel.

A sanction can include a caution, fine, conditions, or an order to expel or de-register the regulated member.

The RICS Regulatory Tribunal reports to the **RICS Standards and Regulation Board (SRB)**.

**SRB**'s role is to provide independent professional regulatory body within RICS. It will ensure that its processes are operating effectively for consideration of cases involving serious allegations of failing to adhere to the Rules of Conduct and incompetence against RICS members and Firms.

**SRB** sets standards of conduct (including the RICS Rules of Conduct).

**SRB** uses 'targeted, proactive regulatory compliance, enforcement, and assurance activities, to regulate RICS members and firms.

**SRB** reports to RICS **Governing Council** (the highest governing body within

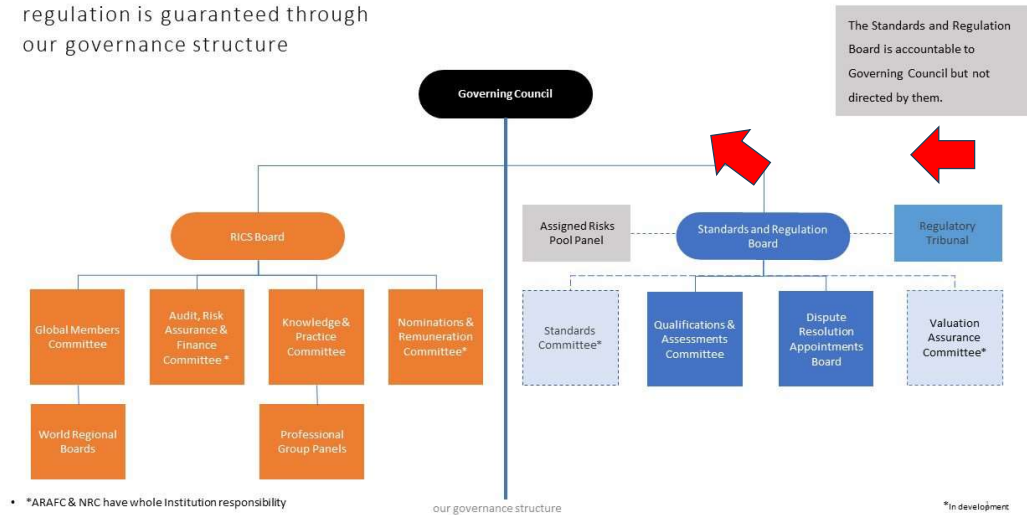
RICS).

Examples of recent disciplinary cases focused on:

- A member practicing without professional indemnity insurance.
- A candidate dishonestly submitting someone else's APC submission and trying to pass it off as theirs.
- A member undertaking valuations when they should have been part of the RICS' Valuation Registration Scheme.
- A members' non-compliance with keeping their CPD records.

### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

Independent professional regulation is guaranteed through our governance structure



### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

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1. RICS Commitment to society - The Royal Charter
2. RICS Rules of Conduct
3. Enforcement of membership standards
- 4. RICS commitment to the environment**

We have looked at RICS's commitment to maintaining professional standards. **Is it doing enough?** Hold that thought.

Now lets looks at its commitment to the environment...

### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

#### 4. RICS commitment to the environment

The main themes at RICS for 2024 are:

1. The need to tackle climate change: and **to lead** rather than getting dragged along.
2. **Decarbonisation** and the importance of the **circular economy** to it.
3. We're up to the challenge of tackling climate change: we already do amazing things at scale.



Tina Paillet FRICS  
RICS President

On January 1st, Tina Paillet FRICS became the 142nd President of RICS.

A key focus during her year in office is on the need to tackle climate change: and **to lead** rather than getting dragged along.

She noted that

1. we are now in the **decisive decade**, where, if we do not do more to reduce carbon emissions, we will hit tipping points within our biosphere that means that it will be even harder – if not impossible – to turn back the clock.
2. Our role as surveyors in climate change is under increasing scrutiny as

the path to net zero is quite simply blocked without us.

3. The built environment is responsible for:
  1. 40% of carbon emissions.
  2. a third of material waste.
  3. the consumption of more than 50% of the world's primary resources.
5. We all have a choice. To trail behind an agenda agreed and enforced by others. Or to be leaders in our sector and ready for what will be asked of us. To ensure plans are **realistic, deliverable and financially viable.**
6. To build greater trust in the profession, the whole industry must work together.

### 3. RICS ethical standards & the environment

#### 4. RICS commitment to the environment

- As President, her sustainability focus has been on two areas: **decarbonisation** and **the circular economy**, because members are going to need to be ready for the demands placed on them.
- The RICS **Whole Life Carbon Assessment standards** is a phenomenal tool available to help RICS members with their need to advise organisations or clients on strategies to decarbonise, mitigate climate impact, and build resilience. **RICS will develop training to support chartered surveyors to do this.**
- But **carbon** is not the whole of the built environment's impacts on the planet, and we'll be asked for more.
- Only 1% of materials from demolition are re-used. So our take, make, waste linear economy is also the problem.
- A **circular economy** – where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated - is paramount to our existence.

Decarbonisation and adopting the circular economy will require extensive changes to the way we design, measure, cost, procure, construct, manage, value and deconstruct buildings. This may seem too big to know where to start and how to manage it.

RICS will support members by providing guidance and standards, training and education, to equip as best as possible for this future.

We can't do this alone. RICS' thought leadership and advocacy in the wider sector and in public policy circles will also be a key facilitator for change. Policy makers, regulators, investors, insurers and others will need to be brought along on this journey.

Tina closed her inauguration speech by putting our sector's need for climate



action into perspective:

1. As an industry, throughout history, we've demonstrated an ability to think big. We've always set high ambitions and delivered the undeliverable.... And at scale. We've reshaped cities and landscapes, created communities and delivered world class critical infrastructure. When we set our minds to a task, we can make it happen.
2. There's no doubt about it, we will become the sought-after expert advisors on sustainability and be asked to provide counsel and data to inform decisions and build confidence in society's efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
3. So RICS needs to be positioned as a global leader in sustainability, trusted by all stakeholders and embodying its Royal Charter.
4. Our industry CAN be the change agent on this. And these targets are within our grasp.

So we can see here RICS's ambitions regarding sustainability.

#### 4. Professionalism and sustainability in the wider markets

- Professionalism was linked to the built environment.
- The decline in professionalism in the 80's.
- Professionalism v Managerialism.
- Built environment now everyone's concern.
- The need for professional standards is now more critical than ever.

To briefly recap, I have looked at the surveyors commitment to professionalism, how a surveyors standards of professional behaviour is inherently linked to protecting the environment and we have seen the RICS's ambitions to become a leading organisation on sustainability.

But are these standards evident in the wider markets and in other professions?

In the 1960s and 70s the generally accepted orthodoxy was that there was a clear and close relationship between ethical behaviour, social responsiveness and the notion of professionalism. What it meant to be professional also extended to recognising the importance of the built environment.

However, in the 80's the notion of what it meant to be '**professional**' changed through the influences of the '**enterprise culture**', that is, the values and beliefs that encourage entrepreneurial behaviour. Governments at this time promoted this enterprising spirit through freeing up markets with deregulation, the privatisation of state-owned companies and emphasising greater personal liberty.

When preparing this slide I couldn't help think of Oliver Stone's movie 'Wall Street' and Michael Douglas's character Gordon Gekko. In particular, his mantra of 'Greed is

good'. By the way Stone based this line on a speech given to graduates at a major US university in 1986 by Ivan Boesky, an American stock trader who said 'greed is right, ... you can be greedy and still feel good about yourself'. He was later fined \$100m and imprisoned in 1987 for 3 years for his involvement in insider trading in the 1980's. There was no professionalism evidenced here.

While a professional would have considered either the benefits or negative consequences of a new project to, say a local community or the environment, now often the only consideration was the bottom line ie profit for the client.

**Professional groups** came to be viewed as self-serving monopolies and were at times portrayed as serving neither client nor society because of the supposedly unreasonable standards they sought to maintain.

This shift in attitude against 'professionalism' and professional bodies arguably led to a decline in professional standards during the 80s, 90s and early 00s until the GFC in 2007 when global markets went into meltdown.

Because professionalism has traditionally been intrinsically linked to the environment this **decline** in professional standards also affected our shared commitment to being sustainable.

More recently we have seen a conflict between professionalism and **managerialism**. Here managerialism involves an ongoing attempt to replace professional knowledge with narrowly defined instrumentalism. Now KPIs arguably act to remove any professional discretion from the decision-making process.

The decline of professionalism should be of direct concern to the protection of the built environment.

## 5. Summary

- The wider public are calling for action to protect the environment.
- Built environment is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases.
- RICS is one of the largest representative bodies for professionals in the built environment.
- RICS requires members to act in the public interest.
- RICS states that behaving ethically is at the heart of what it means to be a professional, it distinguishes professionals from others in the marketplace.
- RICS Rules of Conduct are good but only 'encourage solutions' that are sustainable.
- RICS has powers to discipline members but to date - not on sustainability.
- RICS wants to be a global leader in sustainability.
- 'Professionalism' has been in decline.

So in summary

According to Tina Paillet at her inauguration speech earlier this year - We are now in the **decisive decade**, where, if we do not do more to reduce carbon emissions, we will hit tipping points within our biosphere that means that it will be even harder – if not impossible – to turn back the clock.

She further added that as chartered surveyors, our role in climate change is under increasing scrutiny as the path to net zero is quite simply blocked without us.

Echoing the key focus of rules 3 and 5 of the RICS Rules of Conduct she stated that RICS needs to build greater trust in the profession and the whole

industry must work together. Tina aims during her presidency to be one that gathers people together across boundaries of thought and across the silos of our professions. To take responsibility for steering our sector towards decarbonisation, planet resource protection, and a more equitable and inclusive society... and with this 2030 timeframe in mind.

## 6. Recommendations

Clearly professionalism and sustainability are intrinsically interlinked.

Representative bodies, such as RICS, need to get tougher with their members regarding their commitments to sustainability. Society requires them to take a 'zero tolerance' approach with their members.

But how?

- Develop membership regulations to address sustainability. Take cases against non-compliant members.
- Make sustainability training mandatory for all surveyors.
- CPD – Make it mandatory to do a minimum amount of CPD on sustainability.
- Develop 'Rules of Conduct' to more explicitly address the subject of sustainability.
- Create a new sustainability pathway – create the title 'Chartered Sustainability Surveyor'.

Clearly professionalism and sustainability are intrinsically interlinked.

But as mentioned at the beginning, professionalism and sustainability are hard to define and professional behaviour is in a constant struggle with the dynamics of entrepreneurialism.

RICS as a global representative body for surveyors wants to be a leader in sustainability. But how?

In the short term, I believe we should implement the following quick-win measures:

- Update 'Rules of Conduct' to more explicitly set RICS expectations for its members on sustainability. Such rule updates will protect the 'professionalism' of our membership and be a distinguishing feature for members in comparison to the rest of the marketplace.
- Sustainability should be recorded to level 3 in the APC process for all new candidates to show the seriousness of the subject.
- RICS should create a new sustainability APC pathway and create the title 'Chartered Sustainability Surveyor'. This will reinforce the message that RICS

- is the go-to body on environmental matters.
- As part of every members commitment to lifelong learning:
  - Make short online training courses on sustainability mandatory for all surveyors.
  - CPD – Make it mandatory to do a minimum amount of CPD hours on sustainability every year.
- Develop membership regulations to address sustainability. Take cases against members who don't comply with the mandatory CPD and training requirements above.

Stronger statements, guidance notes and rules are surely coming as the issue of tackling climate change will take years and there is a sense that things may get worse before they get better. Also, many believe that not enough is being done.

Such new standards and rules for members will protect the 'professionalism' of its members, be a distinguishing feature for members in comparison to the rest of the marketplace and align with the Royal Charter's requirement to act in the public interest.

Ultimately, it is what society expects from us!

I look forward to speaking with attendees later today to find out more about what lessons can be learned from Jamaica and its surveyors regarding sustainability in the built environment.

Thanks you.

**Next COP:**

**‘New behaviour guidance from UCEM and RICS for  
students and surveyors’**

**Thank you!**





## Useful References

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- <https://www.rics.org/news-insights/rics-sets-new-standards-of-conduct> [Accessed 06/09/24].
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