

EXECUTIVE BOARD'S REPORT – 2009/10

Report for the year ending 2009 presented on behalf of the Executive Board of IBP by Gerald Bowey, CEO ibp Services.

In common with our sector IBP has had a mixture of good and bad news to deal with. Nevertheless in 2009 we continued to provide members with the key events that set IBP apart from other communications groups, celebrated our 40th Anniversary and set-up the first Futures Group.

One of the partnerships to suffer was with The All Party Parliamentary Built Environment Group with which we had planned to co-host another Housing debate in the light of the Bill being adopted (given Royal Assent early 2010) and the run-up to the next general election. With the dire state of the housing market and politicians of all shades running for cover, under the general excuse of being in purdah, this initiative fell by the wayside.

Last June's IBP Journalists v PR's cricket match, sponsored by restoration and stone specialists Szerelmey, produced another PR winning side, with team captains, Dave Rogers (Construction News, now running his own media company) and Andy Walker (in his last act before leaving ACE for the charity sector) giving their all - both in taking the field and shouting encouragement to their teams.

The Annual Summer Dinner held at the RAC was a truly International affair not only kicking-off the IBP 40th celebrations but also marking the CIOB's 175th Anniversary with their President Li Shirong delivering a keynote speech, to over 70 members, on the opportunities available from the continuing emerging markets in China.

Professor Li also presented the first of the 2009 crop of Awards – the Subscription and In-House Magazine of the Year - with the chairman of the judges Giles Barrie, editor of Property Week, providing his usual running commentary on the judge's final choices.

Commenting, Giles said: "We had a lively and invigorating final judging session in both categories and were most impressed with the variety on offer and the different approaches taken". In acknowledging the judges deliberations he particularly thanked architectural author and journalist Ruth Slavid, former editor of AJ Online, "for her forensic analysis of the entries".

Giles praised the Willmott Dixon and Costain entries – two polished publications, “the Judges relished the openness with which Willmott Dixon described some big corporate changes, while Costain clearly demonstrated communications flair in the packed issues of *Blueprint* submitted” he said.

Announcing Mott MacDonald’s *m2* the winner, in the In-House category, Giles commented: “This is a publication for its time, concise, colourful yet cost effective, with a lot of personality, information and projects and an overall warm feel to the presentation of the contents”.

In the Subscription category Giles announced a Highly Commended Award for *Construction Manager*, a former winner, “this magazine has improved again under the editorship of Elaine Knutt, with a marked stronger editorial voice on behalf of the membership of the CIOB” he said.

But the winner in this category was ‘A’ from RIBA North West. “We were truly wowed by this title. It looks and feels great – but does not limit itself to highly specialized or pretentious architectural fare” he said. Indeed the issue that impressed the judges the most was the issue that focused on the recession “far more enjoyable” he said “than the Le Corbusier issue – at the same time there was a great North West spirit flowing throughout” he concluded.

In July we held a unique concert of two parts to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the founding of IBP; starting at the spiritual home of journalism, St Bride’s Church Fleet Street, the magnificent choir took us through a programme of four decades of contemporary music and song. This was followed in The Press House by supper and live music with Clarence King and the Regents, fronted by Bob Kidby and including guest spots by Claer Barrett and Jack Russell. The whole evening was made possible because of the generous support of Bob Kidby and the sponsorship of Lovells, now Hogan Lovells.

Last October unfortunately saw another casualty of the credit crunch, after four seasons, the IBP Regional Journalism Awards were stood down because of lack of sponsorship support from the North West property sector. The IBP board will review the situation in 2010.

But October also saw a full turnout of all the judges sitting on the National Journalism Awards panels; some twenty four journalists and construction industry professionals came together for the final judging session, again hosted by The Building Centre in Store Street, to make their final selections. This follows the assessment of over three hundred articles and twenty magazines. A daunting task delivered with great care and professionalism by the judges.

To close the 40th Anniversary programme a capacity audience attended the IBP Annual National Journalism Awards in the Members' Dining Room at the House of Commons, preceded by a reception, supported by BDP, in the Strangers' Dining Room.

The individual categories, (with the exception of the Housing Journalist Award), continued to be well supported by sponsors with the evening event also being sponsored by Resolution Property. Entries in most categories remained high with a range of positive news and feature stories as well as analytical pieces on the credit crunch grabbing the headlines and the Awards – please see the Awards'09 Bulletin report on the IBP website homepage for full results.

We were most fortunate to have as our Guest Speaker Roy Greenslade, Media Analysis, Evening Standard and Professor of Journalism at City University London who gave us his 'take' on the battle between print and online news gathering and delivery to the reader (*a full transcript of Roy's speech can be viewed on the homepage*); while Peter Murray, Director of NLA, guided us through the Award categories with his usual insightful links.

Your executive board (please see full listing attached to the AGM papers) continues to oversee the events and 'new' initiatives that IBP takes forward on an annual basis – they should all be congratulated on the very positive way in which they work together and contribute to the meetings, often after putting in a full days work.

Having reached our 40th Anniversary the board has set-up a number of Futures Groups to look at the interests and needs of young journalists and communicators. In addition, with sponsors, we are looking at the development of the National Awards scheme and the online role provided by members in delivering the news. Claer Barrett, associate editor of Investors Chronicle has kindly agreed to chair the Young Futures Group and reported to the board in February 2010. By the time you read this report I hope you will already see positive additions to the IBP programme.

Of course the events mentioned above and other IBP initiatives are regularly reported and archived on the website for your further interest. Do take a look.

IBP will only prosper if we share the issues that interest us. Journalists need to engage and set the agenda with communications professionals both in-house and in consultancies; PR's need to talk to journalists before they target their news stories. How often have we heard the clarion call – know your media? Well use the IBP network to help build your relationship with journalists.

IBP has and can continue to contribute to the wider on-going debates constantly taking place in our sector, in this context I encourage you to get involved and to make a difference, we now have future groups that can help facilitate your input - please do not hesitate to contact me with your views and suggestions on: 020 7278 8262 or email me to: gerald@Geraldbowey.co.uk