



Landscape Research Group Ltd

Directors' Report, 2005

Landscape Research Group Ltd:
a company limited by guarantee (Registered No: 01714386) and registered charity
(Registered No: 287160)

19 August, 2006

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH GROUP LIMITED

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Directors are pleased to present their Report and enclose Accounts for the twenty-third period of business of Landscape Research Group Limited, from 1st January to 31st December 2005. The company (referred to below as "the Group" or "LRG") was incorporated on 12th April 1983 as a company limited by guarantee (registered number 1714386). The objects for which the Group is established are:

"to advance education and research, encourage interest and exchange information for the public benefit in the field of landscape and any related fields".

The Group is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 287160). It is also recognised as a Charity by the Inland Revenue for taxation purposes.

2. DIRECTORS, BANKERS, AUDITORS AND SECRETARY

Directors who served during the year were:

Dr G. Revill	(Chair)
Dr C. Brace	(Vice Chair; and Deputy Editor)
Dr A. Noussia	(Treasurer to 6 December 2005)
Dr S. Shuttleworth	(Company Secretary; and Treasurer from 6 December 2005)
Dr I.H. Thompson	(Editor)
Dr M. Roe	(Deputy Editor)
Mr R.N. Young	(Editor, <i>Landscape Research Extra</i>)
Prof. P.J. Howard	(International Officer)
Mr J. Gittins	
Prof. B. Goodey	[from 1 August 2005]
Dr R. Hughes	
Dr D. Matless	
Dr M. Miles	
Dr C. Mills	[to 25 May 2005]
Prof. K.R. Olwig	[from 1 August 2005]
Prof. E.C. Penning-Rowsell	
Mr G. Roberts	
Prof. P.H. Selman	
Dr S. Seymour	
Ms N.H. Stedman	
Mr P. Tabbush	

All Directors are British, except Dr Noussia who holds Greek citizenship and Prof. Olwig who holds United States citizenship.

Bankers are: Lloyds Bank plc, 34 Moorgate, London EC2R 6PL.

Reporting Accountants are: Hepburn and Co, 89A The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1QE.

The Company Secretary is: Dr Steven Shuttleworth, 4 Gwyns Piece, Lambourn, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 8YZ.

3. ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP

The activities of the Group have continued to concentrate on publication of *Landscape Research* and *Landscape Research Extra*, and developing the abilities of the Group to encourage wider exchange of information on landscape issues. The Group has successfully continued the expansion in the level of activity begun three years ago, although the commitment of Board Members to their professional work continues to limit activities.

The major area of effort continues to relate to maintaining *Landscape Research* as a respected international journal, and the effectiveness of the Publishing Agreement with Taylor & Francis Ltd. As noted in previous Reports, from 1996 the journal has been published by Taylor & Francis on behalf of the Group. This has required substantial commitment from the Editor and Deputy Editors in particular, to ensure both a smooth flow of material for publication and a further increase in the quality of the published product. The increase in corporate subscriptions to the journal – one of the objectives of entering into the Publishing Agreement – continues to meet expectations. The publication schedule was increased to four issues per annum from 2001, and the flow of research papers received has continued to be sufficient to maintain this commitment. Indeed, there is now the prospect that it may be possible to further expand the journal over the next two years, an issue that the Board will examine in more detail in discussion with Taylor & Francis during 2006.

A related focus of effort has been to achieve citation index status for *Landscape Research*. The Board has recognised this as an important and urgent objective in terms of ensuring the journal maintains its academic standing. It is hoped that these efforts will bear fruit in 2006.

The second area of effort has been progressing the Group's role as a 'networking' organisation, ie its role of encouraging interest and exchanging information in the field of landscape and related fields. Key activities have been the continued publication of *Landscape Research Extra*; enhancing the website; organising the sixth 'annual prize' scheme; and contributing to and sponsoring a conference at Rugby Art Gallery. These are reported in more detail below.

The third area of effort has built on the expansion of activity started in 2003, to develop international links and activities. Key elements of this have included strengthening links with the Council of Europe and with the Nordic Landscape Research Network (referred to in last year's report); maintaining links with the University of Southern Bohemia's Institute for the Study of European Landscapes (ILE), referred to in previous reports; and developing a range of contacts with other European landscape research networks. This is reported below.

The links between these different focuses of activity, and their impact in enabling landscape research to be made more easily available to the wider community of landscape researchers, has become very apparent in 2005. For example, it has enabled the activities of the Nordic landscape research community to reach a wider audience, since two issues of *Landscape Research* in 2005 were based on work undertaken by members of that group. Also, several features in *Landscape Research Extra* directly reflect the Group's growing level of involvement in international contacts and events.

4. PUBLICATIONS

(i) *Landscape Research*

Four issues of the journal (comprising Volume 30) were published during the year. The contents were as follows:

- (i) The **January** issue contained five varied papers covering landscape issues affecting contemporary art; a study comparing leisure time in a garden and indoors, and the implications for geriatric care residents; a study of the identity of English hill towns in the wider landscape; an appraisal of Huaxtepec, Mexico, the sacred garden of an Aztec emperor; and a study of factors influencing community use of local woodland. The issue also included various book reviews.
- (ii) The **April** issue contained six papers on the theme of “Landscape and Seasonality” five of which were originally presented at conference at Roosta, Estonia in May 2003, supported by an editorial which draws together the themes emerging from the conference. The six papers examined seasonal indicators and seasons of Estonian landscapes; the seasonality of use of large village swings in Estonian traditional landscapes; the historical agriculture and management of a dying seasonal landscape in north-east New South Wales, Australia; an assessment of human activity in landscape seasonality, specifically relating to tourism in Crete; the importance of time and seasonality in helping our understanding of landscape; and the impact of seasonality on people’s nature preferences and its relevance to urban planning, based on work in Oulunsalo, Finland. The issue also included various book reviews.
- (iii) The **July** issue was also a theme issue, exploring “Landscape Justice, Morality and the Law of the Land”, again supported by an editorial. Many of the papers in this issue result from the international Landscape, Law and Justice Group that first met in 2002/03 at the Centre for Advanced Studies at the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters in Oslo. Seven papers examine related matters: the landscape of customary law versus that of natural law, based on a comparison of the landscapes of New England and the Mid West of the United States; landscape and political representation in the early seventeenth century art of the low countries of the Netherlands; a case study of the Dunedin district plan and its application to the management of the Otago Peninsula, New Zealand; the relationships between property, law and social relations in the plaza of Santa Fe, New Mexico, United States; an examination of the role of lawyers in influencing landscape, based on research in the United States; a case study of the role of landscape restoration at Mill Creek, Philadelphia, United States in promoting social justice; and the conflict between global and local land-use values in Gauja National Park, Latvia.
- (iv) The **October** issue contained six papers on varied topics: the decline and conservation of hay meadows in the British landscape; the cultural landscape of slavery at Kormantsin, Ghana; landscape planning and community participation – local lessons from the Burren National Park, Ireland; past, present and future perspectives on landscape values; and the role of urban open space in contributing to emotional fulfilment.. The issue also included a short communication on ‘landscape scale’ in planning and recent experience of bio-geographic planning units in Britain, together with book reviews.

The Board wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the commitment of *Landscape Research's* Editor and Deputy Editors – Ian Thompson, Catherine Brace and Maggie Roe – and their supporting editorial team for their work during the year.

(ii) *Landscape Research Extra*

Landscape Research Extra was published twice in 2005 (issues 36 and 37) and totalled 32 pages of illustrated column text. As in previous years, the editorial team aimed to present short pieces written in a clear style, aiming to stimulate readers to a very wide range of landscape topics and issues, and to provoke thought about them. These issues included colour print illustrations.

The issues included the titles of other journals, with lists of landscape related papers abstracted from a range of journals in the fields of geography, land-use planning, ecology, landscape design, art, psychology and countryside recreation, coupled with a 'Should You Read' listing of some of the more significant or provocative papers. The two issues also included a range of reviews and short features on farm subsidies for landscapes; the work of artists currently working with the picturesque landscape to comment on contemporary environmental issues; the sentient landscape; the accessibility of woodlands and natural spaces - addressing crime and safety issues; the Gehry building at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; a short iambic history of the English park; 'going feral' in the landscape; and the landscape of the terraced house.

Various articles related directly to the Group's wider international involvement, reported below. These included an assessment of the varying approaches to landscape in the different countries involved in the work of the Council of Europe in implementing the European Landscape Convention; a report on an intensive course for Ph.D. students on landscape as heritage, held at the Swedish Agricultural University at Alnarp; an appraisal of the Prespa Lakes, Albania and FYR Macedonia; and a report on the third workshop for implementing the Convention, "Landscapes for Urban, Suburban and Peri-urban areas" held at Cork, Ireland (June 2005).

The issues also contained notices and reports of various conferences, exhibitions and courses – notably "From Knowledge of Landscapes to Landscaping Action" ("de la connaissance des paysages a l'action paysagere") in Bordeaux (December 2004); "Prospect and Refuge – a new way of looking at landscape" at Ferens Art Gallery, Hull (February to March 2005); "Critical areas in a Landscape – from Theory to Mapping and Management" in Tbilisi, Georgia (May 2005); "W.G. Hoskins and *The Making of the British Landscape*" in Leicester (July 2005); and "The Value of Water in the Landscape and in Society" at the Swedish Life Science University, Alnarp (October 2005).

The Board wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the continued commitment of *Landscape Research Extra's* Editor Bud Young, Rosemary Young, and the varied correspondents (both overseas and domestic) who supply much of the source material.

5. EVENTS AND "ANNUAL PRIZE" SCHEME

The Group did not organise any events in 2005, although it contributed to and sponsored an exhibition and seminar entitled "Common Ground" at Rugby Art Gallery in October 2005. The seminar was well-attended, and resulted in useful publicity for the Group among a different audience from that normally achieved by our publicity material.

The Group has organised a prize scheme for student dissertations that contribute to our understanding of landscape issues, since 2000. The scheme was originally started on a small-scale basis to continue the work originated by the Nan Fairbrother Memorial Trust, which transferred its assets to the Group when the Trust was wound up (see Directors' Report for 1998). Directors' Reports since 2000 have reported generally on the annual prize scheme, which has gradually expanded as it has attracted an increased number of entries over the years. so that by 2005 – the sixth year – the scheme attracted fourteen entries from students at nine academic institutions. Accordingly, the Board now thinks it appropriate to report slightly more fully on this aspect of the Group's activities.

The 2005 prizes were awarded for both undergraduate and graduate work, in a range of landscape-related fields. The judges – George Revill and Suzanne Seymour – awarded six prizes – two first prizes of £100 and four 'highly commended' prizes of £50. The winning entries covered a wide variety of issues within the themes of cultural histories of landscape, landscape design and garden planning, and environmental and ecological applications to landscape.

6. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

The Group has continued to fund a range of networking visits by Peter Howard (in his role as International Officer) during the year, to raise the profile of the Group at national and international conferences across a range of disciplines, and to contribute to the work of the European Landscape Convention. This has included attendance at events in Albania, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In addition, overseas colleagues from the Nordic Landscape Research Network and the European Landscape Convention have attended Board meetings.

The International Officer's work has been largely engaged with the ongoing process of bringing on stream the European Landscape Convention. Last year's report noted that the Group now has official observer status at the Convention. This involved two workshops, one in Cork, Ireland, in June (reported in *Landscape Research Extra 37* – see above), and one in Tirana, Albania, in December. Peter Howard has also represented the Group at the meetings of one of the groups concerned with the social impacts of multi-functional agriculture, organised by the European Union, first in Prague and later in Brussels.

The Irish workshop was particularly concerned with peri-urban landscapes. One of the major issues arising is that of the participation of the public in landscape decisions. The Group is engaged in organising a Council of Europe sponsored workshop on this issue in Spring 2007, in the Netherlands part of the Waddensee, which has seen serious problems in the participation of the local population. In this endeavour we will be in company both with the Nordic Landscape Research Network, and with several French scholars within the sphere of the Ministère d'Ecologie et Développement Durable, such as Daniel Terrasson and Yves Luginbuhl, both of whom attended the May meeting of the Board of LRG. John Gittins is also contributing to the workshop, on the theme of the participation of local populations in landscape decisions, based on his work in applying landscape character assessment guidance at the parish level.

Finally, Kenneth Olwig is now a regular member of the Board, representing the Nordic group, and Peter Howard has attended the first meeting of the Nordic Group, in Lund in April, as well as the Geographical Congress in Lund.

7. FINANCES

The Group made a surplus for the year of £4809 (income of £22801, less expenditure of £17992). The Group's accumulated fund at 31st December 2005 was £57617 (2004, £52808).

This surplus is a substantial increase on last year's. Overall, income has increased, particularly from increased membership income that directly results from the international networking, the Publishing Agreement and increased interest income. However, the main reason for the increased surplus is reduced expenditure compared to last year's high level on networking and international activity, and associated extra expenditure on publicity and promotion. This more than offset the increase in day-to-day running costs because of changed arrangements for administrative support (previously provided through Oxford Brookes University, the costs for which were reimbursed, although in practice the University generously absorbed certain costs).

Prospects for 2006 are for a broad balance of income and expenditure, or a small surplus. This reflects the move by the Board, outlined in the past two years' Directors' Reports, to expand activity to ensure a proper use of the Group's funds to help promote its overall charitable objectives, in the context of a stable financial reserve.

Looking ahead, the Board plans in 2006 to review a number of key issues that relate to long-term financial strategy (such as re-assessing policy for financial reserves, the implications of expanding

Landscape Research, the need to plan for likely increased support costs for the journal, and re-appraising likely future income and expenditure projections in the light of any extension of and revision to the Publishing Agreement with Taylor & Francis Ltd). The intention underlying this work is that from 2007 the Group will move to a more explicitly budget-based approach to financial management, reflecting a clear business and financial strategy.

The Accounts, the Auditor's Report and the Treasurer's Report give a fuller assessment of the Group's finances. The financial reports have been prepared taking advantage of the exemptions conferred by the Companies Act 1985 on the grounds that in the opinion of the Directors the company is entitled to these exemptions as a small company.

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