



**Minutes of Branch Committee Meeting:
Tuesday 4th December 2012
at The Fox & Crown, Appletongate, Newark**

Present: Roy Lewis, Chris McKinney, Neil Robertson, Kerry Walmsley, Stephen Bradwell, Jane Roylance, Liz Mayle, Robert Walker, Fiona Newton, Jason Mordan & Rose Thompson

Apologies: Philip Grover, Liz Blood & Mark Strawbridge

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting:** Agreed as a true record.
2. **Chair's Report & Business Plan:** Jane was still to e-mail the County representatives.

Jane reported that the recent Branch Connection Day had been very interesting particularly to hear different views from those with different professional backgrounds. The role of the membership was discussed in the context of the Code of Conduct, which was originally written when most Members were employed in Local Government.

As part of the Branch programme Jane also thought that consideration needed to be given to the venue and topic for the 'away day' meeting to be held in April by the time of the February meeting.

Neil noted that St Helens House was due for completion in March and may be occupied as offices by April and so would not be accessible. However another alternative venue could be Buxton Crescent where work had just started.

Jason also noted that HLF first stage had been submitted for Nottingham Castle but an April was possibly too soon to see anything on the ground. Jason also suggested Clumber Park where HLF money had been spent on works to the landscape and gardens.

Chris McKinney also suggested Hardwick Hall stables if the Branch wanted to hold a meeting towards the northern end of the area.

Stephen noted that he had sent the e-mail trailer regarding the Annual School Bursary Award and had one expression of interest.

Jane agreed to update the e-mail from last year and forward it to Stephen and Chris for e-mail circulation and web-site publication.

(ACTION: Jane to circulate annual bursary

e-mail for distribution to membership)

It was proposed that the closing date for applications should be set for Friday 25th January so that a decision could be made at the February Branch Meeting.

Roy noted that the Branch Business Plan would be discussed at IHBC meeting on Thursday 6th December.

4. **Treasurers Report:** As reported in the Agenda. Rose will ask for Branch funds from IHBC after the IHBC December meeting.
5. **Membership Report:** Mark had sent his apologies.
6. **County Representatives Reports:**

Derbyshire: Nothing to report next meeting was to be held on the 5th December.

Lincolnshire: Nothing to report next meeting was to be held on the 14th December.

Leicestershire: In the absence of the County rep an e-mail report had been submitted by Liz Blood. It was noted that Jane had given a presentation on the IHBC which was much appreciated. A discussion on best practice flagged up the importance of getting dates correct on site notices as mistakes can lead to public complaints.

There was also some discussion on the standard of applications and of heritage statements that were generally considered poor, with particular concern that those architects providing a good standard were struggle to compete with those who provide the minimum information necessary to validate.

Pre-app charging: Some districts are now charging, but for different things. City not yet charging. See district websites for charges.

Appeal: it was noted that an appeal had been won for the retention of a coach house in the Evington Footpath Conservation Area despite the character appraisal suggesting that it detracted from the Conservation Area although it was justified at appeal that the it was the condition of the coachhouse that detracted from CA and not the actual building.

Liz also noted that a Heritage Crime Prevention Group was due to meet in December and anyone interested in the group should contact Liz. The group includes representatives from local authorities, police, English Heritage, and Diocese of Leicester and a brief for the new Police and Crime Commissioner was being formulated.

Nottinghamshire: Jason reported that the NCOF met in Mansfield in October. It was sometimes difficult to tell how many Conservation Officers there were in the County due to the number of job-shares.

Nottinghamshire have made a bid for English Heritage for 'BaR' pilot programme. If successful they will be looking to have a briefing meeting in January and may be able to open that meeting up to the Branch.

Jason has also made plans to develop the project on reed and plaster floors.

A number of HLF projects were also moving along such as Nottingham Castle and Beeston Lock Cottages. This project combined the training element with build/construction elements with a proposed end use as a community café. If HLF stage two approved, it would be a useful site for a visit.

East Midlands Research Strategy is also moving forward and looking to develop a web site. Fiona noted that the East Midlands region in particular had made great efforts to expand the original archaeological framework to include standing buildings.

Northamptonshire: Rachel was absent.

7. **Bursary Ward:** Already covered earlier in the meeting.
8. **Communications:** Chris noted that one outstanding issue was the lack of a County activity page and with Liz Blood's assistance he had developed a prototype page for County representatives to consider.

It was intended that this activity page would promote work taking place within County groups that would otherwise go unreported.

Jason noted that he was happy to post NCOF minutes on the website but Fiona warned that anything on the website would be public knowledge so any minutes might have to be carefully scripted with this in mind. Liz pointed out that sometimes the Minutes took a while to be published and sometimes controversial discussions took place that were not for public access.

Fiona also noted that County groups were not strictly IHBC organisations and approval from the County officers may be required before publication on the IHBC web-site.

Roy was concerned that the conservation service was under serious threat with the loss of posts and loss of grants and it was often seen as a negative force. So conservation needs to 'big its part up' and promote purpose and the value of conservation planning. It was essential to get this sort of information onto the website.

It was agreed that Chris will circulate the draft page to the County representatives in order to gather comments, but would also start the trial with the Leicestershire page.

(ACTION: Chris to circulate for discussion a proposed County Groups draft page to the County Reps)

Fiona noted that if the County groups have a page on the website, then should there equally be a section for private consultants?

Jane thought a schedule of HLF Awards and key consultants might be interesting. Roy thought it would be useful to profile some conservation-based schemes. He also thought it useful to publicise IHBC connections.

9. **AOB:** Roy also noted that the IHBC newsblog had recently reported comments from a RICS meeting that there was a lack of conservation officers.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 5th February – Fox & Crown, Newark
