



PRESS RELEASE  
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## **Second winner of the RFS Lockhart Garratt Trophy announced**

The Royal Forestry Society and Lockhart Garratt are pleased to announce the winner of the 2007 Royal Forestry Society Lockhart Garratt Trophy for Arboricultural Excellence, James Hedges.

James, the Arboricultural Supervisor at Greenwich Council, was the outstanding student among those who achieved the RFS's prestigious Professional Diploma in Arboriculture (PD Arb) in 2007.

Good things clearly come in threes for James, who lives in Grays in Essex. As well as winning the trophy, he has recently acquired a new home and a new baby.

"Winning this award is a real honour," said James. "I studied for the PD Arb because it's the premium arboriculture qualification – the gold standard of the profession. It was hard work of course – I put in several hundred hours of study – but the knowledge I've gained will help me develop our consultancy services at Greenwich."

"I congratulate James on his superb achievement," said Lockhart Garratt's Managing Director, Graham Garratt. "The breadth of his knowledge and the depth of his understanding are an inspiration. Students like James prove that the profession of arboriculture has a bright future."

RFS Chief Executive Officer, Dr John Jackson, added: "The Professional Diploma in Arboriculture is recognised in the trade as the top vocational qualification in the UK and across Europe. It is synonymous with quality – both in theory and practice. Credit must be given to all nine up-and-coming consultant arborists achieving the PD Arb this year – and especially to James Hedges whose knowledge and professionalism were exceptional. Thanks and recognition must also go to the team who put so much time and effort into running the exams."

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James Hedges is the second winner of the RFS Lockhart Garratt Trophy. The 2006 winner was Ann Currell of Biggleswade in Bedfordshire. Following her award, Ann accepted an invitation to become the moderator at the practical element of 2007 Diploma which took place at Westonbirt National Arboretum.

"Ann Currell's participation is exactly the sort of professional involvement that we hoped to foster through our sponsorship of the trophy," explained Graham Garratt. "There are plenty of skilled arborists out there, but too few with the professional recognition the industry needs. By celebrating the achievements of the profession's top performers, we raise the profile of the profession as a whole. If we can encourage other specialists to follow in James and Ann's footsteps and study for the Diploma, so much the better."

Ann Currell received the trophy – a magnificent burr chestnut vase mounted on a black walnut plinth – at the Arboricultural Association's annual conference. It's an appropriate occasion: the Arboricultural Association is a leading body within the profession, and its three-day annual conference is the foremost event in the arboricultural calendar.

James Hedges will collect the trophy and a cheque for £300 at the September 2008 conference.

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### **Notes for editors**

The Royal Forestry Society (RFS) was created in 1882. It now has more than 4,000 members who include woodland owners, land managers, foresters, students, keen amateurs, arborists, landscapers, timber merchants, ecologists.

The RFS promotes the wise management of woodlands through formal and recognised qualifications, an exchange of ideas and networking of experiences by professionals, and through the provision of information to the public and an online database.

The RFS's two qualifications, the Professional Diploma in Arboriculture and the Certificate in Arboriculture, are widely recognised throughout the industry and taught in colleges and universities. Bursaries and awards are available to help students further their research. Each year around ten students achieve the Professional Diploma. Their qualification is the result of many years' training. In the year prior to the final examination, students typically devote a day a week to their studies.

The RFS organises visits to 100 woodlands a year, many of which are not open to the public.

The 2008 Arboricultural Association annual conference will be held on 14–17 September.

**Further information**

For further information, call Graham Garratt on 01536 408840 or email [info@lockhart-garratt.co.uk](mailto:info@lockhart-garratt.co.uk).

For information on the Royal Forestry Society, visit [www.rfs.org.uk](http://www.rfs.org.uk)

For information on Lockhart Garratt, visit [www.lockhart-garratt.co.uk](http://www.lockhart-garratt.co.uk)