

## West Midlands Branch Candidate



### Statement of Keith Blizzard

**BSc(Hons) DipArb FRICS FCIOB FCI Arb CARb FFB HonFQSi**

I am honoured that my peers in the West Midlands Branch have put my name forward as a Candidate for President of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators. I am delighted to have the full support of my wife, Maria, our adult daughters Claire and Naomi and my fellow Partners in Harrison Clark Rickerbys. They all know how passionate and committed I am towards the Institute and how much my Chartered Arbitrator qualification means to me.

A copy of my Curriculum Vitae is being provided as a separate document to accompany this statement. It sets out my qualifications and explains the work I have done and what I am currently doing for the Institute and other bodies. I would ask you to consider the contents of my CV to gain an understanding of me as a person, my work, particularly in the field of education and training, and the contribution that I have tried to make to the objectives of the Institute.

I am aware that the President has:

*“an ambassadorial role to promote the Object of the Institute, [but] no managerial or executive powers, save for the requirement to make appointments on behalf of the Institute”*

The President also acts as a conduit for communication in between Branches and between Branches and Bloomsbury Square.

Coming from a family of teachers, education and *“spreading the word”* are bred in me and I also understand that it is part of the President’s responsibilities to support the Institute’s activities, in particular, the Golden Thread:

*Delivering Education, Training and Qualifications*

*Developing the learned society*

*The facilitation of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)*

My work in education and with academics indicates my focus on the first two elements and my day to day work promotes the third.

If elected, I shall put great emphasis on these areas as, through them, we can strengthen and continue the recent growth in membership of the Institute.

During the last 100 years the Institute has adapted and evolved to encompass more methods of ADR. My career has demonstrated a similar pattern as I qualified as a Chartered Quantity Surveyor and progressed through training to become an Arbitrator, Adjudicator and Mediator. Having worked in the UK and Europe and with the experience of running my own firm for many years, my thinking moved on and I joined my firm of Chartered Quantity Surveyors with a firm of Solicitors. Finally, when the rules on ownership of solicitors' practices changed, I was elected and approved as a non-solicitor Partner.

The Institute used to be a secondary professional body where one had to be qualified in a primary area of expertise before applying for membership. However, this is no longer the case and we have three pathways to qualification comprising Arbitration, both Domestic and International, Construction Adjudication and Mediation.

This evolution within the Institute has had two main effects. The first is that we are now a primary profession and the second is that the demographic of our membership is changing with younger people who do not already have an established career in a primary profession being able to qualify through to CI Arb Fellowship. To make the Institute more attractive, a programme of mentoring of new members, not unlike the system of pupillage, would give support and guidance to young members.

The use of ADR is changing across the world, providing the basis for our Institute to be truly global. Arbitration is cross border and thriving. Construction Adjudication has been introduced in numerous jurisdictions and Mediation is being considered globally. There is growth in the use of Dispute Boards for Construction Projects to avoid disputes as well as to decide them.

As a practising Arbitrator, Adjudicator and commercial Mediator, and particularly being a non-solicitor in a firm of solicitors, I have a great belief in the benefits of ADR and I am a constant advocate for their use.

I have served the Institute at Branch level and internationally through the Education & Membership Committee and by providing education and training. When speaking at national and international conferences I take the opportunity to promote the Institute and the benefits of membership.

It would be a privilege to be elected President and to receive the support of the membership. Should I be given this opportunity I shall strive to build on our great past and continue the development of ADR worldwide. I would ask the membership to join me in encouraging young people to join our progressive Institute and take advantage of the opportunities that having our qualification brings with its standing and recognition worldwide.