

Back from Russia with a love of architecture

Top projects judged

A COLNE Valley landscape architect swapped Marsden for Moscow to judge a prestigious industry prize.

Tom Lonsdale went to the Russian capital to be part of the judging panel for the Moscow Centre for Architecture's annual awards.

Mr Lonsdale, who was one of the founding partners of Marsden-based landscape architecture firm Camlin Lonsdale, is renowned across the architecture world for his work.

Landscape architects are responsible for designing, planning, creating and managing landscapes in a variety of settings — both urban and rural.

Mr Lonsdale jetted out to Russia earlier this month to judge the awards, which featured projects looking at everything from urban public spaces to the role of art in design.

He was asked because of his national profile due to work as a member of the design review panel and Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.

He has also worked as an

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enabler for the Housing Market Renewal Programme in the north of England.

He said: "The standard was fairly similar in its range to Britain. Russia generally looks up to Britain as a model or superior standard.

"They regard Britain as being the source of a lot of their knowledge, which is funny because we look to other countries such as Germany or France."

Mr Lonsdale, who was Manchester City Council's former chief landscape architect, said he enjoyed the experience.

He said: "I gave a keynote lecture at the conference and was interviewed by a number of Russian journals.

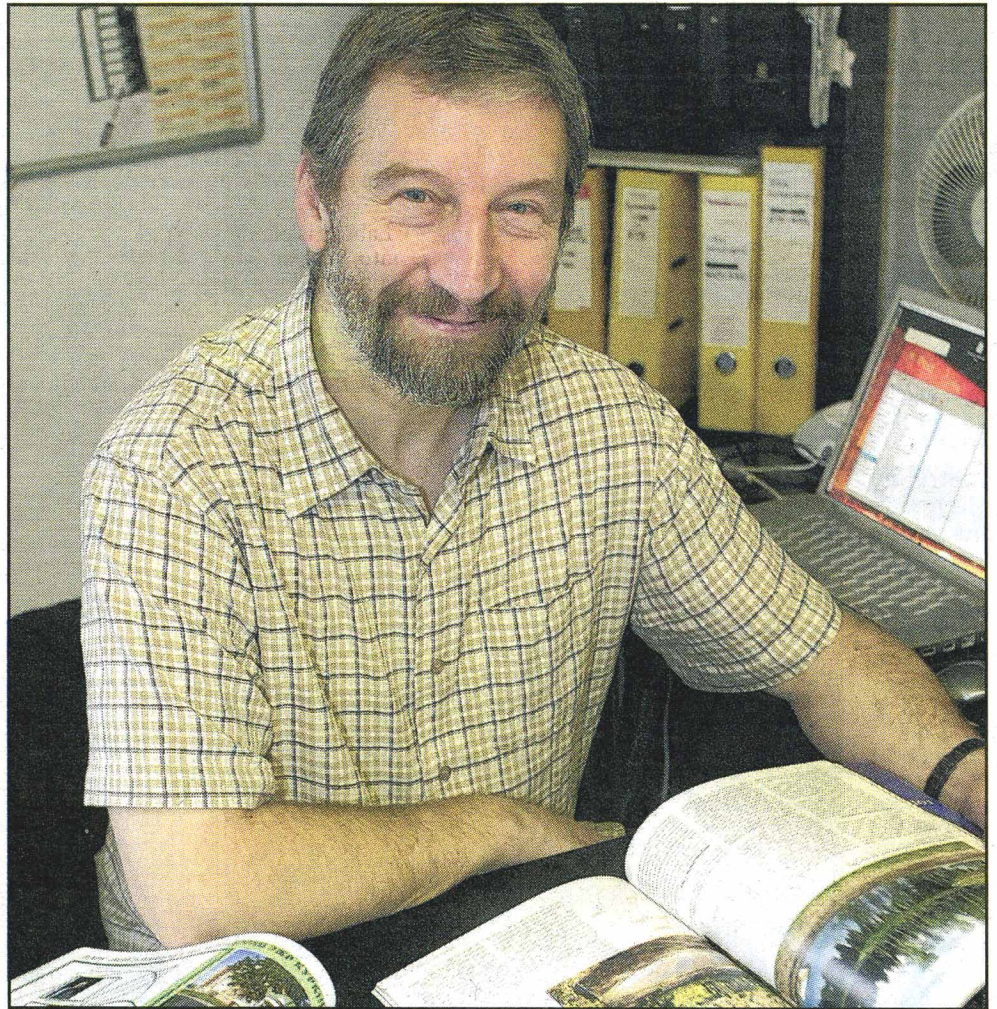
"I even had my own interpreter. I was treated like a bit of a VIP."

He added: "The Russians have a reputation for being strait-laced and reserved but that's only a superficial one.

"When you get to know them they are warm, kind and funny.

"The competition was a great experience."

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■ PICKING WINNERS: Tom Lonsdale was one of the Moscow judging panel