

## Annual General Meeting – Thursday 19 June 2008

Southern's Annual General Meeting was the ideal opportunity for the Branch to welcome the recently appointed IHIE President, Tony Sharp, who came on two wheels from Bristol to Guildford – no mean feat – arriving in one piece, dry and with the inevitable appetite that motor cycling produces. On this aspect neither he nor the 16 delegates were disappointed.



The venue chosen for this year's event is the very popular Dapdune Wharf which is The National Trust Wey Navigation Visitor Centre. Though located in the heart of Guildford it represents a part of the more sedate pace that existed over a hundred years ago

Following the buffet, Branch Chairman, Alison Coffey, opened the meeting by asking Tony to make his 'maiden' Presidential speech. In thanking the Branch for the invitation, Tony said that it was his intention during his tenure as President to get out to Branches as much as he could as he recognised that the strength of the Institute was through its Branches and he congratulated Southern for being one of the more active in providing regular and educational events for its members. On a national picture, the Institute was holding steady with the loss of members due to retirement etc. being balanced out by recruitment. The Institute is more active now on 'national' matters supporting the Highways Excellence Awards and creating professional certification in various skills such as Traffic Signals, Development Control and Traffic Design Courses with more in the pipeline.



In addition to this, IHIE were also involved in various publications – Home Zones, Motor Cycle Guidelines to name a couple and, with the recent revamping of the web site the Institute is now better placed to provide a high level of member information and service.

In her report, Alison congratulated Sara Pegram on her election to Council and then highlighted the eight events that had been arranged over the past year that had attracted about 260 delegates including the recent successful Winchester Seminar. More events were being planned and it was hoped the forthcoming year would be as

busy though getting venues and speakers were an increasing challenge.

In closing Alison thanked the members and especially the Branch committee for their efforts in maintaining the good reputation of the Branch.

The Branch accounts revealed that, like any organisation, the Branch though solvent is challenged by increasing costs in the running of events and various methods of increasing revenue were discussed preferably without levying charges for events. At this time, the valuable assistance given by our sponsors, The Stilwell Partnership who continued to underwrite the costs involved in communicating with Branch members through the web-site and Newsletters.

On closing the meeting, delegates were able to tour the Visitor Centre and enjoy the exceptionally good weather that existed – fortunately for Tony Sharp!