

British Brick Society

Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting at Kingston upon Hull.

The meeting was held in the Wesley Room, Jubilee Centre, King Edward Street, Kingston upon Hull on Saturday 15th June 2024, commencing at 11.15 am.

The Society celebrated 50 years in 2024, with the first Annual General Meeting held in London in 1974.

Officers Present: Mike Chapman Chairman
David Kennett Editor, Congresses, Visits
Member Attendees: Ken Redmore, Jim Beckett, Mike and Pam Kingman,
W. Ann Los
Guest Attendees: Angie Beckett.

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chairman opened the meeting and then welcomed members and guests to the historic Jubilee Centre and Kingston upon Hull.

Following the AGM a walking tour has been arranged, to look at the Historic Quarter of the city, which miraculously emerged unscathed from the tremendous damage caused by sustained aerial bombardment during the Second World War.

Nationally the Brick Industry remains subdued, principally from the continued slowdown in housebuilding. Although there has been brick factory closures, investment in new plant and equipment provides some certainty for the future. One significant investment has been made by the York Handmade Brick Company, with a visit by the Society planned for August.

The Chairman concluded by recording his grateful thanks to the officers of the Society who have all worked extremely hard to ensure its continuing success and to our Web Master for his continued work to maintain our Web presence.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Adrian Corder-Birch, Michael Hammett, Anthony Preston, Graeme Perry, Alun Martin, Jacqueline Ryder, Edward Handley, John Harrison, Brenda Chapman and Pat Chapman.

3. Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting

These were taken as read and accepted by all members present.

The future format of this meeting was raised at the 2023 AGM and discussion will be held later in this meeting.

5. Secretary's Report

This post remains unfilled, with the Chairman covering these duties

The principal task of the year has been to arrange the AGM Day and for which I would like to record my thanks to the staff at the Hull Tourist Information office who have been extremely helpful in making all the arrangements and who are a credit to the spirit of the city. My thanks also to Ken Redmore for his support.

Notwithstanding my comments above, the effort required confirmed my view that our late Secretary, Mick Oliver, did a huge amount of largely unseen work on behalf of the Society and is still very much missed.

With the venue for our AGM confirmed as Colchester in 2025, the Society is grateful to Adrian Corder-Birch for his offer to assist.

6. *Treasurer's Report* *Received from Graeme Perry.*

Good morning, members and guests.

First, I must apologise for not being here today. Great friends of ours for 40 years plus, who have lived together for years, suddenly announced that they were getting married today. They 'phoned us and asked us to attend as 'two of their oldest friends'. We could not refuse.

Mike has very kindly agreed to read out this report for me; I am grateful to him for that. Members will have already seen the Financial Statement for 2023 which was circulated in *British Brick Society Information 155*. My thanks go to Committee Members for their continuing support and to our Honorary Auditor, Adrian Corder-Birch, who I understand is standing in for the Lord Lieutenant of Essex today. Adrian has offered his services for another year.

I would draw attention to my Notes, particularly number 1. It is very disappointing that a handful of Members have ignored the Chairman's reminders. I can report that the number of 28 referred to in the statement has now reduced to 24, but that only reduces the deficit to £205. It is still too many and the rest of the Membership is paying for that.

David does a sterling job on keeping the costs of *British Brick Society Information* under control and thanks must go to him for that.

The account balances as at 10th June 2024 are:

Current account:	£2,144.08
Deposit account:	£4,054.83

I have given Mike a copy of the Financial Statement for 2023 signed by Adrian Corder-Birch and me for approval and sign-off at today's AGM.

Finally, I indicated at last year's AGM that I would stand for another year but would encourage a member to come forward to take over as Treasurer. Unfortunately, no one has contacted me in the last year. Age, health and circumstances inevitably take their toll, and as things currently stand, I cannot see me seeking re-election at the 2025 AGM.

I trust that you will have a good AGM and enjoy the walk around Hull this afternoon. Confirmed that only those members paying the full amount received *BBS Information*. Once the membership list had been checked again for correct address the Society would write again to the under payers.

7. *Membership Secretary's Report*

The Chair advised the meeting that no report was available owing to Anthony Preston's continued poor health, and he had advised the Society that was not able to continue in this role.

On behalf of the Society the Chair thanked Anthony for all his hard work as Membership Secretary and wished both he and his wife well for the future

8. *Enquiries Secretary's Report*

The report from Alun Martin, Enquiries Office, confirmed that the Society has had a very busy year, receiving 19 requests for help from both the UK and Abroad, with many originating via our web site. These included Belfast brickmaking, Brick Trade statistics 1900-1960 and the UK Construction Market, the possible origins of a 17th Century brick found at Cupid's Cove Newfoundland as well as several technical enquiries concerning faults in brickwork.

The Enquiries Secretary has been very resourceful in getting information from a wide variety of sources, and together with help from other officers the Society has managed to successfully help most enquirers.

Of note was an enquiry asking for assistance from the Hedgerley (Bucks.) Historical Society who were planning a study day focussing on the historic brickmaking industry of that area. As a result, Mike Chapman and Peter Hounsell gave presentations as part of the overall day, which included a practical brickmaking demonstration by Jim Matthews from the nearby H.G. Matthews Brick Company. BBS were very pleased to have received a donation from Hedgerley and HG Matthews totalling £150 as a thank you.

The Society has also been very pleased to be of ongoing assistance to Bursledon Brickworks Museum in researching World War Two records of the brick industry.

9. *Report from Editor of British Brick Society Information.*

Since June 2023, four issues of *British Brick Society Information* have been prepared and three issued to members:

<i>BBS Information, 153</i> , June 2023	52 pages
<i>BBS Information, 154</i> , September 2023	52 pages
<i>BBS Information, 155</i> , February 2024	52 pages
<i>BBS Information, 156</i> , June 2024	48 pages

The Editor explained that due to his severe back problems in February and March 2024 *BBS Information, 155*, February 2024, was delivered two months late to the printer and this has had a knock-on effect on the production of *BBS Information, 156*, June 2024. It is hoped to return to regular a four-monthly interval with *BBS Information, 157*, October 2024. Notable articles in the first three of the issues include:

- Making Patterns: Creating Diaper in Medieval and Tudor England.
- Brick and the Larger Houses of Dorset in 1662: Context, Materials, Destruction, Rebuilding.
- The Humber Brick and Tile Industry: The Economic Context.
- Skegness Brickworks: An Evaluation from *circa* 1960.
- In Memoriam Michael Seabrook Oliver: The 1632 Church at Great Stanmore, Middlesex, and its Brickwork.
- St John the Baptist Church, Burringham, Lincolnshire (1856-57) by S.S. Teulon.
- Bricks found during Restoration Work at All Saints church, Wokingham, Berkshire.
- Hedingham 'Reds' used in Churches and Other Buildings in London.
- Louis Henri Sullivan: The Unanswered Question.
- Brick for a Day: the British Brick Society's visit to the Dreadnought Brick & Tile Works of Hinton, Perry & Davenhill, on 18 July 2023.
- Brick for a Day: W.T. Knowles & Sons Ltd, Elland, West Yorkshire.
- An Aspect of Bricks in Archaeology.

Issues have also included Editorials, book reviews, reports on the society's meetings and visits.

The Editor thanks all who contributed to these four issues. Apart from the Editor, they are Miss M.C. Buggins, Michael Chapman, Pat Chapman, Adrian Corder-Birch, Alan Ingle, R.A. Manchester, Ken Redmore, Jacqueline Ryder, and the late Terence Paul Smith.

The potential contents of *British Brick Society Information*, **156**, were reported. The contributors to *BBS Information*, **156**, June 2024, are Derek Barker, Michael Chapman, Alan Ingle, David H. Kennett, and Jacqueline Ryder.

British Brick Society Information, **157**, October 2024, has a potentially wide range of articles and contributors. It is in active preparation. The potential contents were outlined. This will be an issue with articles illustrated with black-and-white illustrations *only*.

The potential contributors are David H. Kennett, Terence Paul Smith, and Ian Smalley with John Howarth, respectively.

British Brick Society Information, **158**, June 2025, is designed to be a 'Brick in Essex' issue with *colour* photographs. Potential contents include:

The articles have been written by David H. Kennett and Han Li, respectively. Enquiries have been made about a possible article on 'Hedingham Bricks in Colchester'. The Editor also holds two articles on aspects of Layer Marney Tower:

- Early Tudor Architectural Terracottas in England: Aspects of Production
- Accommodating your Social Superiors: The Late Medieval Brick Gatehouse at Layer Marney Tower, Essex, in Context

Written by two old hands, these could form the basis of *BBS Information*, **159**, June 2025. Both have only black-and-white illustrations and this issue would therefore *only* have black-and-white illustrations. Further contributions of 'Brick in Essex' are invited; please let the Editor know by Wednesday 18 December 2024.

Despite Terence not having left a last will and testament, the Editor acted as executor to and has been acting as the literary executor of the late Terence Paul Smith. From Terence's last flat, copies were secured of a number of unpublished items by Terence of varying lengths. Those which have appeared since June 2022 were in Terence's neat handwriting and without too many interpolations. Those which remain to be published were typed and they are now slowly being scanned into the Editor's computer.

Arising from working through Terence's unpublished papers, it is suggested that at some point in the future, an issue of *British Brick Society Information* be devoted to 'Brick in London' to include his essay 'The Progress of Brick in Stuart London' (24 pages double-spaced in 12pt Times Roman, about 8-9 pages of *BBS Information*). The paper has no illustrations and neither endnotes nor bibliography; the Editor is working on both of these aspects of the paper. Coupled with this, the Editor holds a completed paper 'From Manhattan to Great Marlborough Street: Two Buildings in Black by Raymond Hood' (17-18 pages for *BBS Information*).

Checking of the potential article on 'Brick and the Search for An American Architecture: The Banks Designed by Louis H. Sullivan' has been delayed by the cyber-attack on the British Library Document Supply Centre at Boston Spa, Weatherby. As of 10 June 2024, the article remains as an outline draft.

May I make the plea for more contributors. *British Brick Society Information* exists to disseminate the work of the members of the society. In the past three years, the society has lost four regular contributors: Molly Beswick, Brian Murless, Michael Oliver, and Terence Paul Smith.

10. *Visits Coordinator's Report*

Since the Annual General Meeting in Bridport on Saturday 15 June 2023, two works visits have been held:

- The Dreadnought Brick & Tile Works of Hinton, Perry & Davenhill, on 18 July 2023
- W.T. Knowles & Sons Ltd, Elland, West Yorkshire on Wednesday 18 October 2023

The Visits Co-ordinator is extremely grateful to Mike Chapman for organising the brickworks visits.

Unfortunately, due to the severe indisposition of the Visits Co-ordinator, no town visits were been arranged for 2024. A projected visit to south Derbyshire in Spring 2025 to see the Moravian Settlement at Ockbrook and the buildings of the Willoughby family at Risley and the brick chapel added to the church at Church Wilne has been suggested.

A visit was confirmed to York Handmade Brick Company, Alne, North Yorkshire in September to see the results of their considerable investment in new plant and machinery which has transformed their manufacturing process.

When these minutes were being typed, the Visits Co-ordinator realised that further background research would be necessary for the South Derbyshire and this now postponed to Spring 2026.

11. *Report on Congresses and Conferences*

Since the AGM in 2023, Daid Kennett has been active in this area:

- 'Bricks, Baptisms, and Burials: Imported Materials in Medieval Churches in England' in May 2025 at ICMS at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo. The brick aspects of this are the principal subject of an article projected to be included in *BBS Information*, **158**, June 2025.
- Accommodation fit for a Monarch: The Brick Gatehouse at Layer Marney Tower in Context scheduled to delivered at the Leeds International Medieval Congress in July 2024.

Two non-brick topics were:

- 'Withstanding Rain, Fire, and Flood: St Mary the Virgin, Luton, Bedfordshire, in the Early Fourteenth Century' which examined the rebuilding of the only church in the vast parish of 15,435 acres (6,210 hectares) following the fall of the central tower of the church in 1336, closely followed by a town fire which destroyed 400 houses, of which 200 had not been rebuilt in 1340 when the taxman came calling,
- 'Own Resources or Purchased Materials: John, Lord Wenlock's Chapel at St Mary the Virgin, Luton, Bedfordshire, in the 1460s', which follows on from a similar presentation to the South-Eastern Medieval Association meeting in Decatur, a suburb of Atlanta, Georgia, in 2011. The charnel house beneath the chapel is of brick.

Both papers are for sessions on 'New Work on Church Art and Architecture' at the International Congress of Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA, in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

12. *Election of Officers*

The existing Officers having indicated their willingness to continue in post this proposal was put to the meeting. Proposed by Mike Kingman and seconded by Ken Redmore, and unanimously accepted by the meeting. The Chairman thanked the meeting for this but explained that whilst the Treasurer would stand for another year he wished to stand down at the next AGM.

Clearly the Society is in desperate need of members to help with the present situation being of great concern to the future existence of the British Brick Society.

It was later confirmed that offers of help had been very gratefully received, with discussions to take place during the rest of this year.

DHK, as Editor would publish a note in the next *BBS Information* entitled 'More Hands to the Pugmill' as a plea for more help in running the Society.

13. *Election of Auditor*

Adrian Corder-Birch having signified his willingness to serve for another year, it was proposed by Jim Beckett and seconded by Ann Los that he be reappointed and was unanimously accepted.

14. *Discussion on Holding future Annual General Meetings using Zoom*

The Chair led these discussions by saying that given the increasing costs incurred in holding a physical AGM, the technical difficulties and even greater costs of running a Hybrid meeting and the low turnout of members confirmed that holding future AGMs as physical meetings must be in doubt.

Only one ballot paper was received and that indicated support for Zoom, however, with a low attendance at the AGM it was very difficult to take an informed decision. Whilst the members present were in favour of Zoom meetings it was felt that more time should be taken to try and canvass opinion and take the decision.

The AGM for 2025 was in process of arrangement and would be a physical meeting. The format of the 2026 AGM must be decided at the 2025 AGM.

15. *Venue for Annual General Meeting in 2025.*

It was confirmed that the 2025 AGM will be held on Saturday 21st June 2025 in Colchester at the Roman Circus House.

The Chairman is very grateful to Adrian Corder-Birch for his help with this event.


16. *Any Other Business*


1. Mike Kingman introduced his new book *Brickmaking and Brick Building in the Midlands, 1437-1780*. Published by Brewin Books ISBN 978-1-85858-758-5
2. Ann Los had kindly brought along some copies of the International Brick Collectors' Association, IBCA, periodical for members to see.
3. Ballot papers for a venue for 2026 were distributed, with Crewe being the venue that gained the most first choice votes: 5 from the 10 papers received.


The meeting concluded at 12.45, with members meeting again for a guided tour of the centre of Kingston upon Hull.

**BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

<u>2021</u> £	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2022</u> £
26.84	Postage and miscellaneous expenses of Officers	184.36
1,821.77	Information, Notices, etc incl. Postage	2,884.79
0.00	AGM Costs	99.00
0.00	Miscellaneous inc visits	0.00
1,848.61	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,168.15
<u>INCOME</u>		
2,224.00	Subscriptions	3,112.00
12.56	Bank interest	0.40
0.00	Other income - Worcester visit donation	10.00
2,236.56	TOTAL INCOME	3,122.40
1,848.61	DEDUCT TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,168.15
387.95	SURPLUS/LOSS	-45.75
4,215.00	SURPLUS FROM EARLIER YEARS	4,602.95
4,602.95	TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	4,557.20
590.39	Current account balance 31.12.2022	544.24
4,012.56	Deposit account balance 31.12.2022	4,012.96
0.00	Unpresented cheques	0.00
4,602.95		4,557.20


Signed Hon Treasurer date


Signed Hon Auditor date
6th January 2023.


Signed Chairman 15th June 2024.
date

NOTES TO ACCOUNTS (GJP)

- 1 Loss for the year primarily because *Information* costs increased and 45 subs still coming in at pre-2022 rates which equates to £348 shortfall
- 2 Officers expenses are higher mainly due to covering 2 years due to the pandemic
- 3 The costs of producing *Information* and postage is ever increasing as advised to the Membership during 2022