

The Bassil Shippam Centre Tozer Way, St Pancras, Chichester, PO19 7LG



www.rcts.org.uk

Email: chichester@rcts.org.uk



The Monthly Newsletter of RCTS Chichester Branch.

Editor: Ian McKey

Distributor: **Roger Sandford**

Additional Proof Readers: Geoff Adams, Geoff May

& John Barrowdale

Front Cover by Ian McKey © Keeping to the Straight & Narrow!!

Contributors: John Barrowdale, Richard Hance, Geoff May, Ian McKey, Roger Sandford, Joe Whicher

What's on for the Railway Enthusiast in August

Railway Name	Website	Contact Email	Contact Phone
Bluebell Railway	Bluebell Railway Web site	Bluebell E-Mail Contact	01825 720800
Isle of Wight Railway	IOW-SR Website	IOW Steam Railway Email	01983 882204
Kent & East Sussex	K&ESR Website	enquiries@kesr.org.uk	01580 765155
Watercress Railway	Watercress Website	info@watercressline.co.uk	01962 733810
Amberley Museum	Amberley Museum	office@amberleymuseum.co.uk	01798 831370
Hayling Light Rail-	HLRT Website	haylinglightrailway@yahoo.com	07902 446340
Littlehampton Minia-	LMR Website		01903 719876
South Downs Light Railway	South Downs Light Railway	info@south-downs-railway.com	07518 753784
Stansted Park Light Railway	Stansted Park Light Railway	help@sp-lr.co.uk	02392 413 324



RCTS Chichester Meeting Wednesday 17th December 2025

Chichester Branch AGM will be convened at our December meeting.

Following the official business we will be holding a members photo event. If you would like to be considered for a short presentation or require further information please contact us by email chichester@rcts.org.uk with brief details of what you would propose to show to our audience.

All emails will be acknowledged.



What's on for the Railway Enthusiast in August

Railway	Start Date	End Date	Event
Stansted Park Light Railway	01/03/2025	29/10/2025	Running on Wednesday's and Saturday's
Hayling Light Railway Trust	01/04/2025	30/09/2025	Summer Timetable - (See website for details)
Littlehampton Miniature Railway	05/04/2025	02/11/2025	Summer Timetable - (See website for details.)
Bluebell Railway	25/04/2025	15/11/2025	Fish and Chips Supper Trains - Various dates - See website
Bluebell Railway	25/04/2025	25/10/2025	Wealden Rambler Afternoon Tea - Various Dates - See Website
Bluebell Railway	27/04/2025	16/11/2025	Golden Arrow Luncheon 2025 - Various Dates - See Website
Bluebell Railway	03/05/2025	01/11/2025	Bluebell Railway Yard Visits - Various Dates - See website
Bluebell Railway	23/05/2025	07/11/2025	Pie and Mash Supper Trains - 23/5 and 7/11 only
Isle of Wight Railway	01/07/2025	19/08/2025	Fish & Chip Evenings (Tuesdays Only!)
Kent & East Sussex Railway	23/07/2025	30/08/2025	Early Service - Summer Explorer 2025 - See K&ESR Website for details
Bluebell Railway	25/07/2025	05/12/2025	Murder Mystery at The Bluebell Railway
Amberley Museum	01/08/2025	31/08/2025	Rail 200 linked activities - See Website for details
Bluebell Railway	01/08/2025		Rail Ale
Bluebell Railway	02/08/2025		Golden Arrow Cheese and Wine
Bluebell Railway	02/08/2025	03/08/2025	Bluebell Food Festival & Crafts!
Bluebell Railway	02/08/2025	03/08/2025	Unicorns at Kingscote
Kent & East Sussex Railway	03/08/2025		Junior Engineering Experiences
Watercress Railway	05/08/2025	10/08/2025	Day out with Thomas
Bluebell Railway	08/08/2025	10/08/2025	Bluebell Railway 65th Anniversary
Bluebell Railway	09/08/2025		An Evening with Elvis: Tribute Night at Sheffield Park
Kent & East Sussex Railway	10/08/2025		Bus Rally at Tenterden Town Station
Bluebell Railway	16/08/2025	17/08/2025	Bluebell Railway Music Festival
Watercress Railway	16/08/2025	01/11/2025	RAT (Real Ale Trains) - Various dates - See Website
Watercress Railway	16/08/2025	25/10/2025	The Watercress Belle - Fine Dining Train - Various Dates: See Website
Kent & East Sussex Railway	19/08/2025	19/08/2025	Train Time - Creative Play for Children aged 5 and under
Bluebell Railway	19/08/2025	21/08/2025	Dinosaurs at the Railway
Watercress Railway	22/08/2025	24/08/2025	Bluey & Bingo Meet and Greet returns!
Isle of Wight Railway	22/08/2025	25/08/2025	Island Steam Fair
Bluebell Railway	23/08/2025		Toy & Rail Fair
Bluebell Railway	23/08/2025		Sunset Observation Rides on the Golden Arrow
Watercress Railway	27/08/2025		Afternoon Tea
Bluebell Railway	30/08/2025	31/08/2025	Baby Dino Days
Watercress Railway	30/08/2025	01/11/2025	Murder Mystery Evenings - Various Dates - See website
Kent & East Sussex Railway	30/08/2025		The Model Railway Exhibition
Watercress Railway	31/08/2025	02/11/2025	The Royal Wessex Fine Dining Sunday Lunch - Various dates: See Website



Southern & Local Engineering Works - August 2025



Some Engineering works likely to affect journeys in our area.

Start Date	End Date	
4/8/2025	7/8/2025	 Engineering work is taking place between Brighton and Worthing, closing all lines. After 23:30 each night, buses will replace trains between Brighton and Worthing / West Worthing. Trains that normally run between London Victoria and Worthing will be diverted to terminate at Brighton instead of Worthing. Additionally: The 22:20 Southampton Central to Brighton train will not call at Southwick or Portslade. A replacement bus will run from Worthing to Brighton, calling at these stations The 22:52 Portsmouth Harbour to Brighton train will terminate at Littlehampton. A replacement bus will run from Littlehampton to
		Brighton, departing at 23:53 and calling at all stations Check before you travel:
10/8/2025		Engineering work is taking place between Three Bridges and Horsham, closing all lines. Buses will replace trains between Three Bridges and Horsham / Billingshurst. Trains between London Victoria and Bognor Regis will run between Billingshurst and Bognor Regis. Trains between London Victoria and Portsmouth Harbour will run to an amended timetable with extended journey times, and will be diverted via Hove. Some trains on the London Victoria - Littlehampton / Portsmouth Harbour / Ore route will call additionally at Three Bridges to provide bus connections.
10/8/2025		Engineering work is taking place between Southampton Central and St Denys, closing all lines on Sunday morning. As a result, the 07:30 Southampton Central to Brighton service will be amended to start from St Denys at 07:34. A replacement bus will run from Southampton Central at 07:17 (earlier than usual) and run to Woolston, connecting with the train there.

For the latest updates on Engineering work please follow the link below :-Planned Changes to Train Times | Southern Railway



Southern & Local Engineering Works - August 2025



Some Engineering works likely to affect journeys in our area.

Start Date	End Date	
11/8/2025	15/8/2025	Engineering work is taking place between Three Bridges and Horsham, closing all lines.
		Buses will replace trains between Three Bridges and Horsham / Billingshurst.
		Trains between London Victoria and Bognor Regis will run between Billingshurst and Bognor Regis.
		Trains between London Victoria and Portsmouth Harbour will run to an amended timetable with extended journey times, and will be diverted via Hove.
		Some trains on the London Victoria - Littlehampton / Portsmouth Harbour / Ore route will call additionally at Three Bridges to provide bus connections.
16/8/2025	17/8/2025	Engineering work is taking place in the Barnham / Worthing area, closing all lines.
		Saturday:
		The 22:35 London Victoria to Chichester train will terminate a Barnham. A replacement bus will run from Barnham to Chichester.
		The 23:16 London Victoria to Chichester train will terminate at Worthing. A replacement bus will run from Worthing to Chichester.
		Sunday:
		Before approximately 07:45 on Sunday morning, buses will replace trains between:
		Littlehampton and Barnham
		Angmering and Barnham via Littlehampton
		Trains will run to an amended timetable between Brighton and Angmering and between Barnham / Bognor Regis and Portsmouth Harbour / Southampton Central
24/8/2025		Engineering work is taking place between Three Bridges and Horsham, closing all lines.
		Buses will replace trains between Three Bridges and Horsham.
		Trains will run between Horsham and Bognor Regis.
		Trains between London Victoria and Portsmouth Harbour will run to an amended timetable with extended journey times, and will be diverted via Hove. These trains will be joined to and form part of Littlehampton trains between London Victoria and Worthing.
		Littlehampton / Portsmouth Harbour and Ore route trains will both call additionally at Three Bridges to provide bus connections. Journey times will be increased when using replacement buses.
		Journey unles will be increased when using replacement buses.





Southern & Local Engineering Works - August 2025



Some Engineering works likely to affect journeys in our area.

25/82025	29/8/2025	Engineering work is taking place overnight between Ford and Bognor Regis / Chichester, closing some lines.
		At the end of service on Monday to Thursday evenings, trains to / from Barnham / Bognor Regis / Chichester will run to an amended timetable. Some trains will be diverted to Littlehampton. Replacement buses will run between Littlehampton and Barnham / Chichester and between Barnham and Bognor Regis / Chichester.
		At the start of service on Wednesday to Friday mornings, the 04:55 Chichester to Brighton train will start from Barnham. A replacement bus will depart earlier from Chichester to connect with the train. Journey times will be increased when using replacement buses

May's Miscellany: by Geoff May ©



Stanier Class 4MT 2-6-4T 42455 on E.C.S. duties at Manchester Central on 17th August 1965. The station closed in May 1969 but the trainshed survives today as the G-MEX Conference Centre. 42455 was withdrawn from Trafford Park in April 1966.

RCTS THE RAILWAY CORRESPONDENCE AND TRAVEL SOCIETY

RCTS Chichester Branch Newsletter August 2025

41 Years of Mid Hants Railway Footplate Crew by John Barrowdale © Part 8

The noughties were a good period for me as a fireman and my regular driver, then Nigel Stinchcombe in the early years, often let me oil up the loco under his guidance, and gave me tips on various things he did on prepping a locomotive for the day with a view that I would undergo driver training one day. He was not the only driver that took a keen interest in my progression and I regularly drove a light engine back to the shed at the end of the day and sometimes at the start of the day including buffering up to a train. The best driving came when I was let loose to drive a whole train under the driver's supervision and I probably drove every single engine we ever had permanently on the railway, including long term engines we had on loan.

I did loco driving on light engines as well when still a much-improved trainee fireman. I was well aware that, unlike a car where you might have 3 to 4 passengers with you, as an engine driver you may have a couple of hundred in the carriages behind you, all depending on your decisions. Buffering up to a train was not that easy and really needed concentration, especially if the loco was to be used going in reverse and had a long boiler between you and the coaches. The tendency was to go very slowly towards the coaches, with hand over the brake handle which inevitably caused you sometimes to stop short, maybe more than once. You then had to open the regulator quickly to send steam through the system and immediately shut it again so that you did not clout the coaches hard. It was always a relief to me when I heard a light clonk as the buffers connected.

In 2007 I reached seniority to start driver training together with another fireman. However, being well aware of the limited sight in my left eye after my detached retina operation in 1999 I said to Bob Deeth the Loco superintendent was that wise? (now sounding like sergeant Wilson from Dad's Army). What I did not want the MHR to do was to expend much time in training and wasting money with my training, only to be failed by a medical which all our drivers undertook occasionally. Bob's way out was the suggestion to send me and the other fireman for a medical in advance as the other fireman was aware he may suffer from colour blindness. I said to Bob "don't waste money with a medical". I knew I would not be passed as only you yourself really know how much you can see so it did not go ahead for me. The other chap was failed for driving as he was colour blind, however both of us continued as fireman albeit the other fireman decided shortly afterwards not to volunteer anymore and left his paid job in the carriage department.

During the period 2010/11 there were an increasing number of accidents across the UK on heritage railways concerning volunteers and resulting in a couple of deaths, one being either a guard or shunter being crushed to death on the NYMR. This frightened several heritage railways with the MHR going through all the self-certificated medical forms to see if there were any dangers. My left eye came up for consideration and as a result Richad Bentley, then a recently promoted loco inspector came over to me when we were in platform 2 at Ropley Station waiting for a down train to pass ours in the spring of 2011. He was very apologetic but said I would have to revert to 3rd man status just in case there was an accident concerning a locomotive hauling a passenger train I was on and the RAIB were called in to investigate. He also said I was blocking progress for others who would go on to be drivers, which really was not true in my opinion as there were 28 set crews. The good news was that I would retain my fireman status for footplate experiences (FE) as there were no paying passengers and the fact, I had lots of excellent



41 Years of Mid Hants Railway Footplate Crew by John Barrowdale ©

Part 8 Continued.

feedback to the management from FE customers. I could also fire any goods trains, but that never came to pass. I did fire a one coach train all day with our Black Five No 45379 to reward people who had given over £500 in donations to restore it, as they were not paying for the privilege which included footplate rides for them. However, I was saddened by this turn of events especially as trainee fireman were going to do more paperwork during their training in future which I would have encouraged having managed staff in HMIT and later being part of IR Training team. At least I did not waste hours learning how to drive and take written and physical tests between 2007 and 2011, which would have been even more depressing. At first, I was added to crews where the fireman was undergoing driver training so that the driver could concentrate on the fireman driving rather than worry about the boiler management. This made a lot of sense, but about 2013 I started just going with crews where the fireman was not learning to drive which was also disappointing.

When we are waiting at stations, we often invite people onto the footplate especially young children, particularly if they have a yummy mummy accompanying them, or we chat to visitors over the side of the cab or sometimes they grab your attention when coupling up or changing the route discs from the smokebox to the tender & vice versa. I always felt this was a good way of enticing them to revisit or hoping they would tell their friends what a fabulous day they had increasing more visitors in due course. Their comments and questions range from sensible, crazy, interesting, and amazing to really weird questions which I will tell you about in part 9.

Watercress Line - Diesel Gala 11th July 2025



D1015 Western Champion is seen arriving at Ropley. © Ian McKey

Built in 1963, D1015 was initially given a trial "Golden Ochre" livery but was later repainted in Maroon followed by British Rail Blue, Yellow warning panels were subsequently added.

In 1965 D1015 hauled the return working of Sir Winston Churchill's funereal train. D1015 was withdrawn in 1976 following derailment damage, after completing nearly 1.3 million miles



The National Transport Trust - No.15

A series of monthly items provided by Joe Whicher ©

1841 BATH SPA STATION

Built in 1841 and listed Grade II*, the station is the principal focal point of a string of distinguished railway work by Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Brunel, in bringing his Great Western Railway through the famous Roman and Georgian city of Bath, had to pay special attention to its architectural character and the possible effect on its setting. Characteristically for a man of his generation, he believed in using a variety of architectural styles according to the context and the client's wishes: so at Bath the great viaduct is in a castellated gothic style; the now-rebuilt 'Skew Bridge' over the Avon is gothic; the bridges next to Sydney Gardens are in a simple classical style, and the station itself is modelled on an Elizabethan country house in a two storey Jacobean style stone structure. When it first opened, the station boasted a magnificent hammer



beam roof that spanned the area between the platforms. This architectural marvel was similar to the one still present at Bristol Temple Meads. However, in 1897, during a station remodelling, the roof was removed to accommodate longer platforms.

Originally named simply "Bath" until 1949, the station was renamed to "Bath Spa" to distinguish it from another station called "Bath Green Park," better known as the northern terminus of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway from the South Coast.

Bath Spa station is an asymmetrical Tudor-style building with curving gables and it's design is a testament to Brunel's creativity, blending architectural elements harmoniously. It stands on the north bank of the River Avon, where the railway line gracefully curves across from the southern bank to the station and back again.

Adjacent to the station, a three-track goods shed was constructed In 1877, to handle freight traffic but during the 1897 remodelling a new goods depot was established about 500 meters west of the station at Westmoreland, leading to the demolition of the original goods shed.

A footbridge connects the station to the Widcombe area of the city, allowing direct access across the River Avon. The original wooden bridge, known locally as the Halfpenny Bridge, tragically collapsed in 1877, resulting in several fatalities. The current steel girder bridge replaced it later that same year.





RAILWAYS in MINATURE "A HISTORY OF THE N GAUGE SOCIETY"

By Richard Hance

Do you remember your first model railway, perhaps called a train set?



My guess is that interest in all thing's railways started in our early years with a Hornby Dublo Electric train set or even a Hornby clockwork train given to us as a Christmas present, only to be taken over by our father and grandfather!

Interest in model railways continues to this day, to attract both young and not so young since the early days of the Hornby Train sets.

Today the "N Gauge Society" is at the forefront of "N Gauge" model railways with a membership of just under 5,000.

It is certainly not the domain of grumpy old men, the Society has talented lady members who contribute in many areas, not just making the "tea and cakes", including building layouts and model making.

The society was founded in 1967 by a small group of N Gauge modellers in West Yorkshire with the support of the late Sydney Pritchard, the founder of Peco; the manufacturer, to this day, of track, a comprehensive range of wagons and buildings all in "N Gauge".



From this early beginning fifty-eight years ago the Society, together with N Gauge model railways, has grown to what it is today.

RAILWAYS IN MINATURE "A HISTORY OF THE N GAUGE SOCIETY"

By Richard Hance - Continued



Peco in 1969 produced an N Gauge rule which set the standard for N Gauge and introduced their Jubilee 4-6-0 locomotive made by Rivarossi.



"Courtesy Hampshire Models"

In 1970 the society published, for the first time, the forerunner of today's "N Gauge Journal", the "N GAUGE GAZETTE". In the same year, Graham Farish started production of their N Gauge range with 1.48 scale open wagons and vans.

By 1972 N Gauge model railways had become firmly established with an increasing number of enthusiasts which saw the Society growing in membership.

In 1974 the Society's magazine "N Gauge News" was produced as a glossy A4 sized booklet that was on sale to the public in a number of newsagents. However, this was not a success and in 1975 it was withdrawn from general sale.

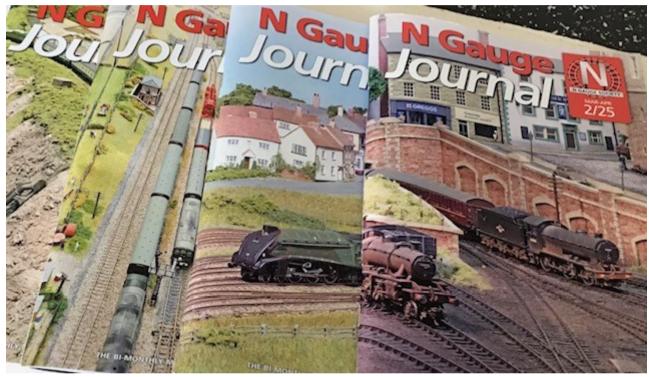


DAII WAYS IN MINATURE "A HISTORY OF THE N GAUGE SOCIETY"

By Richard Hance - Continued

In 1977 the "N Gauge Journal", which continues to this day; was published, to society members, six times a year in full colour; with up-to-date news of all that is N Gauge.

In addition to the journal the Society produces a handbook, first published in 1995 and which is regularly updated with all you need to know, or almost, about N Gauge Railways together with helpful guidance on building a layout.

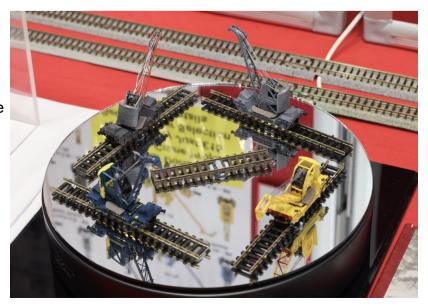


N Gauge Journals Courtesy R Hance

For a short while the Society had been known as N Scale International; at the 1997 AGM the name reverted to the "N Gauge Society".

In 1979 the Society commissioned its first specially branded ready to run wagon manufactured by Peco. This private owner wagon was the forerunner of a number of models, and kits, to be produced for the Society. The latest, currently in production, is a model of a "Cowans Sheldon Crane". This will be available to society members later this year in various liveries.

Right: Cowans Crane Courtesy N Gauge Society





RAILWAYS IN MINATURE "A HISTORY OF THE N GAUGE SOCIETY"

By Richard Hance - Continued

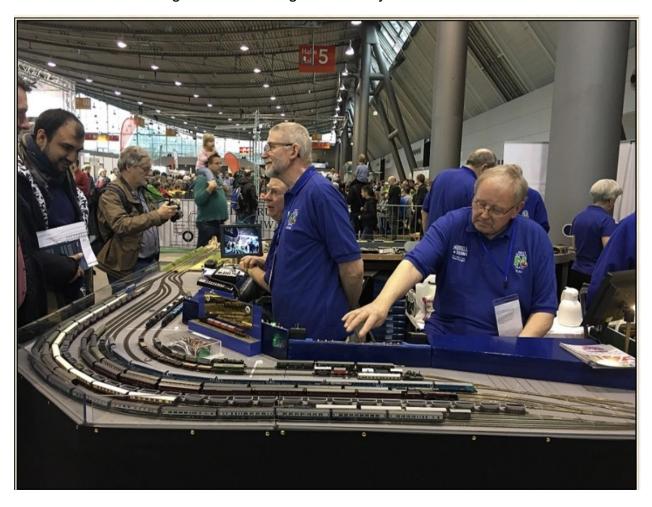
Today the Society has expanded with a whole range of products and accessories that are available to members from the Society's on-line shop which is run by a team of volunteers.

The Society has, over the years, held a number of very successful exhibitions. In 1988 a 21st anniversary exhibition was held in Harrow, now in Greater London, in conjunction with the 2mm Scale Association. It was the first for an exclusive national small scale model railway show.

This was followed by a 30th anniversary exhibition in Bletchley in 1997, a 35th anniversary show in Milton Keynes, a 40th in Kettering and a "Celebration of N Gauge Modelling" at the York Railway Museum in 2023.

To celebrate the Society's Diamond Jubilee in 2027 a big celebration is being planned to be held in Derby.

Today the Society has a network of Area Groups who hold local exhibitions across the UK and support national shows in London, York, Glasgow and an annual "N Gauge Show" at the Warwickshire Event Centre every September. It has also been represented by area groups at the annual International N Gauge Show in Stuttgart Germany.



Stuttgart Exhibition
Courtesy West Sussex N Gauge Group



RAILWAYS IN MINATURE "A HISTORY OF THE N GAUGE SOCIETY"

By Richard Hance - Continued

The N Gauge Society today is a non-profit organisation run and managed entirely by volunteers for the benefit of its members and exclusively supports the hobby of railway modelling in "N GAUGE"

Members are able to exchange experiences via the Journal and by today's electronic means together with a network of 45 Area Groups, this includes groups as far away as Australia; meeting in club rooms, village halls, Scout huts, in homes and on line.

In the south there are area groups in; Horsham, Isle of Wight and Sompting where you are sure of a warm welcome.

In conclusion our hobby would not continue without the support of many manufacturers both in the UK and worldwide, who today produce models, with ever increasing detail, of the trains we see on our railways across the country today.



Virgin Train Courtesy Bachmann Times



RCTS Chichester Branch Meetings 2025/6 Season





Illustrated talks on a range of railway related subjects

Everybody Welcome

Dates and Times Overleaf



with the Charities Commission. Registered number 1169995

Wednesday 24th September 19:15 1125 & DEMU's over the Alps (Watercress Line) Richard Bentley

Wednesday 22nd October 19:15 The Didcot, Newbury & Southampton Railway Richard Coghlan

Wednesday 26th November 19:15 Rail Freight Trains around the UK - Steve Bigley

Wednesday 17th December 19:15 AGM plus Local Heroes - Members Photos

Thursday 15th January 14:00 Level Crossing Management - Nick Solti Afternoon Meeting

Wednesday 28th January 19:15
Railways Remembered: Lake District and
North Lancashire - Charles Roberts
ZOOM MEETING ONLY - See Below

Thursday 19th February 14:00 Lance King in Ulster 1957-1970, The Northern Counties Committee - Leslie McAllister Afternoon Meeting

Wednesday 25th February 19:15 Stratford Upon Avon to Cheltenham 1904-1979 Tony Bowles

ZOOM MEETING ONLY - See below

Wednesday 25th March 19:15 Chasing Steam in Western Europe 1970-1974 John Barrowdale

Wednesday 22nd April 19:15 Lines to Midhurst, via Petworth, Petersfield and Chichester - Bill Gage Wednesday 27th May 19:15

Signalling Topics - Peter Gibbons

Zoom meeting tickets at £3 must be purchased in advance at www.rcts.org.uk/branches/branch-chr-chichester

No advance booking required at Bassil Shippam Centre Meetings Suggested small donation on the door - Guests £4, Members £3 Interval Refreshments - Meeting duration 2.5 hours approx.

> www.facebook.com/chichesterrailrcts E-mail chichester@rcts.org.uk

We Look Forward to seeing you

NB: The title of the ZOOM meeting on 25th February 2026 has changed from that shown in last months edition!