

Minutes of Cymru / Wales IfA committee meeting, 10.30 28 January 2011 at RCAHMW, Aberystwyth.

Present: Kathy Laws; Ian Brooks; John Latham; C Stephen Briggs; Fiona Grant.

1. Apologies: Dave Maynard; George Nash.

NB Richard Hankinson has now resigned from the committee due to pressure of work but Fiona Grant has been co-opted pending result of an election at the next AGM.

2. Minutes of meeting on 30.09.10 approved

3. Matters Arising

The tendering process flagged up by DM last time was discussed and JL suggested that he could contact Kathryn Whittington and Peter Hinton at IfA to see if there were any guidelines available – essentially Local Authorities were not giving potential contractors sufficient time to draw up tenders for work. It was agreed more committee members are needed and Fiona Grant was welcomed while Richard Hankinson was thanked for his positive contribution to the work of the group.

4. Officers Reports

IB reported that the bank balance was £1,760.38 of which £974.62 is Research Agenda funds. The last Day school (Transitions 5.11.10) lost *ca* £100. Postings on the Groups section of the main IfA website were discussed and agreed that pending approval we could post both short reports of past Dayschools and other Welsh issues such as Hidden Histories in lieu of a Newsletter as such. JL and CSB would work together on this. JL will need to discuss with Kathryn Whittington at IfA initially.

5. November Day school

The committee noted that these Dayschools usual break-even it not being necessary to make a profit. This one lost around £100. Some lessons could be learned. What members and others seemed to want were Dayschools targeting the CPD concept rather than those focused purely on the academic. Those who attended the last day school were very enthusiastic about its content but evidently its content probably put off most students with one or two exceptions). It was noticeable that nobody from Lampeter had attended, despite its large archaeology undergraduate population. Advertising had made little difference to attendances generally.

6. Future Dayschools

Evidently these will need to be more technical and less academic (?). If so it might be possible that Cadw and/or the RCAHMW might put in some funds. CSB has already approached Mark Macklin and Geoff Duller of the Earth Sciences Dept. to set up the 2011 Autumn Dayschool (4th Nov) at Aberystwyth. Campus-based, this would be essentially a scientific techniques/technical/ training session. However, for the next regular spring Day school (6th May) would be on "Finds" dependent upon the availability of suitable speakers.. Committee members had various ideas for this and some contacts were to be chased up. Possible title: "From Lithics to Plastic Elephants". The IfA finds group to be contacted. JL had a contact at the Avebury Museum. In summary: Lithics, Coins, Pottery, Roman, Ironwork, Medieval and Later Pottery. A new venue would be explored to get around the problem of expensive lunches and JL had experienced a session at the unlikely venue of a caravan park in Borth which he would approach for a quote. It should be as easy to reach as Machynlleth, particularly by train (Borth having its own station). It was agreed to pursue this idea and contact appropriate speakers before further email liaison. for e.g. Julie Edwards at Chester Museum was mentioned as a possible contributor.

7. IfA website postings etc.

Pending approval, the concept of short reports and the insertion of other items to be on the IfA Groups website as short report rather than a full printed and circulated newsletter.

8. Gwynedd Museum

Essentially this issue is closed for the present and the future of the Museum is more or less secure so there is no real scope for any further intervention with the Local Authority. However the matter needs to be kept in view.

9. Standards & Guidelines (again)

The committee felt that IfA centrally had sufficient grip on this already and that except for the odd input from the Group such as a query as to where the word Archaeology had gone it should be left to the Secretary (JL) to inform the rest of the committee vis a vis changes and amendments.

10. IfA - A Chartered Institute

Decided to carry this item forward to the next meeting for discussion.

11. Standards & Guidelines drafts

See above

12. Ethical Publishing

CSB had produced a considered paper on this subject and it has already been widely circulated (for instance to the Society of Antiquaries (where it was not felt to contribute usefully to existing procedures). CSB thought that there still many organisations without clear and helpful procedures for intending authors. Yet it is evident that guidelines are needed. As IfA centrally hasn't yet officially adopted the principles it was promoting, the committee felt it could usefully appear on the IfA Wales Group website as a discussion document. JL agreed to send to Kathryn Whittington.

13. AOB

Research Agenda: Since the very successful Bangor Conference there have been two poorly attended tele-conferences. Nothing of substance appears to have been completed as yet but the various session chairs are still working on their final documents. The committee wondered if there was a deadline for these. IB thought that there was one for the end of February for the session chairs final versions.

The Current Economic Climate:

Smaller contractors in Wales are on the whole quite busy but the two of the Trusts appear to be struggling for survival following the financial implications of retrospective VAT demands.

14. Date and venue of next meeting

Neither date nor venue set but a meeting in mid-March might be useful before the next Day school. The venue was a bit of a problem and needed to be convenient for all the committee members.

JEL / CSB

08.02.11