IHBC SOUTH BRANCH AGM MINUTES 2026

HELD ON- LINE VIA ZOOM

THURSDAY 4 JUNE @ 12.30 PM

Apologies received from: Chris Wood, Professor Malcolm Airs OBE, Sarah Homer, Rosemary Thornber

13 people in attendance on-line.

Invited guest: Dr Seán O'Reilly BA, MURP, PhD, FSA Scot, FInstLM, FRSA, IHBC , Director IHBC

1. Approval of Previous AGM Minutes

The Chair, David Lomas, welcomed attendees and opened the meeting.

The minutes of the 2025 AGM were circulated prior to the meeting. Members were invited to comment on the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

The minutes were approved unanimously by those present.

2. Chair's Report and Review of Branch Activities

David Lomas thanked the South Branch Committee for their continued commitment and support over the past year. He noted that the work of the branch relied upon the time, expertise and goodwill of a small but dedicated committee working alongside their professional commitments.

The Chair reported that the South Branch continued to deliver a strong programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events and

professional engagement activities across the branch area, which extends from Buckinghamshire to the Channel Islands.

During the year the branch organised and supported a number of successful events, including:

- A visit to Whitchurch Silk Mill and the Industrial Heritage Museum.
- A visit to the Brooking Collection, examining the history and development of the built environment through architectural artefacts and salvaged building components.
- A CPD event at Shaw House on Historic Buildings Fire Protection and Regulations.
- A visit to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, including a presentation on the conservation works associated with HMS Victory and the challenges of managing nationally significant heritage assets.

The Chair also highlighted the increasing importance of heritage professionals in responding to changes in planning policy, sustainability requirements and climate adaptation measures, whilst continuing to protect and conserve the historic environment.

A Draft South Branch Business Plan 2026-29 for the branch had been prepared and circulated prior to the AGM to all South Branch Members twice with no comments received by the deadline. Members present voted unanimously to approve the Draft Business Plan.

Action: The Business Plan to be sent to the National Office for approval by the IHBC Board.

3. Treasurer's Report

Morwenna Breen-Haynes presented the Treasurer's Report.

Members were advised that the IHBC financial year has changed and now aligns with the subscription year. Consequently, two financial returns had been completed during the reporting period.

Income during the year was generated principally through two successful CPD events:

- Historic Buildings Fire Protection and Regulations, Shaw House.
- Portsmouth Historic Dockyard Conservation Visit.

Both events were well attended and received positive feedback from members.

The Treasurer noted that one of the committee's priorities for the coming year is to modernise the branch bank account arrangements, replacing the current account with a more suitable banking facility offering modern payment functionality.

The Treasurer's Report and financial accounts were adopted unanimously by those present.

4. Election of the Committee

The Chair confirmed that the current committee members had agreed to continue in their roles for the coming year, together with the appointment of Bethany Griffin to a combined Education, Communications and IT role.

The following committee structure was approved unanimously:

South Branch Position	**Member**
Chair/ Council Representative	David Lomas
Treasurer	Morwenna Breen-Haynes
Secretary / Membership Secretary / Branch and Council Representative	Sarah Homer
Professional Liaison Representative/ Branch and Council Representative	Elaine Walters

South Branch Position	Member
Education, Communications & IT Officer	Bethany Griffin
Oxfordshire Representative	Sarah Homer
Hampshire Representative	Rosemary Thornber
Berkshire Representative	Gill Butter
Buckinghamshire Representative	Vacant
Isle of Wight Representative	Vacant
Channel Islands Representative	Vacant
Committee Members	Kevin Stubbs, Simon Went, Julia Foster

The committee appointments were approved by the membership.

5. Future Branch Activities and CPD Programme

Bethany Griffin invited members to provide suggestions for future CPD events, site visits, webinars and training opportunities.

The branch intends to continue developing a varied programme of online and in-person events over the coming year. Members were encouraged to contact the committee with ideas for future topics and locations.

The Chair also encouraged members to subscribe to the IHBC CPD Circular and make use of the South Branch YouTube channel, which hosts recordings of previous presentations and lectures.

Particular interest was expressed in expanding activities across all parts of the South Branch region, including Buckinghamshire, the Channel Islands and other areas currently underrepresented in branch events.

6. IHBC Update

Sean O'Reilly, IHBC Director, provided an update on a number of national IHBC initiatives and developments.

Charter Petition

Sean reported on progress towards the Institute's long-standing ambition to secure Chartered status. Members were advised that, following submission of the Institute's memorandum to the Privy Council Office (PCO), approval in principle had been granted to proceed with a formal Petition for Charter. Sean explained that this represents an important milestone for the Institute, recognising the unique interdisciplinary nature of conservation practice and the role of the IHBC as the UK's professional body for built and historic environment conservation.

The process remains complex due to the Institute's charitable, corporate and trading structures, and work is ongoing to prepare the Charter, By-Laws and associated governance documentation required to support the Petition.

Members were referred to:

- *IHBC warmly welcomes PCO approval to Petition for Charter* (August 2025)
  https://newsblogs.ihbc.org.uk/?p=43849

Branch Support and Branch Consultants

Sean highlighted the continuing investment in branch support through the Branch Consultant programme. The initiative aims to reduce administrative burdens on volunteers, improve communication between branches and Head Office, and provide additional support for branch activities and governance.

Members were referred to:

- *IHBC's newest 'Branch Committee Bulletin, from the IHBC's Director': National updates for volunteer leads*
  https://newsblogs.ihbc.org.uk/?p=45375

Parliamentary Advocacy and Heritage Skills

Sean outlined the Institute's ongoing parliamentary engagement work, particularly the campaign around the IHBC's "Five Commitments to Help Heritage Skills in Conservation". The initiative seeks to address critical skills shortages across the heritage sector, improve conservation capacity and support better outcomes for the historic environment.

Members were referred to:

- *Parliamentary '5 Commitments to Help Heritage Skills in Conservation'* https://ihbc.org.uk/aboutmain/ParliamentaryBriefings/FB/6/index.html#t=NixsZWZ0LDQyLjM0LDQwLjE2LDE1OS41Nyw1MzkuNjMscmlnaHQsYm90dG9t

Sean also highlighted recent Council discussions focusing on local authority conservation services and future sector capacity. Members noted the importance of supporting conservation officers and regulatory services as a key priority for the Institute.

Members were referred to:

- *Top marks for IHBC's latest Council as LA Conservation service talks, papers & film get 10/10 from nearly 20% of 120+ delegates, shaping the survey in our new parliamentary push* (8 April 2026) https://newsblogs.ihbc.org.uk/?p=46336

Corporate Plan 2026–2030 (CP30)

Sean advised members that work has commenced on developing the Institute's next Corporate Plan (CP30). The emerging plan builds upon current priorities including Chartered status, parliamentary engagement, volunteer support, member services and professional development.

Members were referred to:

- *IHBC opens Corporate Plan 2026-30 ('CP30') development with CP25 consultation, noting Charter, Parliamentary 5 Commitments, volunteer investment & more* https://newsblogs.ihbc.org.uk/?p=45335

Volunteering and Member Engagement

Sean encouraged members to become involved in the Institute's work through volunteering opportunities across Committees, Panels, Working Groups, Branches and other activities. He noted that increased member involvement will be essential in supporting the Institute's future growth and strategic objectives.

Members were referred to:

- *IHBC is planning for growth, so grow with us by volunteering, with our Committees, Boards and Branches, or Panels, Groups and more as suits – just let us know!*
  https://newsblogs.ihbc.org.uk/?p=45450

Members thanked Sean for his update and welcomed the progress being made across these initiatives.

7. Any Other Business

Members discussed opportunities for future collaboration and support for heritage professionals across the region.

The following comments were recorded from those participating online:

I would welcome some webinars on local vernacular traditions and regional uses of traditional materials eg southern timber framing as opposed to timber framing elsewhere in the country. Also how these evolve over time.

Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust would be happy to accommodate a visit to Bursledon Windmill if that would be of interest sarah.roberts@hbpt.org

Please could IHBC take an interest in the future of the GradeII* Beneficial School, Kent Street, Portsea, Portsmouth, one of the earliest examples of a charity school in the country, which is standing empty without a future use since the Groundlings Theatre moved out. It belongs to a property developer whose intentions are not known. It is very vulnerable,. Historic England and the Theatres Trust are aware of it and have been involved in the past. Celia Clark, Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust.

No further business was raised.

8. Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked all attendees and formally closed the AGM.

9.Documents discussed at the AGM

Draft IHBC South Branch Business Plan 2026-2029

IHBC South Branch Treasurers Report

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