

Minutes of Committee Meeting - Tuesday 4th November 2008 At The Fox & Crown, Appletongate, Newark

Present: Roy Lewis, Rose Thompson, David Boyson, Stephen Bradwell, Robert Walker, Fiona Newton, Jenny Timothy, Jane Roylance & James White; Branch Members Martin Jones and Ramona Usher also attended.

1. Apologies from: Chloe Oswald, Rachel Booth, Liz Mayle, Chris McKinney and Philip Grover (Branch Member)

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed; Robert Walker noted that the English Heritage questionnaires mentioned at the last meeting should now have been completed.

3. Chair's Report & Business Plan

Robert Walker thanked Rose Thompson for submitting the Business Plan to IHBC central office, and noted that it was the first to be reported to Council. He also added that sadly a poor postal service to Lincolnshire delayed the Branch Accounts, allowing the Wales Branch to submit theirs one day ahead of the EM Branch!

Robert also mentioned the AGM which he thought had gone well, with a good turn out and that letters of thanks had been sent to Bob Stewart and the staff at Stoke Rochford.

4. Branch Rep's Report

Written report attached to the Agenda, (copies available on request), of particular note:

- A conservation services survey was being carried out by Fiona Newton to update previous surveys and to assess age structure of the profession;
- Eddie Booth had been elected as IHBC president, replacing David Lovie. Robert Walker offered the Branch's thanks for David's hard work in the past;
- IHBC were keen to promote a capacity building initiative to support people undertaking projects outside of the formal Business Plan;
- Revisions to PPG15 and PPG16 are expected to be published with the Heritage Bill and would be subject to a full consultation period;
- A technical bibliography was being drawn up by Fiona Newton and was available on the IHBC web site;
- Candidates for the IHBC Disciplinary Committee are still being invited, any interested persons to contact Roy Lewis.

5. Treasurer's Report

Rose Thompson gave the latest figures from the accounts:

Current Account: £142.59

Reserve Account: £388.05

The funds would be boosted in January when the £500 grant was drawn down,

6. Membership Secretary's Report

David Boyson noted that he was still working on the list of potential new members but was struggling to find some addresses; David offered to circulate the list to Branch members so that any information could be added before finalising the list.

[ACTION – David Boyson to circulate new member list to Branch Members for assistance]

Fiona Newton added that IHBC national office was keen to draft new members directly and was asking branches to send a list of people who they feel should be IHBC members and who would respond to a letter from the current and previous two IHBC presidents. It was agreed that after the list had been circulated to committee members and updated including addresses where known, this should be forwarded to the IHBC Director. The Branch could though still write to potential new members where a more personal approach was felt to be beneficial.

7. County Representatives' Report

James White (Leicestershire) reported that County officers' group had met at the City Rooms in Leicester; considering such issues as highways good practice and the national heritage roofing contractors list.

Chris McKinney (Derbyshire) in his absence had sent a written report noting that the County officers' group had met in Derby, taking in a wonderful tour of the Derby Roundhouse to see the ongoing repair and restoration scheme. Other news was that the Long Eaton THI Stage II bid had been approved and a THI officer had been appointed.

There were no Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire or Lincolnshire reps at the meeting.

8. Improving Communications and Raising Interest Initiatives

Robert Walker asked for feedback on improving ways of promoting the activities of the Branch, particularly the publication of Committee details, Branch meeting dates, the latest Business Plan, Branch agendas and minutes and Annual School details on the IHBC web page.

David Boyson agreed to liaise with Peter Badcock to set up a set of a series of web pages.

[ACTION – David Boyson to arrange amendments to Branch web site]

Robert Walker also felt that information about committees, membership and meeting minutes should be more easily accessible on the web site. It is not for example possible to access details of Committee agendas, minutes or even who sits on committees on the IHBC web site. This does not help members wishing to find out more about the activities of IHBC or encourage the interest of Members. It was felt that this sort of information should be more accessible just as it is with local authorities where often more sensitive information is being discussed.

Robert also wondered whether it might be useful if we had a branch nominee who would make personal contact with the Chairs of the various Committees to encourage

greater interest and involvement in IHBC affairs. This type of involvement would take some of the pressure off Roy Lewis, who, as the Branch's IHBC representative, was the sole link between the Branch and national office. It might also encourage more Branch Members to get involved and possibly provide opportunities to fill vacancies on Committees. Branch Members would know more about the composition, responsibilities and issues discussed by IHBC Committees and feel more confident to volunteer their services.

Fiona Newton noted that the IHBC Committee Business Plan contained a lot of useful information, whilst David Boyson thought that the publication of minutes and agendas should not be too difficult, and a pre-requisite if the IHBC was to become more open.

Roy Lewis thought that improving the IHBC web site would be a good idea but some other issues would be more difficult but he was happy to raise the issue at next Full Council if the Branch wanted this.

For example, Fiona Newton noted that to have meaningful published minutes would take additional work, particularly to deal with sensitive and confidential information.

A vote was taken of the Branch Committee, Fiona Newton abstaining declaring an interest with IHBC affairs at national office, and it was agreed that Roy Lewis should pursue the matter at the next Council meeting and ask whether more information can be provided on the IHBC web site.

[ACTION – Roy Lewis to raise issue on behalf of the Branch at the next Council]

9. Branches Meeting in Birmingham

Roy Lewis referred to the on-going initiative by IHBC central office to meet with representatives from the Branch and the first event was due to be held in Birmingham on 19 November. Of particular concern was the different levels of activity between the Branches, some were more active, whilst others dormant; to improve voluntary capacity; and to look at ways IHBC central office can help Branches.

Roy Lewis noted that the level of additional support being offered by IHBC national office had to be limited and it cannot be expected to do everything. Robert Walker felt that there had been good support from national office in the past. The person who should attend should not be the Branch Representative or someone who had been a previous member of Council. But Roy also felt that it was inappropriate for the Chair or Secretary and other senior Branch Officers to attend.

James White expressed an interest in attending but needed to be briefed on Branch activities.

[ACTION – James White to represent Branch at Birmingham, Roy Lewis to notify Lydia]

10. 2009 Annual School

David Boyson had prepared a list of potential speakers and now preparing to draft a letter to invite people to speak at the School.

The next meeting of the organising Committee was due to be held on 20 November.

Robert Walker also noted that it would soon be necessary to call-in the offers of help made at the AGM.

11. AOB

James White noted that Valerie Scott had now left English Heritage, leaving Leicestershire without any historic advisers.

Robert Walker noted an e-mail from Liz Bates referring to the latest guidance issued by English Heritage on metal theft

[Link: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.14772>]

12. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 13th January 2009

[FUTURE ACTION: TO ALL - HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!]