

BRANCH LIAISON OFFICER

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## Officers' Newsletter 215

13 September 2022

Dear All

Welcome to Officers' Newsletter 215 with some important subjects that have deadline dates for providing the information requested – namely the Active Volunteer Recognition (AVR) returns and the Officers' Conference Attendance (and apologies) form. The final item is equally important and I hope you will consider it now rather than leaving it until it is too late to attend to.

### Active Volunteer Recognition

I hold my hand up to say sorry for not getting this out to you all sooner which would have allowed you more time to think about making branch and national officer nominations – my apologies and no excuses.

My delay means that it is really important to get your nominations in as soon as possible before the renewal process is completed, so this is a message for all branch committees to complete and send in their branch AVR nomination forms to me at [liaison@rcts.org.uk](mailto:liaison@rcts.org.uk) by 30 September 2022 at the latest. If you have any queries about making a branch nomination or if the deadline date may be a difficulty because of the shorter notice this year, please ask as we may be able to find a solution. The leaders of the various Governance Groups will be responsible for making nominations regarding the volunteers within their groups for presentation to the Trustees. Any queries about nominations for AVR, please ask.

The nomination form for AVR for the branches is attached as **Appendix 1**. Although the AVR Guidance Notes are included the Officers' Handbook on the RCTS website, part appeared to be missing when I checked, hence updating and attaching them to this newsletter as **Appendix 2**. A word version of the nomination form is available on request if this is more convenient for you.

### Officers' Conference 2022

As already advised, this is taking place on Sunday 23 October 2022 from 0900 to 12.15 at the Novotel Reading Centre, 25b Friar Street, Reading RG1 1DP. Timing is tight as the Officers' Conference (OC) needs to finish promptly to allow for those going on the afternoon visit to Fawley Hill. Please note that Conference is for ALL Society Officers and not just for Branch Officers. All Society Officers contribute to the running of the Society and we would like representation from all branches and all areas as far as possible.

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The information contained in this newsletter is for use of RCTS Officers and Members only and should not be communicated outside of the Society

## OC Agenda Items

The Agenda is already being drafted. However, if there are any subjects that you would like to see included on the agenda for discussion at Conference, please let me know as soon as possible so that they can be included if there is time. If there are subjects that cannot be included at Conference, but that people feel are important and that they would like to have discussed, then they will be carried over to next year's Regional Meetings if appropriate.

## OC Attendance Record

We ask Society Officers in advance whether or not they will be attending Conference and this year is no different. It helps in a number of ways - not least in having an idea of numbers in advance so that we can cater properly for everyone who will be there. It is also an easy way to give your apologies if you are unable to attend. The form to complete for branch officer attendance or apologies is attached to this newsletter as **Appendix 3**. A word version is available on request which can be completed and emailed back to me if that is more convenient.

The Officers' Conference is for all Society Officers, so those of you who are attending in their national capacity and not as a Branch Officer, I would be very grateful if you too would let me know whether or not you will be attending Conference. Please would you also indicate on the attendance return any member who is attending Conference for the very first time. You can send information by post, by email [liaison@rcts.org.uk](mailto:liaison@rcts.org.uk) or leave a telephone message – contact details at the top of the Newsletter. Any apologies should also be included on the Attendance Record whether hard copy, email or telephone message.

Any landline telephone or postal notifications will need to be with me by 09.00 on Wednesday 19 October 2022, although I should be able to access email after that date – dependent on WiFi at the hotel. My mobile telephone number for a late notification is 07913 584990.

## New Wills & Bequests Leaflet

This is something that the Society originally produced several years ago having taken legal advice at the time on the suggested wording for clauses to be included in your will. The rest of the leaflet needed updating, especially as there appeared to be two slightly different versions in circulation.

The leaflet has now been revised so it is time to publicise this to members and friends alike. Please share this with all your branch members and encourage anyone interested to consider the advice included in the leaflet. This is now available on the website using the link <https://rcts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/web/Wills-Bequests-Leaflet-V3.0-2022.pdf> and paper copies will be available as soon as they come back from the printers.

There is quite a lot of information in this Newsletter including three appendices, but I hope you appreciate the need to share these with you. Please share the information in this newsletter as appropriate and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Officers Conference in Reading.

Kind regards

Irene

## Appendix 1



### ACTIVE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION (AVR) NOMINATIONS

Branch/National Designated Budget

| Name | Membership Number | Position or Activity |
|------|-------------------|----------------------|
|      |                   |                      |
|      |                   |                      |

Approved By Branch Chairman or Relevant Society Budget Holder

Name.....Signature.....

Membership Number.....

Date.....

Please return the completed form to Irene Rabbitts, Branch Liaison Officer by 30 September 2022.

## Appendix 2

### AVR Guidance for Branches

#### Rationale & Objectives

- The Trustees are conscious of the major part played by volunteers in supporting the Society's operations and its dependency on them.
- To continue encouraging such member commitment, the proposals to reward significant levels of usually continuous volunteer effort with some sort of formal recognition have been agreed.

#### Award Criteria

- Eligibility derives from significant and continuous voluntary effort in support of formally designated Branch or National RCTS activity over periods of not less than 12 months.

#### Method of Recognition

- A membership category of "Active Volunteer" has been established.
- Eligible Volunteers would receive full Society membership at a substantially reduced rate during the year that they have been nominated for.

#### Consideration for AVR

Volunteers, both at National and Branch levels, who make a significant continuing contribution to the Society's day to day operations over the whole of the Society's financial year.

- **National Level**  
Occupants of designated "National Officer" roles will be nominated by the national budget holder and formally endorsed on an annual basis by the Trustees. Determination of eligibility would be the responsibility of the appropriate budget holder.
- **Branch Level**  
Up to two Branch members (**they do not have to be branch committee members**) who fulfil the criteria of a significant on-going and continuing contribution would be eligible. The candidate(s) would be proposed and endorsed by the Branch Committee, appropriately minuted, and submitted through the Branch Liaison Officer.

#### AVR Award Process

- A list of proposed AVR recipients will be compiled annually based on National and Branch recommendations.
- Candidates' eligibility would be evaluated by the Trustees and decisions made as to those to be awarded AVR prior to the start of the annual subscription renewal cycle.
- Volunteers who are successfully awarded AVR status would then enjoy the reduced AVR subscription rate for the following year.

#### AVR Subscription Rate

- The Society offers more than one subscription rate – *i.e. printed RO, Digital RO, Direct Debit*, however, the AVR rate will be the same regardless of the individual member's pre-existing subscription type.

- The AVR subscription has been set at the reduced rate of £5.00 per year. The AVR rate will not be subject to the annual subscription review process, but will be reviewed at five yearly intervals.

#### **Funding the AVR Subscription Rate**

- Funding of AVR roles will be the responsibility of the Trustees and will be allocated against the appropriate designated budgets, ie Railway Observer, Publications, Archive/Library, Membership, Finance, Trustees. Please note – Branches will **NOT** be expected to fund their accepted nominees.

#### **Nominations**

- All branch nominations for AVR must be with the Branch Liaison Officer on the attached form (Appendix 1) by 30 of September otherwise nominees will be sent the normal annual renewal letter in October.
- Any names received after the 30 September 2022 will not be considered as this would mean an unacceptable additional workload for the Membership Renewals Team.

For those who may be eligible at National level, please ask your respective budget holder if you have any queries about your eligibility. At Branch level, if you have any queries about who may or may not be eligible, please contact the Branch Liaison Officer and ask.

Appendix 3



## OFFICERS' CONFERENCE READING 2022

### Branch/National Officer Attendance at Officers' Conference

#### BRANCH LIAISON OFFICER

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The Branch/Officers' attendance record should be completed and passed to the Branch Liaison Officer in advance or at the conference including apologies for those unable to attend.

Please note that apologies must be tendered prior to the Officers' Conference by **NOON on Wednesday 19 October 2022** as I will not have access to my home telephone number after that time, it will be too late to attend to postal responses, and access to e-mails may be intermittent. You may leave messages on my mobile 07913 584990 in the event of a late change of plan.

Please indicate any member who is attending Conference for the very first time.

**BRANCH**.....

| OFFICERS ATTENDING | First Time at the OC- ✓ | APOLOGIES |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
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