

The Landscape Institute 2024 AGM Q&A Report

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Question		Asker Name	Answer
1	Haslam referred to "closure of the London office" and Hughes referred to continuing rental of Tottenham Ct Road. What is the position on office space in London?	Tony Edwards	We are continuing to have a service delivery function and use of a lounge space at Tottenham Court Road . We no longer have dedicated office space.
2	What is the underlying cause of the reduced income in the past year? Is it dropping membership, less job adverts, less sponsorship etc?	Paul Reynolds	Membership has remained static. The drop is in commercial income and we have been prioritising redressing this. Jonathan will be leading this work
3	Can you tell us what is that TGN please? I missed the reference number. thank you	Anne Westover	TGN06/19 https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/ It is about visualisation
4	You are incorrect that you are following CC Guidelines. Any online meetings have to be defined in the meeting strategy, which has not been done in your documentation. Also the LI cannot be above the law - Byng V London Life concerning meetings.	Edward Hutchison	We are following the new Charity Commission guidance which was published in July 2024 in light of the changing ways in which people participate in meetings and communicate since the pandemic. I can confirm that following the publication of the new Charity Commission guidance the Board approved a new meeting policy and process in September this year which can be found on the AGM page on our website. It sets out that General Meetings may be held in any format as determined by the Board for each event.
6	As we are now 7 months into the new financial year, would it possible to have a brief update on progress against the 2024/25 priorities?	Simon Cramp	From a financial perspective we are on target for achieving our reduced deficit of £100k. This has been achieved by oversetting the reduction in income with reduced expenditure. We are on target with most of priorities for the year which have mainly been foundation building. Our two new Directors will help us to elevate our impact going forward. I have recently published an update on the website (add link) and would encourage you to look at the detail. I am really pleased with the progress we have made.
7	If no office how will you deal with hard copy documents and library?	Anne Westover	We have made arrangements for printing and storage facilities until our new arrangements finalised
8	if you do not have the use of office space where do the LI staff all work from	Tony Edwards	Staff work remotely but regularly find opportunities to meet in different spaces to work together and collaborate. We also have access to office space on a flexible basis and in a variety of locations across the UK.
9	Can you just confirm the current membership numbers of the LI in Nov 2024?	Pamela Morris	5803 on 12 November

10	<p>The accounts show a deficit in our finances once again of 300k and the institute expect to clear this deficit by 25/26</p> <p>question how has the institute been able to fund this deficit-out of its reserves or a loan?</p> <p>if the answer is out of our reserves can i be assured that the money [1.2k] raised from the sale of barnard mews is ringfenced and safe?</p>	Peter Hutchinson	<p>At the AGM in January 24 we reported the decisions taken by the Board in respect of the Fund and it is recorded in the Trustees 2023/24 Annual Report. The Property Fund was a designated fund. Designated funds are earmarked formally by the trustees for a particular purpose. They can be formally undesignated by the Board and returned to the general fund or re-designated for a different purpose. The responsibility of the Board is to make sure the funds work in the best interests of the organisation. We are living in a rapidly changing world and the changes we have seen over the past three or four years have fundamentally altered the way we live and work. The shift in social practices and the pandemic have led to significant and persistent change and digital change has now reached the point that it underpins the way we work and communicate. Investment in a freehold headquarters is therefore no longer seen by the Board as in the best interests of the organisation and it consequently took the decision to re-designate the Fund as the Strategic Development Fund and to commit £400k of that fund to deliver project kestrel – the new digital home for landscape professionals and the Institute. At the same time the Board agreed changes to the way we allocate the interest from our investments which will enable us to restore the fund whilst at the same time support the General Fund and fund the current operational deficit through the General Fund. We are on track to meet this commitment and to return the Institute to a surplus position in 2025/26 and to return the value of the Fund over the subsequent two or three years.</p>
12	<p>I am regularly giving training in this wider technical area and struggling with how slow the LI has responded to the issues that TGN06/19 has created in planning since 2019.</p> <p>There is no confidence in photography & visualisations going into planning by landscape practices and it is creating a problem of low confidence in the profession.</p> <p>We need transparency and demonstration of technical knowledge.</p>	Mike Spence	<p>Delivering a plan for the review of our GVLIA and TNG06/19 guidance is a priority for the new Director of Policy and Public Affairs. We are committed to having the new Standing Committees in place by March 2025 by which time we will have completed all the preparatory work and collated the relevant data, reference materials and intelligence from members to inform the reviews.</p>
13	Can we have more social events arranged by landscape institute?	huiying jiang	We are planning more in-person events going forward and these will include networking opportunities
15	Jonathan : why no LI leaflet for schools to give to students to promote recruitment to aid recruitment?	Robert Holden	We will be reviewing how we promote landscape as a profession of choice for students at all levels of education, and as part of that we want to make sure that we have the most persuasive and impactful resources, which may include such leaflets, to make that case.
16	Why are no urban design programmes accredited by the Landscape Institute?	Robert Holden	It is an early priority for the new Director of Membership and Professional Standards to connect with our university partners and to work closely with the Education & Membership Committee, and the Accreditation

			Panel, to explore what future steps we can take on accreditation in alignment with the Competency Framework.
17	Jonathan Ellis - what are you doing to ensure we have sufficient landscape architecture courses attended by UK citizens . Arranging for existing staff to meet is not the problem - the real problem is the shortage of newly qualified staff working into the Uk market made worse by the recent rise in student costs.	Tony Edwards	Encouraging more students joining landscape courses is critical to the future pipeline for the profession. It is a key priority, working with our university partners, as part of our emerging education strategy.
18	This is not a question that needs answering today but it would be good for the LI to review how many members attending this AGM are and are not volunteers on committees or branches as this may give an idea of member engagement and current desire to engage.	stephen mann	Going forward this would be one of a number of useful engagement metrics
19	Are you able to say more about the "Quick wins - government facing" that you mentioned during your presentation?	Simon Cramp	At the moment Belinda is getting out and meeting as many people as possible (e.g. TCPA, RTPI, Learning through Landscapes....) and doing some broad stakeholder mapping. When the Board has agreed priorities we will do some detailed power mapping and target particular stakeholders.
20	It would be good to understand which stakeholders the LI is concentrating on.	Henry Penner	We will be able to give a comprehensive answer next year.
21	If the LI is open and transparent, why are the Board minutes not published promptly? When I looked recently, were no Board minutes since December 2023?	Helen Tranter	<p>Trustee meetings and their discussions are confidential. However when a decision has been reached by the Board as a whole that decision is reported to members with a clear explanation of the reasons for that decision. This is how we ensure every member receives the same information and explanation.</p> <p>It is for that reason that an update from the Chair of the Board following each Board meeting is now being published/circulated, giving an outline of key decisions made and the context around what was considered by the Board in reaching those decisions. This update is circulated to all members and is available on the website. A similar report is also being circulated by the President after each Council meeting.</p> <p>The Board feel this is a much clearer, and more accessible way of communicating the outcomes of Board meetings to members.</p>
22	Are there any plans for a mutual recognition agreement between UK and US & Australia for chartership? Or at least for the LI to recognise accredited university degrees from those countries? RIBA has a mutual recognition agreement with the US, Australia, and New Zealand.	Miza Moreau	We do have recognition of overseas' programmes for Associate Membership. There is reciprocity arrangement in place with IFLA organisations but we carry out additional scrutiny to safeguard our standards. Historically we have had people with degrees and experience in other countries join the pathway at the right level.

23	<p>Landscape Planning is the main growth area in the job market. There are not enough landscape planners. We need many many more.</p> <p>There is no clear academic route currently. So the LI has a responsibility for how we are going to increase numbers in this area.</p> <p>It is a completely different profession to design and it is important that the LI recognises its importance. Masterclasses, training, sharing good practice etc is needed. The LI hasnt a good record in this area and this MUST improve</p>	Mike Spence	<p>We raise this at every meeting with Government and other professions. We are working hard to influence the government planning agenda to ensure that landscape is maintained as a key part of the planning system and why we came up with our asks of government prior to the election and have submitted a comprehensive response to the NPPF review. It is also the central theme of the Jellicoe Lecture at the end of November this year. The Education & Membership Committee is also looking at landscape planning and looking at changing from full accreditation to Landscape Approved Courses to widen our net and reach more people to bring more people into the profession more quickly. NPPF consultation response is here: https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/news/landscape-institute-calls-for-landscape-led-development-in-response-to-government-consultation-on-planning-reform/</p>
24	Please can we see all others attending this meeting	Edward Hutchison	<p>We used a specialist AGM meeting platform which enables members to access the meeting and interact through, raising of hands and a Q&A feature as well as vote securely. It is a system used by a wide range of membership organisations and charities because it enables more members to participate and vote wherever they are with no need to travel. I don't know if you watched the National Trust AGM this year but they used a similar system and members questions were read out by the facilitator and there was no ability for members participating remotely to speak. There is currently no system that can support so many members using their camera facility.</p>
25	How much is the LI paying MERL for our archive and is this going to be increased as we get nearer to the LI centenary	Tony Edwards	<p>We make an annual donation to them of £10,000. We will be working closely with FOLAR and MERL in the leadup to our Centenary to develop a plan to deliver what we want to achieve from the centenary. We still have to consult on what we want to achieve from the centenary but we will want to look forward to the next 100 years as well as respect and cherish our incredible history.</p>
26	It was sad to hear that Karen is leaving the LI - she has been a brilliant contact point for the branches - something lacking for a long time. Can you confirm if she is being replaced, or if someone else will be picking up this key role as a liaison between branches and the LI Office?	Paul Reynolds	<p>Yes we are sorry to see her leave us. We will be recruiting to this role which is critical to the interface with branches specifically and members more widely. In the meantime, the team will make sure that we provide continuity in that service to branches.</p>
28	Why no Bachelors and Masters level apprenticeship programmes accredited or approved by the Landscape Institute? Most development professions (e.g. RIBA, RTPI, ICE, etc.) have several such programmes.	Robert Holden	<p>This is a really important area. We do have a Level 7 programme but it is not yet supported by an educational institution</p>
29	Some Landscape Architecture courses are under threat of closure : is the LI addressing this	Robert Holden	<p>We're working closely with universities to understand and mitigate those pressures - This is a really important issue.</p>
30	Re. Landscape Planning - we need to be aware of the financial pressures in the public sector and the increasing challenge of retaining these and other skills that are necessary to deliver key environmental priorities	Simon Cramp	<p>Yes, we are very aware and building that into our plans for addressing workforce issues</p>

31	Is it possible to know approximately how many student members of the LI there are currently?	Lucy Jenkins	952
Questions asked in advance			
1	The volume of investments and assets of the Institute seem to show significant increase. It unclear how these investments are structured. In line with other Charitable bodies would the Institute consider agenda for publishing based on independent advice on financial policy, an Ethical and equitable charitable investment policy, to be devised?	Adam Cook	The current investment policy was updated and approved by the Board this year and includes a section on Ethical and Sustainable Considerations. This policy will be published on our website and do please get back to us once it is if you have any further questions. In addition, we have significant internal guidance around our investment and the Board has ensured our investment manager has strong ESG credentials which are applied for the benefit of the LI's assets. However, the value of the LI's investments is not sufficient to warrant a bespoke mandate
2	Could the Institute consider adding agenda for a transparent ethical standard in a code of conduct of practice and research?		Yes this will certainly be considered as a part of the review of the Code of Practice that is to be undertaken next year.
3.1	I put this question to the 2023 AGM and received an unsatisfactory answer. Please could I have a specific and numerical answer: "2023 LI Awards: what were the costs of mounting the event and what was the revenue from holding the event?". Please also give the figures for the 2024 LI Awards	Tom Turner	The next Awards Ceremony will take place in the Autumn of 2025 while we take time to review all the different feedback we have received from members and come forward with future options thereafter. What I can say on the cost is that the 2025 ceremony will be cost neutral.
3.2	I put this question to the 2023 AGM and received an unsatisfactory answer. Please could I have a specific and numerical answer: "Occupancy of the LI HQ: (1) what is the pattern of usage? (2) how many staff visit the office on an average day? (3) what is the average duration of a visit by a member of staff to the office?"	Tom Turner	We have taken advantage of a break in the lease of the offices in Tottenham Court Road to close them and to take the opportunity to review our future requirements for office and meeting space in light of changing ways of working and communication. The review will take into account feedback from members on their needs. There are lots of different exciting options and I am confident that we can find a solution which will reflect our values and meet our requirements across the UK. While this review is underway we will be retaining our registered office and a service hub at Tottenham Court Road and our staff team will be working remotely temporarily with frequent team meetings organised.
3.3	I put this request to the 2023 AGM and received an unsatisfactory answer. Please will you (1) set out how the LI Corporate relates to the Royal Charter Objectives (2) define how the objectives will be "identifiable and capable of being proved by evidence" (3) have an open discussion with the membership, both online and offline, to consider alternatives and discuss their costs, benefits, merits and drawbacks.	Tom Turner	The future structure of our Strategy will be for the Board to decide early in 2025 in light of all the feedback from members and stakeholders it has sought. You will have already seen our commitment to prioritising our core objectives of membership and professional standards and education and careers going forward and that will be at the heart of our refreshed strategy. The Board will also be agreeing key performance indicators and these will enable members to monitor delivery against our commitments.

4	<p>Given that the LI's Skills surveys have identified the need to promote a wider, more diverse membership and to encourage early career landscape architects to take up chartership (and that members subscriptions bolster resources), should the Landscape Institute consider adopting the RIBA's model for Registered Practices?</p> <p>This requires (as below):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at least one full-time principal to be a chartered member; - at least one in eight of all staff to be chartered members; and - all work to be supervised by a chartered member. <p>(Currently the LI requirement seems to be the same for a practice of 2 people, as for a practice of 100s).</p>	Lucy Jenkins	<p>This is an interesting idea. I am aware that the Registered Practices scheme has been under review for some time. As part of the work to refresh the member value proposition for individual members and for Registered Practices that I am picking up, we will looking closely at the routes to membership, and exploring ways to promote a wider and more diverse membership. We will also be looking at ways to promote the pathway to chartership.</p>
5	<p>I would like to know why the LI doesn't celebrate new CMLI members in anyway whatsoever. No ceremony, certificate or even a website post. I became a CMLI in June and on request I was sent a pdf of my certificate and told it would cost £20 for a hard copy. This hardly endears new members to the LI and yet the LI needs all its members both to engage with it and for their fees. Please can the LI rethink it's policy on this?</p>	Clare Birbeck	<p>Thank you for raising this really important point. This has been raised by others and reinforces how important it is for us to recognise the commitment and hard work it takes to reach CMLI status. Therefore I can confirm that we will be reviewing how we do this and how this is acknowledged.</p>
6	<p>My question is the following. Why did you stop sending out certificates to cmlis when they are elected as chartered members? When I was elected as a chartered member there was a linkedIn post and not even a mention on the LI website.</p> <p>Don't you think that this is at odds with your new behaviour policy which is articulated in the following six points?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mutual respect and courtesy 2. Active participation and collaboration 3. Ethical behaviour 4. Feedback and contribution 5. Celebrate achievements 6. Adherence to policies and guidelines <p>And part of the reason people feel disengaged with the Institute?</p> <p>I understand the need to be sustainable and not waste paper. However people work very hard to achieve this status and it means a lot to them so they would like a certificate.</p>	Clementina Immerzi	<p>Thank you for your patience while I waited to be able to speak to people. I have caught up with key people this morning and you have made some very valuable reflections that have highlighted how important it is for us to recognise the commitment and hard work it takes to reach CMLI status. Therefore I can confirm that we will be reviewing how we do this and how this is acknowledged.</p>
7	<p>What progress has been made on replacing the website / improving P2C and CPD records ?</p>	Daniel Stewart Smith	<p>This is part of Project Kestrel to deliver our new digital home. Work is progressing and is on track for going live autumn 2025. Unfortunately that means issues with the current website and our on-line processes will continue to as is until then.</p>