



Landscape Research Group Ltd

Directors' Report, 2016

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

3 May 2016

Approved by the Board of Directors: 3 May 2016
Approved by the Annual General Meeting: 18 May 2016

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH GROUP LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT, 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

The Directors are pleased to present their Report and enclose Accounts for the period of business of Landscape Research Group Limited from 1st January to 31st December 2016. 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), and as such was the successor body to the unincorporated association known as "Landscape Research Group" which was founded in 1967.

The Group is a Charity registered with the Charity Commission (number 287160). It is also recognised as a Charity by HM Revenues and Customs for taxation purposes.

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 works internationally to deliver these objects and promotes collaboration and exchange between different disciplines and sectors, and between professionals and the public. We seek to empower people to question and understand how we shape and are, in turn, shaped by the world we live in. The Group promotes a 'landscape approach' because it emphasises the holistic, dynamic and cultural nature of people's interaction with the world. It therefore supports the European Landscape Convention's definition of landscape as "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors". A fuller interpretation of the Group's charitable objects and a statement of our current priorities are presented in our Research Strategy available at www.landscaperesearch.org/research/lrg-research-strategy/.

2. DIRECTORS, BANKERS, AUDITORS AND SECRETARY

Directors who served during the year were:

Mr Paul Tabbush	(Chair**)
Prof. Tim Collins	(Vice Chair** to 19 May 2016; and acting Coordinator, Education and Training*)
Dr Chris Dalglish	(Vice Chair** from 19 May 2016; and Coordinator, Research and Policy*)
Dr Steven Shuttleworth	(Company Secretary**, and Treasurer**)
Prof. Laurence le Dû-Blayo	(Coordinator, International and Outreach Activity*)
Mr Graham Fairclough	
Mr Peter Herring	
Dr Anna Jorgensen	(Editor, <i>Landscape Research</i> *)
Dr Markus Leibenath	
Dr Antonia Noussia	
Prof. Kenneth R. Olwig	
Prof. Hannes Palang	
Mr Gareth Roberts	(Coordinator, Events Activity*)
Ms Maggie Roe	(Consulting Editor, <i>Landscape Research</i>)
Ms Nancy Stedman	
Prof. Ken Taylor	(Associate Editor, <i>Landscape Research</i>)

Dr Emma Waterton (Coordinator, Website Activity*)

The posts shown in the list of Directors above with a double-asterisk (**) are the Officers of the Group who, together with the Activity Coordinators shown with an asterisk (*), comprise the Group's Executive (all as at 31 December 2016).

Of the seventeen Directors at 31 December 2016, nine are British. The eight other Directors hold citizenship as follows: Prof. le Dû-Blayo holds French citizenship; Dr Leibenath holds German citizenship; Dr Noussia holds Greek citizenship; Prof. Palang holds Estonian citizenship; Prof. Collins holds United States citizenship; Prof. Olwig holds dual United States/Danish citizenship; and Prof. Taylor and Dr Waterton hold dual British/Australian citizenship.

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

Reporting Accountants are: Hepburn and Co, 1027A Garrett Lane, London SW17 0LN.

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

The Group's website is www.landscaperesearch.org, email address admin@landscaperesearch.org, and its Twitter 'handles' are @aboutlandscape and @LandscapeResJ.

3. PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

This Directors' Report comprises the 'Public Benefit Statement' which the Directors as Charity Trustees are required to make under the Charities Acts. As required, it describes the charity's activities during the year to deliver its charitable purposes for the public benefit, as set out in the Introduction above. The Directors confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's 'Public Benefit Guidance for Charity Trustees' in undertaking those activities.

4. BOARD AND EXECUTIVE

(i) Board of Directors

The Board met on two occasions during 2016, on 19 May and 8 December. One email decision was made separately from decisions at Board meetings during the year, relating to approval of the draft Directors' Report 2015.

As well as discussions in formal meetings and related to e-voting, the Board and the Executive regularly discuss issues during the year, to progress the Group's business. The Board uses 'Basecamp' to share documents and track discussion, and since 2014 the Executive (and Working Groups set up for specific purposes) has been using 'Skype' for discussions including both a few or all members. Overall, despite some problems, these systems continue to prove both effective and worthwhile.

(ii) Role of the Executive

The Executive is responsible for managing the day-to-day affairs of the Group, except insofar as they are delegated to Officers and Coordinators; for coordinating the work of all activity groups; and for formulating and recommending on all issues of strategy and policy to the Board.

The Executive comprises the four Executive Officers of the Group (namely the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Company Secretary) together with the Coordinators responsible for delivering the

Group's activities (that is the Editor of *Landscape Research* and the five Coordinators for other activities). The Executive's Chair is the Chair of the Board, Paul Tabbush.

(iii) Business Strategy and related Board decisions

The 2015 Report noted that the Board had focused on implementing the Group's Development Project and various governance issues. Building on this work, in 2016 the Board began to consider some key issues related to its function and structure, to assess whether changes needed to be made to ensure continued effective working in future. Work on this issue, on the Development Project, and on other key matters considered by the Board in the year, are discussed at (iv) to (xi) below.

(iv) Future Board structure and function

An initial task of the development project in 2016 was to undertake a skills survey of Directors, to inform the Board's debate about its effectiveness, having regard to Charity Commission guidance on charity governance. The resultant analysis and report, highlighted a contrast between the 'Trustee' role of Directors (which is mainly about ensuring the proper governance of a charity, and demands managerial skills as set out by the Charity Commission) and the 'Volunteer' role (with many Board members contributing significantly to the development and delivery of the Group's activities and programmes). They further suggested that the Board had greater need of general managerial skills to deliver the former role, whereas it needed greater capacity and resource to deliver the latter which did not necessarily have to be undertaken by those charged with trustee responsibilities.

The Board explored options to address these issues at its May 2016 meeting. It noted that there may be advantage in changing the Board's function and structure to enable it to focus on the trustee role, and to complement this by establishing a new subset of members from the wider LRG membership (the concept of 'Landscape Associates' was considered) to deliver the 'volunteer' role. The Board also noted that it might be more effective to have fewer Trustees, and/or to employ a 'Chief Executive Officer' who would deliver the Group's objectives by developing and implementing a work and activities programme. Finally, it noted that ideally any future structure would be in place by December 2017 (i.e. at the end of the Development Manager's contract), although this was not a necessity and depended on a number of other matters being satisfactorily addressed in time to do so.

The Executive met in September 2016 to consider detailed issues arising out of this discussion, and from several separate strands of the Group's day-to-day as well as strategic review activity. A key factor is the likely future need to provide additional paid support for the *Landscape Research* Editorial Team (to address the increased workload resulting from the journal's expansion and success, and the changing climate in universities concerning voluntary work of this nature). Other issues include the potential opportunities arising from establishing formal partnerships and collaborations with other bodies, the initial findings from the Governance Group, and the learning from HERCULES that substantial LRG involvement in such projects is unsustainable on a volunteer (unpaid) basis. In parallel, the Treasurer's initial work to 'roll forward' the Group's three-year budget projection (currently to 2017) to 2019 suggested the need for a clear review of the Group's activity (and thus spending) priorities, because the financial proposals from the various activity Coordinators together considerably exceeded the Group's projected income, even allowing for the drawdown of some of the Group's reserves for specific one-off purposes.

The Executive therefore identified the need to review these issues in greater detail once further supporting work had been completed, to develop a strategic review paper to make recommendations on future Board structure and function, the role of volunteers and paid staff, and strategic priorities in relation both to the sustainability and resilience of the Group and to the promotion of its charitable objects. The Executive therefore decided that the Officers and Editor (including Markus Leibenath as incoming Company Secretary from May 2017) would meet in January 2017 to progress this work, as a basis for further discussion by the Executive and Board

(v) The 'Development Project' and Activities of the Development Manager

Sarah McCarthy has continued in her role as Development Manager, on a 0.6 full-time equivalent (fte) self-employment home-working contract for a three-year period from 1 December 2014. The post is intended to help the Group to deliver its ambitions related to increased networking activity and impact, and to increased membership. Sarah works to a detailed 'Work Plan' which is subject to regular review with the Chair.

Detailed discussion of much of Sarah's work – particularly in relation to website and information activity, international correspondents, the Research Strategy and Project HERCULES – is set out in the relevant sections later in this report. Progress on the strategic issues of communications strategy, internal communications, anniversaries programmes and membership is summarised below.

(a) Wider Communications and Publications Strategy

The Reports for 2014 and 2015 noted that the Board recognises the importance of communications and publications issues for delivering increased networking activity, impact and membership, and considerable work was undertaken to inform a future Communications Strategy. This work has progressed in 2016, taking account of the experience of operating the Group's two Twitter accounts and e-Bulletin (discussed in more detail in the section on 'Website and Information Activity'). It is intended that work to prepare a formal Strategy will be completed in 2017.

(b) Internal Communications

The Board uses Basecamp as its main method of formal communication outside meetings and for document storage. Last year's Report noted that Sarah had carried out a major rationalisation of Basecamp to make it easier to navigate and render current discussions, issues and events much more visible, by reallocating material and more systematic archiving or deletion of older material. This work has proved beneficial in 2016, in that use of Basecamp has proved less confusing, and is working also as a generally-accessible "go-to" resource for archived material such as the LRG logo, documents relating to older Board Meetings and events.

(c) Anniversaries Programmes

Last year's Report noted that the Board has been developing activities to mark important anniversaries in 2016 and 2017. During 2016, *Landscape Research* included a special 'Editor's Issue' containing a retrospective paper which reflected critically on the journal's achievements and successes over the past forty years, together with papers on current and future developments in landscape research. The Editor also prepared an Editorial for the first issue of 2016 which focused on the theme of 'landscape justice', promoting a key theme in the Group's Research Strategy.

In addition, work has been undertaken during the year by the Company Secretary/Treasurer to prepare a special paper for publication in 2017, to act as a document of record of the Group's history and critically reflect on its achievements and successes over the past fifty years, and the challenges ahead. Following discussions with Taylor & Francis (T&F), the Group's commercial publisher for the journal, it has been agreed that this paper together with a re-print of the equivalent about the journal, will be published during 2017 as a one-off supplementary ninth issue of *Landscape Research*.

More detail on emerging plans is discussed in the sections on 'Events' and 'Research Support'.

(d) Membership

A key objective for the Development Project is increasing the individual membership of the Group,

although recognising that this can only be achieved effectively in the context of providing a clearer 'offer' to prospective members. The work outlined above and in the rest of this Report in relation to better communication, events and the research strategy are part of improving this 'offer'.

Last year's Report noted that it is very difficult to be clear about the precise factors that influence people's decision whether or not to join a group, but that the development work to date had resulted in a substantial increase in membership. 2016 has unfortunately not seen this continue, with new members being more than outweighed by loss of members. A substantial amount of work has been undertaken in 2016 by Sarah McCarthy, Steven Shuttleworth and Markus Leibenath (with support from Pauline Graham) to try to better understand membership recruitment and retention patterns, to underpin the development of a membership strategy. This work will be concluded in early 2017, to enable the Board to agree how best to provide a good base for future membership expansion.

(e) Work Priorities for 2017

Work in 2017 will build on that undertaken in the Development Project's first two years. As noted in last year's Report, it is recognised that detailed work initiatives need to be launched in the context of a pre-agreed strategy. Work in 2017 will therefore focus on bringing to a conclusion strategy papers on communications and membership (referred to above) and on five other subjects – partnership, branding, managing the website, and income strategy/financial sustainability (referred to in last year's Report and some also elsewhere in this Report for 2016), to provide a clear basis for specific future initiatives.

(vi) Governance Arrangements

Last year's Report described in some detail the Board's work to start to update the Group's governance arrangements, that was considered by the Board at its May and December 2015 meetings.

During 2016 work to take forward a revised, consolidated and clearer governance framework and to address a number of gaps in governance arrangements proceeded more slowly than hoped. However, at its December 2016 meeting the Board approved new policies to specify its approach to managing risk when working internationally; for trustee recruitment, with an associated vetting procedure to ensure that a trustee or member of staff is eligible to act in the position he or she is being appointed to; and for dealing with vulnerable people (which is very important in legal terms although not of direct interest to the Group's activities). In addition the Board agreed the need for an equalities and diversity policy to be drafted and approved as soon as possible, and this work was in hand at the end of the year with the intention of being adopted by an e-vote early in 2017. Also at the end of the year, rapid progress had begun to be made by Graham Fairclough to complete the other work previously agreed by the Board, and for the Working Group led by him (now comprising Nancy Stedman, Gareth Roberts and Sarah McCarthy) to make appropriate recommendations to the Board in May 2017.

(vii) Payments and Benefits to Members and Directors

The 2014 and 2015 Reports explained the Board's deliberations about a governance issue that arose following the Group's involvement in Project HERCULES, regarding payments and benefits to Members and Directors, which potentially has significant implications for any future LRG involvement in external research contracts that might arise as a result of implementing the Research Strategy. This had led the Board to explore alternative models for delivering work resulting from externally funded contracts, including commissioning legal advice to outline the options available to resolve the issue. The Board approved the recommendations that arose from this legal advice, primarily around setting up a 'trading company' and associated changes, and authorised the Company Secretary and Chair to commission further legal support to progress the matter.

The 2015 Report noted that Solicitors were instructed accordingly. Progressing this work has been delayed due to other priorities. It is intended that this matter will be resolved during 2017.

(viii) Future arrangements for *Landscape Research*

Last year's report noted that the only outstanding issue for the new arrangements following Anna Jorgensen taking up her role as Editor of *Landscape Research* from 2014 was reaching agreement with the institutions of the other members of the editorial team to provide limited research programme support similar to that for the Editor. Substantial progress has been made on this matter during 2016, with discussions with all members of the editorial team and their institutions. It is anticipated that agreements for some members of the team, as well as one-off arrangements in respect of expenses for two others, will be formally completed in early 2017.

(ix) Research Strategy

As indicated in last year's Report, the Board resolved in December 2014 to adopt the Group's first Research Strategy and approved a small budget for its implementation, the major part of which is allocated to a fund to grant-aid research projects which align with the strategy. During 2016 the Board agreed to substantially increase this budget on a one-off basis, to enable a major launch of the fund in the 2017 anniversary year. A major focus for work in 2016 has therefore been to call for bids against this fund. This work is discussed in more detail in the section on 'Research Support' below.

(x) Honorary Life Membership

No proposals were received or therefore considered by the 2016 Annual General Meeting, for Honorary Life Membership of the Group

(xi) Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant remains Pauline Graham, who provides support to the Chair and the administrative and other support that is necessary for the smooth working of the Board and its meetings, as well as managing membership subscriptions and day-to-day financial processes (which are becoming ever more complex and voluminous) under the supervision of the Treasurer. As in previous years, she undertakes the role on a 0.27 fte equivalent self-employment home-working contract. The Board wishes to thank Pauline for her continued excellent support.

5. EDITORIAL ACTIVITY: *LANDSCAPE RESEARCH*

(i) Role of the Editorial Board

The Editorial Board is responsible for producing *Landscape Research* on behalf of the Group's Board of Directors, and ensuring that the journal maintains standards appropriate to a respected international academic journal; and for formulating and recommending on related issues of strategy and policy to the Executive Committee.

The Editorial Board comprises the Editor and Associate Editors of *Landscape Research*; two other Board members not directly involved in the journal's production, responsible for ensuring that the editorial approach to the journal meets the Group's wider charitable objectives; and on an *ex officio* basis the Chair and Treasurer of the Group. The Editorial Board is also empowered to co-opt up to two additional members from the main Board as it sees fit, to add to the breadth of its expertise, and a T&F representative(s). The Chair of the Editorial Board is the Editor of *Landscape Research* – during 2016, Anna Jorgensen.

In 2016 the Editorial Board has not needed to meet, since the Editor and the Treasurer/Company Secretary have dealt with the key issue of concern to it – ensuring the support arrangements that underpin production of the journal are functioning smoothly (see ‘Business Strategy and Related Board Decisions’ above).

(ii) *Landscape Research* Editorial Team and International Editorial Advisory Board

The Editorial Board referred to above is not involved in matters of editorial content of the journal, which are the responsibility of the Editor advised by the wider Editorial Team and a separate International Editorial Advisory Board.

During 2016 *Landscape Research's* Editorial Team comprised the Editor (Anna Jorgensen), Consulting Editor (Maggie Roe), Associate Editors (Tom Mels, Ken Taylor, and Vera Vicenzotti), Assistant Editors (Federica Larcher and Lise-Marie Shillito) and Book Reviews Editor (Thomas Oles). Vera Vicenzotti was on maternity leave for much of the year, but will return to her role in January 2017.

Last year's Report noted that towards the end of 2014, the Editorial Team was expanded to include three new Assistant Editors on a trial basis, to provide extra editorial capacity to deal with the expansion of the journal, one of whom was confirmed during 2015. Lisa-Marie Shillito was confirmed during 2016. The third (Penny Travlou) did not continue in the role beyond November 2016.

The Editorial Team's work to develop the academic content and quality of the journal is supported by an International Editorial Advisory Board (IEAB). At 31 December 2016, the IEAB comprises thirty highly respected researchers, chosen to represent a wide range of disciplines and interests across the field of landscape research and to ensure wide geographic coverage. A full list of the IEAB members and their affiliations is given in the inside front cover of each issue of *Landscape Research*, which includes two new members in 2016, Paul Gobster (US Department of Agriculture Forest Service) and Prof Mattias Qvistrom (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences). There were no retirements in 2016. The Editorial Team's work is also greatly supported by the many individuals who act as peer reviewers of submitted papers. They carry out their work on individual papers on an anonymous basis, but a full list of those who undertook the role in 2015/16 is provided in Volume 41 (Issue 8).

The Board wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the work and commitment of the Editor and her team, which has led to the journal becoming highly respected in its field (see below), with continued high quality special and theme issues. The Board also wishes to thank the members of the IEAB and the peer reviewers, without whom the journal could not maintain its reputation for excellence and status as a peer-reviewed research publication.

(iii) *Editorial Assistant*

The Editorial Assistant remains Crista Walshaw, who provides the administrative and editorial support that is necessary for the smooth production of the journal. Crista was engaged on a self-employed homeworking contract on an 0.5 fte equivalent basis with effect from January 2014, but this was increased to 0.8 fte in June 2016 reflecting the increased work that has resulted from expansion of the journal in 2015 to eight issues annually. This arrangement continues to work smoothly, to the satisfaction of both Editor and Editorial Assistant. The Board wishes to thank Crista for her continued excellent support.

(iv) *Landscape Research*

Feedback from various sources demonstrates that *Landscape Research* continues to be a respected international journal which is performing well in the current market, and that the T&F Publishing

Agreement continues to be effective. During 2016, the total number of full-rate subscriptions remained steady (and included a 97.5% per cent renewal rate), as did online access sales agreements. Online usage of the journal continues to increase steadily.

The latest data for article citations and impact factor is for 2015. The impact factor of 1.012 (2015) is the second highest the journal has had over the last seven years and was only marginally lower than the highest score (of 1.077 in 2014). The lower score in 2015 compared to 2014 was anticipated in last year's Report because there were fewer Special Issues, these tending to be the most highly cited papers. Figures for 2016 should increase because four of the eight issues were Special Issues, and this increase is likely to be sustained into 2017 when six are planned to be Special Issues.

Submissions to the journal remained stable in 2016 compared to 2015 (respectively approx. 240 and 250 papers submitted via the online submission system, compared to less than 200 in 2014). There continues to be an even flow of accepted papers with just a small backlog maintained to act as a cushion in the event of any unexpected drops in submission or throughput.

A key issue for the Editor and Consulting Editor in 2016, and one which will remain so in 2017, has been the effective management of submissions as a result of the expansion to eight issues. This remains onerous notwithstanding the slight drop in submissions. The work of the various Special Issue Editors has greatly helped the editorial team in 2016 and is very much appreciated. Expansion has continued to provide an effective response to the growing number of submissions.

The new Journal cover introduced in January 2015 (Volume 40, Issue 1) continued in 2016, with a new picture and a banner celebrating forty years of the journal. 2017 will see a new cover in the same design, together with a banner celebrating fifty years of the Group. Colour illustrations have now been introduced into the body of the journal – see for example the set of colour illustrations appearing in Volume 41(6) in the paper *Affective sanctuaries: understanding Maggie's as therapeutic landscapes* by Angie Butterfield and Daryl Martin. 2016 also saw the introduction of a more contemporary look for the interior of the journal, and journal web site, as part of Taylor and Francis' wider update of their portfolio.

It is planned that six Special Issues will be ready for publication in 2017, including one on the HERCULES project. There will also be a full review article on the theme of "*Defining Landscape Justice: a review of the interface between migration and landscape*", which is the first of a series of research reviews being commissioned on key topics in landscape research. In addition, a supplementary ninth issue will be published, devoted to the Group's achievements and future challenges on its fiftieth anniversary. For 2018 and subsequently, a further five special issues are confirmed and at various stages of preparation with three currently at the review stage, while a further two proposals are pending (that is, are proposals already submitted or ideas currently in discussion with the Editor).

As noted in last year's Report, one of the new Assistant Editor posts has special responsibility for promoting the journal through social media such as Twitter, with a new Twitter account (@LandscapeResJ) being set up and used from late 2014. This activity is undertaken by Lise-Marie Shillito, who coordinates her work with the Group's general Twitter account managed by Sarah McCarthy (see below). During 2016 the @LandscapeResJ Twitter account has proved to be a popular resource, attracting 881 followers over a broad range of interests (up from 280 at the end of 2015).

Eight issues of the journal (comprising Volume 41) were published during 2016. The contents were as follows:

- (i) The **January** issue was a General Issue containing nine papers, plus a special Editor's editorial reflecting on the issue of landscape justice as an area for research and study (which is a central

theme of the Group's Research Strategy), and its implications in terms of the focus for *Landscape Research* as an academic journal and for its future development.

The nine papers covered: the influence of the environment on health (directed attention, blood pressure and heart rate); the role of landscape structure in facilitating species range expansion through an urbanised region, in the context of butterfly response to climate change; building collective community knowledge about the environment through design, with reference to the Nicolo riparian garden in Sicily (Italy); the production of local landscape heritage, with reference to a case study in the Netherlands; identifying features of pocket parks that may be related to health-promoting use, based on case studies in Copenhagen (Denmark); deciphering historic landscapes, with reference to a case study of Slender West Lake, Yangzhou (China); characterising the morphology of suburban settlements; avifaunal richness and abundance along an urban-rural gradient and the effect of different vegetative and anthropogenic attributes, with reference to a case study in Tiruchirappalli (India); and an assessment of the influence of Hogarth's aesthetic theory on river design by Capability Brown in the Eighteenth Century and on river restoration in the Twentieth Century.

- (ii) The **February** issue was a Special Issue guest-edited by Kenneth Olwig, Chris Dalglish, Graham Fairclough and Peter Herring, on *The Future of Landscape characterisation and the Future Character of Landscape – between space, time, history, place and nature*. The issue content was drawn from a symposium held at the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry in Stockholm in March 2014, which was co-sponsored by the Group (see Directors' Report for 2014).

The editorial summarised the key points arising from the event, and in particular the need to re-evaluate the future of landscape characterisation in the light of changing ideas of landscape, especially under the democratising influence of the ELC and the future character of landscape that the ELC might bring about. The papers explore these themes.

The papers discussed: the national context and cultural ideas that preceded the Landscape Character Assessment method in England, and their implications for 'exporting' the method to other countries; the interactions between Historic Landscape Characterisation and Landscape Character Assessment, and their implications for the concepts of landscape character and inter-disciplinarity; the issue of temporality in integrated landscape management; landscape characterisation as a process of situated, problem-oriented public discourse; landscape strategy making and landscape characterisation, with a focus on learning from experimental planning processes in Denmark; the dynamics of integrating landscape values in landscape character assessment; and the relationships between virtual enclosure, ecosystem services, landscape's character and the 'rewilding' of the commons, using the Lake District (England) as an example.

- (iii) The **April** issue was a General Issue containing seven papers on varied topics. They were studies of: landscape practice in the Middle East, exploring the tensions between global and local aspirations in landscape architectural projects; integrating time and the third spatial dimension in landscape structure analysis; an eco-historical study of the pre-Hispanic landscape of the Cero de Montevideo (Uruguay) in the Sixteenth Century, focusing on evidence from the biogeography of vegetation and arachnids, historiography and other sources; assessment of the environmental, economic and social benefits of high-profile landscape design projects; an assessment of 'land grabbing' from protected forest areas of Bhawai National Park (Bangladesh); festivals as a vehicle for place promotion and the creative city ethos; and the reconstruction of Nineteenth Century landscapes from historical maps, with reference to the 1881 Palestine Exploration Fund survey map (covering an area that is now part of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza).

The issue also contained a short review article on linguistic landscape studies.

- (iv) The **May** issue was the special 'Editor's Issue' referred to in the section 'Anniversaries Programmes' above, celebrating the fortieth anniversary of *Landscape Research*. It contained an Editorial *Landscape Research in Landscape Research: reflections on a changing field* and a

retrospective paper which reflected critically on the journal's achievements and successes, together with eight papers based on historical reflections which provide insights into the future of the field of landscape research.

The papers were on: forty years of *Landscape Research* (the paper reflecting on the journal's achievements and successes); the connections between ideas of landscape and 'homeland'; the role of 'representation' as a core concept of landscape and environmental justice; the utility of walking methods in landscape research; unintentional landscapes and their implications for the concept of landscape and the definition of marginal and interstitial spaces; challenges for landscape policy and management in the European countryside, and the potential for modern community-based landscape perspectives in helping to address an uncertain future; an exploration of the different discourses about 'landscape' in the Middle East; and an exploration of the 'Historic Urban Landscape' paradigm as a way of assessing cities as cultural landscapes.

- (v) The **July** issue was a General Issue containing seven papers on varied topics. They were studies of: the design of outdoor space as a means of improving understanding and improvements to urban soundscapes, based on a case study in Malmo (Sweden); the coexistence of amenity and biodiversity in urban landscapes; a perception approach to assessing fauna in wetland landscapes, based on a case study in the Padul wetland, Andalucia (Spain); trans-national learning to resolve landscape-related conflicts in World Heritage Sites in Finland, Norway and Sweden; the evaluation of biocultural landscapes and their associated ecosystem services at Sügla Lake, Konya (Turkey); adolescents' preferences for natural and semi-natural riverscapes as recreational settings, based on a case study in the Danube Floodplains National Park (Austria); and the factors in the outdoor urban landscape that promote or hinder adolescents' everyday physical activity.

The issue also contained four book reviews.

- (vi) The **August** issue was a Special Issue guest-edited by Catherine Ward Thompson, on *Landscape and Health*. The issue included an editorial outlining key issues related to the topic, in particular how the landscape might offer opportunities for health benefit and how different experiences of landscape might be more or less therapeutic for different individuals or groups, with eight papers which explore these themes.

The papers discussed: the well-being benefits of greenspace at urban fringe business sites using 'go-along' interviews, based on case studies at science parks in Scotland; the mental well-being and quality-of-life benefits of inclusion in nature for adults with disabilities and for their caregivers, based on a health research programme in Alberta (Canada); the impact of recreational running on health in the changing urban landscapes and lifestyles of post-socialist societies, with reference to a case study in Sofia (Bulgaria); the links between urban greenspace, gender and well-being, based on a case study of conservation volunteers in Scotland; the role of the landscape in the grounds of the former Caterham, Surrey (England) Imbecile Asylum as a therapeutic tool to improve the welfare and recovery of inmates; the decline in the use of the landscapes of mental asylums as a tool to improve the welfare and recovery of inmates, based on a case study of the former Parkside Lunatic Asylum, Adelaide (Australia); the role of the urban landscape in restoring mental health, based on a study of user perspectives in Sheffield (England); and an assessment of the therapeutic effectiveness of purpose-designed building and garden environments in treating cancer, based on case studies of 'Maggies Centres' in England, Scotland, Wales and China.

The issue also contained a review of one book on the theme of landscape and health.

- (vii) The **October** issue was a Special Issue guest-edited by Maggie Roe, on *Food and Landscape*. The issue included an editorial outlining key issues related to the interactions between people, food and landscapes, in particular how food production both shapes and is shaped by the nature of the landscape and people's relationship with it, together with eight papers which explore these themes.

The papers discussed: the connection between landscapes and quality wine as a means of promoting the sustainable development of rural areas, with reference to the vineyard landscapes of Italy; tourism development in agricultural landscapes, with reference to the Atherton Tablelands, Queensland (Australia); the impact of sustainable policy initiatives and emerging corporate commitments in the palm oil industry and their impact on the landscapes of Malaysia and Indonesia; identity, food and landscape in the urban context, based on a case study in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (England); the productive potential of residential urban agriculture, with reference to case studies in the San Francisco Bay area, California (United States); the landscape of urban agriculture in Sacramento, California (United States); the ecology of alternative food landscapes and networks, and their implications for sustainability, based on a case study in New York (United States); and the attitudes of migrants growing 'foods from home' and the resultant changing cultural landscapes of gardens and allotments.

- (viii) The **December** issue was a General Issue containing seven papers on varied topics. They were studies of: climate-adaptive 'frozen landscape' design interventions to address climate change impacts in Ladakh and Zaskar, Jammu & Kashmir (India); the carbon emissions from sheep grazing of 'lawnscapes' compared to conventional management methods; the motives of and benefits for urban allotment holders, with reference to case studies in Oslo (Norway); sacred records in the landscape, with reference to the 'mirila' of Ravni Kotari and Bukovia, Dalmatia (Croatia); the impact of abandoned and disused marble quarries on avifauna and landscape biodiversity in the anticline of Estremoz, Alentejo (Portugal); the impact of conservation works in making rural traditional cultures more sustainable, with reference to case studies of mountainous communities in Japan; a terrain-based method for selecting potential mountain-ridge protection areas in South Korea; the impact of institutional arrangements and exclusionary practices around a wildlife conservation area on local communities' sense of belonging to the landscape, with reference to a case study in the Masebe Nature Reserve, Limpopo province (South Africa); detecting people's and landscape's identity in a changing mountain landscape, based on a case study in the northern Apennines of Piedmont (Italy); a relational approach to the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Sweden; and contested identity and the stigma of crime in Adelaide (Australia).

The issue also contained one book review.

(v) Research project, University of Sheffield

One element of the Sheffield University Editorial Support Agreement is the provision of a grant (£5,004 in 2016) to promote landscape-related research at the university. This grant was provided to recognise, in a notional way, the large amount of time spent by the Editor in producing the journal.

The funds are to be used to provide small research grants to students and staff. All students (undergraduates and both taught and research post-graduates) are eligible to apply by a competition process which will be held twice annually. The following applications were funded in 2016 (using 2015 and 2016 funds, no grants having been awarded in 2015):

- Josepha Richard: *Cataloguing Stewart Johnston's research papers on Chinese gardens* (£313.80);
- Audrey Gerber: *Exploring the development of landscape architecture in southern Africa and its agenda for landscape orientated research* (£1000);
- Ngaire Burston: *Plant hunting expedition to Yunnan, China* (£1000);
- Camila Allen: *Point of Conception: Richard St. Barbe Baker and the Great Green Wall* (£1554);
- Elsie Roulston: *James Russell and the Irish Woodland Garden: a review of his role in the design of gardens in the Republic of Ireland between 1953 and 1979* (£750);
- Kevin Thwaites: *Children and Youth, Formas Research Grant Development Workshop* (£2000);
- Angela Hird: *Building towards socially cohesive urban neighbourhoods? An examination into the Urban Design of prevailing approaches to high density housing in the UK and Sweden* (£568).

6. EVENTS, RESEARCH AND NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

(i) Coordination of Activity

The Group development and promotion of events, research and networking activity in all areas other than publication of *Landscape Research* is managed by Directors who act as Coordinators for various activity networks. During 2016 these were:

- delivery of Events - Gareth Roberts;
- development and active management of the Website - Emma Waterton;
- promotion of Education and Training Activity (including the Student Awards Prize Scheme) - Tim Collins (on an acting basis);
- development of International and Outreach Activity - Laurence le Dû-Blayo; and
- development of Research and Policy Initiatives – Chris Dalglish.

In addition, a key events, research and networking activity remains the production of *LRE*, of which Bud Young continues as Editor although now retired as a Director.

The Board is pleased to report that these new arrangements continue to work well, and significant activity has been successfully undertaken in 2016 as summarised in sub-sections (ii) to (vii) below.

(ii) Events

a) Introduction

The Group, via Coordinator Gareth Roberts, organised or contributed to seven events during the year, discussed in turn below. These were:

- Organising and funding a seminar as part of Project HERCULES on *The Rural Landscapes of the Rance Valley - heritage, recreation and perceptions* (in Rennes, Brittany on 16 to 17 June 2016);
- Organising and funding a research workshop on *Mountain grazing landscapes caught between abandonment, rewilding and agro-environmental bureaucracy. Is there an alternative future?* Which was held as part of the Permanent European Conference for the Conservation of the Rural Landscape (PECSRL) 2016 conference (in Innsbruck and Seefeld, Austria on 7 September 2016);
- Sponsoring a symposium on *Artists, Farmers and Philosophers: the Landscapes of Upper Teesdale* held by the Teesdale Landscape Partnership (at the Bowes Museum on 7 to 9 September 2016);
- Contributing to the organisation of the Project HERCULES Final Conference *Sustainable Futures for Europe's Heritage in Cultural Landscapes: Applying a landscape approach to land-use science and policy*, including organising and delivering a *Workshop to apply lessons from case study areas* (in Brussels on 4 October 2016);
- Sponsoring an open public debate on *Art in Landscape* held by the Snowdonia Society (at Machynlleth on 19 October 2016);
- Sponsoring a research seminar *Valuing our Distinctive Landscapes: learning from best practice experience in the UK and Europe* organised by Pennine Prospects (in Halifax on 8 to 9 November 2016); and
- Holding a public lecture (in London, 8 December 2016).

This level of event activity was more than planned at the start of the year and at a higher level to that undertaken in 2014 and 2015. Linked to the emerging programme for 2017 and 2018, it continues to give confidence that the new arrangements for promoting event activity are now progressing well.

b) Rennes 'HERCULES' Seminar

The two-day seminar on *The Rural Landscapes of the Rance Valley - heritage, recreation and perceptions* in Rennes, Brittany in June 2016 comprised a day's presentations and discussions held at University of Rennes 2 followed by a day-long field visit to the Rance Valley. The seminar was held as part of Project HERCULES (see below). It was funded by the Group using its HERCULES project funds with support from local partners (Rennes Metropole and University of Rennes 2), and organised by Laurence le Dû-Blayo from the University and the Group.

The seminar was convened as a localised stakeholder workshop to discuss the emerging lessons from the HERCULES research findings and their applicability to the Rance Valley, to help inform the project's final policy recommendations. In this respect, the Rance Valley made a good mini-case-study because it is experiencing rapid change to its cultural landscapes and has a number of established and emerging local initiatives to address this change. The event was well attended, with 60 delegates comprising local land managers and producers, together with researchers and government agencies from the area. Several Group representatives attended as key members of the HERCULES team leading on developing recommendations from the project, to facilitate discussions with local stakeholders. The event was judged by attendees to be very successful in promoting debate. It included a presentation about the Group, making use of the publicity banners and leaflets.

The University of Rennes 2 holds a range of videos from the seminar which are available online at www.lairedu.fr/collection/seminaire-hercules-sustainable-futures-for-europes-heritage-in-cultural-landscapes/. A report outlining the papers and discussions was published as part of the HERCULES project material [see www.hercules-landscapes.eu/tartalom/publications/articles_3.pdf]. The resultant material was then used as part of the stakeholder workshop at the Final Conference (see below).

c) PECSRL Research Workshop

The 'round-table' workshop on *Mountain grazing landscapes caught between abandonment, rewilding and agro-environmental bureaucracy. Is there an alternative future?* was held in September 2016 in Innsbruck and Seefeld, Austria as part of the PECSRL 2016 Conference *Mountains, Uplands, Lowlands: European landscapes from an altitudinal perspective*. The multi-disciplinary 'round-table' was wholly funded by the Group. The event was organised and chaired by Kenneth Olwig and Hannes Palang. Eight papers were presented followed by thought-provoking discussions about the conflicting perspectives of land managers using this fluid mix of environments and those of environmental and agricultural bureaucracies, as well as environmentalist rewilders, in the context of the abandonment of these landscapes and the consequent loss of their cultural and biological value. The workshop was attended by 21 delegates. It included a presentation about the Group, making use of the publicity banners and leaflets. The field trips organised as part of the wider PECSRL conference supplemented the issues that were discussed in the workshop and the various other seminars held during the event.

A report outlining the the papers and discussions was published in *LRE 78*. It is also intended to publish a Special Issue of *Landscape Research*, edited by Kenneth Olwig and Werner Krauß, and good progress has been made to prepare this at the end of 2016.

d) Teesdale Symposium

The Group sponsored a symposium on *Artists, Farmers and Philosophers: the Landscapes of Upper Teesdale* organised by the Teesdale Landscape Partnership and held at the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle in September 2016. The symposium marked the completion of a Lottery-funded Partnership project, which focused on the aesthetic and cultural character and dynamics of landscape. The project, and the symposium, started from the premise that incorporating grassroots

expertise into landscape governance structures and processes could be transformative in ensuring a better understanding of cultural landscapes and help catalyse local buy-in for future landscape planning, design and management approaches. The symposium therefore aimed to create connections between different landscape interests and to seek consensus through the notion of cultural landscape. By encouraging attendance by local people and being open to all, it aimed to engage the grassroots expertise that was so central to the Partnership project. This thinking is, of course, directly parallel to the Group's promotion of the landscape approach, and many of the conclusions arising from the HERCULES project (see below).

The event included two days of varied and stimulating presentations and discussions with a full day field trip, and was well-attended, including 8 LRG members. A report outlining the papers and discussions was published in *LRE 78*.

The event enabled the Group to make a wide range of contacts with other bodies and individuals, and it is hoped that these links can be used to develop better thinking and discussion about adopting the landscape approach, as a basis for future event planning. It also enabled the Group to strongly promote the Anniversary Research Fund, which led to at least two applications for funding.

e) Brussels 'HERCULES' Final Conference

The Group contributed to the organisation of the Project HERCULES Final Conference *Sustainable Futures for Europe's Heritage in Cultural Landscapes: Applying a landscape approach to land-use science and policy*, which was held in Brussels in October 2016. The event included a workshop, held as a series of 'break-out sessions', focused on *The Landscape Approach: how best to apply lessons from the HERCULES case study areas*, which was organised and delivered by the Group. It was followed by an afternoon workshop to give insights on the key findings from the project. Graham Fairclough was a chair for one of the main Conference presentation and discussion sessions, and Laurence le Dû-Blayo, Paul Tabbush, Steven Shuttleworth, Chris Dalglish and Celine Vervaele acted as session facilitators and rapporteurs for the break-out sessions.

The Conference programme, copies of the keynote papers and a copy of the conference booklet (with reference to the last, see the discussion on HERCULES in the section 'Research and Policy Initiatives' below) are available on the HERCULES website at www.hercules-landscapes.eu/stakeholder_workshops.php?final_conference&id=23, which includes photographs (see Photos 17 to 25 in relation to the break-out sessions). Material from the afternoon workshop are at www.hercules-landscapes.eu/stakeholder_workshops.php?final_workshop_insights_from_hercules_project&id=22.

f) Public Debate on Art in Landscape

The Group sponsored an open public debate on *Art in Landscape* which was held at the Museum of Modern Art in Machynlleth in October 2016. The event was organised by the Snowdonia Society to explore issues relating to the appropriateness of large art works, installations and other promotions and 'happenings' within 'prized' landscapes such as national parks whose special character and qualities prompted their designation. It was stimulated by the strong adverse public reaction after an artist was commissioned to produce a large art work at Llyn Llydaw, Snowdon. The event was planned to be of interest to those who have responsibilities for governance of protected landscapes and to the arts community generally, but also to interest academics and policy makers and those involved in environmental ethics, landscape aesthetics and public participation in the planning and management of protected landscapes. It was based around a debate on the motion '*This house considers that outdoor art works and installations should not be subject to additional planning control*', which was fiercely discussed by over 40 attendees and who voted to reject it.

The presentations of the speakers both for and against the motion, and articles about the contribution artists make to informing our thinking about landscape, will be published in *LRE* and the Snowdonia Society Magazine in 2017.

g) South Pennines Research Seminar

The Group (together with the Caroline Humby Heck Trust) sponsored a research seminar on *Valuing our Distinctive Landscapes: learning from best practice experience in the UK and Europe* which was held in Halifax in November 2016. The event was organised by Pennine Prospects, a rural regeneration company set up in 2005 to promote, protect and enhance the built, natural and cultural heritage of the South Pennines area. It was aimed at people living, working or having an interest in landscapes with unique and distinct character and focused on finding ways of protecting and enhancing those landscapes. The programme included keynote speakers from Ireland and Italy as well as different nations in the United Kingdom, and included site visits and workshop-style discussions as well as presentations.

The event was attended by over 70 people. A short report will be published in *LRE* during 2017.

h) Annual Lecture

The final event of the year was the public lecture by Prof Brian Goodey on *Interpreting the Landscape: The Popular Agenda*. The event was organised by Antonia Noussia, and took place at the London School of Economics. Before introducing the speaker, Paul Tabbush gave a short briefing about the Group's work. The event included a reception after the lecture, and was supported by the Group's publicity banners and leaflets. It was very well-received, with a stimulating discussion afterwards. The lecture was videoed and is available for viewing on the Group's website (as are videos of previous lectures).

i) Future Events Planning

Other event-related activity during the year focused on firming up proposals for activities to be convened by the Group itself and on assessing applications for events the Group has been requested to support with grant aid for 2017 and 2018.

Four events are currently scheduled for 2017:

- An evening seminar following the AGM in London, to be held on 18 May 2017. The focus is on *Landscape Research in partnership: challenges and opportunities going forward*. The seminar will feature the Student Awards scheme and UK-based winners, the Anniversary Research Fund and two of the successful grantees, as well as a general discussion on the role and focus of landscape research with speakers from the Development Planning Unit at University College London, the Heritage Alliance and (to be confirmed at the time of writing) the Landscape Institute.
- A three day seminar in June/July 2017 in Port Arthur, Tasmania, a former convict settlement which is a World Heritage Site, one of Australia's most significant heritage areas and Tasmania's most popular tourist attraction. The seminar will allow experts from different disciplines to share expertise and perspectives, with the aim of developing a suite of innovative methods capable of capturing how landscapes are felt and experienced, based upon developing an understanding of affect (of this place) in response to atmosphere, mood and message.
- A three-day seminar/workshop for both landscape researchers and practitioners on the issue of *Protecting and using landscapes: Large protected areas caught between the conflicting interests of conservation, economic development and politics* (in German: *Schutz und Nutzung von Landschaften: Großschutzgebiete im Spannungsfeld naturschutzfachlicher, ökonomischer und politischer Interessen*), to be organised by Arbeitskreis

Landschaftsforschung (the 'Working Group for Landscape Research', the informal e-network of German-speaking landscape researchers established in 2011 as the German partner organization of the Group – see previous Reports). The event is to be held in Odernheim, Germany.

- A half-day symposium on the theme of *Landscape and Justice*, to be held in London in December 2017. The event will include discussion and debate, having a mix of academic and non-academic speakers on a discussion panel with the aim of integrating theory, practice/research and application. This symposium will replace the Annual Lecture in 2017.

Looking ahead to future events, the Group intends to continue to use the Research Strategy as a basis for framing more precisely their scope and purpose to support its over-arching theme of “just and sustainable relationships between people and landscape”.

Details of all events organised by the Group feature on our website and are advertised in *LRE* and the e-Bulletin along with short reports summarising the outcomes of these activities.

(iii) Website and Information Activity

a) Website

Last year's report noted that the website is probably now the first point of contact for most people interested in finding information about the Group, but that the past few years' effort to upgrade it has led to the position where it needs rebuilding to meet the Group's future needs by becoming a more effective recruitment, networking, trustbuilding, reference, fundraising and inspirational tool. Key steps were taken in 2015 to begin this rebuilding process, starting with the migration of the website from the ISP Provider GoDaddy and emails from 1&1, both to Nethosted.

The rebuilding work continued in 2016, starting with the development of a scope of works that was issued to three web-design companies for them to prepare costed proposals about how they would create a website that could help the Group position itself for the future. The brief provided detailed information regarding the Group's aims for a redesign that will reflect its style and ethos, in intuitive, bold and stylish ways. The brief had four key requirements: integrating a new website with a 'customer management system' that provides efficient management of content; a new design that makes better use of content and which meets accessibility standards; migration of content from the current site; and improved engagement with the Group's membership (in terms of subscription renewals, events, research grants, etc).

The proposal from the firm with which the Group has had an ongoing relationship in respect of previous upgrades and website maintenance was accepted, being the the most thorough and engaged response as well as the most competitive price, decision factors reinforced by the already existing excellent working relationship. Concept development work was in hand at the end of the year, with the intention that design work will take place in early 2017, so that a final design can then be tested prior to launching the new website in May 2017.

Last year's Report noted that the website feature introduced in 2014 to enable web-based payments linked to a PayPal account, both for new Members to join the Group and for existing members to renew their subscriptions, had proved very successful and beneficial, with a high take-up in 2015. This has continued in 2016, with most new members joining via the website/PayPal facility, and the majority of members who do not pay their subscriptions by UK-based bank standing orders or foreign bank direct transfer doing so using the facility rather than by cheque. In both 2015 and 2016 some 88% of membership subscription payments were received via the website or direct bank payments, with only 12% by cheque.

As noted in previous years' Reports, a key issue is ensuring the website is kept up-to-date. This has

continued to be achieved during 2016. News items and weblinks have been added about events, a downloadable booklet of the Research Strategy, documents of longer articles published in the e-Bulletin, new issues of *LRE*, the Annual Lecture and Project HERCULES updates. In addition, 'house-keeping' updates such as new or updated pen-portraits of Board members and a copy of the Annual Directors' Report have been added. In parallel, a series of 'behind the scenes' maintenance improvements have been made, which together have resulted in the site's load time improving by 400% (i.e. the 'Homepage' now loads in 1.1 seconds compared to over 4 seconds previously).

b) Twitter

Last year's report noted that a Twitter account (@aboutlandscape) was set up in December 2014, the Board having agreed the basis on which this will be operated. Twitter is proving a popular resource. It has attracted 875 followers over a broad range of interests (compared to 280 at the end of 2015) and is not solely confined to academics or practitioners. The Twitter feed runs alongside the e-bulletin (see below) in disseminating information about matters and events relating to landscape.

c) e-Bulletin

As noted in last year's Report, the Group launched an e-Bulletin in September 2015. Its purpose is to encourage debate and dialogue and to inform about landscape, by providing a dynamic, informal and inclusive platform for information, news, events and developments relating to landscape research, practice and experience. Both its content and method of e-circulation is intended to complement *Landscape Research* (available on subscription only) and *LRE* (available in hard copy to our members, and to anyone via pdf download from our website), and so is focused on short pieces aimed at a broad audience from diverse and geographically widespread sources. The e-Bulletin is issued via email to LRG members and to those who subscribe to it via our website.

There were four issues of the e-Bulletin in 2016, in February, April, June and August. The e-Bulletin has also continued to prove popular, and at the end of 2016 was received by 249 readers, compared to 138 when launched. The analytics show that 38% of readers are UK-based and 62% elsewhere, while the 'open' rate and the 'click links' rate are well above the non-profit sector average.

The e-Bulletin is produced using the free version of the software MailChimp. Since this software has no support or help line, Sarah McCarthy is providing ongoing training to Nancy Stedman to facilitate publication when the Development Project finishes. The format of the e-Bulletin has also been revised (from 2 columns to single column) to reduce the complexities of future compilation and production.

d) Member Access to other Journals

In relation to the issue of improving the Group's 'offer' to current and prospective members, and in the interests of promoting better information on landscape issues to Members, one initiative agreed as part of the review of the T&F Publishing Agreement was to allow members to have access to some relevant journals published by T&F. As noted in last year's Report, Members are now able to access five journals online, via the new Members' Area of the Group's website, as well as *Landscape Research*. Sarah McCarthy reinvigorated discussions in late 2016 with T&F (following a change of T&F personnel) about how this arrangement might be reviewed and extended to provide an even better range of supplementary material for Members.

(iv) Education and Training Activity

(a) The Annual Student Awards Prize Scheme

The Group has organised a prize scheme for student dissertations that contribute to 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). Since then, as noted in previous Reports, the scheme has steadily expanded in scope to include a range of categories and awards for undergraduate, masters and doctoral level, that explore an interdisciplinary approach to landscape. From 2015, it has also explicitly requested submissions that align with the Group's Research Strategy by contributing to the development of society's understanding and response to injustice, rapid environmental change, and short-term decision-making and narrow franchise, and which challenge established norms through creative work. The current terms of the invitation for entries are on the Group's website at www.landscaperesearch.org/students/awards/.

The submission and judging process moved online in 2012, simplifying the nomination, enrolment and submission process. Unfortunately this did not work as effectively as it should during 2016 as a result of the changes made to the website hosting arrangements referred to in last year's Report (the new server and changes to online security resulting in system malfunctions). Once the nomination and submission of theses were logged by more traditional methods, effective use of Basecamp enabled the 2016 review process to run smoothly, although a consistent problem remains the difficulty in finding reviewers for interdisciplinary science-led theses. The Board's thanks are due to Tim Collins as acting Education and Training Coordinator, who resolved these problems by various 'fixes' and considerable personal effort. Coupled with other commitments on his time, the end result was that the judging process was delayed, so that the awards were not ready to announce until December 2016.

There were only two submissions in the 'Humanities' category of awards, in contrast to eleven that fit the science-led approach and ten that meet an art and design approach. It is hoped that this imbalance will be resolved by a more explicit emphasis on the environmental aspects of the humanities and their focus on the landscape topic in the future.

Having regard to the need to resolve these various issues, the Board agreed (at its December 2016 meeting) a break of the Awards scheme until 2018. This break would allow the Coordinator time to re-establish the online awards nomination and submissions methods; address the ongoing problems with the lack of science-based reviewers, the lack of humanities-based submissions and reviewer workload more generally; and consider how to further focus the scheme's emphasis of supporting the Research Strategy. It is intended that a plan of work would be considered at the May 2017 meeting.

A total of 23 submissions were received in 2016 for work completed in 2015, comprising 2 entries for the Undergraduate prize, 11 for the Masters prize and 10 for the PhD prize, from students at 14 institutions in the UK, Europe, Asia and America. The judges were Tim Collins, Graham Fairclough, Jay Koh ¹, Markus Leibenath, Hannes Palang, Gareth Roberts and Nancy Stedman. Seven awards were made. Two were first prizes of £250 for the Undergraduate dissertations, two were first prizes of £350 for Masters theses and three were first prizes of £500 for PhD theses, all of which met in various ways the Research Strategy's emphases outlined above. Reports outlining the dissertations will be presented in *LRE* 79 and 80 during 2017.

The two Undergraduate prizes addressed injustice and rapid environmental change. They were awarded to Jennifer Dobson and Samuel Stevenson (of the University of Glasgow and University of Nottingham respectively). Their dissertations were respectively entitled *The Impact of Climate Change in Fiji* (awarded in the 'Science and Management' category) and *The Socio-Cultural Importance of Abandoned Industrial Space; the island of Nottingham* (awarded in the 'Humanities' category).

¹ Dr Jay Koh is an artist, curator and researcher and Director of the International Forum for InterMedia Arts in Singapore. The Group is grateful for his willingness and support in acting as one of the judges.

The Masters prizes were awarded for research that challenges norms through creative practice. They were awarded to Shachi Bahl and Dawn Parke (School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal (India) and Writtle College respectively). Their theses were entitled *Public Arts project transformation of everyday spaces into an art precinct - New Delhi, India* and *The Physical Life of Place* (both awarded in the 'Art and Design' category).

The PhD prizes were awarded to: Helen Hoyle (University of Sheffield) for her work on public perceptions of designed urban plantings; Eva Schwab (University of Natural Resources and Life Science, Vienna (Austria)) for her focus on justice and injustice; and Christina Thuring (University of Sheffield) for her integration of injustice, environmental change and a creative approach to extant norms. Their theses were respectively entitled *Happiness and Urban Biodiversity versus Urban Biodiversity? Public perception of designed urban planting in a warm climate* (awarded in the 'Science and Management' category), *Urban Promises? Spatial Justice in Public Space Based Upgrading Programmes of Popular Settlements in Latin America* (awarded in the 'Art and Design' category) and *Ecological Dynamics on Old Extensive Green Roofs: vegetation and substrates twenty years since installation* (awarded in the 'Science and Management' category).

The first set of invitations inviting entries for the 2018 Awards (ie for dissertations completed during 2016 and 2017) will be issued in 2017.

(b) Other Education and Training Activity

Last year's Report noted that a Working Group led by Tim Collins had been formed to develop a policy position on a Group education programme. The Board considered its report in May 2016 and approved the goals and objectives of the proposed policy, recognising that LRG is not itself an educational institution but rather a body which promotes innovation and best practices, and therefore that partnerships with other relevant organisations will be central to the delivery of any programme.

The proposed programme will focus on continuing to provide student awards; providing strategic alternatives to current educational provision; diversifying perception, knowledge and practice; and promoting new ideas about landscape research, its utility and its value. It is proposed to work towards these goals by supporting (rather than delivering) activities such as: lectures and seminars that make a counterpoint to extant knowledge or practice within a discipline; developing programmes that seek to foster critical knowledge and practices and offer an integrative view of landscape education and training; and bridging elements of art and design, the humanities, social science, natural science, environmental planning and management.

Further work on this programme was then delayed due to unforeseen personal commitments, so that a further report from the Working Group could not be prepared before May 2017. At its December 2016 meeting, the Board therefore decided that the need to take forward this work, as well as the need to address the various technical and capacity challenges affecting the Awards scheme (outlined above), justified suspending the latter for a year.

(v) International and Outreach Activity

As noted in previous years' reports, the Group's profile as a leading institution in landscape policy and research circles has become widely appreciated and understood across Europe. LRG is now an accredited observer not only at the meetings of Council of Europe (CoE) on the ELC, but also at meetings of Uniscape (the organisation of universities to support the Convention), as well as having a reciprocal membership arrangement with Civilscape (which is a similar organisation to Uniscape, for non-governmental organisations). The Group is also invited to observe at and contribute to meetings of PECSRL, and retains its close connections with the French government research organisation Cemagref.

In terms of the Group's international activity during 2016, the work undertaken with partners as part of the HERCULES project continued to be the most significant, and is discussed under 'Research and Policy Initiatives' below. However, the Group has progressed more general contacts with Civilscape, and with contacts in Canada and the United States. In addition, a range of Directors (in particular in 2016 Laurence le Dû-Blayo, Markus Leibenath, Kenneth Olwig and Hannes Palang) have contributed more generally to work to promote international activity.

As discussed in last year's Report, a key activity during 2015 for Laurence le Dû-Blayo, with the support of Sarah McCarthy, was to identify and appoint individuals to act as a network of "International Correspondents", in Hong Kong, China, North Africa and Scandinavia. Their intended role was to develop contacts, to exchange information and promote LRG membership in their country, and to seek to strengthen links with 'landscape observatories' and similar bodies. Three further correspondents were appointed in 2016, in North Africa and Sweden. The correspondents act in a voluntary capacity, except that their membership subscription is waived during the time they act in the role. All already contributed material for the e-Bulletin. All the appointed correspondents have contributed at least once to the e-Bulletin and some have done so regularly, as required by their appointment letter.

Reference was made in last year's Report to LRG agreeing to participate in the action planning process following the conference *A Marinescape Forum* organised by the Mediterranean Institute for Nature & Anthropos (Med-INA) on behalf of Civilscape in May 2015, and the resultant proposal to establish a "Mediterranean Marinescapes Observatory [MMO]. No contact was received by the Group during 2016, so at this stage the details of such involvement remain to be defined and agreed.

Looking ahead to 2017, it is already planned that Laurence le Dû-Blayo as International Activity Coordinator will represent the Group at the Civilscape/CoE international conference on landscape observatories to be held in February 2017 in Amersfoort (Netherlands), and at the CoE's Ninth Conference on the European Landscape Convention to be held in March 2017 in Strasbourg (France). In addition, she will also represent LRG as a co-speaker in a session devoted to the results of the HERCULES project, to be held as part of the International Association for Landscape Ecology (IALE) 2017 European Congress to be held in Ghent (Belgium) in September 2017, this event traditionally linking with a special training week training for PhD students.

Expenditure on international networking was formally recorded as nil in the 2016 Accounts. However, as can be seen from the discussion above, this does not reflect lack of activity but simply that Group expenditure on this activity was subsumed under networking related to the Events programme and Project HERCULES.

(vi) Research and Policy Initiatives

(a) Research Strategy

As indicated in 'Business Strategy and Related Board Decisions' above, Chris Dalglish as Coordinator has taken forward work to implement the Group's Research Strategy during 2016. The Board resolved in 2014 to set up a budget to support implementation to be used both proactively (i.e. to fund research activity that the Group wished to promote or encourage) and reactively (i.e. to fund activity proposed by others). The major part of this budget is currently allocated to a fund to grant-aid research projects which align with the strategy. All research proposals are assessed against criteria which have been developed by Chris Dalglish and the Treasurer, including a requirement that the proposed activity helps to deliver the Strategy's objectives and priorities, these criteria being made available to research fund applicants in advance of them submitting their proposal. The Board agreed in December 2015 to substantially increase the research fund budget on a one-off basis to £20,000 in 2017, to enable a major launch of the fund in the anniversary year by an open funding call on the

topic of 'landscape justice'. A key task in 2016 has therefore been to call for bids against this fund, to evaluate them, and to make awards.

The Group received 32 applications for funding. Of these, 12 were assessed as 'not to be funded' for various reasons (in particular because they did not align strongly with the funding call). Of the remainder, 13 applications were assessed as strong proposals well-aligned to the Group's priorities, but since their combined funding request was £65,284, it was necessary to evaluate these in more detail to narrow down the final selection to the available budget. Given that they had already been assessed as being strong proposals, the final selection focused on assessing their relative strength against the funding call and the general research fund criteria, and also on arriving at a final mix of projects which would, together, speak to LRG's strategic aims. The applications were initially assessed by Chris Dalglish with support from Maggie Roe, and the final selection from the 13 'strong proposals' was assessed by Chris Dalglish, Steven Shuttleworth and Paul Tabbush.

Six projects (with a combined funding request of £20,639) were finally chosen. They include two applications from the UK and one each from the Netherlands, France, Spain and Argentina, for projects to be undertaken in the UK (x2), Greenland, Greece, Spain and Argentina. One of the applicants has applied under a university affiliation, one is affiliated to a charity, one to a small and medium-sized enterprise, and three are independent (one of these having the explicit support of a university). The projects vary in terms of their aims and their methodologies, meaning that the suite of funded applications represent a range in terms of the types and uses of research, disciplinary contexts, outcomes and outputs. The projects also range from early-stage/pilot projects to those which are building on a foundation of previous work, established relationships and/or existing data. The assessment process was completed at the end of 2016 and the applicants have since been notified of the outcome of their funding bids. The successful projects will all begin in 2017, during LRG's 50th Anniversary year, and will be detailed in next year's Report.

Finally, reference was made in last year's Report to a possible research initiative on *Landscape Justice and Human Need* being developed in collaboration with Northlight Heritage. This project has not progressed, both because of staff changes at Northlight Heritage and also because it was superseded by a change in the Group's approach to use of its research fund (as discussed above).

(b) Project HERCULES

A major activity for the Group in 2016 has been its involvement in the EU-funded research project HERCULES, which finished on 30 November 2016. The purpose and research approach of the project were set out in the Directors' Report for 2013, and the Reports for 2014 and 2015 summarised the Group's activity in those years.

As previously explained, the Group is formally involved in the Work Package or stream of work known as 'WP9', which is concerned with stakeholder involvement, communication strategy, organising the final conference, and developing recommendations. In 2016, the Group provided substantial support to this WP9 work. Key elements were: assisting in the third EU-level Stakeholder Workshop (in Brussels, in June 2016); organising the discussion workshop held as part of the project's Final Conference in Brussels in October 2016 (the general organisation of which the Group supported), and the seminar in Rennes in June 2016, both of which are discussed in more detail at 'Events' above; and (with the European Landowners Organisation, the partner leading WP9) jointly writing and producing the Final Conference booklet.

In respect of policy and practice implications, the Group played a major role in helping to develop the recommendations arising from the project overall, and specifically in drafting a chapter of the 'deliverable' report D9.4 "*Report on policy briefs and set of recommendations for landscape policy and practice*", entitled "*The Landscape Approach: Towards landscape-centred policy*", issued in November 2016 and available on the HERCULES website at:

www.hercules-landscapes.eu/tartalom/HERCULES_WP9_D9_4_ELO.pdf.

In addition to its role in WP9, the Group has continued to make a wider contribution to the project by contributing where appropriate to the detailed work of other WPs and more generally acting in the role of 'critical friend' for other WPs. During 2016, the Group contributed to ongoing internal debates on the relationship between landscape and heritage, and particularly to the policy and practice implications of the project. In addition, the Group was also involved in the quality assurance process for two of the seven project report 'deliverables' prepared during the year.

The Group has contributed to disseminating the project's findings more generally, by disseminating HERCULES material via *LRE*, the e-Bulletin and the website throughout the life of the project. A substantial effort has been made in 2016 to enable the Group to make a further contribution in 2017 by publishing a Special Issue of *Landscape Research* on the theme of "*Landscape Research and Knowledge Transfer: Learning from the EU HERCULES Research Project*", being co-edited by Hannes Palang and Steven Shuttleworth. The issue will include a keynote paper on "*Key Findings and Recommendations from the HERCULES Research Project: the need for a Landscape Approach to Environmental Governance*", prepared by Steven Shuttleworth.

Last year's Report referred to a potential major extension of the Group's contribution to HERCULES, and noted that the research consortium's revised approach was submitted for EU approval in October 2015 but was still awaited at the year-end. The EU did not approve this proposal as submitted, although a revised proposal was approved. The end result for the Group was that it did not contribute to the revised approach as originally planned, and received only a small amount of additional funding.

To support the above work, the Group has attended the third Stakeholder Meeting in Brussels in June 2016 (Paul Tabbush and Sarah McCarthy); the fourth HERCULES Project Group meeting in Lesvos in April 2016 (Paul Tabbush, Laurence le Dû-Blayo and Sarah McCarthy) and fifth/Final Meeting in Brussels in October 2016 (Paul Tabbush, Laurence le Dû-Blayo Steven Shuttleworth and Chris Dalglish); and WP9 meetings in Devon and Brussels in February 2016 (Paul Tabbush and Sarah McCarthy). Other meetings, both internally within the Group and with partners, have been conducted using Skype.

As noted in last year's Report, the conditions of EU research grants require that the consortium prepares progress reports at key stages of the project. The 'First Periodic Report' and 'Mid Term Assessment Report' covered the first half of the project, that is from 1 December 2013 to 31 May 2015. The 'Second Periodic Report' and 'Final Assessment Report' are due following completion of the project, and the Group prepared its input to these in late 2016, for submission to the EU in early 2017. The EU will assess these reports for compliance with the terms of grant in respect of completion of deliverables, financial procedures and the value of the research findings. Assuming it is satisfied, the EU will pay the final tranche of the research grant in late spring 2017.

Fuller details about HERCULES, including details of our partners and the reports and other outputs published, can be viewed on the project website at www.hercules-landscapes.eu.

Now that the HERCULES project is finished, it is appropriate to reflect on its value. It will of course be some time before the wider long-term value of the project can be assessed, since it was only completed at the end of 2016, and much of the academic output is still to be published. But the key outputs seem likely to have long-term value for future landscape research and practice. However, from the Group's viewpoint, a key outcome was its role in promoting the adoption of 'the landscape approach' to environmental governance as a tool for policy analysis, formulation and implementation, based on harmonising EU policies in an ELC-centred and culturally-informed landscape framework, which seems to have been widely accepted in discussions at the Final Conference.

Less positively, the Group's early reflection on the resource demands of the project is that the resource required for such projects is simply unsustainable if done primarily from volunteer resources. Any decision to get involved in a similar research project must be based on ensuring that the Group has the right level and kind of capacity (e.g. by taking on additional staff to cover new contract work), and being clear in all cases about the kind of role the Group wishes to play. In this respect, reflection on the HERCULES experience has led to the conclusion that the Group is not an organisation which exists to undertake research, as such, but rather is an organisation with a history of advancing research in other ways. Any major change in this status would potentially be consistent with the Group's charitable objects but would represent a significant shift in the nature of the Group's activity and in the character of the organisation, requiring significant development of and investment in its research capacity.

That said, maintaining the *status quo* does not preclude the Group's participation in future research projects in a specific role (e.g. as an advisor and/or to facilitate the dissemination of research results). Given this, the Board recognizes that the creation of a trading company (discussed in 'Payments and Benefits to Members and Directors' above) is an action of potential value to the Group to facilitate limited participation in research projects, but it is not immediately essential. However, it remains desirable that it should be put in place, to be activated if and when needed.

(c) Other Research Project Support

Use of the Research Fund in 2016 was nil, other than meeting those costs of HERCULES that were not eligible for payment by the EU research grant (£630.78). The underspent budget (as with the underspend for 2015) will be carried forward to 2017 to help fund the increased budget for the Research Strategy funding awards described above.

(vii) Landscape Research Extra

LRE was published three times in 2016 (issues 76 to 78). The three issues totalled 36 pages of illustrated two column text. As in previous years, the Editor Bud Young aimed to present short pieces written in a clear style, seeking to stimulate readers with a very wide range of landscape topics and issues, and to provoke thought about them. Each issue included colour print illustrations, with reviews and short features. Each completed issue was published immediately on the Group's website by Emma Waterton.

Key features covered the issue of 'wildscapes', with particular reference to South East Asia and Australia (and included follow-up correspondence); the abandonment of old vehicles in the landscapes of Slovenia; cultural landscapes and community identity (reporting on one aspect of the HERCULES project); and development and conservation issues affecting the Conwy Falls in Snowdonia. Other features were on changing attitudes to public transport and the implications for learning to live sustainably; tree root plates and their impact on ground surface shape; a reflection on the work of W.H. Hudson (author of *Afoot in England*, 1909); the experience of steam locomotives in landscape (with particular reference to North Wales); railside landscapes; the use of Bath stone in the urban landscape; the Whitehorn Way pilgrimage route in Scotland; island landscapes; ancient field systems in the South Downs National park, as revealed by recent LiDAR mapping; and an announcement about and outline of the Group's Research Strategy. There was also a memorial tribute to former member and long-standing supporter of the group Ian Mercer.

The issues also contained notices and reports of various recent or planned conferences and papers, including: *Wild Thing? Managing Landscape Change and Future Ecologies*; *cultural change and continuity* conference held at Sheffield in September 2015; the *Artists, Farmers and Philosophers* symposium held in Barnard Castle in September 2016 which was sponsored by the Group (see above); and the workshop on *Mountain grazing landscapes caught between abandonment, rewilding and agro-environmental bureaucracy. Is there an alternative future?* held at the PECSRL

conference on *Mountains, uplands and Lowlands: European landscapes from an altitudinal perspective* in September 2016 held in Innsbruck and Seefeld, Austria, also sponsored by the Group (see above). Other features included a review of art exhibitions on the work of Georgia O'Keefe at Tate Modern and Paul Nash at Tate Britain.

Other articles included descriptions and portayals of landscapes in the London Olympic Park four years after the 2012 Games (and follow-up correspondence), the Faroe islands, Mardon Down in Dartmoor, and Ardeer (the site in Ayrshire chosen by Alfred Nobel for his dynamite manufacturing plant). The issues also included write-ups of three dissertations that received a prize under the Group's 2015 Award Scheme (see Directors' Report for 2015).

Last year's Report noted that the Group was giving thought to the issue of ensuring long-term access to the many substantive articles published in *LRE* over its past 27 years of publication. One option referred to was the possible uploading the articles to the website as single, stand-alone items which can be more easily downloaded, and creating an index for the articles already on the website. This option might still be pursued, but it is now hoped that an alternative might be to publish an 'anthology' of such articles in book form.

More generally, *LRE* issues 1 to 36 have been scanned to pdf format by a specialist document scanning company, with the intention that these will be transferred to the website (more recent issues being put on the website as they have been published). Also, Bud Young and Sarah McCarthy have begun to discuss future *LRE* production and access issues, in the context of other aspects of development activity.

The Board wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the continued commitment of Bud and Rosemary Young, and the varied correspondents (both overseas and domestic) who supply much of the source material. In 2016 these were: Julia Ellis Burnett, Ros Codling, Roger Dalton, Genevieve Girod, Brian Goodey, Jacqueline Jobbins, Val Kirby, Werner Krauss, Owen Manning, Pippa Marland, Claire Masters, Helen Noble, Kenneth Olwig, Terry O'Regan, Hannes Palang, Gareth Roberts, Paul Selman, Nancy Stedman, Anna Stenning, Paul Tabbush, Ken Taylor and Martyn Thomas,.

7. FINANCES

The 2013 to 2015 Reports noted that the Group's finances are 'split' to distinguish the two separate elements of "unrestricted funds" available for any use considered by the Board to be appropriate to delivering the Group's charitable objectives, and "restricted funds" held for the specific purpose of delivering project HERCULES. This split is applicable to the Group's 2016 finances, and the discussion below therefore deals with the two elements separately.

With regard to its "unrestricted funds", the Group made a surplus in 2016 of £27,159 (income of £107,352, less expenditure of £80,193). This compares to the surplus in 2015 of £19,605 (income of £99,717, less expenditure of £80,112). There being two adjustments for 2015 creditor under-provision, the Group's Accumulated Fund of "unrestricted funds" at 31st December 2016 was £153,294 (2015, £125,307).

The 2016 surplus of "unrestricted funds" was due to two factors. The first is that the royalties from the Publishing Agreement substantially exceeded predictions, so that total income from this source was £100,300 (compared to £91,600 in 2015). The second is that expenditure did not increase by a similar amount. Although expenditure on *Landscape Research* increased by c.£10,000 as planned, expenditure on Events, the Prize Scheme and Administration was at a similar level to 2015, and was less on *Landscape Research Extra* (because there were only three rather than the usual four issues), the Development Project (because the 2015 expenditure included an extra 0.2 fte for 6 months) and the Executive Committee (because in 2015 there was one-off expenditure on legal advice).

As well as its unrestricted funds summarised above, the Group's finances have included expenditure in relation to HERCULES. The funding for the project is provided to the research consortium in tranches, with the first tranche paid at the start of the project in 2013, the second tranche paid in early 2016, and the final payment due in 2017 (subject to EU sign off of 'satisfactory completion'). Accordingly, the Group received income of £10,428.26 (€14,522.40) in 2016, but spent £18,356. The remaining balance of "restricted funds" (to be used only for EU-approved purposes in relation to HERCULES) is £2,630.78 as at 31st December 2016.

Thus, the Group's total Accumulated Fund at 31 December 2016 was £155,025 – £152,394 being for "unrestricted" use and £2,631 being "restricted".

Looking ahead to 2017 and beyond in relation to the "unrestricted funds", normal income is expected to increase, to £113,000 in 2017 and rising to c.£120,000 by 2019. This increase largely reflects the full effect of expanding *Landscape Research* to eight issues yearly and allowing for some volume increases in sales, and there should also be further increased membership income as a result of Development Project activity. More generally, it seems prudent to continue to assume that bank deposit interest income will remain at its current extremely low level, and also (as noted in the Reports for 2012 to 2015) to assume that there will be no tax reclaim contributions from Gift Aid donations for the foreseeable future.

However, the above income estimate will be boosted on a one-off basis in 2017 by the refund to the Group's "unrestricted funds" of its eligible expenditure for the second half of the HERCULES project (assuming 'satisfactory completion' sign off of the project by the EU). The amount of this refund is uncertain pending EU sign off, and will in any case be affected by the €/£ exchange rate, but is estimated at c.£15,000.

With regards to expenditure from the "unrestricted funds", as noted in last year's Report, it is planned that this will rise substantially over the next few years as a result of expanded activity made possible by the expected increased income. The costs of producing *Landscape Research* will further increase as a result of the new support arrangements for the Editorial Team, and there will be a one-off cost in 2017 for the supplementary issue that will include the 'LRG anniversary/history' paper. Also, as discussed above, major programmes of expenditure are being developed for Research Support in 2017 (although in terms of accounting treatment, some of this expenditure may appear in later years), and for Events. Costs will also rise for International Activity (over the past three years there has been nil expenditure because costs have been subsumed under HERCULES and Events expenditure), Website improvement and *Landscape Research Extra* (which should return to four issues). Development Project expenditure may also be higher in 2017 if it is considered necessary to temporarily increase the Development Manager's hours to ensure completion of the project objectives. Other costs in 2017 are expected to remain broadly similar to previous years, excepting the Awards scheme (which as noted above will not run next year). Looking ahead to 2018 and onwards, there may also be greater expenditure arising out of the discussions in the Executive and the Board about longer-term priorities and plans, not least in relation to future staffing needs after the current Development Project is completed.

With regard to the "restricted funds" for the HERCULES project, the final tranche of research grant is due in late spring 2017 following the EU's (assumed) sign off of 'satisfactory completion'. The current and expected funds, after deduction of any 2017 costs, will then be transferred to the Group's "unrestricted funds" to refund it for its eligible expenditure for the second half of the project. At the end of 2017, therefore, it is expected that all HERCULES-related financial activity will have been completed and that the related bank current account will have been closed.

The Group's current financial strategy is based on achieving a broad balance of income and expenditure, by making use of the funds available over and above the costs of publishing *Landscape Research* and of administrative support, to enable the wider range of activity. In terms of financial

planning for delivering this activity programme it is assumed that some years may have a slight surplus and others a slight deficit, but that over a rolling three-year period the Group will maintain a broad balance of income and expenditure. The four-year projection for 2014 to 2017, and the roll-forward to 2019, reflect this approach. However, as noted in previous years' Reports, the Group's Accumulated Fund overall is now considerably in excess of £60,000, the level of reserve intended by the financial strategy. The intended expenditure and investment described above should use some of that excess in a planned way, and more generally it will enable the Group to adopt a relaxed approach to high planned expenditure which exceeds income in individual years.

The key financial issue for the Board to focus on during 2017, and indeed over the next three years, therefore remains as identified in previous Reports – ensuring that expenditure plans for activities other than publishing *Landscape Research*, and in particular for events, international activity and developing proposals for research, are refined into robust multi-year programmes of activity, which are then implemented and delivered.

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 2006 in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

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