



Minutes of Branch Committee Meeting: Tuesday 28th October 2014 At The Fox & Crown, Appleton Gate, Newark

Attendance: Liz Blood, Chris McKinney, Rose Thompson, Jane Roylance, Roy Lewis, Rob Walker, Liz Mayle, Rosamund Worrall, Fiona Newton, Stephen Bradwell, Becky Waddington & Eva Long

Apologies: Philip Grover, Sara Crofts, Jason Mordan, Simon Revill & Neil Robertson

- 1. Minutes of Last Meeting:** Agreed as a true record, although it was noted that Fiona should be added to the list of people attending and that Chris McKinney had sent his apologies.
- 2. Chairs Report:** Liz pointed out that the IHBC Council's Peripatetic Meeting in Derby in September had been a great success with over 80 people attending the main Friday event. This event would now provide a pattern that other Branches could take up.

Fiona also added that the feedback was positive, with support for the venue and the location, and that the speakers were well received, with a particular mention for Roy Lewis. Some people had commented that the information could have been dealt with in half-a-day; but a full day did give people an opportunity to network and tour the Roundhouse.

Liz was now working to the new business plan, but she pointed out that the achievements from last year were down to the hard work of the Branch Committee.

She also noted that there were only two meetings after tonight's meeting to organise the April 'away day' meeting and to arrange the Bursary for the next Annual School.

Fiona added that the theme for this year's Branch Connection Day was related to IHBC membership and the new associate category, which will allow people to apply for an associate membership and have some degree of professional accreditation with letters after their name, as a stepping stone to full membership. The Connection Day would inform the Branch membership secretaries about the operation of these new procedures.

Rob mentioned that Neil Robertson had agreed to attend and a vote was taken by the Branch Committee to authorise Neil to attend on behalf of the Branch.

- 3. Branch Reps Report:** Roy reported on the matters discussed at IHBC Council, noting that IHBC's relations with the IFA were now improving particularly as the Chair and President of the IHBC have had regular meetings with the IFA.

Overall the IHBC membership numbers were relatively stable with new members balancing resignations and the IHBC was also financially sound. The main concern was those members who had not yet paid their subscriptions, with only a small number in the East Midlands.

Other matters included the issue of 'governance' of the IHBC organisation.

Roy also reported that Terry Farrell had recommended a 'PLACE' alliance to bring together professional groups with an interest in the urban environment.

It was also discussed that the Government are still considering proposals whereby private heritage consultants would be able to authorise alterations to listed buildings, similar to the Building Regulations regime. The IHBC was in a difficult position in commenting on these proposals, but it may be able to offer some support if 'inspectors' were somehow accredited, such as by being IHBC members.

Rob noted however that the decision making was only part of the process, often the key to a successful scheme was in the implementation of the works and who would supervise that. It was generally agreed that overall the process seemed fraught with difficulties and legal complications.

Chris McKinney queried the level of works that this new procedure might cover, such as small scale works below EH notification thresholds.

Roy was also concerned that such a process would take the decision out of the democratic process, as LBC was not always a technical decision.

Roy also noted that charging for LB applications was still under consideration; with differences of opinions between large boroughs and smaller rural authorities. Other possible changes included the possibility of designating conservation areas on archaeological grounds.

- 4. Treasurers Report:** Rose reported that the end of year accounts had now been sent off, and that the Branch's current finances were:
Current Account: £1297.39
Reserve Account: £190.08

5. Membership Report: Neil was absent.

6. County Representatives Report:

Derbyshire: there had been a recent meeting in Cromford in September with a presentation by Sarah Gibson of the EH Designation Team.

Rob pointed out that the EH team were happy to deal with minor updates or corrections to list description entries if notified to them [link:

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/amending-an-entry/>]

In other news, the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust had bid for an HLF grant to cover a countywide BAR survey; Bolsover had a new HLF heritage grant scheme for the listed model village and in Derby City the Stage II THI had been approved.

Recent changes in staffing provision included: Jacob Amuli was to be replaced by Scott Nicholas, currently a planning officer at Chesterfield; Lisa Walton had not yet been replaced in North East Derbyshire, although Chris pointed out that other options were being considered. (*Becky has since confirmed that conservation at North East Derbyshire is now under Planning Policy and falls to James Arnold as Assistant Director for Planning.*)

Nottinghamshire: a recent meeting at NTU had been provided with a demonstration of a 3D building scanning machine, which as Eva pointed out could be a useful tool for recording buildings.

In Nottingham City, Tom Street had been seconded to the Carrington Street THI, and at Rushcliffe, Amy Schofield and Oliver Scott had raised concerns about the threat of demolition over the Kimberley Brewery. While Mansfield was proposing to reduce its conservation service from two officers to a single officer.

Leicestershire: A forum had been arranged for December in Harborough. In news, EH had pulled out of the PSICA in Melton and a new conservation scheme had been introduced for War Memorials. The Leicestershire Historic Buildings Trust was also looking at Bradgate Stables.

Leicester City was about to publish a heritage action plan and Jenny would be happy to speak to Branch about it.

In North West Leicestershire, a Stage I THI in Coalville and a shop front scheme was underway, and the conservation officer post vacated by Ramona Usher was to be advertised.

Lincolnshire: the last LCOG was held in Stamford, but was not well attended. Lincoln City would have a new Conservation Officer from December.

(Rob has updated his report adding that the new CO for Lincoln will be Sarah Harrison from West Lindsey DC. She is already advising Lincoln one day a week. Her last day with WLDC will be Friday 12 December and Yvonne Rose will be leaving Lincoln City on 19 December.

Heritage Lincolnshire has appointed Kelly Appleton, as its new Buildings Conservation Officer – she will be doing BPT projects and the area grant scheme in Boston.)

Northamptonshire: no report.

- 7. Communications:** Chris reported that the web site has been brought up to date, but a main objective was to give Branch Members advance notice of the Branch meetings and the website needed to be regularly updated to keep members involved.

There was then considerable discussion as to how the site could be used to help promote Branch activities.

Fiona noted that she always asks new people on the IHBC editorial board to give their impressions of how things are done, or can be improved and maybe it would be useful to ask our Branch members their views. Ros noted that perhaps an e-mail could be sent to members to advertise the new look web-site and web-starter as well as details of the Branch Committee and contacts.

Liz noted that it was important to encourage people to advertise events, although Eva thought that there was a danger that people can be inundated by e-mails, and considered whether other options could be used, such as text messages and Twitter, to give brief updates.

Chris pointed out the Branch needed to get information out to the membership about activities to encourage more people to attend Branch meetings or events, and Fiona pointed out that it was useful to let people know that the Branch were working on their behalf.

Eva asked whether the Branch Committee knew what the members wanted. Chris pointed out that the only feedback was through the AGM, but Rob mentioned that Dave Boyson had carried out a Branch survey sometime ago and perhaps this needed updating.

Eva wondered whether the key points of the meeting could be circulated to Branch members, and Fiona referred to the bulletin that followed the IHBC

Council meetings as a way of communicating the salient points of the meeting to the IHBC membership.

Chris thought it would be useful to advertise examples of work carried out in the Counties for others to use, and he also offered to draft/compile a Branch news bulletin.

Fiona also thought that it might be useful to update Dave Boyson's survey to see what people want from the Branch, particularly as the Branch's present activities were based on a survey from 10 years ago. Although Fiona thought that the cheap/free events were still likely to be popular, but there may also be other activities that the Branch could provide. And Fiona added that if the Branch wanted to distribute a survey then it was able to use the IHBC 'Survey Monkey' account.

Eva suggested people could bring ideas forward to the next Branch meeting and Chris suggested that the Branch Committee could update the ideas from the AGM as well asking about new ideas for events. Rob asked whether Chris could bring some thoughts to the next meeting for discussion.

Eva warned that the survey should not be too big, but it should ask not just about what members expected from the Branch Committee, but also what sort of events they would like to see. However Fiona urged caution against possibly duplicating surveys.

In terms of future events, Ros mentioned that she had good contacts with NTU Urban Design and Liz pointed out that the Branch had previously tried to establish links with the County groups, but these had been difficult to arrange in advance. Liz suggested that the County Representatives could report back to the County groups to encourage wider invitations to site visits and to help to promote IHBC membership.

Eva wondered whether Context could be linked to current events, but as Fiona pointed out this was not possible due to the lead-in times for publication, also there had been a deliberate decision to publish Context as a journal rather than a magazine.

- 8. AOB:** Rob asked whether as an alternative to Article 4 Directions in Conservation Areas, which were often not adopted for political reasons, anyone had experience of using Local Development Orders as a means of promoting positive action that would not require consent to restore features within a conservation area.

Steve mentioned that he had recently attended a conference in Liverpool organised by the North West Branch. David Tomback of EH had given an interesting talk on the impact of enabling development on the setting of the host listed building and he had offered to talk to the North West Branch on

the forthcoming revised EH advice on enabling development. Steve wondered whether this was something that the East Midlands Branch might possibly want to consider as a basis for a future Branch event.

Liz noted that Jenny had offered Leicester as a possible venue for a future Branch event.

Fiona then asked whether there were any Branch volunteers willing to represent the IHBC at a future NHTG meeting in Lincoln - Liz Blood offered to attend and Liz Mayle said that she might also be able to attend.

Date of Next Meetings:

Next Branch meeting: Tuesday 2 December 2014 - 7.00pm in Newark

Future Meetings:

Tuesday 3 February 2015 - 7.00pm in Newark

April 2015 - meeting venue and date to be confirmed

Tuesday 14 July 2015 - 7.00pm in Newark
