

SOUTHERN BRANCH NEWSLETTER SPRING 2020



- CHAIRMAN'S LETTER -

Dear Colleagues.

Welcome to my first annual newsletter as chairman. The newsletter provides branch news and updates and reports on our events we have held in the past 12 months.

The first thing I must mention is COVID-19, this has forced the postponement of all future events until at present the end of June, but will be revised in time along with government advice.

Can I just mention what an amazing service that all the key workers have done, risking their own health to help keep us all safe and deliver provisions. What a response for volunteers to help the NHS over 400,000 individuals.

Look after yourselves, be kind to others, keep to the curfew and do what you can to help where it is needed.

Look forward to seeing you soon,



Hope to see you at a future event.

Best wishes, be safe,
Jamie

- EDITORIAL -

Well another year has passed since the last Newsletter and it has been quite a year. Brexit has happened and a budget prepared by the government which showed great promise for the highways industry as at last the importance of the network was finally being recognised. Then along came Corona Virus and put a hold on life as we knew it and now hangs like the 'Sword of Damocles' over us.

In any event we will need the highway network and the Chancellor promised finance for potholes and schemes such as the Lower Thames Crossing and the A303 Stonehenge Tunnel though we will now have to wait and see if these will come to fruition.

Come what may, engineers will be needed in the industry which will provide opportunities for IHE members for all categories of employment whether public or private sector at Eng Tech, IEng or CEng levels.

With regard to this the government is promoting the need for alternative education routes to qualification. This means that engineers without a degree will be encouraged to use routes that are already available within IHE to obtain registration with the Engineering Council. These are via the Individual Route by Personalised Report Option for IEng or Experiential

Route if you are seeking CEng. If you are currently practicing as a non-registered engineer, I seriously suggest that you consider obtaining an appropriate qualification to secure your future with a professional registration.

Details can be found on the website at theihe.org. You can also obtain an assessment by the Academic Standards Panel of your current qualifications and experience and how to progress these to registration. Don't delay – do it today!

**Chris Bowley IEng FIHE, Editor, Branch
Development & Champion for CPD**

- PAST EVENTS -

**19 June 2019 – Annual General Meeting
The Bluebell Railway, Sheffield Park East
Sussex.**

In accordance with our tradition in seeking interesting venues to hold our AGM, 2019 was no exception when it was held at The Birch Grove Suite.

Outgoing Chairman Tony Suter welcomed the 17 delegates and reviewed the branch activities for the past 12 months where we held 6 CPD events plus our annual charity quiz night. Our 'main event' of the year was our Winchester Seminar, held in October and the 2018 event *'Highway Engineers Creating Safer Highways'* attracted our usual high number of delegates and the highest ever attendance of exhibitors. It was interesting to record that of our other CPD events, some were put on as a direct result of interest being expressed in topics briefly (by comparison) covered in the Seminar where delegates wished to learn more.

The business of the day being completed, Tony thanked the Branch Committee for their enthusiastic hard work over the time of his Chairmanship and welcomed Jamie Durrant as the new Branch Chairman who had the 'honour' to close the meeting before heading out to inspect the preserved railway.



The line reopened as a volunteer service in 1960 and operated between Sheffield Park and Bluebell Halt. It was several years before the connection was re-created taking the service into a special platform at East Grinstead Station, in 2013. This is a very potted history but our guide worked well to explain other 'highlights' of the line's history as we passed through Horsted Keynes Station (pronounced 'Kaynes' as the locals didn't want it to sound like Milton Keynes). This station has its own moments of glory as a much sought after 1920s location for films and TV such as Downton Abbey, The Woman in Black and Muppets Most Wanted.

18 September 2019 – Using waste plastics to enhance our road networks, The Grange, Midhurst, West Sussex

Ben Williamson of MacRebur gave a presentation to the Branch on the products being developed by their company.

MacRebur products are made from non-recyclable waste plastics that were destined for landfill or incineration.

By extending part of the bitumen in the mix MacRebur products reduce fossil fuel usage, leading to a reduction in carbon footprint and helping to foster a circular economy.

With each km of road laid using their MR products, they use up the equivalent weight of 740,541 one time use plastic bags. 1 tonne of MacRebur mix contains the equivalent of 80,000 plastic bottles.

A purely impressive saving.



20 September 2019 – Greenwich University, Chatham Campus



Tony Suter and Chris Bowley once again attended the Campus Induction Day and assisted Cherrie Ouerghi to encourage the new intake of Engineering undergraduates to join the IHE as Student Members and follow a career in highway engineering.

23 October 2019 – Annual Seminar, Ashburton Hall, HCC Winchester, 'Highway Engineers – Courting Trouble'

It has always been the aim of Southern Branch to provide high quality CPD at an affordable price for its members. This year was no exception and this was confirmed at our 28th consecutive seminar held at our regular venue, Ashburton Hall, HCC in Winchester with 130 attendees. This year's session was an update on a topic first aired by the branch in 2005 which looked at the potential effect of the Corporate Manslaughter Bill on highway engineers upon its introduction. The Bill came into force as the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act in 2007 and has far reaching consequences compared with previous legislation. It was therefore felt appropriate to update our members of the changes and make them aware of the pitfalls that can be encountered in their everyday lives whilst undertaking their duties. The days programme was therefore designed to cover both the need for good practice by all parties within the industry and hope to achieve these and also to warn of the consequences the act can impose upon failure to comply with it – Grenfell Tower fire being the classic example of this which has still to run its course. Under the chairmanship of the IHE President, Jonathan Pearson the day began with the IHE CEO, Richard Hayes setting the scene by explaining the Legal Challenges which are currently concentrating the minds of highway engineers such as climate change and its impact upon our networks. Following Richard, Paul Aldridge from WJ Group

presented to us the necessity of having Qualified Competent Employees within the industry. Paul is a

Fellow of the IHE and a regular supporter of the Branch and the IHE has encouraged WJ's staff to gain the qualification of Eng Tech or above in order to enhance their ability and confidence as individuals which leads to improved standards within the profession. To explain the consequences of possible negligence within our actions we invited Gerard Forlin QC to return to address delegates with a follow up to his original presentation to our Annual Seminar in 2005 and to explain the changes made by the 2007 Act. Gerard is an eloquent and lively speaker who informed us in an entertaining way leaving us all to go away thinking more broadly about our actions and their potential consequences. Following the excellent buffet lunch provided by the HCC Facilities Staff the afternoon session began with Keith Smith, Group Technical Manager with Chevron Traffic Management Ltd a leading company in the UK TTM business and another regular supporter of the IHE in his capacity as lead tutor of the Postgraduate Diploma in TTM Engineering for the Institute. Keith highlighted the vagaries of poor planning and design of TTM schemes and the ease with which these can lead to prosecution when accidents arise. Branch Committee Member, Greg Holland was next up and gave a detailed presentation on the importance of Road Safety Audits. Gregg is a specialist in these and has worked overseas for many years as a specialist advisor in road safety as well as in the UK. RSA's are key to getting design, build and operation right from beginning to end perspective with improvements to ensure that Corporate Manslaughter does not arise from the project. The next session presented the need for a change of speaker as the



author. Nigel Lawrence, Head of Client Partnerships, Global Solutions UK was unavoidably not available to present for personal reasons. Step up Tony Suter our Past Chair of S Branch and ex Traffic Sgt with Surrey Police who stood into the breach for Nigel. Fortunately, Tony has experience in the topic from his previous employ as a Traffic Officer and could therefore interpret Nigel's presentation. The title was 'Addressing Work Related Road Risk Why It Matters to the Safety of Your Staff, Your Brand, Your Bottom Line'. Last but not least we came to materials and their quality presented by Ian Gillam, Sales Manager from Saint Gobain PAM UK who own one of the largest foundries in the UK and are producers of high-quality ironwork that is commonly situated in the highway. The need for quality in design and production of such is paramount to safety and was

clearly explained by Ian. The event closed with a question and answer session followed by a vote of thanks by Jamie Durrant, current Chair of S Branch.

22 November 2019 – Wine & Wisdom Charity Quiz Night, Ripley Village Hall

Following our 'new tradition' we invited our regular supporting team 'Runnymede Ex Pats' to nominate a charity to benefit from our annual charity quiz night. They opted to support 'Uganda Creates' which is a small organisation offering young people from rural communities in Uganda opportunities to gain skills that enable them to get a job or start a small business. It was set up by a Surrey resident in 2008 and now employs 12 people in Uganda and supports over 500 people each week through their community resource centres, libraries, sports activities, employability workshops and vocational training programmes. A busy and business-like atmosphere prevailed with 8 teams knuckling down to pit their wits against worthy opponents. A wide range of topics featured in the quiz rounds ranging from round titles as 'the golden age of musicals' to 'routes' - some straightforward and some with a cryptic element. A good contest with the team 'In Need of Structural Support' becoming the ultimate winners by a short margin and also becoming the custodian of the impressive challenge shield with the winners badges on from the early days. Something to dust and polish for 12 months..... There is also a wooden spoon for the 8th team but that identity remains a secret under the 30-year rule!



It was a delight for the Branch Chairman, Jamie Durrant to be able to present a cheque for £500.00 to representatives of the Uganda Creates who also entered a team for the evening.

Another good sociable evening with the usual wine and excellent buffet arranged by 'the team' who we thank for their efforts, but above all, our gratitude to our loyal teams for their ongoing support.

4 December 2019 – Passive Safety Workshop The Grange, Midhurst, West Sussex

An afternoon event arranged by Chris Stark, Area Highways Manager at WSCC with UK Roads was presented by Andy Pledge of UK Roads.

Andy is a Fellow of IHE and a regular contributor to the Institute. He gave an overview to members of UK Roads which is an independent company dedicated to encouraging a better understanding of the current standards, advice and issues relating to the provision and maintenance of features on our roads. Their purpose is to facilitate better practices in the design and use of highways infrastructure by: managing a family of websites that are run by practicing engineers; and delivering specialised events designed to help engineers experience the operation of products in safe, off-highway environments.

UK Roads was responsible for bringing 'Seeing is Believing' from concept to reality; a truly unique and highly popular event, now organised by Traffex SIB, and the first of its kind in Europe. Contributing presenters were Wayne Lovatt from

Pole Products describing their new classes of Passive Safety Products, Tony Everitt from V&G Ltd. on Passive Combinations & Real-World Applications and lastly Carolien Willems from Belgium who updated us on European Standards Procedures.

A useful and constructed afternoon's CPD which was well attended.



- NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS -



Alexander Shrubsall

Alex has been a highways technician for Surrey County Council since April 2016 and has delivered a range of small carriageway schemes across the network. His time at Surrey has seen him work within the Asset Planning team, where he has been involved with bridge, road and VRS inspections, data management and scheme prioritisation. He is also the custodian of the county's grit bin facilities and has successfully managed their filling and general maintenance since he took over the role in 2018.

As an undergraduate he worked part time within the highways industry as a carriageway works liaison, traffic management operative and HFS supervisor. Shortly before joining the county council he spent a few months as a campaign's assistant for a London based MP. In his spare time, he enjoys playing a variety of musical instruments, cycling and all things political.



Gregg Holland

Gregg Holland FIHE became a co-opted member of the Committee in November 2018 and his status as a formal Committee Member was officially confirmed at the AGM in June 2019. Gregg joined the IHE in 1978 (when it was known as HTTA). His early career encompassed all aspects of transport planning activities from traffic surveys, through modelling and economic

assessment, to outline highway design. Since the early 1990's Gregg took a particular interest in Road Safety and, working within large consultancy organisations, he subsequently became a business lead in this work stream, undertook research projects and travelled internationally. He is now a freelance Road Safety consultant. Gregg says, "After a stint living and working in the Middle East, I returned to the UK and found I had a bit of time on my hands. I met a former colleague at the IHE Seminar event in October 2018 and was invited to come along to a Committee meeting. First impression – What an enthusiastic and good-humoured bunch of people there is leading the IHE Southern branch, searching for presentations and events to inspire IHE members. I'm honoured to be a part of it."

BRANCH SECRETARY –Sam Winterson
sam.winterson@surreycc.gov.uk

NEWSLETTER EDITOR – Chris Bowley
chris.bowley@talktalk.net

Visit our **Branch news pages** at
www.theihe.org