

BRANCH LIAISON SECRETARY

Irene Rabbitts, 34 Victory Park Road, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 2AZ

Telephone: 01932 855015

e-mail: liaison@rcts.org.uk

Officers' Newsletter 174

30 April 2019

2019 Regional Meetings Update and Agenda

Dear All

All the Regional Meetings have now been confirmed as you will see from the table below with one or two changes from last year - most notably the change of venue for the Great Western meeting where new arrangements will be advised accordingly. Please will all regional secretaries/chairmen ensure that details of the arrangements for the day are circulated to the branches in their region in good time before the meeting if you have not already done so. I have no doubt there will be engineering work somewhere on the network so the usual care is advised when checking train times for attending meetings – you know your area best. If you are already aware in advance of the meeting who is likely to attend, please let me know as this would be really helpful.

The agenda and associated notes are attached as Appendix 1 to this newsletter. Please read the notes as they give more information on some of the agenda items.

We nearly managed 100% branch representation last year so it would be good to achieve it this year. Regional Meetings are a good opportunity to network, exchange experiences – good and bad, with other branches and meet with an MC representative, without having to travel what might be a considerable distance for some to attend a Society AGM or Officers' Conference.

2019 Minutes

Minutes should be printed in Arial 11 point font and sent as an attachment to an e-mail to liaison@rcts.org.uk which will make the Branch Liaison Secretary's task of compiling five sets of minutes in to one Summary Document easier. It also makes the compilation easier if they are sent as a Microsoft Word document in .doc, .docx or .rtf format and NOT as a pdf.

Please ensure that the minutes are paragraphed to contain the relevant information for the topics discussed as per the agenda as this makes compilation of the Summary Document much easier and saves considerable time. See Newsletter 165 for last year's Regional Meetings Summary and Précis if you would like to refer back to last year's outcomes. Please would the Group Chairmen/Secretaries have all the minutes ready for collation by the Branch Liaison Secretary as soon as possible after the meeting and not later than Monday 8 July 2019.

Any queries or problems please let me know so that we can try to resolve them quickly.

Kind regards and thank you for all your help.

Irene

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

 RCTS	GREAT WESTERN	LONDON & SOUTH	NORTHERN HOME COUNTIES	MIDLAND & NORTH WESTERN	EMNESH
LOCATION	Widcombe Room, Manvers Street Baptist Church, BATH	Maybury Centre 27 Board School Road WOKING GU21 5HD	Digswell Village Church Warren Way DIGSWELL AL6 0DH	Waverley Hotel, CREWE	Edmondson Room National Railway Museum, YORK
DATE	08 June 2019	11 May 2019	11 May 2019	31 May 2019	6 June 2019
TIME	13:00 11:45 at Bath Spa Station	11:00	11:00	12:00	11:00
MC ATTENDEE	Andy Davies	Reg Wood	Bob Green	Irene Rabbitts	Gordon Davies
CHAIRMAN	Brian Arman (secretary Paul Udey)	Richard Ashby (secretary for 2019 only Irene Rabbitts)	Robert Warburton (secretary David Elsdon)	John Cowlshaw (secretary tbc)	Malcolm Hammond (secretary Rodney Allen)

Great Western: Bristol; Cheltenham; Thames Valley; South Wales; West of England

London & South: Chichester; Croydon & South London; Solent; South East; Surrey; Windsor & Maidenhead

Northern Home Counties: Cambridge; Hitchin; Ipswich; Milton Keynes; Northampton; Peterborough; South Essex; Watford

Midland & North Western: Furness, Lakes & Lune; Lancashire & North West; Merseyside, Chester & North Wales; West Midlands

EMNESH: East Midlands; Humberside; North East; Scottish; Sheffield; West Riding

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

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with The Charity Commission. Registered number 1169995

REGIONAL MEETINGS 2019 – AGENDA

Branch Liaison Secretary
Irene Rabbitts, 34 Victory Park Road, Addlestone KT15 2AZ
Telephone: 01932 855015 email: liaison@rcts.org.uk

- 1 Welcome by Chairman and introduction of Delegates
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of Local Regional Meeting 2018
- 4 Matters arising from Local Minutes not covered by the Agenda
- 5 2018 Regional Meetings National Action Points
- 6 Matters arising from 2018 National Action Points
- 7 MC Representative presentation
- 8 The new website - updating branch pages – see note (i)
- 9 A short presentation by a representative from each branch describing their accomplishments, failures, opportunities and threats over the past year – see note (ii)
- 10 Branch Officers Handbook – see note (iii)
- 11 Long service awards – see note (iv)
- 12 Guidelines for branch indoor meetings regarding speaker costs – see note (v)
- 13 Branch social media – eg Facebook, online Forum – see note (vi)
- 14 Confirmation of Chairman and Secretary for next year for those Regional Meetings where this is to change either by rotation between the branches or because of retirement
- 15 Any Other Business
- 16 Date, time and place of next meeting

Notes to go with Regional Meetings Agenda

(i) It is intended that there will be guidance and training in due course for branch web coordinators including minimum standards and levels of information. What would you like to see included in any training or guidance notes and what would you like to be able to do? This might include updating information on branch activities eg meetings/outside visits/exhibitions, uploading reports, uploading images, lists of books/photographs/other items for sale, who to ask if you have a problem etc.

(ii) a) This has been raised by several branches, and many issues are not limited to the RCTS. What have you tried that works or does not work? Where do you go for support? This discussion could help to highlight best practice which could feed into the newly formed Working Group for Branches that has been given the remit to help struggling branches and to set up new branches in areas that have a relatively high population density but no local branch.

b) Getting members to actively engage with their branch has also come from the branches. Active engagement could have a number of benefits both for the member and the branch and possibly the wider Society. Please discuss.

(iii) Progress is being made with the Handbook effectively in two parts to cover both Branch Officers and Society Officers. Is there anything in particular that you would like to see included that has not been there before and would you prefer that the Handbook is published in sections as each is ready rather than waiting until the complete update has been done before it is published as a whole? Please discuss

(iv) The idea of long service awards has been raised with a couple of suggestions of how this might be done already forthcoming. It is intended that anything like this should be a token of recognition of the loyalty of those who have been members for some time. It might be in the form of a certificate or small badge for example, and could be awarded for 5, 10, 15, 20 years continuous membership without a break. Is this a good idea and if so what form should that recognition take? There are cost implications and expenditure will need to be kept low. Please discuss.

(v) This item for discussion has come from the branches and the idea is to put together some simple and flexible guidelines. Any discussion should include what is or is not acceptable eg travel costs – petrol/train ticket; overnight accommodation for someone travelling a longer distance (overnight accommodation paid by the branch means that VAT can be reclaimed where applicable but if paid by the speaker and the amount refunded, VAT cannot be reclaimed). Any guidance could be included in the new Branch Officers Handbook and as part of best practice.

(vi) In this digital age there has been some discussion on branches setting up their own Facebook or similar pages and/or perhaps having an online forum for branches. Only a very few branches currently use social media regularly. What would this involve for your branch; what might your branch membership be interested in; might this help to encourage more active engagement at branch level and with non-members; what sort of help or support would you need as a branch to set something like this up and keep it going; if your branch already has a social media presence, what did you find to be the pros and cons? Please discuss.