



BUSINESS PLAN March 2025

INTRODUCTION

This is an updated Business Plan, derived from extensive work by the Committee and Trustees of the Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre – RCHC and the Historical Society, now functioning as Rowlands Castle History and Heritage (RCHH). This work was undertaken to ensure that the business plan accurately directs and reflects the current work of our Charity and how we want the Charity to develop in the future. It is submitted for discussion and if agreed, ratification by the Trustees. Henceforth, in everyday documentation it will be referred to as Rowlands Castle History and Heritage (RCHH).

BACKGROUND

The origins of the Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre date back to 2015. It was in response to an offer from Peter Goss to purchase the iconic model railway that he had researched, designed and built. It was set in the Village during military preparations for the D-Day Landings on the Normandy beaches in June 1944.

The initial purpose of the RCHC was to raise funds to purchase the model railway and to find a home to store and display it. Thoughts included housing the model in the Rowlands Castle Railway Station and there to develop a physical base for the preservation and display of all aspects of our Heritage.

Money was raised from donations by the villagers and the charity was created with some of the benefactors as Trustees. The model was purchased. It was then successfully displayed for three years during the summer in Stansted House. This venue is unfortunately no longer available and for now the model is being stored centrally in the village and it is displayed, free to the public, on village occasions, such as the Summer Fair.

The work of the Charity has not just been about displaying the railway and searching for a base. An impressive website was developed under the leadership of Alan Drinkwater with the aim of preserving and making available to the public, information about many aspects of the heritage of our community. In addition, other projects have been undertaken, aimed at the wider aspects of our Heritage.

Increasingly it became evident, that there was a mismatch between a Charity whose focus when set up, was a model railway train and base, and the realities of a developing broad- ranging Charity aimed at recording, preserving and educating people about all aspects of the heritage of our community. It was for this reason that the Committee and Trustees undertook the work to align the business plan with the current realities and aspirations.

More recently, October 2025, in recognition of the many shared interests and objectives Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre and Rowlands Castle Historical Society amalgamated to form Rowlands Castle History and Heritage. RCHH adopted the "Membership" model of the RCHS which generates an additional income stream.

MISSION STATEMENT

“Protect and Record the Past and Present, for the Benefit of Future Generations.”

MISSION OBJECTIVE

To record, preserve and educate people about all aspects of the heritage of our community through our website, archiving, educational activities, oral history, trails, outreach and by regularly displaying our model railway with an emphasis on its historical import.

RCHH FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The business functions and activities include those listed below. These are expanded into actions in the associated Action Plan which is used to monitor progress for each project:-

0.0 MEMBERSHIP

The RCHS membership model has been adopted. Membership of RCHH is open to all and, with certain exceptions, incurs an annual membership fee which entitles members to attend evening talks free of charge and to take part in visits at cost. We will explore the possibility for receiving Gift Aid on our membership subscriptions and apply if eligible.

1.0 HERITAGE

1.1 Model Railway

The model railway is currently stored centrally in the village. There is need to review its long-term storage, how and where it is displayed and how we can best use the model to illustrate its heritage aspects as opposed to simply presenting it as a remarkable model railway.

1.2 Projects

We will work to further develop the heritage projects and recruit more volunteers

1.3 Archive and Collection

We will develop a collections policy and develop a catalogue of what we possess and where it is currently stored. We plan to make this available to the community.

2.0 EDUCATION

We aim to engage with the community, through the website and social media to educate them about our heritage as opposed to simply being a resource that people may choose to access.

2.1 Educational Activities

We will raise community awareness and understanding of the heritage of Rowlands Castle through a variety of educational initiatives of history talks, trips as well as trail quiz and outreach activities to schools and youth organisations.

2.2 Website Maintenance and Development.

We will further develop the website as a virtual museum.

3.0 COMMUNITY

3.1 Community involvement – links with others.

The Rowlands Castle Historical Society and Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre are now fully integrated and the annual series of lectures and visits are continuing with the same format. This satisfies one of the original aspirations of the organisation, to provide history themed talks for the community.

RCHH will continue to make and develop contacts with other similar organisations to exchange ideas to ensure that we are adopting “best practice” and to explore opportunities for collaboration.

We will engage with the younger generation and other age groups to inform them about aspects of our heritage which will interest them. Other community involvement will include recruiting more volunteers, working with other organisations, fundraising and generally raising the profile of the RCHH.

3.2 Promotion to Increase the visibility of our charity and heritage

We will explore and make more use of opportunities to reach out to a wider range of local people including the further use of social media channels.

3.3 Volunteers

We will continue to encourage recruitment of new recruits to assist with or drive our projects. There is a need to recruit more volunteers to help us implement as many of our plans as possible.

3.6 Fundraising

We need an active campaign to raise money through various mechanisms in addition to money raised from the membership, fees from guests at the talks, grants, donations and Easyfundraising and Just Giving.

OTHER FUNCTIONS

Physical Base for the Heritage Centre including the Model Railway –

This matter is dormant (no action at present) but to be reactivated if and when an opportunity arises.

Management Committee Meetings

Meetings will follow a format so that matters are crisply reviewed, actions taken and targets set. These meetings will receive progress against the Action Plan, developed from this Business Plan in a format suitable to record progress and enable the Trustees to monitor its effectiveness.