**IHBC North Branch AGM

Thursday 26th May 2022**

**@ Redhouse, 32 Sandhill, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3JF**

 **Chair’s Report**

1. **Looking Back**

**Update on Previous Events and Progress**

It has been a quiet few year for the Branch due to Covid. Our last event was the IHBC & Lichfields Summer Screening of Matt Tyneer’s ‘Citizen Jane’ documentary about Jane Jacobs at the Boiler House at Newcastle University (20 June 2019). We had a great turnout of members and it also attracted a cross section of other professional bodies including the Landscape Institute, RTPI, RIBA, Urbanistas and Newcastle University which generated some great debate at the end.

We had prepared and approved a 2019-2020 Business Plan but unfortunately our programme of events was cancelled due to Covid. Ongoing lockdowns halted our plans although one positive to emerge was the holding of ‘virtual’ Committee Meetings which has improved accessibility and attendance and we hope might make it easier for members to get involved in future. Meetings ceased in August 2020 and resumed at the start of this year, when, in light of the improving circumstances, the Committee regrouped with the hope of reviving a programme of events for 2022.

We have been busy in the background with 4 committee meetings this year to get things up and running. We have:

* Consolidated the North Branch Committee membership, roles and responsibilities. All roles have been ‘acting’ until formally ratified at this AGM.
* Submitted our Branch Nomination for the 2022 IHBC Marsh Awards.
* Prepared an ambitious 2022/2023 Business Plan which sets out our events programme, plans and budget. Soon to be submitted for approval.
* Updated the North Branch webpage on the IHBC website; and
* Special thanks must go to Stewart Ramsdale who has maintained the member a database (and confirmed we currently have 80 members – the highest number in 20 years).

After lots of work behind the scenes we are delighted to be rolling out a new programme of events which happily coincides with #IHBC25.

**IHBC North Branch Committee**

Key to delivering our goals is a dedicated Committee of volunteers. I am very fortunate to have a great Committee behind me who continue the long legacy of fantastic work that the North Branch has achieved over the years. Indeed, I would like to take this opportunity to remember several well-loved and very influential members of our Branch who have sadly passed away in recent years: Graeme Darlington (2019); Mike Hein-Hartmann, (2019); David Lovie (2020); and Richard Majewicz (2022).

I also need to update you on some changes to the Committee. We are sadly bidding a very fond farewell and vote of thanks to Jules Brown who stepped down as Chair in November 2021; our long-serving Committee Member Ian McCaffrey (former Newsletter Editor) and Rose Lord (Cumbria Representative). They have given so much to the IHBC and the North Branch over many years. On behalf of the Branch, I would like to offer our very best wishes for their next endeavours and our gratitude for their hard work and commitment over the years. We have a small token of our appreciation for each of them.

Due to committee changes, there are a number of roles and vacancies that must be filled which will be covered in the next item, but we welcome any interest from new members wishing to get involved.

1. **Looking Forward**

We intend to hit the ground running with an exciting series of events, awards and member engagement.

**Events** - The AGM marks the launch of our Seasonal Events Programme which includes:

* Spring - Members Social, AGM and Heritage Walking Tours
* Summer - Membership Application Training Event
* Autumn - Cumbria Field Trip - Practical Skills and Projects
* Winter - Heritage and Design Conference - Law, Policy and Guidance Updates

**#IHBC25** - We are celebrating #IHBC25 by reinvigorating branch connections:

* We plan to bookend the year with two Members’ Socials to help us reconnect as a network of friends, colleagues and practitioners.
* We will recognise the contributions of our long-serving members through a special #IHBC25 Branch Award.
* We look to the future of the Institute and will engage with the next generation of members through a Student Award.

**Membership Engagement** - We want to understand our members better and how we can best serve them:

* We will issue a members’ survey later in the year;
* We are updating our communications strategy with more frequent and focused mailouts to members and increased use of social media.
* We want to strengthen our regional network and are hoping to launch a members’ mentoring scheme to help share the wealth of experience and support members at all stages in their careers.

We have plenty of ideas, energy and enthusiasm and we are looking forward to getting started.

 **Oonagh Cranley**
*Acting Chair of the IHBC North Branch*
26/05/2022