MINUTES OF BRANCH MEETING HELD AT BERKSHIRE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE ON TUESDAY 21ST MARCH 2006

Members present: 21
Apologies: 10

1. Welcome

Ken West, Branch Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and to the college which facilitates the Institute COTS courses.

2. Last Minutes

The minutes of the branch meeting held at Imperial College, Charing Cross Campus, on 24th November 2005 were agreed.

3. New Members

Visiting member Pauline Pearce, Landscape Manager at North Somerset Council, was welcomed.

4. Presentation

Paul Sugden and Craig Thurlow from Data Find Services gave a most interesting and informative presentation on archiving, indexing and information retrieval with particular reference to business continuity. They demonstrated their system and took questions from the floor.

5. Up-date from National Office

Tim Morris advised the meeting on a number of important issues. Of particular interest was the shelving of Dame Shirley’s enquiry into the Shipman case (the Coroners Review is, however, proceeding); the Cremation Amendment Regulations; DCA workshops covering a number of different subjects since the Select Committee Enquiry; BCAG looking at memorial management via a sub-group with re-use very much a focus; conference arrangements; emergency planning; increase in COTS on-site and college based activities; procedures for cremating more than one body in a coffin (e.g. mother and child); radio-active implants and implications for crematoria.
6. Open Forum

(a) Steve Brown, together with other members, have received publicity literature from Bridge Insurance who are brokers for Stoneguard memorial insurance, asking if burial authorities may wish to consider becoming agents. Memorial insurance is strongly advised and Bridge are involved with the BRAMM scheme. Members felt it would be appropriate to invite Bridge Insurance to a future branch meeting and Steve will make arrangements.

(b) Expressions of interest are invited to host next year’s meetings, particularly non-crematorium venues. New members with fresh ideas are welcome to join the Steering Group.

7. Vote of Thanks

On behalf of the branch, Dave McCarthy thanked the COTS team, Stonesafe and Total Memorial Safety Ltd. for the morning’s demonstrations, Data Find for the presentation, Berkshire College for the facilities and Steve Brown for the arrangements.

8. Next Meeting

Garden of England Crematorium, Sittingbourne, on Saturday 10th June 2006. This will be an excellent opportunity to visit a facility which has been in operation for just three years.