

RCTA 2018n AGM, Wolverton.

PR & Communications Report by Sue Meades

Marketing:

It has been our second year of markets under the new rebranding, which I still love & think it is bright, colourful & eye-catching.

I feel that we will need some new banners & possible replacement flags for next season. The condition of some of the banners this season has not been good so I would ask members, if you are tasked with looking after the market paraphernalia please make sure it is all collected after an event, is clean & undamaged & is stored appropriately. If any flags, poles or banners do get damaged please let me know so I can order replacements straight away.

Mind the Gap signs: It was easy to spot our traders this summer on the GU as our red “mind the gap” signs seemed to be in a lot of traders windows, it was agreed that these would be handed back to MMs after an event, however if traders feel it’s beneficial to have these signs (which should be displayed whenever you are trading) all the time then I feel that we should order Magnetic versions x 4 for every trader that needs them.

Direction arrow signs: these seem to disappear & not get returned to MMs or became damaged, please report this after an event so we can arrange for more well in advance of the next event.

Market Feedback: I noticed in the market feedback forms numerous mentions that the flyers/posters were not with the MMs far enough in advance. Mainly this was due to the fact that they were not ordered & paid for until it is 100% confirmed that the event would go ahead & unfortunately CRT have not been granting our licenses very far in advance this season & I did not want to waste funds on printing if an event didn’t go ahead. Birmingham was another example of where ordering too far in advance could have wasted funds.

This is something myself & Ronni Payne will address for next year.

PR & Communications:

This is a role that has proved to be very difficult this year, media such as radio & newspapers are very unwilling to give any coverage to events as small as ours unless we pay for it, even though a lot of you think that local newspaper advertising should be forthcoming it isn't simply because there is no such thing as an independent local newspaper anymore most are owned by sections of the big news groups & are therefore unwilling to give anything away.

We did use the local newspaper for the Milton Keynes event & a small box of 5x8cm cost us around £200, the footfall & feedback it generated was minimal, this is money that would have otherwise been used in FB boosts.

It also seems that any canal related magazines are not interested in our events, however that is a new challenge for next season.

We did manage to secure newspaper & radio coverage for Berk, Mkt Drayton & would have done so for B'ham had it of gone ahead. Gt Haywood & Cassiobury Park seemed successful & I'm confident we can build on media exposure if we repeat those two venues next year.

This is a role that requires research & time, not just spending funds on ads. If anyone wants to join the steering committee & take over or assist with this role I am more than happy for that to happen.