



“Leave your Mark” was the theme of one of the NC2015 sessions encouraging Presidents and their Deputies to use their Presidential Year(s) to lead.



Colleagues from Belfast, Plymouth, Tunbridge Wells, Watford sharing a drink with Zoe and Richard

I’m home after a day in the office and I’m reflecting on an amazing Conference experience that I shared with Richard and Zoe. These are some impressions and I’m thrilled to say that Sussex were at the centre of discussions. In fact, better than that! We were commended by CEO Dr Sandy Scott in his opening remarks for the energy and vitality we have demonstrated in reenergising our Local Institute. So within the first 5 minutes Zoe, Richard and I were acknowledged by Conference and Sussex was described ‘the future’ – “The aspiration for other LIs”. That set the tone for the following two days. Engagement, Regeneration, Consolidation, Succession, Programme, Website, Diversity, Mentoring, Embracing PFS colleagues ... the list went on and on and other Presidents and Deputies were keen to talk to and learn from us. We are still on our journey but I’m in no doubt we are leading the field!

I will ask Richard and Zoe to give a more formal report to Council but, in addition to the sessions, I met Maree Hall, from Legal & Secretariat, and we discussed Richard working with her as we consider the possible benefits of becoming Incorporated. I was delighted to meet Victoria Rees-Price and share thoughts on how we can work with her and other LIs on marketing ourselves. We also met Christopher Digby (Tunbridge Wells) who is our Representative Council Member and very enthusiastic about Sussex. I’m thrilled that both Victoria and Christopher will be joining us at our augural Council meeting on 10th June.

The second day was an in depth study led by our friend Melissa Kidd aimed at bringing about change. Melissa was full of useful ideas and facilitated the morning session giving focus and encouraging ideas. I presented ‘our journey and plans’. Others are keen to learn from our experience and I will ask Rachel for permission to share her original report – or at least a summary – with those who expressed an interest. I was flattered to be asked to speak to Insurance Institute of Ireland later in the year. Many UK offices are registered and regulated in Ireland including Zurich. This made me wonder about Twinning. Perhaps with an Institute that has ideas and experiences that would enable us to help each other?



The other very live topic was the variety of Annual Dinner formats. Led by Sandy’s complimentary comments on our own and Aberdeen’s he encouraged Local Institutes to match their offering to the changing membership. Branko was a very strong advocate of introducing a more inclusive approach.

Colin has moved us from the format he inherited and Phil's innovation to have a 'round top table' along with Graham's entering to the melody 'Sussex by the Sea'. The introduction of our two tables of 2020 and Award Winners has added youth and energy. So what might we do in 2016 and 2017? (Sandy urged dropping speeches or limiting each to 90 seconds and to use the event to promote and network). So.... I'm looking forward to catching up Paula, our new Dinner Manager, Colin whose relationship with The Grand Hotel and experience is critical and Ros who has volunteered to support. Also bringing in Richard as he considers ideas for the 2017.



The Grand Hotel – Booked for January 29th. Target 200 guests. Very inclusive CII/PFS.

Here is my wish list for the 2016 Annual Dinner.

1. Dispense with the VIP Reception – How can we network if we isolate 40 guests? I will ask the Dinner team how we might have a President's Welcome Reception for all and serve Sussex Wine and Beer.
2. Dinner to be completed by 9 pm including three (short) speeches. Mine, the incoming CII National President, Robert Fletcher, Operations Director Lloyds Banking Group and Richard to promote the Insurance Charities.
3. Followed by two hours of music or entertainment keeping all our guests in the main room with the conservatory bar. Perhaps a Sussex live band? Close up Magicians?

Last week I shared that I love discovering people's pasts. Few of us were born to be in our profession but found it. One talent that the BBC and the nation missed out on was Colin! I've discovered that in his youth Colin presented on a Hospital Radio station in Liverpool and interviewed Shirley Bassey, Terry Wogan, Morecambe & Wise (and many more). So I am sure we will have a party!

My plans for next week

I've caught up with Mandi and I will add an article to hers this weekend to submit for Network News. Mandy will meet Victoria at the Council meeting next month to plan future submissions.

Richard and I are attending a Business Intelligence Breakfast at the AMEX Stadium on Tuesday as guests of Lara Squires. Lara has presented to our team on how we can make the most of Social Media. LinkedIn is the route most LIs have chosen. With Lara's and Victoria's help we hope to introduce our IIS group enabling members to engage. We will also be proactive and publicly acknowledge individual achievement.

I am meeting Susan on Wednesday in Worthing to plan the format and Agenda of the first Council meeting. Afterwards I will collect 'The Bell' and other items from NSure's office. Zurich's new UK CEO, Vibhu Sharma is visiting N&G shortly so our CII office display is sure to make a great talking point.

I will finalise our mailing to members announcing the change of name with Victoria and Susan

Work with Isabelle and Nigel on creating a website link to new photo albums of events. We also need to add new Council members with their photos to promote our changing face. A fresh new CII website will be with us soon and we volunteered to be a pilot. Please let Nigel have a photo if you are waiting to be included nigel.cheater@collinsongroup.com

Write to Award Winners with presentation photos.

I mentioned a couple of weeks ago that we have 'two Charlottes and a Diana'. With Victoria on the team we now have a Royal Flush! This is the last Bank Holiday for a while and the weather forecast is good. Have a lovely time.

Best wishes.



Mark Longford