



## **Architects Benevolent Society opens its doors to support more people in the architectural community**

Architects Benevolent Society (ABS) is very pleased to announce that from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, it will be able to support more people within the architectural community as their eligibility widens to include all employees of architectural practices and their dependents.\*

ABS supports people across the UK in times of need, and can help with money and debt, mental health & wellbeing, physical health and disability, employment support and specialist housing advice.

This new policy is the result of a comprehensive welfare review which involved direct feedback from ABS beneficiaries and supporters. The review acknowledged that as the practice of architecture has evolved over the years, many architectural practices are now multi-disciplinary, employing staff such as IT and HR professionals, interior designers and office managers, among others, who are integral to the running of the business and are invaluable members of the architectural community.

Rob Ball, ABS Chief Executive, says: "We are delighted to be announcing the widening of our eligibility. This follows a detailed review in consultation with our stakeholders and there was overwhelming support for increasing the range of people we are able to help. We have been pleased to be able to help architects, landscape architects and architectural technologists over the course of our 170 years and we will now be able to support their colleagues in architectural practices, who might otherwise have nowhere to turn when struggling with illness, unemployment or other personal difficulties. We sincerely hope this will help to bring the wider architectural community closer together and to ensure we can assist and support each other through life's challenges."

ABS Ambassador Chris Williamson, Weston Williamson + Partners states: "I wholeheartedly support the aims of the ABS in expanding the availability of support to a wider architectural community. It's fantastic that the ABS recognise all the roles which combine to form our profession."

ABS continues to focus on how they can help the greatest number of people in the most effective ways. This latest development will not impact the support ABS is able to offer their current beneficiaries and all future architects, landscape architects and architectural technologists who may need support.

"I am pleased that ABS are widening their eligibility which ensures that every person in our practice can be supported in their time of need should they need it. Our whole team contribute to achieving our goals as a practice and it is wonderful that ABS recognises this."  
– ABS Ambassador Rick McCluggage, Smith Scott Mullan Associates says.



### **Eligibility criteria for employees of architectural practices**

The eligibility criteria include any person who has been an employee of an architectural practice for at least two years in the UK and their dependants. This two years' experience should have been within the last five years, or the person could have at least five years' experience in total. Existing financial criteria still apply and there is no change to our current support. ABS encourages anyone who is not sure if their experience quite meets this criteria to still get in touch with their Welfare Team, as they may be able to offer confidential advice and other resources.

Katie Vivian, Operations Manager says: "In working towards our aim to improve the quality of life for the architectural community and their families, we continually review the support we offer, and try to make sure it is reaching those who need it. We hope that employees of architectural practices will feel they can approach us for help, knowing that they will receive confidential and impartial advice, support and guidance relevant to their individual circumstances. We understand that it isn't always easy to ask for help but everyone needs support sometimes and ABS is here when you need us."

### **About Architects Benevolent Society**

Architects Benevolent Society is a registered charity that help those in the architectural community – from those at the beginning of their career to those in retirement – with a range of support services. They aim to ensure all members of the architectural community can flourish and work without barriers.

For more information on the support services ABS can offer, as well as their eligibility checker please visit their website here:

<https://www.absnet.org.uk/get-help>

For help and support you can contact the ABS Helpline **020 3918 8588** or email [help@absnet.org.uk](mailto:help@absnet.org.uk)

\*new eligibility criteria applies