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BUILDING · CONSERVATION

NORTH WEST BRANCH

**Minutes of North West Branch Meeting
Held in Millennium House, Liverpool, 22/04/09**

		ACTIONS
	The meeting opened at 5.30pm	
1) Attendance	Present: Chair; Paul Hartley (PH), Crispin Edwards (CE), Graham Arnold (GA), Chris Griffiths (CG), Paul Butler (PB), Kate Borland (KB), Louise Wallace (LW), Nick Grimshaw (NG), Dave Hayes (DH) Apologies: Jason Kennedy (JK), Paul Mason (PM), Adrian Dowd, Ashley Pettit	
2) Minutes of previous meeting & matters arising	The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 th January 2009 were accepted as a true record. Matters arising to be addressed via the agenda.	
3) Anthony Blacklay	Thanks were expressed to GA for writing a tribute to Anthony for publication in Context; a number of members represented the branch at Anthony's funeral.	
4) Treasurer's Report	NG submitted a report. He has submitted information to the centre regarding VAT payments (see National Rep report). Finances are generally healthy. (post meeting note: NG has discovered that various cheques thought to be outstanding have already been presented, and the finances are therefore better than thought. A revised report was submitted by email)	NG/PH to arrange revising bank mandate
5) Consultations report	PB submitted an up to date list of consultations received and expected. No response was made to the World Heritage consultation. Regarding the proposed revision to Part L of the Building Regulations, Bob Kindred has commented that Section 55(1) of the Sustainable & Secure Buildings Act (2004) has primacy over this part of the regulations. Initial comments have been requested by 23/04 on the Heat & energy saving strategy.	PB to circulate James Caird's draft response on this.

6) Events sub-committee	KB reported that speakers are being confirmed for the branch Annual Conference in October, and the programme is expected to be of high quality. NG agreed to email KB with a suggestions for a possible speaker. Summer Social event venue still tbc but date 3 rd or 10 th July.	CE to post dates for upcoming events on the branch webpage, along with committee minutes and newsletters
7) Joint events with COGs	see action for CE above	
8) Annual Summer School	members are encouraged to book places as early as possible.	
9) Membership	JK reported by email prior to the meeting; 1 new membership application received, JK has commented directly to the centre. JK has an up to date NW branch membership database, and 100 membership leaflets for distribution. KB reported from Council that since the last quarter there have been 4 new members and 2 upgrades, with one membership cancelled due to loss of contact.	
10) Branch Newsletter	NG agreed to continue to liaise with Taylor Young re production. Articles have been prepared/promised by 3-4 people. The approach of spotlighting particular towns/local authorities was supported by PH, and members are to be encouraged to provide personal interest pieces. CE queried whether the newsletter needs to be printed and posted except where members do not have electronic access. PH supported providing a tangible benefit direct to members.	CE agreed to collect and edit pieces, PH to advise who has offered these. CE to set up a NW contact email
11) NW Historic Environment Forum	PM provided a report by email prior to the meeting. NWHEF has received a consultants' report evaluating the historic environment sector in the NW and the agenda for the future. A brief has been given for setting a strategic agenda for the HEF for the next 5 years, progress to be reported at future meetings.	CE to request article from PM on the NWHEF and implications of the Civic Trust going into administration.
12) National Rep report	KB reported from Council meeting of 12/03. Relations with the IFA are improving. The IHBC has become a member of the Planning Forum. The national VAT backpayment bill has been reduced from c£25k to c£14k. NW membership stands at 128 (up 5), with 88 Full, 37 Affiliate and 3 Associate members. Policy Committee is investigating pursuing compliance with British Standards; however, it might be better to pursue the creation of our own standard based on Conservation Principles. Branch engagement and communication with members is encouraged to improve. An awayday is planned to consider the national Business Plan. 2010 Annual School is to be in London on 10/11/12 June. Guidance on the roles of committee members has now been placed	

	on the website (this is non prescriptive). The NW has expressed an interest in hosting a council meeting in September 2010.	
13) Trada seminar, 28/04/09, Manchester	PH and KB to attend and have agreed to man a branch stand, requesting further membership leaflets.	
14) Any other business	Ian Lucas has expressed an interest in contributing to the work of the branch. As the newsletter editor post is burdensome and no other post is available, Ian's co-option onto the NW committee as an interim measure was unanimously agreed.	LW to include IL on circulation list for meetings.
	GA raised the issue of the English Heritage survey on Conservation Areas; the survey was time consuming to complete, and there has been no tangible output in return to Conservation Officers. Due to low return rates, EH is not publishing analysis in full, and this could be self defeating in persuading respondents to repeat the exercise next year.	CE to contact EH requesting that some analysis of the results for their area be made available to COs.
	Congratulations and best wishes were offered on behalf of the branch to GA on his forthcoming retirement (GA supplied a superb carrot cake which was enjoyed by all).	
15) Next meeting	Weds 22/07/09, Manchester Town Hall (following GMCOC and afternoon members' event in Manchester)	
	The meeting closed at 7pm	