

## Chair's Introduction

Dear East Mids Branch members, I hope this bulletin finds you all well. The first six months of the year have flown by, and as we enter the second half of 2025 it falls to me to welcome you to the latest branch bulletin. As ever there has been work happening behind the scenes at the committee level, but a particular success, which I know many of you will have enjoyed, was the Fire Safety in Traditional and Historic Buildings event in Newark with Steve Emery. The event was a sell-out and we really appreciate the support from IHBC Head Office with the event. Further details on what was a great day can be found below.

This will be my final bulletin as the Chair of the IHBC East Midlands Committee. After three years at the helm I will be stepping down in October at the AGM in order to let someone else have a go. It's been a real honour and very enjoyable, but that is due to the fantastic work and dedication of the rest of the committee. We have a number of roles becoming vacant at the AGM in October, and there will be soon a call out for people to show their interest. If you do value what the IHBC delivers at a local level, it would be great to see some of you involved. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss, and enjoy the rest of the Bulletin!

## Annual General Meeting 2025

This year our in person branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at Newark Civil War Museum's Tudor Hall. The AGM will include a full CPD programme led by Dave Chetwyn on Placemaking.

At the 2022 AGM held in Buxton it was agreed that roles on the branch committee would be fixed at three years, as such we are now approaching the end of the first three year cycle and many of the committee roles will be up for re-election. We are keen to hear from anyone interested in becoming involved with the committee in any capacity. If you would like an informal chat then please don't hesitate to contact any present member of the committee, our contact details can be found here: <https://www.ihbc.org.uk/branches/emids/index.html> or via [ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com](mailto:ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com)

The roles that we are seeking officers for are:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Membership Secretary
- Communications Co-ordinator
- Education Officer
- Private Sector Representative
- County Representatives - Leicestershire, Lincolnshire
- General Committee Members

Descriptions for each branch role will be circulated in due course as part of the AGM papers, however if you are interested, then please contact [ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com](mailto:ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com) and these can be sent to you.

## Annual General Meeting 2025

The CPD element of the AGM will consist of both talks and a tour. Dave Chetwyn will address different aspects of placemaking, design and planning for historic places. Covering a broad spectrum of the IHBC professional competencies. In the afternoon a tour of Newark will take place in conjunction with local conservation staff, looking at the ongoing work of the Heritage Action Zone and other ongoing conservation projects.

Full details, timetable and an Eventbrite link for the event will be released in due course, as always refreshments and lunch will be provided on the day.

## Sleaford Town Centre Regeneration

Heritage features have been revealed and buildings restored thanks to funding to preserve historic shopfronts and enhance public realm in Sleaford town centre.

North Kesteven District Council has been working closely with commercial property and business owners to wind back the clock by repairing and reinstating historic features, using funding through the Council's [Sleaford](#) Shopfront Grant Scheme.

More than £400,000 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding from the scheme has been allocated across 14 projects, with up to 90 per cent of the total cost of works awarded as a grant. Property owners and businesses have come on board and funded the remaining costs of their respective projects and are working together with the Council and Heritage Lincolnshire in partnership through the scheme.

The regeneration ties in well with the millions spent on renovating the Market Place (1.011m) and the area around the Handley Monument and the Sleaford Museum (£135,000).

The funded projects range widely in scale, from just £1,500 in grant funding for two stone repairs on a former coaching inn on Southgate, up to £100,000 on the early 19th century Jennings betting shop (formerly Mark Jarvis).

The scheme also funded public art, murals and traditional sign writing to enhance the visual character of the town centre.

To compliment the work undertaken to date, North Kesteven District Council has been working with Historic England to secure capacity funding to review the Sleaford Conservation Area, and to produce a shopfront design guide for the district. Sleaford is a conservation area at risk, and it is hoped the works to properties and the strategic documents will support a future bid for a larger town centre regeneration programme.

*Words and photographs provided by Matthew Bentley, Conservation Officer, North Kesteven District Council*

*Various images overleaf provided by Matthew Bentley.*



## IHBC East Midlands - Fire Safety in Historic Buildings CPD

On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April, IHBC East Midlands hosted a well attended CPD event on Fire Safety in Historic Buildings at the Tudor Hall of Newark's Civil War Centre.

The venue was an appropriately historic building, listed grade II\* comprising of an early 16<sup>th</sup> century timber framed building and an early 19<sup>th</sup> century building. Historically a grammar school and headmaster's house, the building is now a museum and exhibition centre.

The highly experienced and knowledgeable speaker for the day was Steve Emery of Heritage Fire Consultancy. Steve has over 50 years of experience in fire safety, the last 35 years with heritage buildings. After 15 years of operational firefighting, Steve worked for 12 years as fire safety officer for the City of Bath, followed by 15 years with English Heritage and Historic England, six years for the University of Oxford and two years as a fire consultant.

Steve's engaging style brought life to the subject of the day, each topic covered was enlightening and brought to life with his own examples of cases worked both on standing buildings but also in controlled testing scenarios.

Underpinning all of the sessions on the day were messages that are key to many aspects of conservation. Advocating good maintenance and repair and a need to look at all parts of a room or building as a whole and not just one part in isolation when developing solutions. One attendee noted they now *"felt more empowered to question applicants, agents and colleagues when a standard solution is being proposed."*



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Following the session on historic fire doors an attendee said *"I will now look more closely at compartments, look up in rooms to see where ventilation might come from and look for hidden voids to argue that the historic doors are the least of our concerns"*.

The sessions delivered by Steve was well attended by a multi-disciplinary audience with discussions extending into lunch and breaktimes. I think all in attendance would agree they learnt something new that they will take into their working practice from this CPD event.

Thanks go to Steve, the team at the Civil War Centre for accommodating us and to officers of the branch committee and national office for their support in organising the event.



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## National Office Updates

[#IHBCPetitionforCharter: Survey and Events Update](#)

IHBC's exploration of a possible [Petition for Charter](#) continues apace, with many Branches taking up the offer of assistance in hosting meetings/workshops. IHBC Chair David McDonald, Vice Chair Lone LeVay and President Mike Brown especially have helped lead in-person and online events presenting and answering questions.

## IHBC MATE: Membership Application Training Events

National office currently have several online MATE sessions organised for 2025 to be held 5<sup>th</sup> August and 2<sup>nd</sup> September. For further details look online at [IHBC Mate Session](#), or contact Ramona Usher [professional@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:professional@ihbc.org.uk).

## IHBC Online Supporter Surgery Session

Do you have any questions about the affiliate application form, or the application process? On 18<sup>th</sup> September, national branch are piloting a series of free, online supporter surgery sessions. They will be free to attend for all existing supporters, and those who are considering applying for Affiliate membership, there is no need to book, just drop in. The session will take place virtually between 1:00pm and 1:45pm you can register here: <https://www.ihbc.org.uk/join/affiliate/index.html>

## Articles, Contributions and Letters

Can you help? We are always looking for articles and contributions for future editions of the newsletter. If you have any ideas for future articles or discussion topics you would like to share with members in future newsletters, please get in touch with: [ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com](mailto:ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com)

## 2025 Meetings

October 6<sup>th</sup> - Annual General Meeting and CPD on Placemaking - Newark Civil War Centre  
Wednesday 4th December - Branch Committee Meeting - Virtual  
2026 Meeting Dates TBC

Should you wish to attend any branch meeting, please contact [ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com](mailto:ihbceastmidlands@gmail.com) and we will send you a link to join meetings virtually.