



Thames Valley Branch

31st Annual General Meeting of the IOSH Thames Valley Branch
held on 17th May 2021 via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Geoff Adlington, David Armstrong, Nick Bathurst, Jane Booyesen, Jane Brown, Vince Butler, Tanya Chalkley, Colin Clark, Mark Cummins, Delwynne Cutilan, Graham Dandridge, Paul Davies, Howard De Silva, Gareth Evans, Ian Fernley, James Ford, James Francis, Stefan Friel, Jason Gawronski, Angela Giakovmis, Laura Graure, Elizabeth Gray, David Heath, Grahame Jamieson, Lynda Jones, Mary Kimani, Myra Kelly, Paul Kelsall, Bridget Leathley, Subash Ludhra, Joanne Malpass, Kelly Mansell, Dave Maycock, Alan Mcentire, Richard Mumford, Kelly Nicoll, Othuke Okah, Shirley Parsons, Tyrone Partridge, J Payne, Karl Petre, Michael Pitfield, Jim Prowse, Steve Pulling Paul Roebuck, Steve Rogers, Rebecca Russell, Grant Skinner, John Steed, Chris Stops, Keith Tennant, Jennifer Toner, Bosco Tsz Yan Chan, Steve Turner, Sarah Valentine, Andrew Vaughan, Tom Wilson, Kieran Williams, Chris Williamson, David Wright.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Tim Dixon, Joao Matias, Jimmy Quinn

VISITORS: Neil Budworth, Ciaran Delaney,

MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM:

The minutes of the AGM, held on the 15th April 2019 were accepted as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING:

None

BRANCH REGULATIONS AND AGM PROCESS

Due to the Covid 19 situation and all Branch meetings being virtual, it was necessary to change the regulations relating to AGM's and election of Officers / committees. The amended Regulation 15 is appended to these minutes.

CHAIRS REPORT

Firstly, I am happy continue to be your Chair for the Thames Valley Branch.

Last year was a difficult year worldwide due to the Corona Virus we lost members due to hardships and lost of jobs, and I am sure we lost member/past members due to the virus itself.

Members present and past are reminded that there is an institute Benevolent Fund that they can apply to, and I hope those who need money do apply.

Most of us have had to try a different way of working, working from home and video conferencing Teams, Zoom etc became the norm. Initially learning the new skills were a challenge but many who were furloughed or working from home enjoyed the extra time with the family especially as the weather was fantastic. We as a branch missed one session but then managed to keep our programme together for the rest of the year and I thank your committee for this.

We as a committee award annual prizes to the NFTS students and are committed to continuing this going forward.

Going forward will be a challenging time, many of the UK population may be suffering stress from being alone and other fatigue from Zoom meetings all day long. We as a branch and institute will be changing the way we deliver to our members with a blended approach, both online, face to face and with joint partnerships with other branches and groups – possibly with free to members half day seminars. As a branch we will reduce to one event per month as with zoom events there is now a plethora of events each month for you to choose from.

Our aim as our newly formed committee is to deliver quality events as a branch rather than quantity and if you have any areas of interest you would like to be included, please let me know. You can also help IOSH understand your requirements by completing the online survey.

I hope for your continued support of our branch and we as a committee are here to enhance our member's experience.

Thank you.

T J Partridge

Tyrone Partridge

TREASURERS REPORT:

A lot of IOSH funds come from training courses and this has been curtailed to some extent with many courses going on line, resulting in a reduction of income for IOSH centrally. However IOSH is now on a sound financial footing.

The funds we held in our branch account (~10K) has been recovered by IOSH and funds will now be held centrally and we will have to 'bid' for the funds we need. This means we will have to ask IOSH as and when we need money to fund our activities such as Reading University room hire.

ELECTION OF BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Under the new regime all the executive committee were elected by on-line voting in April. The results are as follows:

Tyrone Partridge – Chair
Nick Bathurst – Vice Chair
David Heath – Secretary
Steve Pulling – Treasurer
Communications co-ordinator - Tom Wilson
Programme co-ordinator – Laura Graure
Members : Joao Matias, Karl Petre, Kelly Nicoll, Myra Kelly.
Co-opted for NFTS – Chris Stops

Zuzanna LaLanne and Graham Dandridge stood down as committee members. The Branch expressed their thanks for their work over the previous years in making the Branch events a success.

The AGM closed at 20.00

James Quinn presented a Presidents Distinguished Service award to Shirley Parsons for her outstanding work in the service of Health & Safety across several branches over many years. She has been a committee member, a member of the nominations committee and delivered many talks to several branches, nominated by 3 past presidents. Very well deserved.

311th Branch meeting

Topic for the evening: The Fire Safety Act 2021 – a legal update

Speaker for the evening: Sarah Valentine – Principal Associate / Solicitor Advocate at Eversheds Sutherland

Her slides are on the Thames Valley Branch website.

Members questions for the speaker

Why does regulation change occur only after a significant event. Supported by a statement in regards to why regulation then is reactive rather than preventative. Why has this gone on for so long? Which in turn led to a question about why the regulators don't always consider the practicalities of bringing the regulation into practice.

A - It's disappointing that this has happened so many times since the 1970's, including Coroners courts commenting on multiple fire deaths and the need for change. The hope is the fire safety act will cause proactive risk assessment. Also a lot of fire risk assessment has been carried out on retail premises and many FR Assessor's are not competent re domestic and high rise premises. Regulators will now be looking at more significant penalties including gross negligent manslaughter.

Where are we to find the competent people to do the fire risk assessments?

A – this is one for the regulators but the history of competency is not great, no knowledge etc to 'competent' often in a couple of days on a course!

What secondary legislation will follow the Act?

A - There will be an ACOP and guidance – more info in October.

Is there a height limit height of buildings applicable under the Bill?

A – 6 storeys / 18 metres and above

Is there any specific requirement for sprinkler systems to be fitted?

A – Speaker was not aware of any legal requirement in the act.

Comments regarding the Grenfell inquiry

Why has the criminality been allowed to go on for so long. Not helped by lack of attention by regulators and low fines.

A lot of back and forth regarding the forthcoming regs is it not fit for purpose or who is doing the lobbying. The local MP has asked for changes. Will the £5 billion be used to take off and then put back on safer cladding ? And who will do this? The people who caused the problem in the first place ?

Reply to: David Heath, Branch Secretary

Heath410@btinternet.com Tel: 01628 634523

Branch regulations and AGM process

- The management of the AGM process moved from the Networks Team to the Governance Team
- Nominations and voting were conducted electronically prior to the AGMs and administered by an independent organisation: Mi-Voice
- Changes made to **Regulation 15** with approval of Council include
 - Communications Co-ordinator has been created as a Principal Officer Role
 - Nominations shall no longer require a proposer or seconder
 - Minimum number of committee members has increased to three
 - Branches: Maximum number of committee members has been set as twelve (Does not include Principal Officers)
 - District and Sections: Maximum number of committee members has been set as eight.
 - Co-optees shall be non-voting members, co-opted for either a specific purpose, agenda items, or committee project
 - All members shall hold office (be elected) for two years and shall be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of four years, after which he/she may be re-elected only after at least three years have elapsed.
 - Quorum at general meetings shall be at least ten members of whom at least two must be Principal Officers. Where this is not achieved, the Professional Development Committee has confirmed that the Regional Manager will cast the deciding vote.
 - A new election shall be held for any Principal Officer position if insufficient nominations are received by the nominations closing date, to be concluded no later than two months after the end of the financial year.
- **The AGM timeline** was as follows:
 - Nominations opened 15 Feb to 1 Mar
 - Re-opened for some branches who lacked a full committee on 10 Mar to 24 Mar
 - Voting opened 5 Apr to 19 Apr
 - Branch AGMs to be held between 26 Apr and 26 May where outcomes of the elections will be confirmed.