

**Meeting notes of a Council Meeting of the Institute of Historic Building
Conservation held virtually via Zoom
on Thursday 11 July 2024, starting at 4.00pm
Chair: Mike Brown, IHBC President**

Present

Emily Anderson	Peter Hayes	Thomas Pierce
Catherine Armstrong	Daniele Haynes	Robert Platts
Joanne Balmforth	James Hetherington	John Preston
Gregory Barrett	Judy Hewitt	Rebecca Reynolds
Louise Bartlett	Rachel Higgs	Belle Richer Hill
Owen Barton	Laura Hodson	Caroline Ridgwell
Rachel Bissell	Holly Houghton	Cheryl Roberts
Nathan Blanchard	Lynda Jubb	Sanne Roberts
Michael Brown	Sharon Kelly	Stuart Robinson
Nichola Burley	Jillian Kerry	Jacob Rock
Sophie Button	Adam Klups	Joanna Saady
Des Cairns	Elizabeth Laycock	Florence Salberter
Sheena Campbell	Lone Le Vay	Andrew Salter
Serena Cardozo	Jennifer Leadbetter	Mary Saunders
Eric Carter	Graham Lee	Emma Sharp
Sarah Cawrse	Sarah Leete-Groves	Tiffany Snowden
Ian Coney	Trystan Lever	Caroline Sones
Jill Channer	David Lomas	Brad Steer
Joyce Christie	Amy Longford	Kevin Stubbs
Max Clark	Antony Lowe	Paul Sutton
Christian Clarkson	Patrick Maguire	Robert Sutton
Chris Collison	Rowenna Malone	Hannah Taylor
Matthew Crook	Minette Matthews	Melisa Thomas
Elizabeth Da Silva	Alison McCandlish	Stephen Tudball
Philip Derbyshire	Eilise McGuane	Paul Velluet
Harriet Devlin	Martha Michael	Louse Wallace
Nicholas Ellis	Kim Miller	Lauren Way
Lynsay Ewart	Beverley Mogford	Stacey Weiser
Alexandra Fairclough	Alison Montgomery	Simon Went
Jeremy Fazzalano	Kathryn Moore	Jenny Wetton
George Fennell	David Morgan	Jude Wheeler
Anthony Garratt	Don Murphy	Ben Williscroft
Lizzie Glithero-West	Michael Netter	Juliette Wilson
Fleur Gordon	Fiona Newton	Emma Winder
Ruth Gray	Sean O'Reilly	Samantha Wood
Angharad Hart	Chloe Oswald	James Woolgrove
Paul Hartley	Rob Palmer	Maria Yioutani-
Sally Hartshorne	Sophie Peason	Iacovides
Rachel Haworth	John Peverley	

Apologies for absence

Lydia Porter

Introductions & Minutes of Council meeting on 27 February 2024

Mike Brown (President) opened the meeting. The meeting is being recorded so that Lydia Porter, who was not able to attend, can produce minutes. He reminded attendees to remain muted unless they wish to speak. Council is a vehicle for the membership to pass comments to officers and it is his responsibility to pass these comments back to the trustees on the Board. The other function is an opportunity for education and training, recent speakers have been excellent. The minutes of the last council meeting held on 27 February 2024 had been circulated any issues were invited via the online chat. No objections were received so the minutes were adopted as a record of the discussions.

Council business

1. Exploring the Petition for Charter

At the last meeting there was a discussion around this and the resolution which went to the AGM where it was adopted overwhelmingly. There was just one objection and a few abstentions, it is our understanding that those were around needing more information and the institute is working to answer those questions. Since the AGM, knowing the membership supports moving this forward, the institute has been working with the Foundation for Science and Technology ([Welcome - FST \(foundation.org.uk\)](https://www.foundation.org.uk)) which can advise organisations how to make a successful petition for charter to the Privy Council. These discussions have been very useful so far. The next step is preparation of a memorandum, which will set out IHBC's case for why we are applying for chartership, and the national office is working on this. This will take time, but it is hoped that there will be more to report in the autumn. Please do submit any questions, comments or points either via the chat now or through other channels. IHBC is partly there to work for the public good, so if you have any examples on how IHBC and its members have worked for good please do let us know (president@ihbc.org.uk or director@ihbc.org.uk). Sean O'Reilly (SOR) noted that a next meeting with the Foundation will be in late July or early August.

2. Local Authority Fast Track to Affiliate

Angharad Hart (Education and Applications Officer) at the end of last year we launched this fast track pilot to support experienced supporter to progress to Affiliate membership which is now formally assessed. Following on from that, and with the support of trustees, we are now launching a fast track to Affiliate pilot specifically for supporters in local authorities, in whatever capacity. This will run from 15 July to 30 August, there is specific guidance on the affiliate webpage and we will be running online sessions to help supporters ([The Institute of Historic Building Conservation \(ihbc.org.uk\)](https://www.ihbc.org.uk)). We hope that this will help local authority staff overcome some of the barriers they might be experiencing with lack of time, uncertainty around the process and how to demonstrate their awareness against the areas of competence. This will help us learn lessons and refine the process with a view to rolling it out more widely later in the year. This has been notified on a NewsBlog (<https://newsblogs.ihbc.org.uk/?p=40347>), an email will go to eligible supporters early next week and we are encouraging branches to spread the word too. Do contact Angharad using training@ihbc.org.uk if you would like more information or have any queries.

MB there is something in the chat about taking this through to full membership. AH has received questions about this but at the moment we are just focussing on moving supporters to affiliate level. SOR we will be using the lessons learned here to streamline the process for full accreditation and we do already offer the MATE sessions. This is in addition to what is already offered.

Cheryl Roberts said a member of her team is about apply for affiliate, can they take part in the fast track pilot. AH responded saying if they meet the criteria then yes.

MB noted that supporters working in other sectors (ie not local authorities) can of course apply for affiliate membership, but this pilot is specifically aimed at supporting local authority staff where IHBC membership may not be as widely recognised or supported as it might be.

3. Open to the Floor Discussions

Fiona Newton said Stacey Weiser has commented "It might be useful to flesh out what the benefits are of being an IHBC member offers. I have been a full member for many years and it has not offered me any additional pay or status, per se". FN noted there seems to be a particular issue in local authorities, there used to be career graded posts depending on membership but these seem to have gone now.

Joyce Christie commented " I wondered how LAs were dealing with the request from Land Search teams to identify curtilage buildings in their districts?" FN that is deep and complicated. The back ground is that in 2018 the Land Registry wanted to develop a universal list that showed a line around curtilage and this has now been accelerated. Some LAs have drawn a random line, some have done their best to draw a curtilage boundary, some have tried to avoid doing this and have involved their legal departments as to what to do. IHBC is aware of these concerns and is trying work out what it can do to assist. Cheryl Roberts asked if this initiative by the Land Registry was UK wide as she has not come across it in Scotland? FN said it is just in England and Wales. SOR said maybe a summary of the issues can be put together and circulate with the Council minutes so that we are not trying to answer this on the hoof.

Matthew Crook said "Would it be possible to establish some guidelines about heritage consultants working both privately and professionally as conservation officers within the same local authority area? I have come across this, and in my view this is unethical, or at least questionable. What do IHBC members think about this?" FN noted the Toolbox might have some guidance on working practices and conflicts of interest ([Starting out on your own – some advice for setting up in private practice](#)). MB it is an interesting point and we all do need to be aware of this, do refer back to the IHBC code of conduct to see what is required. FN the code of conduct is there to enforce the standards of the IHBC and there is a disciplinary process so if anyone is aware of an issue please do get in touch ([The Institute of Historic Building Conservation \(ihbc.org.uk\)](#)).

MB thanked the everyone for the comments and any questions that have not been addressed here will be picked up after the meeting.

Politics is not an exact science...

MB introduced Lizzie Glithero-West, Chief Executive of The Heritage Alliance, of which IHBC is a member. Please use the chat so that questions can be put to Lizzie and discussed after the presentation.

Lizzie aimed to unpack the results of the recent election, change can be challenging but also an opportunity to make contacts with and understand what a new administration's priorities are. Let's be optimistic, the heritage sector has a lot to offer and accounts for 2.5 Gross Value Added (GVA) so not an insignificant amount. What is member confidence on how heritage priorities might feed into the new administration? 5 being confident and 1 not at all confident, using the chat function. There were quite a lot of low scores and a few higher ones so a real range of feelings. Due to the huge change over in seats there are a lot of new MPs who will be learning the ropes and the new administration will have quite a number of inexperienced ministers. The shadow cabinet too has lost experienced members and until a new leader is elected there will be continuing uncertainty there.

For our sector at DCMS the previous shadow Culture Secretary, Thangam Debbonaire, who did not retain her seat, Lisa Nandy has now been appointed to that role, Chris Bryant is Minister of State and Stephanie Peacock is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State. Lisa Nandy is already known to Historic England (HE) and has been known to be friend to the idea of heritage as having a positive impact on place. She has written a book called All In: How we build a country that works ([All In by Lisa Nandy review – why Labour must give power to the people | Politics books | The Guardian](#)). She does have a planning portfolio background which could be quite useful in her role so hopefully she will be receptive to heritage.

In Defra lots of major appointments made so far the Environment Secretary is Steve Reed. The National Trust have built links with him and he seems quite receptive to heritage issues, one of his special advisors was formerly at the National Trust. Daniel Zeichner is Minister of State, Emma Hardy is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State but as yet don't have a portfolio and Baroness Hayman is the Lords Minister was a former Lords speaker and Defra spokesperson.

At DCLG (formerly DLUHC) Angela Rayner is Housing Secretary and also Deputy Prime Minister. A lot of the appointments are for MPs from the North West. Planning and growth have been mentioned a lot in speeches so far and appear quite high up on the agenda which present opportunities as well challenges.

Inside Whitehall civil servants will be busy working out what the new administration wants. The state opening of parliament will be on 17 July when the King's speech will set out the new government's agenda. A publication on state of spending inheritance will come out somewhere in July, basically reviewing the state of the finances inherited from the previous government. Also expected in before the summer recess is an announcement on intentions for

planning and NPPF. Into September and October it is anticipated there will be a spending review.

Growth seems to be the buzz word and that goes hand in hand with planning, lots of u-turns eg new wind farms and north sea oil. At the same time devolution to metro areas seems likely to come forward quite soon. Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) level 3 likely to be reintroduced, we know that actually these don't work for heritage so need to help their understanding around this.

What are opposition parties saying, more voices in parliament now? Last administration's Levelling Up legislation has not all been enacted so important for us to make the case on what matters. Could be useful if opposition ask some informed questions where things do and don't work. Lib Dems have included heritage in their creative industries document, so they could be a useful voice. The Greens have opposed demotion so could be good on this and they were the only part advocating for funding for local government.

APPG's will be interesting as many have MP's have lost seats so there will be an important opportunity to build new relationships with MPs to support these groups will be important.

Threats and opportunities to be dealt with, need to make the case for heritage that it can be a very positive driver for growth and the economy, planning protection and deregulation might be a threat.

The Heritage Alliance did produce a Heritage Manifesto in early 2024 drawing on the view of all its members ([Heritage-Manifesto-2024.pdf](https://theheritagealliance.org.uk/Heritage-Manifesto-2024.pdf) (theheritagealliance.org.uk)), hopefully IHBC members will be able to use this when contacting their MP's. It also has a toolkit which offers resources and tips to engage your local representatives ([Beyond the General Election: Heritage Manifesto Advocacy Toolkit - The Heritage Alliance](#)), as well as lots of useful publications ([Publications - The Heritage Alliance](#))

Questions and reflections on discussions

MB noted growth needs to be in a sustainable way and heritage can be a showcase for this.

John Preston asks

- "Do you have any indication of how / when funding regimes halted by the Election may be up and running again? Note that Daniel Zeichner has said "the growth of Cambridge can't wait for reservoirs"?!?"
- He also asked "You haven't mentioned Climate Change, who will be dealing with that, and how they will or will not influence climate change measures including insulation etc impacting on built environment, and pressures for food self-sufficiency impacting on historic natural environment."
- And "In terms of retrofit, we urgently need to get over the message of "whole life cycle" rather than "one size fits all" so-called quick fixes."

LG-W responded that there is no guarantee that the things the former government were pursuing will be taken up by the new administration. For example Statutory HERs were not enacted as part of the Levelling Up Bill so this may go by the wayside.

On community ownership, funding streams is defiantly one on the list that the Alliance will be advocating for.

In terms of retrofit and climate change the Alliance had been discussing cost of living and carbon in the context of heritage with Labour prior to the election, but we are back to square one a bit really and will have to make a case all over again. There is a danger with speed on planning changes that heritage is not understood, heritage is part of the solution as repair is better than demolition and rebuild and the sector needs to very strongly positively advocate for that whole life cycle approach to make sure there is no damage.

JP asked who are the new ministers? LG-W said that is not clear yet but it will be across several departments (Defra, Dept for energy security and net zero), Ed Miliband is the new Energy Secretary.

Kathryn Moore noted "It was interesting to see that there has been funding earmarked for more planning officers. Is there any guidance going out about appropriate levels of conservation staffing to sit alongside that resource? It is very easy for conservation (and ecology etc.) to be blamed for delays where there can be fewer than even 1 fte equivalent conservation staff in the LA." As we know the headline announcement of 300 additional planning officers is actually not very many, not sure yet what that means. However that does give the sector a hook to ask what that means for the associated capacity within LAs, but we do know that there is no more money in the pot.

Fleur Gordon noted "Really interested to understand what the Government thinking is on heritage skills training (including apprentices) and retrofit training - as we are facing into major problems." MB said this was not just in England but UK wide, this is not just apprenticeships but also about retaining people. There has been work on green skills and the amount of people needed for this, apprenticeships don't work in small organisations. The whole sector needs to think about what the solutions might be and how to advocate for those solutions, be part of the conversation.

LG-W would be happy to have more observations forwarded on after the meeting so that the Alliance can be aware of what's on people's minds.

MB thanked LG-W for her presentation which was interesting and to those that had raised questions, although we realise this was rather England focused. The previous meetings speaker was Alisa McFarlane of BEFS speaking about the Scottish view point and MB hoped that future meeting would include views from Wales and Northern Ireland.

MB noted a draft HE climate change and retrofit document that had been consulted on and then revised following comments from the heritage sector had been on hold because of the election. His understanding from colleagues in HE is that this document will now be published soon.

Close and date of next meeting.

The date of the next meeting will be 16 October 2024. One of the items on the agenda then will be the election of a president as MB comes to an of a two year

term, although the constitution does allow for him to stand for a second two year term if the membership wishes.

The meeting closed at 5.35pm