

OFFICERS' NEWSLETTER 121

BRANCH LIAISON SECRETARY

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Chichester Branch – Publicity Summary

The year 2015 was a turbulent time for the branch; both the chairman and secretary leaving to form a new society in almost direct competition to RCTS.

A new committee was formed, the task to bring stability to the branch and move forward with enthusiasm to increase both attendance at meetings and membership.

Publicity was seen as the key to broadening the message to the local community of our existence and what we are all about. Whilst RCTS provide good publicity on a national basis, including notice of branch meetings in magazines etc. we believed local advertising was the key to our expansion and success.

We immediately decided the area covered by publicity should not encroach on neighbouring RCTS branches and therefore we confine our local advertising to West Sussex, and the borders of Hampshire and Surrey, including the Portsmouth area. Travelling time to and from the venue in central Chichester is also a consideration, the longer the distance the less attractive attendance becomes.

Cost are a significant consideration, even small advertisements in local papers consume a vast amount of money over a period of time and it was felt the potential payback from this did not justify the outlay. The target cost had to be as close a zero as possible.

Committee members using their own resources carry out most leaflet production and distribution.

After much thought, debate and research it was decided to focus on the following activities: --

- 1. Produce A5 size flyers listing a complete season's meeting dates and presentations.**
- 2. Produce quality finish trifold leaflets containing more comprehensive details of RCTS branch events.**

3. Submit meetings to RCTS centrally for inclusion in specialist national magazines
4. Submit meeting details to local newspapers listings pages. (A free service to the community)
5. Submit meeting details to local free letter box distribution monthly magazines for inclusion in “what’s on” sections. (a free service to the community)
6. Submit meeting details to on line only events sites for inclusion in their calendar. (only if service provided is free)
7. Circulate to all libraries in our catchment area copies A5 seasons meeting leaflet for file and display.
8. Circulate to all Tourist Information Offices in our catchment area copies A5 seasons meeting leaflet for file and display.
9. Circulate to all model railway shops within our catchment area A5 seasons meeting leaflet.
10. Contact secretaries of model railway clubs within our catchment area detailing our activities.
11. Contact secretaries of other societies and organisations within our catchment area detailing our activities.
12. Attend model railway and other transport related exhibitions / open days within out catchment area supplying A5 seasons meeting leaflets for attendees.
13. Provide our meeting attendees with a laminated credit card size list of all current seasons meeting dates and topics.
14. Set up and maintain a RCTS Chichester local Facebook page. Considering Twitter
15. Target specific people / groups where a particular meetings topic may appeal to a wider audience.
16. Encourage attendees to bring a friend with them and tell other people of our activities.
17. <http://www.wherecanwego.com/> Another online events guide site added to the list. Just select Chichester and then a date range that includes 26 April.

We have been greatly encouraged by the results of our efforts in promoting the RCTS Chichester branch. Recent meetings have seen our current room at County Hall in Chichester almost full to capacity. We are fortunate to have a larger room to call upon should numbers continue to rise.

We have proved to ourselves advertising does indeed work and make a point of asking new attendees of where they heard about us, enabling us to target more strongly in the most productive areas.

From a low point in September 2015, we have all but doubled the number of regular attendees. Advertising has strongly contributed to this together with good teamwork and the friendly atmosphere prevailing at Chichester.

We are constantly updating our profile and looking at improving our image and the attendees and member’s experience.

Roger Sandford
On behalf of
Chichester RCTS Branch

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