

FOLAR + LI Candidates Responses to FOLAR Questions re LI 2021 Election

FOLAR invited the five **LI candidates standing for President Elect and Vice President** positions in the LI elections to respond to three questions in connection with the Landscape Institute's Archive at the MERL. We sent out the questions on May 10 and ask for a response by midday 14th. These are the questions we wanted to have answers to:

1. What are your top 3 priorities as LI President Elect?
2. FOLAR membership's concern is with the LI Archive at the MERL What are your views on the LI Archive?
3. The funding of the LI Archive has been successively cut by the LI, while the archive itself is expanding and serving more people and promoting the LI as it was intended to do.

This is although the fact that before the EGM of April 2013 when it was resolved to donate the archive to MERL, the membership was informed in writing by the Trustees as part of the notice of the meeting, that "*the Landscape Institute will make a regular financial contribution to MERL which will allow MERL to make our archive accessible, to catalogue and over time digitise selected parts of our material and use all of it as part of the education and advocacy work of the Landscape Institute.*"

The 2020-21 LI funding of £10,000 pa didn't cover the archivist for one day a week for a year. The final decision by the LI Board for 2021-22 has yet to be determined.

What position will you take with regard to funding for the LI Archive at MERL?

We received responses from three candidates. We said we would make their answers available to our members and supporters. This is also available on the FOLAR website. All the candidates' manifestos are on the [LI website](#)

Voting is now open, it closes on June 1. If you have a vote please do use it.

LI President Elect Candidate - Brodie McAllister:

1.

- Work with but challenge the policy context to aid influence, developing an evidence base, embedding the social sciences and human ecology into CPD and university programmes, campaigning for statutory environmental departments (to ensure Landscape Infrastructure), led by landscape professionals and separate to planning departments.
- Accelerate delivery of a more outward facing, visible, and broader profession (to aid growth, relevance, influence, our identity and expertise) that accredits more diverse courses, fast tracks the experienced practitioner entry route, engages the public in design review, with our publications and trains us to be more internationally orientated.
- Develop a more listening, partnering, engaging, diverse and democratic voice through simple and transparent governance within the profession so that when we reach LI 100, we are celebrating a peak in our collective and individual potential to promote a landscape led approach and a real grasping of the nettle of change.

2.

It is a valuable (education, research and advocacy) resource for all ages which should be developed, updated and available to LI members. It has yet to meet its potential in promoting what we do.

As we move towards the LI 100th anniversary it is essential (to our future as a profession) we think ahead and it plays its part in helping to define our identity and deepen our understanding. It is part of our intellectual capital. Many members, I believe, would like to see it periodically displayed for the public digitally and physically alongside current work from practices and continued talks from FOLAR.

3.

Funding should be in line with the spirit of the Trustees' (pre April 2013) promise, which means its level allows the archive to be accessible, to be catalogued, and selected parts digitised enabling all of it to be part of our advocacy and education imperatives to the benefit of us and the public. We can afford that. We can't afford not to do it. It is simply not fair or realistic to ask an over stretched MERL or a few already hard working volunteers to generate their own sufficient funds for its full development.

If the LI feels (alongside MERL) that pursuing grants is a feasible and economic option to part fund archive care and development then the LI should fund the grant application, using expert advice from all parties.

LI Vice President Candidate - Peter Hutchinson

My manifesto sets out my 3 priorities should I be elected as LIVP-namely to :-

- 1 Increase secretarial and financial support for the Branches and its members- a bottom up and a top down approach
- 2 Value support and actively encourage smaller local environmental projects collectively they become a force for good
- 3 Actively support academic and apprenticeship education-and to recruit the next generation of landscape architects

To expand on the above 3 priorities.....

I support....

1.. the LI's **Corporate Strategy**, & value the Importance of the institute's **centralised functions** for **strategic decisions** made on behalf of and for the membership ...but would encourage it to **'loosen the reigns'** and provide more **administrative and financial support** at **local level** and **trust** them with more responsibility, **empower the branches** to engage directly with their members - a **'bottom up'** rather than **'top down'** approach...**relax central control**....make the institute **less London centric**, allow individual **branches, membership focus** to develop and blossom

2.. **small is beautiful**...we as an institute tend to concentrate on **larger prestigious projects** missing/undervaluing the **smaller, 'less interesting' ones** that address **local issues** ...but these can **engage & resonate more** with community & the individual make **an impact collectively**. This pandemic has taught us how **invaluable is open space & fresh air** to our **health and wellbeing**- Rewilding roadsides, derelict spaces, 'tennis court 'forests', repossessing lay-bys, urban allotments ...remember **"mighty oaks from little acorns grow"**

3.. For those who don't know me I have been a **landscape architect** running my **multi award winning practice**, I am also an **illustrator, product designer and artist**, and former university **Teaching Fellow** - unsurprisingly I am **passionate about teaching** and support **expanding education UK wide** at **academic and apprenticeship** levels-and naturally to **lifelong learning**...we need to **double the number of landscape architects** in the next 5 years if we are going to be a force in delivering the LI 5 year Strategy especially on Climate change

I would also like to add a 4th priority

4.. To **re-establish & strengthen links** to the Irish Landscape Institutewe have **so much in common**-many members and practices work and thrive in both jurisdictions- to share and gain from each other- especially with the **ramifications of Brexit**

But all of these above priorities are secondary to the **LI's 5 year Strategic Vision of tackling /reversing the effects of Climate Change** -its effects on the environment and our own very existence..as described in my VP video presentation

As to your other 2 questions

2

FOLAR/LI Archive.. the archive of any institute is so important to any institute..but so important to landscape architects which is made up of both texts and imagery. When I LINI co-chair with Emily Smyth we tried to connect with the LI on getting a repository for LINI archive but we were met with a bit of a blank wall. Their priority was to protect the existing archive and document it which was understandable. So they were not taking on any new material until this exercise was completed. We were asked to find a local repository until this exercise was completed. Even then they would only accept material on a limited basis .I presume tis applied to all other branches-though I can't confirm this is true. Maybe I am out of date??

LINI celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016 and held a conference to celebrate the event. There is much information available on it including a powerpoint presentation and digital wall chart/timeline showing to history of the profession in NI 19662016...as well as an exhibition projects. There is a wealth of information available here but I believe none of it is in MERL and IL archive-bar the book 'Archive Robert Carson' of which I co-edited with Emily Smyth and sally Visick...I could be wrong

My own archive of projects, drawings, illustrations articles etc spanning 50 years as a Li member is going the Irish Architectural Archive IAA in Dublin and not the LI or Public records Office Northern Ireland PPRONI as they didn't come back to me despite reminders and promises

I am not sure if other members/ branches have the same experiences ?...hopefully things have moved on and my experiences are not 'the norm'??..I am not angry but more disappointed -I hope I am wrong and you can show me the light and renew my faith in the archive !!

3

It is really disappointing that the LI funding to Merl/archive has been cut..I am not totally surprised...was on the Advisory Council when archive went to Merl and the LI funding was secured-sadly this has stopped
..I would be very happy to support the Institute change this drying up of support and funds for the archive and how our wonderful past can be conserved for future generations of landscape architects and open to can access it—I fully believe the 'past informs the future'- not having an archive that is healthy ,properly funded and continually replenished with the work of membership and practices is unacceptable

LI Vice President Candidate - Steve Morgan

1. What are your top 3 priorities as LI Vice President?

My priorities are set out within my manifesto. **I want to see the LI a membershiped professional body which:**

- **Is more responsive, supportive & collaborative.** *It is my view that the LI needs to listen, engage and harness the potential of its membership to help advance our collective cause of focusing on being a chartered body for the landscape profession. An educational charity that promotes the art and science of landscape practice and helps to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for the public benefit.*
- **Has respect for & encourages greater diversity.** *I believe we need to diversity the LI, both in terms of its gender balance, BAME and LBGQT+, but also in terms of age. I would like to see a greater effort to promote Landscape as a profession (Via #ChooseLandscape) but also respect retired members who in my view should be able to vote and contribute more to the LI. Everyone should be equally welcomed and their different views and opinions should be heard.*
- **Resolves the issues outlined with the Independent Review.** *In 2019 I decided to put myself forward and became LI Honorary Treasurer, but what I discovered was alarming... weak governance, poor communication and management. The LI wasn't listening or harnessing its memberships potential. I left to expose these issues (and more) which helped to kick-start the Independent Review. The findings of this review verified many of my concerns. I understand there is some unease about implementing the recommendations from the review, but I feel absolutely committed to it, to help improve the way we work together. Because to face together the many industry challenges effectively like the post Covid & Brexit business environment, environmental and planning policy changes, the climate and biodiversity emergency, biosecurity, changes in land management policy, we must also put our house in-order.*
- *I have also outlined other priorities which aims for an LI which: 1) the LI becoming a trusted influencer on government policy, 2) works proactively with professional bodies & universities and 3) promotes #ChooseLandscape to bring new professionals into our industry.*

2. FOLAR membership's concern is with the LI Archive at the MERL. What are your views on the LI Archive? And what position will you take with regard to funding for the LI Archive at MERL?

I am a strong supporter of our archive at MERL. When I took over as Hon Treasurer we invested £20k in that year, but the following years budget that was reduced due to potential cuts needed to cope with BREXIT and COVID. However, the thinking was that this should go back to up, if the financial impacts were not as significant as modelled. I then left to expose some of the major issues, as I outlined above. So I was no longer involved with overseeing that this agreement was upheld. While as VicePresident I'm would not be in a position to increase the archives funding (because this is a LI Board decision), what I can do is commit to proactively support FOLAR as Vice-President. With LI 100 not so many years away, I would be happy to work with FOLAR to develop a plan to be presented to the Board to show how the archive can contribute to this incredibly important event. Doing this would also help raise the achieves profit with the board, demonstrate the existing value the archive

has and how additional funding could be used to make ready and use the archive during LI 100. Influencing the board is the way to secure more money for the archive for the future. LI 100 provides an important event to hang this around.

16 May 2021

LI President Elect Candidate – Christine House:

Top 3 priorities

Education
The Green Infrastructure Agenda
Sustainability and Climate Change

LI Archive

Throughout my career I have been actively involved in the historical environment directly employing cultural heritage experts and field archaeologists in my former position as Director with Wardell Armstrong. I therefore understand the importance of the archives and the important role they have to play in our knowledge of heritage related matters.

Funding of MERL

At this point in time it is not possible for me to give an informed opinion with regard to what is required in terms of funding for the LI archive at the MERL. If elected as President Elect, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this in detail with you and your colleagues at the MERL in order to ensure that the invaluable LI Archive continues to have a viable future.

18 May 2021