

Minutes of the 10th AGM: 3 May 2023:

Draft d2

Zoom meeting

- 1 **Welcome** from Chair (Annabel Downs). Annabel advised that the meeting was being recorded only for the purposes of producing the minutes of the meeting.

Attendees: Annabel Downs (chair), Diana Armstrong Bell, Catherine Bailey, Ruth Benson, Camilla Beresford, Helen Brown, Michael Gibson, Virginia Hinze, Robert Holden, David Jacques, Mark Loxton, Zosia Mellor, Hal Moggridge, Colin Moore, Helen Neve, Barbara Simms, Helen Tranter.

Voting: Attendees reminded that only paid up (and honorary) FOLAR members can be proposers, seconders and vote. Annabel also advised that voting for all the relevant items would be done under item 6 on the agenda.

- 2 **9th AGM (9 May 2022): Draft minutes for approval**

- .1 Corrections: none
- .2 Annabel Downs advised that the final minutes would be posted on the FOLAR website

- 3 **Matters Arising from 9th AGM**

- .1 Annabel Downs advised that most of the matters arising were covered by the Chair's and Treasurer's reports or were resolved already, additionally:
 - Item 3.1: 8th AGM Item 7.4.2: How to access the MERL virtual reading room and how to sign up for better quality images is now on the FOLAR website at: <https://www.folar.uk/using-the-li-archive>
 - Item 7.4: Annabel advised that a MERL report to FOLAR had not been received and that she had reminded MERL recently.
 - Item 7.5: Digitisation of Landscape Design Journal see item 7.2 below.

- 4 **Chair's Report**

- .1 Annabel Downs summarised the key points of her report (annexed below), particularly:
 - 10 years since FOLAR was instigated by the agreement between LI and MERL, so thanks to everyone who has supported us in any way during our first 10 years.
 - Thanks to MERL for all their support, especially: hosting the FOLAR annual symposium and providing a pop-up exhibition for each one, the 2022 one being the *Landscape of Housing* in November which attracted many students; and enabling us to contribute to the MERL's programme focusing on CARE with our *Who Cares?* series of lunchtime talks in June and October 2022
 - Jan Woudstra, Robert Holden and David Jacques organised *the Future History: teaching history in landscape schools* international 2 day conference in Sheffield in September 2022, and the associated book to be published in Autumn 2023.
 - 73 recordings of FOLAR talks have so far been posted on the FOLAR website, thanks to Tom Turner, creating a major resource.
 - In the coming year: a series of 5 talks in association with the Gardens Trust *Castles in the Air?* to compliment the 2022 *Landscape of Housing* symposium, starting 16 May 2023.

- The committee will shortly have a strategy meeting to review what we are doing and where we want to go.
 - 2023 Annual Symposium, 19 November, on *Community Gardens and Landscape*, at MERL.
 - Continuing to: support research and use of the archive; promote the archive to new audiences, kick start the oral history project, develop plans to celebrate LI 100th anniversary
- .2 Annabel congratulated the team on their achievements over the past year, and thanked MERL (particularly Guy Baxter and Caroline Gould), and The Gardens Trust for their support.
 - .3 Annabel advised that the committee membership had remained the same for the past year, and thanked them for all their work; and hence there were still 3 vacancies on committee. Anyone interested in being involved with FOLAR should contact us (see item 6.13 below).
 - .4 Annabel advised that the committee proposed to increase membership fees from £20 to £25 for ordinary members and from £50 to £60 for practices, applicable from May next year for the 2024-25 year, when the fees will have been the same for 10 years. The constitution requires the proposed fee increase to be agreed at an AGM so there will be a vote on it later in this meeting.
 - .5 Annabel invited questions on the report:
 - .6 Hal Moggridge advised that he had attended the last meeting of the *Landscapes of Post-war Infrastructure* project which made extensive use of the MERL archive, <https://www.msa.ac.uk/postwarinfrastructure/> <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBDP3ssAxFz3-X-xNvNIA4ncRLE22L3lm>
 - .7 Robert Holden advised that in relation to the housing talks, Paula Garvey had offered guided tours of Kings Cross and Elephant Park possibly in September/October 2023.

5 Treasurer's Report

- .1 Helen Neve summarised the key points of the report (annexed below). Additionally, Helen advised that:
 - FOLAR finances were firmly in the black, particularly due to the *Why so Special* events with the Gardens Trust. The annual Symposium made a slight loss which was more than made up by the associated book sales.
 - The pending strategy review by the committee was expected to propose projects which would deplete the reserves to further FOLAR's objectives (which will also be reviewed).
 - Membership provided 20% of income last year, but membership numbers were a bit erratic due to the pricing model for events which attracting new members who mostly didn't renew the following year, so efforts needed to retain new members as well as continuing events programme.
- .2 Helen invited questions on the report:
- .3 Virginia Hinze initiated a discussion on how to engage with students and how to convert student members to ordinary members when they graduate.
- .4 Helen requested everyone to renew their membership which was due on 1 May, if they hadn't already done so.

6 Election of members on committee

- 1 Annabel Downs thanked the committee members for all of their efforts during the past year. Colin Moore confirmed that the 3 officers wished to continue for the next year, 6 members of the committee wished to continue, and that the three co-opted members wished to continue as co-opted members; so FOLAR were looking for three more committee members and other helpers.

- .2 Colin proposed that, as last year, voting would be by raising hands, and that since there would already be 2 votes for each item (the proposer and seconder) the first vote for each item would be for those against, so that if there were less than 2 votes against then the item was agreed.
- .3 Minutes of AGM: Colin advised that only those at the meeting should vote: Proposed, Helen Neve; seconded, Mark Loxton; no votes against; **The minutes of the 9th AGM were agreed**
- .4 Chair's report: Proposed, Robert Holden; seconded, Hal Moggridge; no votes against; **The Chair's report was agreed**
- .5 Treasurer's report: Proposed, Helen Brown; seconded, Annabel Downs; no votes against; **The Treasurer's report was agreed**
- .6 Officers election: Colin proposed that the 3 officers should be voted for all together; Chair, Annabel Downs; Treasurer, Helen Neve; Secretary, Colin Moore: Proposed, Hal Moggridge; seconded, Mark Loxton; no votes against; **Annabel Downs as Chair, Helen Neve as Treasurer and Colin Moore as Secretary were elected**
- .7 The other 6 committee members election: Helen Brown, Caroline Fraser, Robert Holden, Hal Moggridge, Mark Loxton, Jan Woudstra. Colin proposed that the 6 other committee members should be voted for all together. Proposed, Helen Neve; seconded, Barbara Simms; no votes against: **The 6 other members of the committee were elected**
- .9 Membership fees increase; Proposed, Helen Neve; seconded, Robert Holden; no votes against: **The proposed membership fee increases starting 1 May 2024 were agreed**
- .10 Co-opted members of committee: Rupinder Chawlia, Bettina Kirkham and Camilla Beresford.
- .11 Activities and roles of members:
- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| LI liaison | Hal Moggridge |
| Fundraising | Helen Neve, Mark Loxton + vacancy |
| Promotion | Mark Loxton, Caroline Fraser |
| Membership | Colin Moore, Helen Neve, + vacancy |
| Communications | Caroline Fraser + vacancy |
| Website | Helen Neve, Annabel Downs, |
| Social media | Rupinder Chawlia (Instagram) + Annabel Downs (Twitter) |
| Symposia | Robert Holden, Camilla Beresford |
| Other events | Annabel Downs, Mark Loxton, Robert Holden, Colin Moore;
Helen Neve, Camilla Beresford (Eventbrite and Zoom) |
| Oral history | Helen Neve + vacancy |
| Acquisitions | Hal Moggridge |
| Telling stories | Colin Moore, Helen Neve |
| Second-hand books | Bettina Kirkham |
| LI 100 project | Robert Holden, Camilla Beresford |
| Born Digital | vacancy + |
| Why archives important | Rupinder Chawlia, Caroline Fraser, Annabel Downs |
- .12 Hal Moggridge advised that given the current circumstances he did not feel he could be effective as the LI liaison person. Committee to discuss at next committee meeting.
- .13 **Annabel invited anyone to volunteer to assist** with any of the activities of FOLAR and advised that FOLAR were currently being held back by a lack of volunteers to help to progress the work of the organisation. If interested contact anyone on the committee or email info@folar.uk

7 Any Other Business

7.1 Barbara Simms reported that:

- a new MA and PhD in Garden History was starting in September at University of Buckingham
- and The Institute of Historical Research is starting an MA in History, Place and Community, in conjunction with Historic England

Annabel requested Barbara to write a few words on these for the next FOLAR Bulletin, within a week.

7.2 Digitisation of the Journal was raised by Annabel Downs, Helen Tranter and David Jacques at different times during the meeting: Annabel advised that she had asked Caroline Gould (MERL) again recently whether there had been any progress with digital access the Landscape Design Journals and hadn't received a response yet. The problem appeared to be that MERL requires LI permission to proceed with the JSTOR proposal (which has not been forthcoming although the proposal was advantageous to LI). Robert Holden suggested FOLAR should contact the new LI President when elected.

7.3 Annabel thanked everyone for attending the AGM. Colin thanked Annabel for all her work for FOLAR including being chair for the past year and the coming year, and for chairing this meeting.

8 Date of 11th AGM (2023-24):

TBC: May 2024: probably by Zoom

CM 30 May 2023

FOLAR AGM 3 May 2023

Chair's Report

FOLAR is a friends group of landscape architects and other interested parties tasked with supporting and advising The MERL (University of Reading), on behalf of the LI, with regard to maintaining and developing the archive and library.

FOLAR was also established to support the Landscape Institute in the delivery of its charitable objects: *'to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for the benefit of the public by promoting the arts and sciences of Landscape Architecture...and for that purpose to foster and encourage the dissemination of knowledge relating to Landscape Architecture and the promotion of research and education therein...'*

We are beginning our tenth year – so this is cause for a bit of a cheer all round and thanks to everyone who has kept this vessel afloat – FOLAR members, speakers, listeners, our friends at MERL and the LI, more recently our partners at the Gardens Trust, and many others who have made contact with us or responded to our requests

This report outlines FOLAR's activities since May 2022, and our plans and aspirations for the next 12 months. Our previous AGM was May 2022 on zoom.

Summary of April 2022 – May 2023

FOLAR has had a successful year particularly with our symposium and programme of zoom talks.

We were invited again by MERL to participate in their events programme on their theme of Time to Care with a series of 4 live talks at Reading. We chose to explore the topic of **who cares?** about landscape and the first two events (three presentations) in June looked at historic and modern designed sites in Reading, and the second pair in October were based on research imagining future landscapes and how to include the social value of land in decision making.

As we always endeavour to do now, and grateful thanks to Tom Turner for leading the way, all 4 talks were recorded by MERL and are now freely available on our website. Lunchtime talks in Reading do not attract the same size of audience as evening zoom talks, so we are minded to explore organising these with MERL (if we are invited again) as live and digital hybrid events.

Our annual symposium - **Landscape for housing** - hosted at the MERL in November was a live event. It attracted our highest number of student delegates which was extremely pleasing. The three speakers covered New Ash Green, Byker and Walter Segal self-build housing. These talks were recorded and are available on FOLAR website. MERL organised an exciting pop up exhibition to accompany the symposium and this included Sylvia Crowe's own copy of Walter Segal's *Home and Environment*.

We plan to add a series of 5 zoom talks - **Castles in the air?** - to complement the symposium theme, and also to explore what we can learn and reuse from earlier housing schemes. These talks will run on Tuesday, and on one Wednesday, evenings in May and June.

Following our successful collaboration with the Gardens Trust (GT) last year with the **Why so special?** series, we are delighted to be running these talks in partnership with them again. Tickets are available from GT and link from FOLAR website – if you haven't already bought them... We are also planning a second series with the GT for the autumn this year.

FOLAR committee members Jan Woudstra and Robert Holden have played a major role in the Sheffield University - **Future History: teaching history in landscape schools** - two day conference in September 2022. This really is a vital topic as landscape history is becoming increasingly marginalised in landscape schools and, where courses are available, these are not as much favoured as other options by students. Lots of comments, suggestions and practical approaches were shared, and thanks to the efficiencies of Jan and his co-organisers and co-editors – Robert Holden and David Jacques - the book of the conference is already with the printers.

FOLAR was established when the archive was gifted to MERL. July this year will be our 10th anniversary. During this time, not only have we gathered a growing band of loyal supporters, members, subscribers and committee members, but amongst other things we have organised, published and made available via our website **73 recorded talks**. 73 !!

Our **strategy meeting**, to be held in the next few months, will review where we are going and what we want to achieve in the years ahead, continuing FOLAR's promotion of the landscape archive to wider audiences.

I have a feeling we will never be short of good ideas, but we are short of people to help, shape and deliver. I don't know if the strategy will result in revolution or evolution, but I hope it will keep us dancing on our toes to remain relevant and curious and wanting to know and share more, to ensure that what of value our forebears learnt and achieved is not forgotten with today's professionals. Also of growing concern is that the more recent landscape architects' project records, invariably now born digital, are not being disposed of when the liability period has expired.

Proposed activities May 2023 - May 2024:

- Continuing **promotion of the LI Archive** in every way we can
- Kick starting our **Oral History project**.
- Supporting **Women of the welfare state** – exhibition and talks at Reading in May; and we have alerted some of our speakers to an invitation to speak on their topics with some successes.
- Continuing **assistance with inquiries** (eg on Margaret Maxwell etc)
- Continuing work **on LI centenary**, developing plans and project partners to celebrate this event
- **More talks** – continuing existing series eg women in landscape no 4
- **Building on the Why so special series** – with talks on other 20c designed listed landscapes, site visits, other actions.
- Looking forward to publication of Michael Gilson's book on LI founder **Richard Sudell**

- **Exploring what can be done with born-digital archives – NELA (Network of European Landscape Archives)**
- Continuing to nudge practices to consider safely archiving their significant projects, and continuing to nudge MERL to collect born-digital material
- Add more angles on **why and how landscape architects use archives**, to complement Hal's video on the FOLAR website.
- **CPD training for landscape architects using landscape archives**, preferably at The MERL and recorded, this has been postponed from pre Covid times.
- **Increasing FOLAR members** and sphere of influence
- **Increasing links with LI branches and other groups**
- **NELA** - I have sat on the back benches of monthly NELA discussions; Guy and Luca are much more involved in projects with European partners. It is a dynamic group of landscape archivists and landscape academics, and we look forward to more engagement between FOLAR and NELA.

Continuing Promotion of Landscape Research

FOLAR continues to provide information for PhD students in landscape research and we are extremely encouraged (and excited!) by the topics being covered, and the growing numbers of students.

We responded to Berks Gardens Trust inquiry for information about the Cement and Concrete association HQ at Wexham Springs and Fulmer Grange where Geoffrey (and Susan?) Jellicoe and Michael Brown produced design elements.

FOLAR was project partner to AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council) **Landscapes of Post War Infrastructure** – led by Luca Csepely-Knorr and Richard Brook. This has now completed, including the production of an excellent film featuring Hal Moggridge. From Prof Csepely Knorr's list of conclusions, this project is the beginning of 30 new initiatives. Publications:

<https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FT006137%2F1>

FOLAR has been invited as project partner to AHRC project **Women of the Welfare Landscape**, celebrating Brenda Colvin, the centenary of her practice, and new research on many of the other 'hidden women' involved in the landscape profession. Led by Luca Csepely-Knorr (now professor of landscape architecture at Liverpool University!), this includes a travelling exhibition, and the next stop is day conference on 15 May at the [Garden Museum](#) London. For **Visions of Welfare** international conference on 2nd, 9th and 15th May see [Programme](#)

FOLAR contributed to the proposed AHRC research bid led by a multi-disciplinary group now led by Sarah Spooner UEA, on **Wellbeing and modern landscape design: unlocking knowledge from the Landscape Institute archive**; sadly the bid was not successful

On our committee

I want to thank all my colleagues on the FOLAR committee for all their commitment, ideas and actions. It is a fabulous group of people to be a part of.

I would like to thank MERL, particularly Guy Baxter, Caroline Gould and Jennifer Glanville for their support and the opportunities they have offered us.

I would like to thank the LI for their continued financial support for their archive. I very much hope that the board of trustees and advisory council will accept our open invitation to visit the archive at MERL,

hear about who uses it and for what purposes, and that this may help them to understand how and why this is such a precious and active asset to the Landscape Institute.

To our fans - thank you again for your support, interest, engagement, encouragement – this is what keeps us carrying on!

Please get in touch if you would like to help / join the FOLAR committee.

Annabel Downs 16 April 2023

FOLAR AGM 3 May 2023

Treasurer's Report

Once again, I can report that FOLAR's finances remain firmly in the black.

Post pandemic, FOLAR's income and expenditure have both increased: income has doubled, and expenditure has also risen and, from a very low base, now absorbs more than half our turnover.

The headline figures are as follows:

	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Closing Balance
2022/23	£8,955.88	£4,984.71	£2,810.62	£11,129.97
2021/22	£6,769.65	£2,400.11	£213.88	£8,955.88

Our main activity for 2022/23 has, once again, been the events programme. Thanks to the insight, inspiration and sheer hard graft of our chair and her team, FOLAR's 'Why so Special?' series was a outstanding success and we are hugely grateful to our partners, the Gardens Trust, whose technical, promotional and professional support was outstanding. It resulted in excellent audience numbers and reliable income. FOLAR's contributions to The MERL's 'Who Cares' series was also a success but, as a 'face to face' event, it highlighted the contrast in out-reach which Zoom based activities can offer.

With this in mind, FOLAR approached the first annual symposium in a post pandemic world with some caution. It was agreed to offer an in-person only event, in the knowledge that a financial loss was possible. Again, thanks to our symposium organiser and some inspired thinking from our chair, the symposium was nearly a sell out and, with supporting book sales, just managed to remain solvent.

Lessons learnt and future activity: by adopting a fairly cautious approach during and immediately after the pandemic, FOLAR has survived and remained in the black. I would now suggest that we need to change our approach and use more of our surplus for promoting, celebrating, expanding and protecting the landscape archive. As Treasurer, I would wish to come to the next AGM with a much lower surplus and a much higher investment in fulfilling FOLAR's objectives.

I would suggest the following objectives for the year 2023/24

- Invest in technology to support hybrid events ie simultaneous face to face/remote access
- Continue with and expand the successful events programme
- Review and update website
- Restart FOLAR's oral history project
- Develop a range of new projects
- Expand our volunteer base and recruit more committee members

Membership: members provide over 20% of FOLAR's income as well as a valuable knowledge resource, and support and critical friend functions. FOLAR receives the full subscription if it is paid via standing order or electronic banking and about 90% if paid via the web site. Students join for free and speakers become honorary members for one year. The table below summarises FOLAR membership for the current year (2022/23) and two preceding years (2021/22 and 2020/21).

FOLAR membership to end of membership year (April)	2023	2022	2021
Individual members	57	98	59
Honorary members	11	23	Incl in above
Student members	34	5	7
Practice members	2	27	10
Total	104	153	76
Non Member Mailing list	1,300	960	655

So, please, do renew your memberships on May 1st and encourage others to join as well. We propose to continue the same membership rates for 2023/24, ie £20 for individual members, £50 for practice members, and free to students. After a decade without an increase in membership fees, we are proposing an increased subscription for 2024/25 (individual membership £25 and Practice membership £60; free student membership would remain).

In conclusion I am still of the opinion that FOLAR offers good value for money and that our finances will be sufficient to offer a diverse programme of activities throughout the current financial year.

A summary of income and expenditure for 2022/3 is given in the tables below.

Bank balance as of 01/4/22	£8,955.88
-----------------------------------	------------------

Income received:

Item	Income £	
Membership Subscriptions	1,131.92	
Event income	3,713.29	
Book Sales	124.50	
Donations	15.00	
Total		£4,984.71

Expenditure:

Item	Expenditure	
Digital infrastructure/expertise	1,629.52	
Event expenses	1,146.15	
Miscellaneous	34.95	
Total		£2,810.62

Bank balance as of 31/3/22	£11,129.97
-----------------------------------	-------------------