

The History of EMBS

The origins of EMBS can be traced back to 1923 when the Estate Management branch of the School of Agriculture began work. This was set up to combine the teachings of Estate Management with the practical management of University and College estates. The impetus had come during the First World War from the recognition of a need to provide an education in aspects of rural economy beyond agriculture and forestry. From the beginning the officers of the branch were engaged in both teaching and in the management of College and University property.

Between the Wars the work of the branch evolved with the emphasis moving away from rural work to the construction, repair and maintenance of buildings and the purchase and sale of property. As a result it was agreed that control of the Estate Management branch should be transferred from the Faculty of Agriculture. In 1954 the Department of Estate Management was constituted with Noël Dean as the first Director. The Department maintained its dual role, providing training for degrees in rural and urban estate management, as well as continuing to carry out building and management work for the University and certain Colleges. Initially the teaching staff were required to carry out some professional work and likewise some holding professional appointments assisted with teaching, but during the 1950's the two sides of the Department grew apart and there were in effect two Departments, each under Noël Dean, until his retirement in 1961.

In 1961 it was agreed that there should be a complete separation of the professional and building function from teaching and research. This was achieved by establishing an Estate Management Advisory Service (EMAS), under the control of the Financial Board, with the Department of Land Economy being established to teach the new land economy tripos which was established in 1962. John Mills was appointed Director of EMAS, and served until 1975. The title of the Department was changed to the present form in 1973.

Vernon McElroy was appointed Director of Estate Management in 1975 and served until 1987. David Todd-Jones followed as Director from 1987 until his retirement in 1997. Serving as Acting Director for one year, Michael Bienias preceded the present Director, David Adamson, who arrived in October 1998.