



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SOUTH WEST BRANCH

A new committee was elected during the summer of 2008 as follows :

Chairman /Branch Rep : Ian Lund	Immediate Past Chairman : Colin Ellis
Secretary : Kate Baxter-Hunter	Asst Secretary : Adron Duckworth
Treasurer / Cornwall : Alyson Cooper	Bulletin Editor : Alex Marsh
Private Sector : Greg Beale	Dorset : James Webb
Devon : Maureen Pearce	Wiltshire : Caroline Power
CUBA : Kingsley Fulbrook	Gloucestershire : vacant
Somerset : Paul Tomlinson	Membership : Sally Knott

It was extremely encouraging to find most of the positions filled although there have been a few subsequent changes of personnel. Caroline left work in Wiltshire and Helen Garside was co-opted to replace her. Caroline however remained on board as English Heritage link. Simon Went volunteered his services and was also co-opted. Stephen Bateman was also put forward by GCOG and was similarly invited to join the committee. Sally Knott volunteered to undertake membership duties but has recently signalled her intention to stand down.

I would like to thank Sally for her work over the past year, together with special recognition to Kate and Alyson for the special efforts they have made to hold the branch together. There is little doubt that each committee member is under pressure in their business lives and their contributions to branch affairs is greatly appreciated.

Local government reform has impacted our members in Cornwall and Wiltshire, and the credit crunch has affected many members working in the private sector. Public sector employees are also being squeezed as resources shrink. The Heritage Bill has been another casualty, and the wording of the government's new PPS a source of debate during recent weeks.

Although the branch committee is no doubt not as effective as some would wish a great deal has been achieved. National Council meetings have been attended, committee meetings have been held. Contributions have been made to the SW Historic Environment Forum and a representative sent to the Branch Connection Day held in Birmingham. Quarterly Branch Bulletins have been published, and membership application processed. Another important development was the undertaking of a survey of the membership, which should be an important guide for the new committee. The work of Paul Tomlinson in bringing this to fruition is happily acknowledged

The branch has also held two training events during 2009. In the spring Greg Beale and James Webb ran a successful seminar on the subject of Consistency in Conservation. This was a critical self examination that should be repeated or usefully built upon. Later this morning we will be working with English Heritage on an update on the designation process. We must thank Maureen Pearce for bringing this together.

At national level the Institute has just surpassed the 2000 members mark. About 270 are members of the SW branch. In order to ensure that the branch committee meets the needs of the membership whilst aligning as accurately as practical with the national committee structure I am recommending some changes to the committee structure. These will be discussed later in the agenda.

Ian Lund
October 2009