



**South East Branch Committee Meeting
The Sergison Arms, Haywards Heath, West Sussex
Thursday 9th November 2017 at 7pm**

MINUTES

Present:

Duncan Philips, Sanne Roberts, Seán Rix, Lone Le Vay and Lisa Brooks

1 Apologies

Debbie Maltby, Eimear Murphy, Clare Dales

2 Minutes of the last meeting

Agreed

3 Matters arising

SR Confirmed that the Branch Survey had been submitted to HO.

4 Review of Committee arrangements/ Committee vacancies/interim arrangements

DP outlined the issues undermining the effectiveness of the Branch Committee mainly non-participation, even amongst Committee members. As outlined in his email of 29th September 2017, attached to these minutes. This was a problem common to most regions and each had different approaches. Some regions are even larger than south-east, for example South-West who had all meetings at the same location, within Council offices on a Friday afternoon. Carla (IHBC Support Officer) had advised that branches had access to IHBC Central's "Gotomeeting" software: <https://www.gotomeeting.com/en-gb>, a video conferencing system. There had also been earlier discussions regarding use of Skype for virtual meetings.

A discussion followed, there was general support for use of technology to allow remote participation in meetings. There was a general view that this would be best if people to participate remotely with some committee members being physically present together. Generally linking meetings with a talk was considered to have been a success and should be pursued, but there was still a need to hold some business meetings. SRix said there was no compulsion to follow a specific model and regions had discretion on how they arranged their communications/activities. He suggested breaking up the region by Counties operating below the main committee to organise events and activities within their areas to overcome the geographical problems of convening meetings for a large area. This generated interest with the possibility of possibly creating two sub-regions, east and west with a vice-Chair for each area. Meetings could be split between the umbrella committee group and each sub area, ideally with the sub-regions alternating the timing of their meetings between them.

It was agreed to draw up a proposal for discussion at the AGM and to seek agreement among the membership to a proposed way forward. The aim would be to pilot the new arrangements for a year and review them and if successful continue

with them. DP agreed to map members again to identify clusters of members to help identify venues for meeting in each sub-region. The possibility of meeting venues within each sub-region alternating between two venues one in each constituent count; Surrey/West Sussex for western sub region and East Sussex/Kent for the east sub region.

The issue of filling vacant posts was also discussed. Filling the secretarial role was agreed to be a specific priority. It was agreed to provide a brief description of each committee role, which could then be used to canvass interest amongst the membership in becoming more active in the branch and joining the Committee. DP had noted that there were some committee members who had not engaged either in meetings or email correspondence. It was agreed that DP would contact dormant members and establish their commitment to continued involvement in the Branch Committee.

Agreed Action:

- i) Discussion Paper to be prepared for circulation in advance of AGM and to be discussed at the AGM in March - **DP**
- ii) Branch members to be mapped to identify clusters to inform best locations for future meetings - **DP**
- iii) DP to email non-participatory Committee members regarding their interest in continued involvement in the committee. - **DP**
- iv) Short descriptions of each Committee role to be prepared. – **All Branch Officers**

5 Branch Business Plan – Progress and way forward

EB was not present at the meeting. LL had made a start on updating the existing Business Plan and this had been circulated. It was agreed to focus more on the Objectives/Future Activities/Implementation rather than the preamble. It was agreed it should include reference to the proposed review of the committee structure and operation. SRob agreed to source some good examples of other Branch Business Plans and circulate them.

A business plan is required to draw down funds from head office. We had not in the past done this and it was agreed that we should consider doing this to spend on events activities that benefit members.

Agreed Action:

- v) Good examples of Branch Business Plans to be sourced and circulated - **SRob**

6 IHBC SE Day School/AGM

The date of the annual Day School and AGM event has now been fixed for 9th March 2018 at the Shepherd Neame Brewery Visitor Centre, Faversham, Kent and the deposit on the venue has been paid. The topic was still Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting.

Duncan explained the problems with previously confirmed speakers dropping out and/or coming back to request fees. Of the original list Jo Luggs of the National Trust was still a possibility and Nick Dermott of Thanet Council appeared willing to discuss the Dalby Square project in Margate. Misha Hewitt was also a possibility, although potentially controversial. Other speakers suggested included Richard Oxley, of Oxley Conservations (Environmental Assessments) and James Mills (Ground Source Heat Pumps). It was also suggested we would try and get a speaker on current research such as from BRE. LL stated that she would ask Historic England if they could suggest any speakers involved in their current research. If we are still short on speakers we could include a Legal Update which had proved popular in the past.

Agreed Action:

- vi) Richard Oxley and James Mills to be contacted to see if they would be prepared to give a talk to the day School – **DP**
- vii) HE to be contacted regarding possible speakers on current research. **LL** [I have also emailed Simon Algar of Swale BC regarding a welcome address and possible speakers in relation to projects in the Swale area. I have also been in contact with SPAB, who may also be able to assist us].
- viii) Once we have firmed up a list of speakers a draft programme with prepared and circulated - **LL**

7 Branch Final Return

The Branch Financial return had been prepared and circulated. There were no queries and the Return was agreed for submission to Head Office. DP to email a signature to LL for incorporating into the return who would submit it with a copy of the bank statements

Agreed Actions

- ix) Completed Branch Financial Return to be submitted to HO with a copy of the bank statements for the year/

8 IHBC SE Branch webpage/Social media

There was a discussion about the Branch's use of Social media as a means of communicating with its members. SRob confirmed she was happy to maintain the Branch FB page. LinkedIn was considered more problematic as it was more difficult to set up and manage groups. Few of the Committee members were regular users of Twitter so for now it was agreed to focus on Facebook.

The Branch page on the IHBC main site needed updating and SRob agreed to liaise with Peter Babcock at IHBC HO to get the page updated and latest minutes/agendas uploaded.

Agreed Actions

- x) Agreed to increase use of Facebook, page to be regularly maintained and updated. – **SRob**
- xi) Agreed to maintain Twitter page - **DP**
- xii) IHBC Branch page to be updated and recent meeting notes and agendas to be uploaded. - **SRob**

9 Feedback from National IHBC (Sanne Roberts)

SRob gave an update from the last Trustees meeting, which was a virtual meeting. Main points:-

- SE Branch now confirmed as hosts of the 2020 National Annual School
- A monthly Newsletter is to be issued and it is important for Branches to submit news items to Carla for inclusion
- The new IHBC website will be launched early in 2018

LL gave a brief update on the last policy committee meeting:-

- Review of NPPF and concerns that while the HE section is likely to be retained, other parts may be amended to reduce the current weight attached to the HE.
- Bob Kindred is still interested in poor appeal decisions

- Still no news regarding further amendment of HE Curtilage guidance
- Currently updating the Policy Committee Business Plan

Agreed Action

- xiii) Doodle Poll to be circulated to members regarding member participation/interest in roles in relation to preparation for the 2020 National School

10 AOB

Agreed to reschedule the forts talk for the New Year, possibly in Horsham.

Need to arrange a Branch Christmas meal. Debbie to be asked to look at possible venues in Tunbridge Wells, failing that it was agreed to hold it in Brighton.

LL confirmed that she would be attending the SE Historic Environment Forum in Canterbury on Wednesday 15th November. She would report the forthcoming AGM event on energy efficiency and retrofitting.

We have been offered the option of another Affiliates Seminar, South Branch recently held one but no-one turned up. It was suggested that as we already had two in Horsham, that we should hold one in the east. Tunbridge Wells or Sevenoaks were suggested as a possible venues.

Action

- xiv) Investigate possible venues in Kent for a future Affiliates Seminar - **DM**
 xv) Issue a Doodle Poll for Xmas meal dates - **DP**

11 Date of next meeting

Next meeting would be in conjunction with the Branch Committee Christmas meal date venue to be confirmed. It was suggested this could be similar to the previous "Wassail" events