

# Landscape Institute Scotland

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Dear Sir/Madam

## **DRAFT SCOTTISH PLANT HEALTH STRATEGY 2016-21**

### **CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

#### **Introduction**

The Landscape Institute in Scotland is part of the UK's chartered institute for landscape architects. This incorporates designers, managers and scientists who are concerned with conserving and enhancing both urban and rural environments.

The LI's Scottish Branch (LIS) represents the professional membership within Scotland and is concerned with design, management and planning for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment of Scotland for the public and private benefit. Much of our work as landscape architects involves knowledge of and engagement with, plant materials being introduced or managed in urban and rural settings. At the same time commitment to the principles of sustainable development is important while improving the design quality in urban and rural contexts and protecting our physical and natural environment.

Our members provide professional landscape expertise and advice on many aspects of landscape architecture practice, including site planting design, implementation and specifications for projects at all scales for public and private clients including to local authorities, private landowners and corporate and other developers. Members work in the public, private and voluntary sectors. LIS welcomes the

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opportunity to respond on behalf of members to the draft Scottish Plant Health Strategy 2016-2021.

The Landscape Institute Scotland (LIS) welcomes the general direction that the Scottish Plant Health Strategy draft 2016-2021 which seeks to promote the Scottish Government approach to the protection of the health of plants for both agricultural, horticultural crops, plants in parks and gardens, forestry and the natural environment in Scotland.

However LIS would like to see more in the strategy to assist landscape architects and their clients to contribute more in their work with regard to safeguarding plant health and particularly:

- To know the likely species selection and specification restrictions for planting programmes;
- To receive timely notice on restrictions on movement of plant stock that they may be using or intend to be using in development and landscape management projects;
- To receive more information concerning restrictions or preparation requirements of planting materials such as growing mediums, mulches and top dressings such as bark chips, which may have an effect on the effectiveness of the Plant Health Strategy intentions;
- To have advice on the above available prior to projects being designed and implemented which are often 6-12months ahead of planting, sometimes longer or planned in stages over several years;
- Access for every landscape architecture practice operating in Scotland, to a risk register of plant pathogens which is frequently updated, with their host species and known distribution and required actions or restrictions;
- Guidance on surveillance and training on recognition of potential and existing plant pathogens and their pathways of infection.

Whilst LIS recognises that the current draft strategy is very much focused so far on delivering an action plan which seeks to support the interests of commercial operators in agriculture, forestry and horticulture, we cannot stress enough the perceived urgency by our professional members for more information to be available as soon as possible to guide decisions on landscape design, landscape management and habitat creation and landscape regeneration projects where planting design and implementation are often key components.

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LIS very much welcomes the establishment of a Scottish Centre of Expertise for Plant Health and the skills pathway and training of plant health professionals which is intended to be formulated. With their background and training LIS would suggest that some Landscape Architects would be ideally placed candidates to train as plant health professionals, particularly in the area of surveillance of plant pathogens.

We look forward to further development of the Scottish Plant Health Strategy and we would be glad to take part in further discussion on any of the above points.

Yours faithfully

Rebecca Hughes

Policy and Development Officer  
On behalf of  
Landscape Institute Scotland

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