



**Minutes of Branch Committee Meeting:
Tuesday 10th December 2013
At The Fox & Crown, Appleton Gate, Newark**

Attendance: Rachel Booth, Lisa Walton, Rob Walker, Liz Mayle, Rose Thompson, Roy Lewis, Fiona Newton, Jason Mordan & Stephen Bradwell

Apologies: Sara Crofts, Liz Blood, Kerry Walmsley, Jane Roylance, Neil Robertson, Eva Long & Chris McKinney

1. **Minutes:** Agreed as a true record.

2. **Matters Arising:** Other than agenda items, Rob had circulated notes of the Branch Connection Day on disciplinary procedures (attached). Rob pointed out, in addition to the main conclusions, the importance of maintaining professional CPD records. Rob also drew attention to potential contacts in the IHBC that could be used as a first port of call if members were involved in a disciplinary matter.

Fiona however pointed out that disciplinary procedures were rare and that most complaints did not get through first sift, that there is no case to answer, but as a result of discussions on the day more formal procedures will be introduced.

3. **Chairs Report:** Liz noted that she had sent introductory welcome letters to new members, but not to members upgrading. It was considered that it might be also be useful to write to upgrading members in recognition of their upgrade.

4. **Branch Representatives Report:** Roy noted that Mick Brown, IHBC Chair, was now the Vice-Chair of the advisory board overseeing English Heritage.

The Treasurers Report was accepted and shows that the IHBC is financially on track. Draft of Business Plans for various IHBC Committees and for the East Midlands Branch were also approved. Although in response to the Branch's request for an additional £150 over the usual £500 allowance, Council suggested that this additional money be left for time being and only requested later if necessary.

On Membership Roy noted that the Branch had one new affiliate member. Roy also mentioned the long-standing debate regarding nominations to IHBC Committee that has still not been resolved due to legal issues.

There was also talk about changes to the full membership procedures, with the possible introduction of a graduated process to allow potential members to address the required competencies in possibly two stages.

The Heritage Alliance were campaigning again on VAT issues in respect of listed buildings, and Vince Cable had invited IHBC representatives to meet with Treasury Officers to discuss the issues.

Bob Kindred reported that job adverts for conservation officers was now picking-up, but that a large proportion were either fixed term or part-time.

In an attempt to change the consultation process, James Caird was now setting up a consultation panel to keep IHBC members informed of consultations. In the past the general, round-robin consultation process had not generated many responses, and it was considered that a consultation panel, open to any member who wished to get involved in the consultation process, will elicit more responses.

Roy also mentioned that Emilia Hands, IHBC vice-chair, is intending to visit all the Branches to introduce herself to IHBC membership.

5. **Treasurers Report:** Rose reported that:
Current Account: £487.99
Reserve Account: £189.97

However she did point out that the Branch had still not had a bill from the AGM venue in Lincoln.

Rose will also request the £500 allowance from the central office.

6. **Membership Report:** Neil had advised that there was nothing to report.

Roy mentioned that the Branch had 166 members in total, of which there were 52 affiliates and 9 associates.

7. **County Representatives Report:**

Lincolnshire: Kerry was absent from the meeting, but had advised that the next LCOG was to be held on 13th December hosted by West Lindsey with a talk by Ben Robinson on Heritage at Risk and wind farms. In commenting on wind turbines, Roy mentioned a recent planning wind turbine appeal in Broxtowe. Whilst the Council had not refused on heritage grounds the Inspector felt obliged to have regard to impact on setting of listed buildings because of statutory requirements and he refused the appeal because of harm to setting of listed buildings. Demonstrating that the primary legislation (s66) had more weight than the planning guidance.

Kerry's report also mentioned that Marianna Porter was the new Conservation Officer at North Kesteven.

Northamptonshire: Rachel Booth had submitted a report by e-mail, with a summary of the Northamptonshire Conservation Officers Forum September

meeting at English Heritage's offices in Northampton. Of particular interest she noted that in Northampton an application to de-list St. Edmund's Hospital, the list entry had been amended to clarify that other than the gatehouse, the entire hospital and ancillary buildings should remain on the list. Also that the grant bid for Delapre Abbey was successful and roof repairs were due to commence in November 2013.

In South Northamptonshire, consultants had been appointed to draw up proposals for a new conservation area to include the whole of the Grand Union Canal through South Northamptonshire.

English Heritage also discussed the latest plans to split the current organisation into two separate arms in April 2015, comprising a charitable organisation to manage its monuments and properties and a non-departmental public body to administer its statutory functions.

There was also a presentation outlining the Heritage Section of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act which is likely to come into force in early 2014. Full details can be obtained from the Helm website.

In Daventry, the Council's Planning Committee had given planning permission and conservation area consent for a major redevelopment project to transform Daventry town centre, although the existing library, housed in a 1930s brick building within the town centre conservation area, together with a number of boundary walls (remnants of Daventry's medieval town plan), will be demolished to facilitate the new development. English Heritage had opposed the development on the grounds that there would be substantial harm to the significance and setting of designated heritage assets in the town centre. While at their Full Council meeting in December, Councillors supported proposals for the authority to begin the process of acquiring the badly damaged Grade II Listed Overstone Hall from its current owners, and also agreed that DDC should form part of a partnership to seek grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund to help achieve the restoration of the Weedon Depot site, a Grade II* Listed military depot dating back to the Napoleonic era.

Nottinghamshire: Jason Mordan noted that Conservation Officer group meetings were to be arranged at 6 monthly intervals. There had been no major staff changes, but there was still a lot of service sharing so all authorities have some conservation advice. The County has just finished BaR project for Nottingham City and were now working on Newark and Sherwood.

Nottinghamshire has also received £20k from minerals s106 contributions for industrial buildings at risk.

Derbyshire: Lisa Walton noted that there had been a recent presentation by High Peak on mobilising volunteers to assist with BaR surveys; but forms supplied by EH needed to be simplified. So far High Peak had managed to survey 95% of its area while Staffordshire Moorlands about 52%. There had also been discussion with Alan Morrison of Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust to consider a County-wide survey of Grade II Listed buildings.

8. **Peripatetic Council Meeting:** Roy noted that the Branch had agreed to help organise with the IHBC the next IHBC peripatetic meeting on the topic of training & new membership issues with the venue to be in Derby. So far Fiona has managed to organise block booking at Jury's Inn and Roy suggested that Council members could be available to present seminars.

The dates for this meeting were: Thursday 11 September for the full Council meeting with a low key social event combined with AGM in the evening followed by an IHBC day on the Friday (mid-morning start), which essentially is a day for affiliates looking to upgrade to full membership.

Emilia Hands and Paul Butler were working on a membership presentation for affiliates and Branch representatives would be able to take this back for use at Branch level.

However there was some concern as to how East Midlands Branch members can be involved in the Friday event.

Roy questioned whether there was enough content in looking at encouraging affiliates to upgrade, were there any other opportunities to involve other professionals who might be interested in joining IHBC, such as development control planners who are working in conservation, or engineers/surveyors who specialise in historic buildings.

Fiona for example had a 'student course' connection presentation for students representatives from different conservation courses looking at IHBC membership and careers along with some discussion time.

Roy suggested that the event could look at the Roundhouse in Derby as an example of a heritage project and to explain what happened there.

Rob suggested that the Branch needed a small working (possibly Roy, Fiona, Liz, Rose, Chris and Neil) to meet more frequently than the Branch Committee to resolve the content of the day and the Branch's involvement. It was agreed that the Committee would therefore delegate arrangements for the event to that working party.

It was also thought that it might also be useful to add a CPD event to the meeting to highlight what the Branch has done as a case study, in order to encourage people from the Branch to get involved and also to showcase the type of 'cheap-n-cheerful' events that we have organised.

Fiona has investigated venues with help of Neil and Chloe from Derby City and was looking for a meeting room on Thursday for the Council meeting with a 'room above pub' for the social evening. The Friday event could possibly be at the Roundhouse or other conference facilities, such as at the Midland Hotel, as long as the venue was close to the station.

9. **Any Other Business:** "Away Day Meeting": Roy thought that it might be too much for the Branch to organise an 'away day' visit as the Branch needed to focus on the IHBC peripatetic meeting. Although it was suggested that the

'Magnus Building' in Newark could be available, and Liz offered to approach Jane for more details, or the 'Prince Rupert', also in Newark, an example of a Kentish Wealden house a long way from home, although that venue might have a problem organising 'buffet' style food.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 4th February – Fox & Crown, Newark

Branch Connection Day 2013

IHBC disciplinary process – Birmingham 19 November 2013

Attendees

Paul Butler (PB)(membership secretary), Eddie Booth (EB)(secretary), Jo Evans (past chair), David Lovie (DL)(past president), Fiona Newton (projects officer), Heather Jermy (east anglia), Rob Walker (east midlands), Jules Brown (north), Kate Kendall (north west), Alison Davidson (south), Clare Dales (south east), Charlotte Lewis (south west), Chris Partrick (west midlands) and Lydia Porter (IHBC administrator)

IHBC Disciplinary Process: Introduction

The basis for governing the IHBC is through its memorandum and articles of association and code of conduct which applies to affiliates as well as full members. Members can use their knowledge and experience to draw a conclusion but this may well be quite different to that of another member. It is fine to have a debate and differing views but members need to justify their conclusions.

If a member falls short of the criteria given in the code of conduct and a complaint is made this starts the disciplinary process. Complaints received are few and most are from members of the public and relating to decisions they do not agree with.

Thankfully complaints by members about other members are rare.

Disciplinary process discussion

A couple of Branches brought examples of issues about which they had been made aware. I did not receive any comments from EM Branch Committee Members. Nationally the limited number of complaints may be because members think very carefully before taking what seems like a massive step in making a formal complaint. Formal action has repercussions for both parties concerned.

During the discussion it was suggested that perhaps there should be some sort of grievance or less formal process (a ticking off) before the formal disciplinary process kicks in. However this would still require the same amount of investigation as a formal complaint in the first stages to determine whether there is a case to answer.

It was also suggested that perhaps there should be someone within the Institute that members can go to for advice on whether something they are aware of is potentially an issue. It was agreed that DL, EB or PB can be contacted if anyone wants to discuss a situation.

The IHBC does attempt to achieve mediation and conciliation between the parties. It was pointed out that in local government the ombudsman will not consider a complaint until other processes of mediation have been completed.

It was suggested that perhaps the wording of the process could be altered slightly to refer to the first part as a complaint/grievance process. The term disciplinary process does make people feel guilty before a case is proven.

Currently complaints are made by letter or email. It was suggested that a complaint form should be available. This may help to deter those without a valid complaint and help ensure that the initial information needed is provided to consider a case.

Attendees were aware that on occasions there may be a conflict between the code of conduct and what an employer wants.

As well as the cases raised by a couple of Branches, a number of fictional case studies branches were discussed to use as examples of the sorts of issues that can arise.

The IHBC was also keen to remind attendees of the Institute's CPD requirements. Do please do all note and remind fellow IHBC members, perhaps through County Reps, that failure to keep up with CPD is a disciplinary matter which could ultimately lead to expulsion from the Institute. It is unfair on the vast majority of members that diligently maintain CPD when there are a number that are not keeping up to date with CPD.

CPD is self-directed and is not just going along to seminars or events but about devising ways to get the development you need. It could be by reading an article or having an informative discussion with a colleague. Be warned should you be asked to provide information on your CPD!!

Disciplinary Sanctions – Where it is found there is a case to answer sanctions could include a reprimand or warning but the Institute does not have the power to levy fines. The ultimate sanction would be expulsion from the institute. It seems however, that very often the person complaining actually wants an apology as much as anything else.

If expelled a person could reapply for membership after a period of time (decided by council) if they affirm their intention to act within the code of conduct.

The conclusions drawn from the day were:

- The terminology used in the process could be softer at the start being called a complaints process before then becoming the disciplinary procedure only if there is a case to answer.
- That a complaints form should be produced
- Timescales for responding to complainants and processing cases are put in place and adhered to
- That the different levels of sanctions that could be applied are made clear.

REW 3 Dec 2013 (extracted from official IHBC notes of the day)