



Minutes of Branch Committee Meeting: Tuesday 2nd December 2014 At The Fox & Crown, Appleton Gate, Newark

Attendance: Jane Roylance, Chris McKinney, Rob Walker, Fiona Newton, Roy Lewis, Liz Mayle, Rose Thompson, Jason Mordan, Stephen Bradwell, & Neil Robertson

Apologies: Liz Blood, Sara Crofts, Becky Waddington, Rosamund Worrall, Philip Grover & Simon Revill

- 1. Minutes of Last Meeting:** Agreed as a true record, although it was noted that James White is the conservation officer dealing with Kimberley Brewery.
- 2. Chairs Report:** Liz reported that she had no specific issues that were not already covered in the main items for discussion on the agenda.
- 3. Branch Reps Report:** Roy reported that there had been no recent meetings of the IHBC Council.
- 4. Treasurers Report:** Rose reported that the Branch's finances were:
Current Account: £1,297.39
Reserve Account: £190.08
- 5. Membership Report:** Neil reported that there had not been any recent membership applications, but presently the Branch had 160 members, and there had been 5 resignations.

Fiona pointed out that the main reason for the resignations was the non-payment of fees, so people had been removed from the membership list.

Neil also noted that the Birmingham Branch Connection Day was very interesting from a networking point of view, but the main ground covered by the meeting was helping people towards membership.

Fiona noted that the 'associate membership' level has now started to help people through a more staged process to becoming a member. This level of membership was more than the affiliate level as people have to be able to

demonstrate the philosophy and practice competencies plus one other, and whilst this might suit specialists or crafts persons, it was also intended to be a stepping stone to full membership.

The previous 'associate' membership had been cancelled and merged with affiliate membership.

Liz thanked Neil for attending the Branch Connection Day.

6. County Representatives Report:

Lincolnshire: there had been no meeting since the Stamford meeting. The next LCOG was due to be held in Woodhall Spa.

Nottinghamshire: Jason reported that the Nottingham conservation officers group was now operating twice yearly meetings and the last meeting had been held in October at the Newton Building, Nottingham Trent University, where there had been a demonstration of a 3D building scanning machine.

Jason also noted that Dan Winfield was now covering conservation at Nottingham City as Tom Street had been seconded to the Carrington Street THI. However there was little change in staffing in the Districts.

Jason also noted that LBC had been granted for one of the malting buildings at the Kimberley Brewery, and that the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust was trying to re-invigorate itself and was looking at Old Robin Hood Hotel in Newark. Sustrans was also looking more seriously at the Bennerley Viaduct.

The Buildings at Risk Survey in Newark and Sherwood was just about finished, but the project did not get Phase 2 pilot funding.

7. Communications: To promote communication within the Branch Chris reported that the County Group meetings could send information to him for inclusion on web site. It may also be possible to circulate a newsletter, but this would need people to contribute articles. Chris also had some feedback from 2 members who thought that the circulation e-mails were useful.

It was suggested that a newsletter could provide news about up and coming events, such as the Bursary award and the April 'away day' meeting, and also innovative ideas such as linking Article 4 Directions and Local Development Orders as Rob was trying to do.

In addition the Committee discussed the possibility of a Membership Survey, but it was recognised that there was a need to consider what the survey wanted to find out from Branch members.

Fiona pointed out that the Branch could use the newsletter as a means of introducing and linking to a survey. Eva suggested that any survey should be restricted to say 6 questions over no more than 2 pages.

It was generally agreed that the previous survey needed refreshing, particularly as the Branch Business Plan is based on the older survey and its support for 'cheap 'n' cheerful' events. So it would be useful to find out if members are still interested in these type of events.

Eva suggested that it may be useful to ask members how they want to receive Branch information, but Fiona pointed out that the Committee did not have the resources to deliver information in different ways and it might be best to say that we are looking at ways of improving Branch communications.

Chris wondered whether it would be useful to know more about the demographic and geographic spread of the Branch membership which might help the Committee to target specific areas for events.

Fiona referred to examples of other Branches using social media, such as the North West Branch had an events Twitter feed. Rob did however point out that Branch members already have access to lots of information through the Branch web-page.

Neil suggested the survey could be used to find out what Branch members wanted to do for the April 'away day' meetings and the AGM. There was also a need to acknowledge that the Branch's activities had to cater for conservation officers and members in private practice.

Rob thought that the Branch should maintain the 'cheap 'n' cheerful' events given the lack of training budgets in the public sector. However in terms of CPD there was a question as to how much would people be prepared to pay, and private practice may be prepared to pay for a high quality event.

Eva pointed out the Essex County Council had a programme of interesting events and Roy queried whether we could run similar ½ day events in the region. Although as Chris pointed out, the Branch had to avoid running at a loss, but an option could be to alternate between 'cheap 'n' cheerful' and paid for events. Although as Roy noted the Branch seemed to be running out of options for 'cheap 'n' cheerful' visits.

Eva thought that CPD events could be used to help people become members, and suggested surgeries to deal with specific enquiries such as advancing membership. Fiona pointed out that although the IHBC does not have a mentoring scheme, the Branch might be able to help people prepare their application forms. Although as Chris noted this relies on people asking for assistance rather than assistance being made available.

Liz suggested that the survey could ask questions about membership, whether people are motivated to upgrade their membership.

Liz suggested that questions in a survey should consider whether people wanted CPD events to target competencies, what people might be prepared to pay, location for events and advice on membership training and upgrades. Liz agreed to circulate topics for questions and Fiona will be try to put them into survey form and send a link to Branch Committee Members.

For the April meeting Liz referred to a recent presentation by Gez Pegram of Dossor MA., a CARE engineer and the possibility of a visit to William Blyth's manufacturers of handmade clay pantiles and other clay products; and Jane said that there was to be an open day at the Magnus Building in January with completion due in April, the Branch could do a return visit. Neil also suggested the Old Bell in Derby where the frontage has recently been restored.

Finally it was discussed that a possible newsletter could include information about the Bursary, the options for the April meeting and a report from Neil regarding IHBC membership following his visit to the Branch Connection Day with advice about who to contact for support and levels of membership.

- 8. AOB:** It was agreed that the Annual School Bursary would cover the costs of the full school, but the recipient would be expected to pay travel expenses.

Eva noted as she was now leaving area she would have to resign from Branch Committee.

It was also agreed that the AGM minutes could be posted on the Branch website and the link circulated to the Branch members.

Date of Next Meetings:

Next Branch meeting: Tuesday 3 February 2015 - 7.00pm in Newark

Future Meetings:

April 2015 - meeting venue and date to be confirmed

Tuesday 14 July 2015 - 7.00pm in Newark
