



# **Landscape Research Group Ltd**

## **Trustees' Report for 2019**

Landscape Research Group Ltd:

A Company Limited by Guarantee (Registration No: 01714386)

and a Registered Charity (Registration No: 287160)

9th May 2020

*For approval by the Board of Directors: 19 May 2020*

*For approval by the Annual General Meeting: 18 June 2020*

**LANDSCAPE RESEARCH GROUP LIMITED**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT, 2019**

**Directors and Trustees of Landscape Research Group Limited at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019**

The directors / trustees who held office during the year were:

Prof Vanesa CASTAN-BROTO  
Dr Chris DALGLISH  
Mr Graham FAIRCLOUGH  
Mr Merouen HEDHELIE  
Prof Laurence Le Dû-BLAYO  
Dr Markus LEIBENATH  
Dr Gavin MacGregor (Appointed 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019)  
Dr Ian MELL (Appointed 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019)  
Prof Kenneth OLWIG  
Prof Hannes PALANG  
Prof Ingrid SARLOV-HERLIN  
Mr Paul TABBUSH  
Dr Tim WATERMAN (Appointed 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019)  
Prof Emma WATERTON

**Company Secretary**

Mr David SAUNDERS

**Company Number**

1714386 (England and Wales)

**Charity Number**

287160

**Registered Office**

99 Western Road, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1RS

**Bankers**

Lloyds Bank plc, 34 Moorgate, London EC2R 6PL.

**Independent Examiners**

Andrew M Wells FMAAT , 99 Western Road, Lewes, BN7 1RS

**LANDSCAPE RESEARCH GROUP LIMITED**

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## **TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2019**

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in presenting their report and the financial statements for the charitable company for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The company (referred to below as "the Group" or "LRG") was incorporated in England and Wales on 12th April 1983 as a Company Limited by Guarantee with no issued share capital (registered number 1714386), as the successor body to the unincorporated association known as "Landscape Research Group" which was founded in 1967.

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

### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **Objectives and Aims**

The objects for which Landscape Research Group (LRG) 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 field".

The trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

A fuller interpretation of the Group's charitable objects and a statement of our current priorities are presented in our *Research Strategy* available at <https://landscaperesearch.org/what-we-do/research-strategy/>

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Significant activities**

The main charitable activities of LRG in 2019 were:

- **Advancing Research:** LRG supported research by providing grants to five researchers selected competitively from a total of 21 applications. A financial commitment of £13,120 was made for the 2019 financial year. Outputs from the research funded in 2018 have started to be returned, and the completed reports are placed on LRG's website.
- **Publication of Landscape Research Journal:** Eight issues of Landscape Research were produced in Volume 44 during 2019. LRG continued to benefit from a publishing agreement with Taylor and Francis which provides payments to the charity in the form of royalties, and also a contribution towards editorial expenses.
- **Community of Interest: Events.** LRG organised two conferences in 2019; In May in Lancaster, and in December in London. LRG was represented by staff and Trustees at other conferences held in Kiel, Brussels, Strasbourg, Tunis and Sterling. LRG launched a new website in 2019 which supports the research and education activity of the Charity, and this along with increased social media activity promotes the work to a wider global community.

- Research Networks: Funding and support was provided to two Landscape Research Networks (LRNs), in Germany and in Tunisia whereby research findings are disseminated. Additional distribution of three new editions of the Landscape Research Extra (LRE) newsletter, and the publication of all past editions of LRE now made available on the LRG website.

### **Achievements against objectives**

LRG have maintained a focus on supporting research and delivering education in landscape-related subject areas, and have continued to develop a wider network of landscape research interests with contributions from both UK, and abroad.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

### **Significant events**

- The main source of income for the Charity is through the publishing agreement with Taylor and Francis. The current agreement continues until December 2020, and discussions have started to continue this relationship for an additional term.
- Membership has increased slightly in 2019, and this has seen a growth in the income generated from subscriptions. With the engagement of two members of staff in 2018 the total annual expenditure has increased and now exceeds income received in the year. Trustees approved a policy to begin to utilise some of the accumulated surpluses to develop the organisation broaden the community of interest and expand its membership to better deliver charitable activity in the future.

### **Reserves**

At the Board meeting in May 2019 Trustees resolved to increase the level of reserves held to take account of the engagement of employees in late 2018. The increased level of £100,000 is held on deposit at a level to cover the charity's operational expenses for approximately one year. These reserve funds are held as £15,000 in an instant access account with Lloyds Bank and £85,000 in a separate deposit account with Hampshire Trust Bank. This arrangement is to spread the risk and safeguard these reserve funds under the FSCS guarantee scheme.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Governing document**

LRG operates under Articles and Memorandum established in 1983. As these rules are somewhat out of date a review exercise was instigated in 2019 to consider the Articles and Memorandum and to bring them up to date to conform to the 2006 Companies Act. In addition, an investigation was undertaken into the conversion of LRG from a Company Ltd by Guarantee, and Registered Charity, structure to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The implementation of this will be subject to final agreement by the Trustees, and then approval of the Members of the Company at the 2020 AGM.

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## ***Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities***

The Trustees (who are directors of Landscape Research Group Ltd. for the purposes of Company Law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

## ***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.

## ***Risk Management***

The trustees review the major risks faced by the charity on a regular basis and it is considered that the implementation of strong budgetary and other key financial controls will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The trustees also examine other operational and business risks faced by the charity and confirm that systems and controls are in place which should mitigate against any significant risks.

## ***The Board, Executive, Officers & Co-ordinators***

At the start of 2019, the Board had 15 members, 12 of whom chose to stand for re-election at the AGM on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019. Although the Board has agreed to aim to reduce its size, over time, to c. 12 members, 15 Board positions were advertised to the LRG membership this year. This temporary increase in size was intended to help ensure that a good number of new Directors were recruited to the Board.

A new election process was implemented this year (see below). Three new Directors – Dr Ian Mell, Dr Gavin MacGregor and Dr Tim Waterman – were elected alongside the 12 continuing Directors.

The Officers and Co-ordinators for 2019 have been as follows: Chair (Chris Dalglish, full year); Vice Chair (Paul Tabbush, Resigned December 2019); Treasurer (Paul Tabbush, full year); Company Secretary (David Saunders); Journal Editor (Emma Waterton, full year); Research & Policy Coordinator (Hannes Palang, full year); Community Development Coordinator (Laurence le Du-Blayo, full year).

The Group's website is [www.landscaperesearch.org](http://www.landscaperesearch.org), email address [admin@landscaperesearch.org](mailto:admin@landscaperesearch.org), and its Twitter 'handles' are @aboutlandscape and @LandscapeResJ. The Group also has a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/landscaperesearchgroup/>).

## ***Governance and Operations***

### **The Board, Executive, Officers & Co-ordinators**

The role of the Board is to ensure the good governance of LRG, agree strategy and monitor achievements. Operational decision-making is devolved to the Executive, the individual Officers and the Co-ordinators, all of whom have the authority to act within the scope of their various remits and the annual budgetary limits as set by the Board.

## **Staffing**

Crista Walshaw continued in her role as journal editorial assistant, and Nigel (Bud) Young continued in his role as Editor of *Landscape Research Extra* throughout 2019.

Paul Lacey has provided website development services for LRG working with the Comms and Membership Manger to create the new LRG website which was launched in early 2019). Agreements were reached on a new, short-term contract with Dickiebirds Studio Ltd (Paul's new company) to provide ongoing website and other IT support during 2019 whilst the new online membership management arrangements bed-in.

At its meeting in May 2017, the Board agreed to create a new position of 'Journal pre-Editor' to provide additional support for the journal editor and editorial team in light of the increasing workloads entailed in delivering the journal. This post was included in the editorial agreement negotiated with Western Sydney University (WSU), the employer of the incoming Journal Editor, Emma Waterton, who succeeds Anna Jorgensen in January 2019. The editorial agreement, signed by both parties in June 2018, stipulates that WSU will employ a pre-Editor at 0.16 fte (6 hours per week). LRG will reimburse WSU for the costs of employing this person to support delivery of the journal. This is a fixed term appointment for 18 months, starting in early 2019. Interviews have already been held for the position.

In October 2018, LRG recruited two new part-time members of staff, David Saunders as Chief Executive and Company Secretary (0.5 fte) and Sarah Hobbs as Communications & Membership Manager (0.5 fte). Both were in post throughout 2019.

## **Volunteers**

Thanks are due to the volunteers that have helped to deliver activities this year. In particular, LRG member Vanessa Lastrucci who contributed to the social media activity and to the smooth running of the December 2019 Landscape Symposium "Staying with the Trouble" held at the Friends House in London.

## **Finances**

Please see the 'Financial Statments for 2019' for more detail than is provided here.

*In the event, the charity made an operating loss in 2019 of £20,534 (income of £111,461, less expenditure of £131,995). This compares to the surplus in 2018 of £12,082.*

The Group's financial strategy, agreed in late 2006, is based on achieving a broad balance of income and expenditure to maintain a minimum reserve of c. £60,000. The Group's Accumulated Fund has risen substantially in recent years and our total Accumulated Fund at the end of 2019 stood at £156,254.

## ***Legal & Regulatory Compliance***

During 2019 the Company Secretary carried out all formal reporting required by Companies House and the Charity Commission.

## **Governance Framework**

In order to improve its governance, the Board resolved in 2015 to bring all governance documentation together in a single place, compiling it as a single 'Governance Compendium'. The Compendium was intended to be a living document to be updated with new or revised material as and when required. A Governance working group has drafted new policies and procedures to fill any gaps identified in compiling the Compendium and this work continued throughout 2019.

During 2019, a final Issue of the Governance Compendium was produced, with both minor copy-edits, small updates (e.g. reference to counter terrorism financial sanctions; reference to new CEO and CMM posts) and the addition of a new policy on Archives. Five other new policies requested by the Board at its December 2017 meeting were drafted by Steven Shuttleworth and Gareth Roberts before they stepped down from the Board in May 2018.

## **Proposals for new policies and / or governance procedures**

With the move to LRG taking on directly-employed staffing in October 2018, changes have been made to the ways that decision-making authorities are delegated by the Board. In particular, certain executive authorities that were previously vested in the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and in the Executive (comprising the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Journal Editor), have been passed to the Chief Executive. The Chair and Chief Executive have been consulting on this 'delegation framework' which was circulated to the Board for detailed consideration during 2019.

The current line management arrangements are that the Chief Executive reports to the Chair of the Board and the Communications & Membership Manager reports to the Chief Executive. The CMM's work plan is agreed with the CEO, and the CEO's priorities are agreed with the Chair.

## ***Advancing Landscape Research***

### **Research Grants**

The 2019 call for research grants was issued on 1<sup>st</sup> February, with the deadline 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2019. The call resulted in 21 applications of which 5 new research grants were issued (see table). The committee also stressed that in the future grants should be made available only to LRG members.

We received 11 grant applications, for the total sum of £30,183. The applicants came from Ireland, India, Greece, US and the UK. The sum applied for varied between £1,339 and £5,000. The proposals were assessed by a panel of Trustees, and the decision was unanimous. The following projects were offered funding:

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Research Project Title</b>	<b>Award</b>
Margarita Cisani	Landscape Education, Heritage & Justice	£ 5,000

Joanne Phillips	Language of HS2	£ 1,000
Gozde Sarlak	Boron Landscapes in Turkey	£ 3,300
Siobhan Forshaw	Ways and Meanings	£ 2,340
Aisling O'Carroll	Deconstructing the Archive	£ 1,480

## **Student Research Awards**

There were no student awards provided in 2019. The Trustees agreed not to return to the thesis competition, but rather to replace this with travel and fieldwork grants. This was included in the research grant call in early 2019.

## **Landscape Research Journal**

Landscape Research Group Ltd. benefits from a publishing agreement with Taylor & Francis Ltd. which allows for payments to the Group in respect of royalties on total Taylor and Francis sales (with a guaranteed minimum royalty), plus a contribution towards the Group's editorial costs and also sponsorship for events. The Agreement was re-negotiated with effect from January 2013 and continues until December 2020.

Eight issues of Landscape Research were published in Volume 44 during 2019.

Volume 44 contained six general issues and two special themed issues which were:

- Changing Landscape Identity – practice, plurality and power
- The Politics of Rurality

In 2019 LRG formalised the appointment of Professor Vanessa Castan-Broto (University of Sheffield, UK) as an Associate Editor and Dr Mark Eischeid (University of Oregon, USA) as an Assistant Editor, as replacements for Professor Ken Taylor and Dr Tom Mels. At the end of 2019, Dr Lisa-Marie Shillito stepped down from the role of Assistant Editor, with Dr Stephen Livesley, a specialist in ecosystems and forest sciences, stepping into the role on a trial basis in February 2020. The full Editorial Team is currently comprised of an Editor-in-Chief (Waterton), a Consulting Editor (Jorgensen), three Associate Editors (Castan-Broto, Roe and Vicenzotti), four Assistant Editors (Eischeid, Larcher, Yang and Livesley), a Book Reviews Editor (Oles) and an Editorial Assistant (Walshaw).

## ***Developing a Community of Interest***

### **Membership, Branding & Communications**

SH has taken on this role and together with Paul Lacey, they have been involved in the project to provide more secure and efficient membership management arrangements. The new LRG website was launched in early 2019. Proposals to develop a more comprehensive accessible "Landscape Exchange" web-based resource were approved by the Board and work is progressing to for launch in 2020.

SH had transformed LRGs presence on social media with active Twitter and Facebook activity.

## **Landscape Research Extra**

Following the publication of “A Bedside Landscape Reader” in 2019 LRE Editor Bud Young compiled three further issues of Landscape Research Extra #85, #86 and #87. The production of print versions of LRE ceased during 2019 and pdf copies have been made available to the public on the publications pages of the LRG website. All past issuers of LRE from issue #1, produced in 1988, have now been prepared for inclusion in the LRG web archive.

## **Events**

Two LRG events were held in 2019. The first in May 2019 was held in Lancaster and coincided with the LRG Board and AGM. Presentations of LRG funded research were made, followed by a series of field visits to investigate the local landscape.

A conversation on critical and creative approaches to the climate and biodiversity crises, facilitated by performance ecologist Ruth Little, with Anupama Ranawana, George Revill (former LRG chair), Amanda Thomson, Andrew Patrizio and Lisa Garforth as panellists. Donna Haraway gave us permission to use her book title as the event title, and Brandon Ballongee gave us permission to use one of his images as the event image. Friends House was chosen as a venue as it fit with LRG’s ethos and event theme, and was central and close to transport hubs.

This event also included a contribution called ‘Landfill,’ an audio performance by sensingsite, a collective at Central St Martins run by LRG members Susan Trangmar and Steven Ball. The performance and research process were inspired by the event theme, and produced especially for it.

## **Partnership Development**

LRG was represented at several conferences and meetings during 2019.  
Keil, Sterling

### **Registered Office:**

99 Western Road, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1RS

### **Company Secretary:**

David Saunders  
41 Grange Road  
LEWES  
BN7 1TS

### **Dated:**

17 May 2019