



**Minutes of Branch Committee Meeting:
Tuesday 29th October 2013
At The Fox & Crown, Appleton Gate, Newark**

Attendance: Liz Blood, Kerry Walmsley, Neil Robertson, Jane Royland, Stephen Bradwell, Sara Crofts, Roy Lewis, Rose Thompson, Liz Mayle, Fiona Newton & Rob Walker

Apologies: Eva Long & Lisa Walton

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting:** Agreed.

2. **Chairs Report and Business Plan:**

Roy agreed to advise Liz of any new members so that she could send out the Branch's welcome letter.

Rose also confirmed that Business Plan had been submitted to IHBC for approval at the December Council meeting.

3. **Branch Representatives Report:**

Roy noted that as e-letters were now being sent out following IHBC Council meetings there was no longer any need for him to write a separate report to Branch.

Roy reported that the IHBC finances are still sound; web-site advertising was proving to be a good revenue and there was a substantial surplus above budget projections.

The Governance review had highlighted issues with late nominations for IHBC Chair, and it was now recognised that there was a need for longer lead-in times so that nominees can be included on AGM agenda.

Roy also noted that there were plans to split English Heritage, to distinguish between the ownership and management of the historic buildings side of the service and the professional advice side.

The Green Deal was also discussed and John Preston has done a lot of work with regards to this issue. However due to the slow take up of the initiative the Government was now looking to introduce a compulsory take-up in both the commercial and residential private rented sector. John Preston has written an update for a future issue of Context; but he would be interested in hearing about the impact of any Green Deal schemes imposed on the private sector.

The IFA's application for chartered status was being supported by the IHBC, but they might lack membership numbers.

Roy also advised that Edmund Fox had upgraded to full membership and that Rosalind Worrall and Emma Dwyer had been elected as Affiliates.

The next Council meeting is due to held on 5th December at the Theatres Trust in London.

Fiona noted that some of the IHBC's surplus funds had been allocated to engage a person to write up the IHBC News Blog, and to develop the AGM initiative to encourage affiliate members to upgrade to full membership.

4. **Treasurers Report:**

Rose reported that the Branch's funds currently stand at:

£517.99 – current account;

£189.99 – reserve account.

However she was still waiting for the invoice from the Heritage Skills Centre for the Branch AGM.

5. **Membership Report:**

Neil reported that there had been no recent correspondence. Fiona pointed out that this was not unusual as Membership applications tended to be treated in batches in relation to Membership deadlines.

6. **County Representatives Reports:**

Derbyshire: Lisa Walton's report was reported to the Committee, and in view of her possible switch out of conservation into development control due to an internal reorganisation, the Committee expressed its support for Lisa in her role as Derby County Representative and hoped that she would continue to represent the district's conservation interests within any new role within her Authority.

Leicestershire: Liz Blood said whilst Jenny Timothy had resigned as Chair of the County's conservation officers group, the County was organising a forum for December. Liz noted that a query had been raised about the impact of latest regulations, particularly on the treatment of conservation area consents.

As this was such a recent change no-one was able to comment on its implementation or impact so far, but it was noted that English Heritage were proposing to hold briefing seminars, and some dates had been posted on the HELM site.

It was also noted that Helen Ensor had left English Heritage and Eilis Scott was providing temporary cover in Leicestershire.

Liz also noted that in her role as the County's War Memorial Project officer she was receiving a lot of enquiries about war memorials as part of the lead-in to First World War centenary commemorations, and in the absence of local officers she was happy to give general advice. Roy noted that expert advice in this specialist area was most welcome.

Lincolnshire: The last Lincoln meeting had been hosted by Arthur Ward and the impact of wind turbines and solar-voltaics was a major issue. It was also noted that North East Lincolnshire were looking to extend the Heritage at Risk project by Heritage Lincolnshire into North East Lincolnshire.

It was also noted that the 1908 wing of North Kesteven School, previously attended by Margaret Thatcher, had been listed.

North Kesteven have also appointed a new Conservation Officer, but no replacement had as yet been proposed Arthur Ward's post in Lincoln.

Northamptonshire & Nottinghamshire: No reports submitted.

7. **Communications Officer:** it was noted that due to the pressures of time at the Branch AGM there had not been much debate about the improved web-site and future initiatives for communications. However Chris noted that he would continue to post information on the Branch web-site, which it was agreed was developing nicely, and perhaps to consider new ways to promote the work of the Branch.

Liz thought that the use of improved communications could help to bring more people into the IHBC who wanted to be more involved in the Branch.

Fiona also suggested that if the Branch wanted to do a survey of its Members opinion of the web-site or a future event, then this could be arranged through the IHBC.

8. **Peripatetic Council Meeting:**

Roy noted that it had been agreed that the East Midlands Branch would host the next Peripatetic Council meeting, scheduled for 11th September 2014, and the Branch AGM could be held at the same time.

As a result the Branch needed to make some strategic decisions very quickly, in particular to identify a location for the IHBC Council meeting on the Thursday, and to consider the evening reception and an event for the Friday, which could be a conference, a visit day or something similar.

In the past these meetings have proved useful as a meet and greet between IHBC Council members and local Branch Members, and also to involve other local professionals or politicians to promote the work of the IHBC members.

Roy suggested Lincoln as a possible venue as the Branch AGM had shown that there was quite a lot going on in the City, although Fiona pointed out that she had struggled to find enough suitable venues/accommodation.

Jane suggested Newark and the Magnus Buildings, and there were also local hotels in town.

Fiona also pointed out that if regional politicians were not to be invited then a formal reception seemed impractical, and it may be preferable to have an informal social event/meal as this could offer better value.

For the Friday event, if the Branch was hold to hold a conference or seminar then the national office could guarantee up to 15 bookings. Or the national office could fund a membership promotion event targetted at affiliate Members, to encourage them to upgrade. This would put the Branch at the centre of the national 'recruitment' issue. Fiona pointed out that a project has already commenced in Aberdeen and this could feed into this event, and it would not need much organisation from the Branch.

However there was a need to decide the best option for the Branch and then that could determine a venue that was accessible to all potential members. Of those places considered, Derby seemed to be the most appropriate.

Liz queried how the event would attract new members, Fiona said other Branches had invited people along to the event and tried to mentor/assist people to apply for full membership. Although Liz pointed out that as this was not be an event for full members, did we need to cater full members as well, particularly as without them it would be difficult to hold the AGM.

Rob said he supported the Council coming to East Midlands, but he was concerned that an IHBC membership event sounded more like a national event rather than an East Midlands Branch event.

Fiona pointed out that the Branch could still organise its own conference if that was what the Branch wanted to do.

Roy noted that previous peripatetic meetings had been quite varied, and that it was useful to have Fiona within the Branch as she attends these meetings and is able to provide useful liaison between Branch and national office; particularly as a purpose of the peripatetic meeting was to allow the Branch to get to know Council and the Council to meet the Branch. And as the national office had an issue that it wanted to develop and the funding, then may be useful to follow this lead.

Kerry asked whether the meeting could be kept more East Midlands orientated, an opportunity to showcase activities in East Midlands.

Fiona thought that the only way to guarantee an East Midlands focus was to organise a conference, but as Rose pointed out there is a risk that a conference will not run at a profit.

Liz asked what is the obligation on the Branch, is it required to anything more than organise and/or participate in the training day event.

Fiona suggested that the Branch could look to combine a Friday event with a 'cheap'n'cheerful' conference followed by the AGM.

Neil suggested that the Branch could organise some study tours to make it a more practical event and showcase conservation work in the East Midlands.

After much discussion, Liz summarised by saying that the Branch had three options: a study tour, a conference or an IHBC training day.

Fiona thought that it was better to link the study tour with the training day; and Roy considered whether it was possible to have a day's outing to various sites to promote best example of conservation in the East Midlands. However it was considered that as the training day needed a full day it was difficult to combine with other events.

The Committee was asked to vote on its preferred option, and given the financial risks involved in running a conference, it was agreed that the Branch would support the IHBC training day programme.

9. **AOB:**

The question of Branch fund raising was also raised, given the discussions at previous Branch meetings and the shortage of time to discuss it properly at the Branch AGM. However it was considered that in view of the organisation required for the peripatetic meeting, the fund raising issues needed to be put to one side for the time being.

It was considered that the Branch AGM for 2014 should be arranged around the peripatetic meeting event and that Thursday was probably the best day for the AGM, to combine it with the evening reception, but it would need an event to attract full members to the AGM.

To promote the Annual School Bursary it was decided to invite applications from the Branch, but it needed to be clear that the Bursary did not cover travel expenses.

Rob also pointed out that he was attending the IHBC Branch Connection Day on disciplinary procedures, so he invited any comments or concerns from Branch Members to take to the meeting.

Jane also noted that she had had a response from Rob Green architect from Arrol & Snell, thanking for the Branch for its letter and book token following his presentation to the Branch AGM.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 10th December – Fox & Crown, Newark
