

BRANCH LIAISON SECRETARY

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Officers' Newsletter 150 - Society Archive - Update

It has been some time since you all had a formal update on the matter of the RCTS leasing Leatherhead Stationmaster's house (at the Officers' Conference), so I will describe the current situation. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to your branch members.

An initial version of the business case for proceeding with the leasing of Leatherhead Stationmaster's House was produced in May 2016 by Andy Davies and Bob Green, but the Management Committee (MC) were reluctant to approve it at that stage, due to the amount of expenditure that was included.

On 9th February 2017 the MC paid a visit to the Leatherhead premises in order to view the completed refurbishment work on the building interior. It was considered that the building work was of excellent quality. This also showed that certain costs included in the original business plan were unnecessary (For example £4500 for floor coverings).

At the June MC meeting I was appointed "Chief Archivist" and then circulated my request for volunteers to assist with running the archive. A sufficient number of people responded to this request to give the MC confidence that we would be able to run an archive at Leatherhead.

In September 2017 TPT (the leasing company acting for Southern Railway) were contacted by our Chairman to introduce himself and advise TPT of changes to the project team. The discussion also established that TPT/Southern were happy to give the RCTS the option of a break to the lease at the 6 year point of the 12 year lease, something considered necessary in case the leasing costs were found to be beyond our means.

A final business case was prepared by the Society Treasurer and presented to the MC at the September 2017 MC meeting. The meeting then formally agreed that the Society proceed with signing of the Leatherhead lease. Southern's solicitors were informed and an 'Early Access Letter' was provided prior to the signing of the lease.

Network Rail has now become involved resulting in some changes to the original terms of the lease. It is very likely that the amendments have come about due to the time lag since the original terms were agreed and the inclusion of a break clause as sought by ourselves.

Signing the amended document, as currently tabled, carries some risk and our solicitors have contacted Network Rail's solicitors requesting clarification and amendment of the terms of the lease.

We are currently awaiting a response from the solicitors.

Andy Davies
31st January 2018.

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1 of 1