



**Minutes of Branch Committee Meeting:
Tuesday 16 July 2013
at The Fox & Crown, Appletongate, Newark**

Present: Philip Grover, Robert Walker, Jane Roylance, Jason Mordan, Rose Thompson, Neil Robertson, Stephen Bradwell, Chris McKinney, Kerry Walmsley, Sara Crofts & Fiona Newton

Guest: Eva Long

Apologies: Roy Lewis & Mark Strawbridge

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting:** Agreed as a true record, although Fiona noted that the previous reference to the Hardship Fund should make clear that it specifically provides assistance with IHBC subscriptions.
2. **Chair's Report:** Jane thought that as the Branch AGM was approaching, the Committee should consider what needed to be included in next year's Business Plan, what was the Branch hoping to achieve. Rob pointed out that the development of the Business Plan was important opportunity to consider whether anything needed changing or refreshed, and in particular to assess the support for the away-day Branch meeting and the contents of the website. In particular whether the away-day meetings were adding to the Branch expenses.

Fiona added that these costs were in part offset by the costs of the regular Branch meeting, although as Rose noted the Leicester meeting had cost the Branch about £280.

Rob pointed out that in the past the Branch had tried to raise its income through day conferences, but was relying on the Buxton funds and he wondered whether there was sufficient funds remaining to maintain the Annual School Bursary.

Rose noted that funds were available for next year to support a bursary, but that the Branch was now relying on the national office contribution and the Buxton funds to fund its general activities.

Fiona considered that as well funding the bursary, the Buxton funds were intended to add value to the Branch, to allow it to do things it would not normally be able to afford.

For next year Fiona also asked whether the Branch would like to host the IHBC peripatetic Council meeting, which normally involved a local networking reception on the Thursday evening and an event on the Friday,

and this might be a useful way for the Branch to hold a conference and invite other professionals along to attend.

Eva Long asked how much money the Branch need to raise. Rob noted that the Branch was normally able to sustain 5-6 Branch meetings and an AGM, otherwise there were minimal running costs, with funds being provided by the national office and the Buxton surplus.

Fiona noted that different Branches had adopted different approaches, some survived on their IHBC allocations whilst other ran conferences. For example, the Yorkshire Branch had recently held a conference with some English Heritage funding, although as Jane pointed out the last time the East Midlands Branch ran a fee-charging event it had lost money.

Chris thought the September IHBC Council meeting could be tied-in with the Branch AGM and used to promote engagement between the Branch members and IHBC Council members, and he suggested that this be raised at the AGM and, if supported, included within the Business Plan with ideas of costs and likely attendees.

Fiona also thought that it would be useful if the Branch could look for external funding opportunities, but she recognised that it was now a challenge to raise outside money.

Rob thought that it would be useful if Branch members came forward to arrange these types of events, noting that there was at least a 2-year lead-in time for the Buxton Annual School. Fiona thought that a 6-8 month timescale was perhaps more reasonable, particularly to arrange good speakers. She also noted that the peripatetic Council meeting would need an event on the Friday to attract more people to it, particularly other related professionals.

Chris asked whether the Council meeting could be held without an income generating feature and in reply Fiona thought that all options were open for consideration.

To supplement the Branch's income, Eva thought that it would be useful to have a specific planned session to consider fund raising.

Rose again pointed out that the 'away-day' meeting was an additional expense that the Branch had recently taken on and Jane wondered whether this could be self-supporting.

Chris also pointed out that even though the web-site offered opportunities to promote the Branch's activities, the response to the communications initiative had been low so far.

Fiona agreed that it would be useful to develop ideas as to how the Branch should operate and whilst Philip also thought that that was a good suggestion, it was more than about money, it was also about doing things that were fun and engaging and meeting colleagues.

Chris thought that a discussion at the AGM to consider funding ideas and options would be useful, otherwise there would be a need to reduce Branch activities or look to have conferences.

Rob thought the discussion of the Business Plan should be used to generate funds, but ideally someone, or a group of people, would need to take the lead.

Eva said she was happy to take a lead in a brain-storming session and Jane considered whether it could be part of the AGM, Rob thought that given the time constraints it would be useful to highlight the need to raise Branch expenses.

Chris asked how the Branch could benefit from hosting the IHBC Council, Fiona replied that it had previously been used to highlight specific Branch issues to the IHBC Council.

Fiona also pointed out that paid events can affect the attendance, for example at the Carlisle Annual School there was a relatively low turnout from Northern Branch members, whereas there had been a good response from East Midlands members at the Buxton school. So there was clearly a need to consider levels of support.

Eva suggested a brain-storming event after the AGM, although Rob noted that the AGM would need to support this. Jane thought there were two issues to be raised, firstly general fund raising, and secondly the peripatetic Council.

Neil pointed out that the time at the AGMs was normally quite limited and perhaps a more fuller discussion about these issues was required.

Rob also noted that there were also opportunities to form links with other professionals, such as ICE structural engineers who were involved in historic structures, but had not received any formal training. And this could be a useful format to develop a conference to raise income and for conservation officers to gain a greater understanding of structures.

Finally Jane announced that she was intending to stand down as Chair after 4 years as she was looking to become a more active member of the IHBC Technical Panel, although she would like to stay as general Committee member.

3. **Branch Representatives:** Roy Lewis was absent.
4. **Treasurers Report:** Rose reported that to date £2,650 had been spent from the Buxton funds from the original £4,000. Rose also pointed out that the away-day trip to Leicester had cost the Branch £280, and this event had eaten into the reserves and in future needed to be approved through the Business Plan. However Philip thought that this was good value for the money and this type of event was the sort of thing that the Branch should be doing.

Rose also thought that there would be sufficient funds to cover another Bursary place at the 2014 Annual School.

Overall the Branch's funds currently stand at:

£242.59 – current account

£189.97 – reserve account

A new mandate and signatories was also required to maintain the Branch's account with the NatWest.

5. **Membership Report:** Mark Strawbridge was absent.

6. **County Representatives:**

Derbyshire: The Conservation Officers had recently had a talk about HLF Grants and Enterprise Grants and their relevance to Derbyshire. Neil also noted a recent appeal refusal in respect of the removal of a bird cabinet at Usherton Hall. There was also to be discussion of future projects at the Derwent Valley World Heritage site.

Lincolnshire: Rob noted that North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire, whilst still in Yorkshire region for many things, were now under the East Midlands region for English Heritage.

Leicestershire: No report.

Northamptonshire: No report.

Nottinghamshire: Jason reported that the Buildings at Risk pilot was nearly completed and was about to launch a volunteer type project based on the Lincolnshire model in the City.

There had also been talks with the NTU computer science department regarding the development of a smart phone application for use in BatR surveys and he was also looking for some collaboration with the Notts Buildings Preservation Trust.

The last meeting of the Conservation Officers Group at the Newark Magnus Buildings had discussed the possibility of a heritage at risk conference for industrial buildings. There were no staff changes to report, Bassetlaw was still providing services to other authorities and all districts have at least some professional input, which was an improvement on the situation 4 years ago.

7. **Communications:** Chris noted that Neil has submitted a summary of activities in Derbyshire for inclusion on the web site and it would be useful to have contributions from all the County representatives. It was interesting to see the range of work carried out within the Counties.

Chris noted that there were no reports from the AGM at the BGS at Keyworth or the Leicester Richard III visit.

ACTION: Sara offered to write a report for the BGS visit, time permitting.

8. **Branch AGM:** Jane advised that the venue had been arranged for Lincoln Castle on Friday 13th September and guest speakers had been arranged.

Chris thought that this would be useful to promote the AGM through the web-site and to set up an on-line booking arrangement. Chris also noted that Liz Blood was preparing a feedback presentation on the Carlisle Annual School for the AGM.

9. **Any Other Business:** Rob thought Branch members should be e-mailed and invited to stand as Branch Chair following Jane's resignation.

Date of Next Meeting: TBA – Fox & Crown, Newark
