The land girls

On International Women’s Day this month, women around the globe will celebrate their economic, political and social achievements, past, present and future. To mark the occasion, Green Places unashamedly blows the trumpet on behalf of just some of the remarkable women who have shaped – and continue to shape – our world’s public spaces and landscapes. Ladies, we salute you!

Lady Allen of Huntworth 1897-1976

Kate Bailey

Kate has worked as a chartered planner and landscape architect for more than 35 years. Her experiences include planning housing, commercial, urban and rural regeneration work. Kate has had a variety of public sector positions in London and Nottingham. She is a former member of the Technical Planning Inspector for Nottingham City Council and a former assistant director of the Nottingham Civic Trust. She is currently chair of the North West Landscape Planning Association. Kate has been the director of various landscape and recreation projects. She has also worked as a landscape planning consultant andaris a part-time lecturer in landscape architecture at the University of Strathclyde, and a part-time lecturer in landscape design at the University of Liverpool.

Diana Bell

Diana studied architecture at Newcastle University and then went on to study landscape architecture at the University of Strathclyde. She has been involved in a number of major landscape projects, including the design of the Millennium Park in Chicago, the Chicago Botanic Garden, and the redesign of the Botanic Gardens in San Francisco.

Julie Bargmann

Julie has a reputation as an innovative designer in building regenerative landscapes. She leads projects at the DRIFT studio (Dust & Ritual) that explore past and present industrial operations and urban processes in relationship to ecological systems, cultural constructs and emerging technologies. Julie earned a Masters in Landscape Architecture at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design along with receiving the American Academy in Rome Fellowship. Her work was awarded a National Design Award by Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. The award recognizes extraordinary and original contributions to the future of design. Julie has also received numerous other awards for her landscape projects.

Gardens in New Orleans, Louisiana, and The English Gardens at Stan Hywel’s Hall, Alnwick, Northumberland.

Mary Bowman

Mary was born in California and studied architecture at the University of Virginia in the US and at the Architectural Association in London. She later moved to Australia and worked for Foster and Partners from 1988-1998 where she was made a partner in 1993. She was also a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley in 1996. Mary joined the architectural practice of Waterman and Cohen in 1999 and is currently a director of the firm. Her work includes the design of a range of projects, from public parks to private gardens.

Martha Brookes Hutcheson 1871-1959

Martha Brookes Hutcheson was an American landscape architect. She was one of the first women to receive a formal education in landscape architecture in the United States. She was also one of the first women to become a registered architect in the state of California. She is known for her innovative designs and her approach to creating landscapes that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Ellen Biddle Shipman 1869-1950

Ellen was hailed as one of America’s greatest “flower gardeners.” She designed over 650 gardens and her commissions spanned the USA. Her professional talents flourished after her marriage failed and she was left to care for her three girls. In 1920, she moved to New York and set up her own office, hiring a graduate from the Columbia School of Landscape Architecture, Gardening, and Horticulture for Women. She opened the doors for many women in what was a male-dominated profession.

Clare Brokhurst

Clare is a graduate landscape architect who has worked on a variety of projects, including the design of gardens and public spaces. She is currently the director of a landscape design firm based in California. Clare has also served as a professor at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design and worked on the East Coast and in Europe before moving to California. In 1998, she established her own practice, and has since designed gardens and public spaces in the United States and abroad.

Andrea Cochran

Andrea is the founding principal of San Francisco- based Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture. She graduated from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design and worked on the East Coast and in Europe before moving to California. She has been named one of the 100 most influential landscape architects by the American Society of Landscape Architects. She is known for her innovative designs and her approach to creating landscapes that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

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Brenda Colvin
1897-1981
Brenda studied garden design under Madeleine Agar at Swarthmore College (later absorbed into Haddon College). She shared an office with Sylvia Crowe and was president of the Institute of Landscape Architects and wrote two influential books: Land and Landscape (1947) and ‘Trees for Town and Country.’ Early in her career, Colvin visited the USA to see the new civic landscaping projects, especially the highways. In England she transformed the landscapes of power stations, reservoirs, industrial sites, city parks and parks and worked on private gardens. Her simple planting styles and ecological approach had enormous influence. The best example of Brenda’s work is her own garden at Figs in Gloucestershire. It is the office of Colvin and Meadmore and is occasionally open under the National Gardens Scheme.

Hazel Conway
Hazel is a landscape historian involved in the historic urban environment. Her first career was as a technical journalist on Fleet Street one of the very few women in this area. Lately she has been involved in the urban environment through her work as a consultant and through her membership of a number of organisations, including the Garden History Society, English Heritage, the Thames Landscape Strategy and the London Parks and Gardens Trust.

Dame Sylvia Crowe
1911-1991
Sylvia studied garden design under Madeleine Agar at Swarthmore College. She then took an appointment with Edward White at Minn, Son and White and later spent 13 years working as a landscape and garden designer for the nurseryman and garden contractor William Cubitt. She joined the EA in 1936 as a result of her appointment as a member of the Institute of Landscape Architects (ILA), and in 1948 she was made a Fellow of ILA. Dame Sylvia was a practising landscape architect until her death, her career having spanned 53 years.

Marjan Cruger Coffin
1876-1957
Marjan was an American landscape architect and the first woman to receive a degree in landscape architecture from the University of Michigan in 1904 and establish a practice in the field. Her major works were the campuses for Delaware College and the Women’s College of the University of Delaware (1918-1929), and the Botanical Garden, Winterthur DE. She also designed numerous gardens for wealthy clients, including the du Ponts of Delaware, the Frick’s, Stattons, and Sabro of NYC, the Kinneys and Frelinghuysens of NJ, and the Ballards and Bullocks of KY. Her designs form an important element in the history and development of gardens in eastern USA.

Beatrix Farrand
1872-1959
Beatrix was a skilled designer and a founder member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She studied under Arnold Arboretum and became expert in both planting and construction design, learning through reading and travel, notably with her aunt, artist and designer Edith Wharton. Beatrix arrived the garden of Gertrude Jeffery, William Robinson and Thomas MacWitney. She acquired Jeffery’s plans during the Second World War and bequeathed them to the University of California. Her style can be seen at Dumbarton Oaks, which has become a centre for the study of 18th and 19th century American garden architecture. Beatrix also worked on the graduate college gardens at Princeton University and the Memorial Quadrangle at Yale University.

Sarah Gaventa
Sarah is a landscape architect, Fellow of the Landscape Institute and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). She trained in landscape architecture under David Skinner at Edinburgh College of Art and co-founded J+S Gaventa in 1996. Sarah has been a design advisor to the Mayor’s Office for London’s design policy plan, City of London and worked for the London Development Agency on many projects in the City and Docklands. She was appointed landscape consultant to both the London Olympic Committee (IOC) and the English Heritage (2011).

What have your personal career highlights been?
Spending a weekend with Dame Sylvia Crowe when I was 17 years old. We walked several miles across an Oxfordshire landscape and she told me the best thing about being a landscape architect was being with friends; it was a study and not being bound to an office, reigned me. More recently, I have been celebrating 25 years of the practice with my truly wonderful partners Niall and Niall. We operate as a triad of support and inspiration for each other as we seek a greater diversity to our work.

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regeneration over many early morning breakfasts. Together, the All London Green Grid is a project I had and I have been working on since 2004 with Design for London and the GLA, which I’m immensely proud to have contributed to, as it promotes a real opportunity for green infrastructure delivery, improving the quality of life in the city, addressing climate change, and demonstrating the unique role of the landscape architect in heading up the movement.

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**Kathryn Gustafson**

Kathryn Gustafson grew up in Washington State and trained in fashion and fabrics design. She then studied landscape architecture in Paris and there she established her practice in 1980, working as a sole practitioner in collaboration with architects, artists and engineers. Through her private practice, she has won a series of high-profile landscape projects including the corporate headquarters for Shell, Esso and TGV near Paris; a new park in Herronville in France which has become a landscaped landmark, the Square of Humans Rights in Eury the Divine, Princess of Wales memorial fountain in Hyde Park and Square Raphanov in Paris. Kathryn works with the world's leading landscape architects and, with the two offices, Gustafson Porter in London and Gustafson Guthrie Nichol in Seattle:

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**Martha Brookes Hutchen**

Martha was born in New York City as Martha Brookes Brown. From 1893-1895 she studied at the New York School of Applied Design for Women and in the late 1890s toured Europe. Hutchen later wrote in The Spent of the Garden: “About 1898, one day I saw the grounds of Bellevue Hospital in New York, on which nothing was planted, and was overcome with the terrible waste of opportunity for beauty which was not being given to the hundreds of patients who could see it or go to it in its converse. In trying to find out how I could get in touch with such authorities as those who might allow me to plant the area of ground, I stumbled upon the fact that my aim would be politically impossible, but that there was a course in landscape architecture being formed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the first course which America had ever held. In 1900, I joined MIT’s new landscape architecture programme at age 29, where she began her design career without a degree. She subsequently designed the grounds of several residential estates in Boston, most notably Frederick Moore’s Mayflower estate.

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**Corinella Hahn Oberlander**

In her own words, Corinella talks about her career, which was recognised last April with the prestigious PLA Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe Award: “From my 11th year onward I had only one goal: to be a landscape architect and design outdoor spaces for the enjoyment of all in our urban environment. Growing up with a garden with large trees and flowers I learned to love nature under the guidance of my mother, a horticulturist. I went to Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, to learn about history, art, architecture and nature. A few years later I received the Professional Degree of Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Harvard University Graduate School of Design. In 1953, I came to Vancouver from the US with my late husband, fellow Harvard student and graduate of McGill School of Architecture. Over the past 60 years I have been involved in a wide range of projects in Canada and the US and also in visiting and studying landscape architecture in cities and urban planning in cities and countries. At each project I attempt to bring the mastery of design and the science of sustainable development, as well as the ability to work creatively as a member of the team.”

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**Jennifer Guthrie**

Jennifer Guthrie is a founding partner of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol. Jennifer’s design methodology merges a unique, experimental vision with intuitive and precise analysis, with work ranging from the neighborhood-scale to public squares, gardens, and cultural institutions such as the Seattle Civic Center campus, the Lurie Garden at Millennium Park (re-visited before left), and the Art Institute of Chicago. Jennifer’s current projects include the Lower River-Isar project at the University of Washington, the LW-Scholarship for Landscape Medicine Lake Union campus, Nu Skin Corporate Headquarters, and the Mercer Hall-LW Farm site, which combines student housing with urban agriculture. Jennifer and her partners are the recipients of the 2011 National Design Award for Landscape Architecture, and her work has received numerous national and regional Honor Awards from AIA and ASLA, Jennifer lectures internationally and serves on the Landscape Architectural Foundation Board and the ASLA CEO Roundtable.

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**Jenni Scherzer**

Jenni Scherzer is a practicing architect in Chicago. Jenni has received several awards for her work, including the 2012 AIA Young Architects Prize and the 2013 Landscape Architecture Honor Award for her work on the Museum Campus in Chicago. In addition to her work as an architect, Jenni is also a writer and educator, having contributed to various publications and lectures on the topic of landscape design. Jenni is currently a partner at Jenni Scherzer Architects, a Chicago-based architectural firm. She is also a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the Chicago Chapter of the AIA.

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**Sue Illman**

Sue is director of the Chelsea-based landscape architecture practice Ilmyn Landscape Design Ltd and president elect of the Landscape Institute (LI). Sue started working life as an accountant, but in 1980 decided she wanted to do something more creative. She trained in Chelsea and then went to work in Australia. Upon her return, she established Ilmyn Young alongside business partner Yvonne Young who retired in 1987. Sue has been closely involved in the work of the LI for more than 20 years and was previously the honorary secretary and was one of the key architects of the Pathway to Charter system. Recent awards for the practice have been: RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2013, which won the RIBA Regional Award 2010, the RIBA South West Town and Country Peoples Choice Award 2010 and their Sustainability Award. Her company’s mission is to "achieve a meaningful relationship between people and their environment.

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**Dame Barbara Hepworth**

Barbara was born in Wakefield West Yorkshire in 1903 and was one of the most important sculptors of the 20th century. She trained in Leeds and moved to St Ives in 1939 and her garden, now part of the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden is open to the public.

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**Octavia Hill**

Octavia Hill was the founding Mother of the National Trust. She was also a driving force in the development of social housing in London, and was particularly focused on enhancing the quality of life for people living in poor communities by increasing the availability of public, open spaces. Her work was strongly opposed to state intervention in welfare. Her mission to change the way social housing was run began in 1864 when, along with her friend John Ruskin, she transformed poverty-stricken houses in three London streets. Her aim was to make ‘lives noble, homes happy and family life good’.

Octavia’s understanding of how to transform things for the better was also reflected in her attitude to open space, and in 1883, she noticed that London needed ‘four things – pleasant places to sit in, places to play in places to stroll in and places to spend a day in’.

Octavia placed a particularly strong emphasis on creating open spaces for the people living within its developments and the Red Cross Gardens established in 1887 is one of the best examples of her work in this area.

The template for the National Trust was set when Hill became the treasurer of her sister Miranda’s Kylie Selsey which was focused on bringing beauty to the poor via access increased to open spaces, books, music and art. After some initial debate over its name, the National Trust was formed in 1895.

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Jane Jacobs 1916-2006

Jane was a writer and activist concerned with urban planning. She wrote The Death and Life of Great American Cities in 1961. Her book went beyond criticizing city planning and influenced the spirit of the times.

Jane had no formal training as an urban planner, but her vision was inspired by her time living in New York City's Greenwich Village neighborhood where she organized grassroots campaigns to block urban renewal projects that would have destroyed her local communities.

After working as a reporter and a freelance writer, Jane joined the editorial staff of Architectural Forum in 1952. She also served on the New York Planning Board for a time. Jane married architect Robert Hyde Jacobs, Jr. in 1944, and relocated with her family to Toronto, Canada, for her husband's work. In 1966, shortly after arriving, she helped lead the Stop Spadina Campaign to prevent the construction of a major highway through some of Toronto's oldest neighborhoods. She also advocated greater autonomy of the city, criticized national policies, and was a major force in grassroots movements and political opposition to the expansion of the Toronto Island Airport.

She also focused on her writing and expanded her work. In 1961, she published The Death and Life of Great American Cities. She died on April 25, 2006, in Toronto, Canada.

Susan Jellicoe 1907-1986

Born Susan Parnes, she became the secretary and then the wife of Geoffrey Jellicoe. Susan was involved in modern dance, language, and landscape design and was responsible for the planning of all of her husband's designs.

Although she had formal training in landscape design, she became a most accomplished plantwoman, claiming that Brenda Colvin taught her all she knew.

Examples of her work can be seen at the Kennedy-Memorial in Runnymede and most notably, Sutton Place in Surrey. Planting at the Water Garden in Heirloom Hampton has sadly been lost.

Susan traveled widely with her husband, photographing many of the world’s most historic landscapes. She took thousands of photographs, many of which comprise a significant part of the Jellicoe Archive. She was a member of the joint committee for Landscape Design (LAD) journal in 1960s-80s, of which she wrote and edited herself. She also co-authored with Margery Allen and Geoffrey Jellicoe a series of important books on garden and landscape design including, “The new small garden,” Modern private gardens and contributed many photographs to Sylvia Crowe’s The gardens of Moghul India.

It has been said that Susan’s contribution to landscape architecture has been overshadowed by many including her husband.

Lynn Kineen

Lynn Kineen studied landscape architecture at Edinburgh College of Art/Harriet Watt University and graduated in 1983. Lynn has over 30 years’ experience and has designed the diversity of the environment in her design led projects, KLA. Her experience ranges from sub-regional planning and urban design to public realm, education and residential sector projects.

The combination of sustainable solutions along with a programme of design development and arts workshops won awards from the LID and Civic Trust for Norman Park in 2009 and 2010. The collaboration with artist Richard Woods and architects Caruso St John on the Wallace Art Gallery Civic Square also achieved a successful new space and many design awards.

Lynn’s recent work includes providing guidance to the London’s Downstairs area for the All-London Green Grid to define a strategic vision for greening the boroughs of Bromley, Sutton and Croydon.

Lynn is a member of the Transforming South Yorkshire DDQ panel, is a design advisor for CARE Space and a London Design Surgeon for Design for London. www.kineen.co.uk

When Helen left university for the first time, with a degree in geography she had never heard of landscape architecture and asked the Wakefield College Msc in Landscape Ecology and Management, however and left as a landscape manager with the prospect of a professional home in the expanding Landscape Institute.

Helen did her landscape ‘apprenticeship’ as a land management and environmental planning officer for British Gas working on the infrastructure required to bring natural gas from the east coast, where it came ashore, to customers and on to storage facilities on the west coast. As with all good landscape jobs, it taught her as much about people as it did about plants and planning.

In 1986 Helen set up Land Management Services as a specialist landscape management practice, first as a sole trader and later in a limited company with co-director David Withycombe. Their range of landscape work is much wider now, but they still specialise in the core skills of management and environmental planning.

Career highlights:
- Highlights have never been a feature of my career. Taking a new design, a special landscape to a neglected space and ensuring it fulfils its potential or stays special, doesn’t seem to have been the designer’s glamour and panache of attainment.
- On the other hand, realising that in 2010 it was voted the best picnic site in East Anglia, that’s a real accolade for the public realm.

Helen Neve

Bridge End Garden, Saffron Walden. I am really pleased that in 2010 it was voted the best picnic site in East Anglia. That’s a real accolade for the public realm says Liz.

Liz Lake

Liz is the managing director of Liz Lake Associates, Chartered landscape architects, urban designers and landscape planners based in Essex. She is a Fellow of the LI and in 2009 was awarded an honorary doctorate by Writtle College. Liz has nearly 40 years’ experience in both the public and private sectors on a broad range of landscape projects.

After studying landscape architecture at Manchester Polytechnic, Liz worked in London for six years for the landscape practices of Moller, White & Partners, Patuxis, Holmes Associates and the Greater London Council. For the next six years she worked on major highways for Travers Morgan Planning where she is credited with developing the first computer aided planting programme for the A55 North West Coast Road.

Liz started her own practice in 1985, literally in a back bedroom and now employs 20 people. She is responsible for the overall direction and business management of the different divisions of the practice – residential landscape design, landscape design, landscape planning and heritage landscapes. Her own specials are in landscape design, landscape and visual impact assessment and heritage landscapes.

The practice has won numerous awards and is well known for its training policies encouraging staff to develop their skills. Liz teaches on the landscape architecture course at Writtle and is chair of the UCIL Prospective Alumni Group that oversees the crowdfund of courses at the school. Liz is also a member of the Landscape Design Trust, which, until 2010, published Green Places.

What unique qualities do women bring to the table?

Women tend to be collaborative and that helps in a design team. Nurturing a project through a process and taking people with them comes naturally.

Can women have it all in terms of family and a successful landscape career?

Anything is possible if you are determined enough. I made the mistake of suppressing the growth of my practice because I felt it would be too much extra responsibility with family commitments, but it’s actually as it has got bigger it has been easier to take time off when I wish I had learnt that earlier.

Of which project are you most proud?

That’s tricky because there are so many reasons to be pleased at an outcome, whether it is work on the ground, helping a colleague grow or facilitating a decision-making process that helps a client achieve their objectives. I have chosen Bridge End Garden in Saffron Walden. It is our local historic garden and we prepared the Conservation Management Plan for a successful Heritage Lottery Fund application. I really think that in 2010 it was voted the best picnic site in East Anglia that’s a real accolade for the public realm.

www.lizlake.com

“IF I FIND THAT WOMEN CAN ONLY SITWITH ALL THE DISCIPLINES AROUND A TABLE IF THEY HAVE DONE THE RESEARCH PERTAINING TO THE PROJECT, THEN THEY WILL BE LISTENED TO.”

CORNELIA OBERLANDER

Shannon Nichol

Shannon is a founding partner of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol and is based in US. Her designs, including Millennium Park’s Lurie Garden, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation campus and Boston’s North End Parks, are widely recognised for being deeply embedded in their neighbourhoods and natural contexts. Shannon’s work incorporates complex geometries and functions into simple frameworks and refined landscapes.

Shannon’s current projects include Phase II of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Campus, Ravina-Vista at the University of Washington, and plans for Cleveland’s historic Group Plan District and Civic Mall – Medical Mart.

Shannon is an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects (Seattle). Her work has received multiple Design Excellence and Honor Awards from ASLA and AIA. Shannon and her partners received the 30th National Award for Landscape Architecture.

Shannon lectures internationally frequently for design awards and serves on advisory committees for universities and non-profit organizations.
Romy Rawlings

A charmed landscape architect with a career spanning 25 years, Romy has taken advantage of the profession’s many facets having worked as a designer, specifier, researcher/writer, consultant and project manager. After qualifying, Romy freelanced for 15 years working as a landscape architect and contractors, with a broad mix of design and project management in all aspects of both hard and soft landscape. She also gained experience in horticulture and woodland management.

Sally Protheroe

Sally’s involvement in the landscape sector began in the early 80’s when for three years on leaving school she worked as an apprentice gardener for the Greater London Council (GLC) during their final two GLC days, she has studied both horticulture and arboriculture, going on to work as a tree surgeon and then to accredit and run the NVT level 2 Horticultural training course at Camden Training Centre for a number of years.

Sally’s interest in horticulture and construction, together with a love of art and design, shaped her desire to later become a landscape architect, studying part-time at Greenwich University while still teaching at Camden. After graduating with a first class degree she worked for English Heritage and then the National Park Service in the US, where she carried out a study for the design and restoration of the Jefferson Memorial.

Following a spell with Leith Beilenson Architects, mainly in housing and urban renewal projects, she joined LDA Design where she is now a director. Sally has led numerous park restoration and new park design projects, including; Dairy Artillery, Fortbury Gardens, Northola Fields, Berling Park, Hertfordhall, Belsize Park, Clissold Park and Victoria Park, London and recently completed Boundary Gardens at Arnold Circus – also in Tower Hamlets.

She has won two RIBA design competitions for the Hermitage Memorial Park, 1999 and British Geological Society-Headquarters, 2002.

How will landscape architecture change or develop over the next decade? What’s the next big thing?

That’s a very interesting question given the uncertain economic climate. Landscape architects will need to be more creative and innovative in their thinking rather than from a design perspective, but in terms of how projects are funded and actually delivered on the ground and then how they can be maintained. The last point is crucial if the last 15 years’ worth of investment in our public parks via the Lottery Funding has not been wasted by recent austerity measures imposed by government cuts given that they are not subject to statutory spending assessments, such as other council services.

We will need to become more efficient, more creative and better integrated with the other professions that we work alongside, taking the lead on more large, multidisciplinary projects, which incorporate production landscapes and ecological infrastructure. We need to promote the alternative values of landscapes not always in purely economic terms, and recognise that all natural resources have a value, such as that now being recognised through the concept of ecosystem services, for instance. There will be part of the real big question of climate change and global food production in which landscape architects need to be taking a leading role, in order to deliver multifunctional landscapes which include producers, transport, leisure/housing and recreation in a way that does not detrimentally compromise our national resources.

www.ldadesign.co.uk

Dame Fiona Reynolds

Born in Alston, Cumbria, Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE has been director general of the National Trust since 2011. Four members today she took over the Trust, it has 2.7 million members today and it is four million.

Before taking up the role, Dame Reynolds was director of the Women’s Link in the Cabinet Office and was previously director of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (now Campaign to Protect Rural England) and secretary to the Council for National Parks, she is a member of the Commission on the Future of Volunteering.

Fiona was involved with the Trust for many years prior to her appointment as a member of the council and the Trustees and Chelmsford general committee, and she chaired the local committee for Sutton House in Hackney.

Fiona studied Geography and Land Economy at Cambridge University and gained an MPhil in Land Economy. In 1998, Fiona was awarded the CBE for services to the environment and conservation. She is married to Bob Reynolds, a trained teacher and firearms mentor; and they have three daughters, Fiona was appointed a DBE in 2008.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Alexandra Rook

Alexandra entered landscape design as a postgraduate at Manchester University in 1975 after a first degree in English Literature and Philosophy from University of Kent at Canterbury. Alex recalls the studies were tough under Law, Laurie Alan Ruff and Tom Howarth, but she survived and left to start her first job in Liverpool restoring sand dunes and managing visitor pressure through the development and management of nearby sand dunes.

After a brief period in private practice, Alex decided it wasn’t for her and snapped up an opportunity to work at the GCLC. She spent four years in the department for recreation & arts and during that time worked on school landscapes and road schemes. Alex recalls one of her proposals, achievements as “subverting the process in Bethnal Green, where there were already several temporary open spaces next to the one I was dealing with, which is still there as a local nature reserve attached to the school. The standard spec was clearance, 150mm topsoil, but a knee rail and a sign saying ‘Temporary Open Space’ in pale green. It was quite hard to spend the £25k budget on this well-vegetated site; we put up an invasive industrial fence, dug a pond and bought some tools. It got involved with the foundation of the London Wildlife Trust and so was able to put together in early partnership to manage, use and develop the site.

This led Alex into the community/voluntary sector and a role at Environment Trust in Tower Hamlets. This was the beginning of community planning and consultation, and the team went from small-scale projects to housing estate renewal. Following the birth of her son, Alex had two spells in local government for two very different borough council-Wandsworth and Islington. During this time, she got involved in housing estate improvements.

Since then, Alex has worked for the Civic Trust where she was involved from the start with Building for Life. Between 1995 and 2010 Alex was a CABE enabler and more recently, she project-managed Walk London. She then went on to become development manager for London Parks and Green Spaces Forum, but is now about to start a new role as a planner in the private sector.

Kate Sessions

Kate’s interest in science and horticulture developed at a young age. She spent several months travelling in the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii) after graduating from high school. In 1881, she became the first woman to graduate with a BSc from the University of California, Berkeley, where she studied chemistry.

In 1895, Kate opened her first nursery in San Diego. For a time, she leased 12ha of the still developing City Park (now Balboa Park) in exchange for donating hundreds of trees to the city. This arrangement left the park with an array of cypresses, pine, redwood trees and eucalyptus grown in her gardens from seeds imported from around the world-virtually all of the older trees still seen in the park were planted by her. Among many other plant introductions, she is credited with importing and popularizing the jacaranda. She was given the title city gardener and her
work with the park earned her the nickname the Mother of Balboa Park. Along with San Diego philanthropist George Marston, she was instrumental in the formation of the city’s park improvement committee.

Sessions published articles in magazines, newspapers and journals, and taught extensively throughout her career. She was a founding member of the San Diego Floral Association. She was the first woman awarded the American Genetic Association’s Frank M. Mayer Medal.

Brita von Schoenaich

Brita studied landscape design in Germany after training as a gardener. In 1994 she completed her studies at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, which she followed by taking a degree in landscape architecture in the UK.

In 1991 she set up a partnership with Tim Rees which lasted more than a decade. In 2004 both partners set up their own practices.

International commissions include the British Embassy grounds in Warsaw, roof terraces at Hamburg’s international conference centre and the masterplan for Harcourt’s International Airport. Brita developed her studio by working with architects on new developments residential and urban schemes. By introducing the concept of contextual contemporary planting via international conferences and lectures and her own work, she contributed to a change in British attitudes towards planting design and developed strategies for urban vegetation.

Brita has worked with leading architects such as Allies and Morrison, Tony Fasset and John Thompson and Partners where she was involved in design development. She started contributing to masterplan development as part of a multi-disciplinary team. Her recent public realm work includes Marks Hall Gardens and Atrium which comprises five separate gardens. Her planting up of Hogarth roundabout in Chiswick, west London attracted national media attention last summer (picture below). www.schoenaich.co.uk

Pam Warhurst CBE

Pam is currently chair of the Board of Forestry Commissioners.

Pam lives in Todmorden in West Yorkshire, and has previously served as a member of the board of Natural England, where she was the lead non-executive board member working with the Countryside & Rights of Way Bill. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts & Manufacturing, and chairs Pennine Prospects, a regeneration company for the South Pennines, and Incredible Edible Todmorden, a local food partnership.

Pam has also been deputy chair and acting chair of the Countryside Agency, leader of Calderdale Council, a board member of Yorkshire Forward, and chair of the National Countryside Access Forum and the Calderdale NHS Trust. She was involved in Bear-Whistle Co-operative for 20 years and ran a vegetarian cafe for 15 years.

Pam was awarded CBE in 2005 for services to the environment.

www.incredible-keith-edible-todmorden.co.uk

Do you think we need to be more imaginative about how we use and benefit public space?

We sure do. Why not a public realm that stirs our feelings? Street furniture that says something about our sense of place. The hundreds of bits of public land all over the place that could be given back to the people to make functional or fabulous, or both.

Lindsay Whitelaw

Lindsay Whitelaw is English at Exeter University and Landscape Design at Manchester University. In 1991 she established Whitelaw Turfing with Ian Turfing.

The company was an early pioneer of community consultation and focused on major commercial projects, which stems from their work with the London Docklands Development Cooperative in 1995. This led to flagship projects for Battersea Park HQ and the redevelopment of the Guinness site at Park Royal in 1998. Other high profile landscape design initiatives include £18m costs from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham for the urban remodelling of Shepherd’s Bush Common; the design of Peninsula Square which marks the entrance to The O2, the former Millennium Dome and Air India town centre.

By 2008, the firm had grown to 70 employees and in the March of that year was acquired by Dutch engineering consultancy Gronemeijer.

Lindsay is now a freelance consultant landscape architect and public realm consultant. For the past year she has been working as a director of SilentHorseflower as a home assisted educator. The company offers corporate and personal experiential learning in team building, leadership and personal development.

Sincere thanks to all those who took the time to contribute to this feature.

LOVE PARKS WEEK

www.lovewardsweek.org.uk

healthy parks, happy hearts...

close to for respiratory loves
Access to quality person’s blood pressure, increasing their ability to cope with their natural environment and become involved in social activities loves. Daily gardening reduces the likelihood of developing dementia by 36%. The difference in the weight gained for children living near green and non-green areas was 5 kg for girls aged 15 years and 5.9 kg for boys. 91% of people believe that public parks and open spaces improve their quality of life loves. Air quality, air temperature, water and flood management, are all kept within manageable limits because of parks and green spaces. Over 50% of us visit a park at least once a week, to improve physical - and mental - health, to enhance our closest relationships, to chill out, to interact with our communities and to have a good time loves. Elderly people who have close access to a place where they can relax and enjoy nature show a significantly greater satisfaction with where they live loves.

21-29 July

Parks, People, Planet