

Queen's Survey – Summary of the points raised.

From the results of the survey I sent out to all Queens in the contact list, I've summarised the results here with suggested solutions. The actual responses in their entirety are on the following pages if you would like to read them.

Who is invited?

It seems some people don't know that Vice Queens and other such people are able to attend a Queen's Council as well. I don't know about previous Queen's Councils (as I wasn't in the RHS when they were held), but from 2016 onward Queens, Vice Queens, Queen Mothers, Former Queens, Acting/Deputy Queens and ladies interested in starting a chapter have all been welcome. Basically if you are, have been or want to be a Queen or a Vice Queen – you're invited. The summary from the 2016 Council did mention this and the advertising on the website and in the newsletter for the 2017 Queen's Council did specify Vice Queens and interested Queens were welcome. However, the email invitations/information is sent only to current Queens, as they are the only ones we maintain a contact list for.

Possible Solution - We will make it clearer who is invited to the event and that if a Queen is unable to make it, she should encourage her Vice Queen to attend. We will also create a “*Queen's Council email list*” that also includes contact details for Queens and Vice Queens etc. who would like to be added to it – to ensure they are emailed out the invitation.

Please ensure yourself as well as your Vice Queen is added to the list (you can add to the file yourself, but if you have trouble, email the details to me and I can add them redhatsvictoria@gmail.com)
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-Kb_US1Xo3-c2pIhNVBeFfkBMicLd7aEgpqwHrPEDNY/edit?usp=sharing

Distance/Travel – Most Queens (83%) were in favour of alternating Melbourne/Regional, however a few had problems travelling longer distances. There were also a few who would like the event to be more central.

One Queen suggested the creation of an online forum – so that there could be a place for Queens who can't attend the council to discuss things with other Queens.

One Queen suggested (via email) that we hold a Regional Queen's Council and a Melbourne Queen's Council each year (rather than alternate years), so that Queens may be more likely to attend each year. 2 Queens said that annual Councils are too frequent. Alternating each year does mean that those who can't travel far may be able to attend one closer to them every second year, which may be preferable for some Queens who don't want to attend each year.

Possible Solution – When held in Regional areas, having those more central would be beneficial to keep travel times down. We can discuss the idea of having the 2 Queen's Councils a year. I have created a forum that can be used by those who would like to and will discuss that in a separate message.

Transportation / Accommodation – One factor in the travel distance may be accommodation. If Queens are trying to make the whole trip in a day that may be too much, whereas spread over 2 days with an overnight stay may be easier, but would come with added expense. One suggestion given at the 2016 Council and mentioned in the survey response was for Hatters in the host area offering billet accommodation to help keep costs lower.

Possible Solution – If Queens from neighbouring towns travelled together this may also help reduce costs while perhaps also making the trip more enjoyable. Perhaps starting a discussion on billeting, carpooling and sharing accommodation when details of the next Queen's Council are available (The forum may be a good place for discussions like this)

Cost – We discussed cost at the 2016 Council and had suggested trying to keep to under \$50 per person. As travelling Queens may have transportation and accommodation costs as well, we should try to help keep costs low. The last 2 events had provided pens and notebooks/pads for taking notes, but I'm not sure if these were really used much.

One suggestion was having them hosted at a club/hotel with attendees purchasing their own meals to keep costs down.

Possible Solution – Encourage sharing accommodation and billeting. Keep budget low. Rather than providing pens/paper – we should perhaps ask Queens to bring their own and aim to keep costs as low as possible.

Stand-alone or 2 day Event - This is a topic that had us divided at the 2016 Queen's Council and again in this survey.

11 Queens wanted the Queen's Council as a stand-alone event (nothing else held on the weekend) and 22 Queens wanted another OPTIONAL event on the other day/night of that weekend. Some responses also indicated that Queens may be more likely to attend if there was something else on that weekend as well to justify the travel/accommodation costs and that they might be more likely to come if they could bring chapter members with them (to the additional event – not the Queen's Council). 16 Queens wanted the additional event open to all members, 6 wanted it for Queens only.

The survey did ask whether or not a “*list of activities/attractions*” should be provided for husbands/chapter members and it seems some misunderstood this question. I meant would it be useful for the hosting Queen to provide an extra section on the information form giving suggestions of what sightseeing opportunities or things husbands could do to pass the time (for those who don't know what is on in the area). Not for there to be anything actually organised - just a list of suggestions given. Because that was one thing specifically requested when discussed at the 2016 Queen's Council, because some Queens had said then that not having anything for partners/travelling companions to do while the Queen was at the council may be a reason not to attend.

Possible Solution – I would recommend based on the survey results that an OPTIONAL additional event be planned for the other day/night in the weekend (open to all members, not just Queens) as well as having the Queen's Council (that is just for the Royalty only). For example having a Saturday night dinner (open to all members) and the Queen's Council for Sunday lunch (Royal Court only). This would allow those Queens who want more event to justify the travel to have something else to attend, but making it optional means those who want to come for just the Council only can do that.

4 Queens didn't know it was on

While it is expected that not everyone will check the website and not everyone is on facebook, there have been multiple ways it has been promoted, so there should be no reason Queens have missed the notifications in at least one format.

The information/invitation to the Queen's Council is:

- Emailed out to all Queens on the chapter contact list I have (the same list I sent the survey to)
- Published on the website (as an event, as well as the “save the date” being up since May 2016).
- On the facebook page
- In the March newsletter (which is available to download from the website and for people to subscribe to via email or you can have it posted to you, if you pay for cost of printing & stamps).

Possible Solution - Queens should ensure they check at least one of these contact points fairly regularly to keep up to date with any events or notices. Queens without internet access should opt for the printed newsletter or delegate a chapter member to pass on information.

The event will always be on the 3rd or 4th weekend in May, so while it may be either of those weekends, there is some degree of advance notice when it will be on. Hosting Queens should be encouraged to announce the date and location ASAP so that everyone has as much advance notice of the event as possible.

Other points raised –

- Queens should have the ability to submit agenda topics before the event and this list should be emailed to the Queens prior to the event.
- Suggested allowing Queens a 3 min spot to talk about their topic, with discussion time afterwards.

Queen's Survey Results - All Answers submitted - 29 total responded

Q1 - Why do you think it is important to have a Queen's Council (Queenathon) gathering of Queens?

- Sharing ideas – 79.31% (23 responses)
- Discussing problems and issues with other Queens – 72.41% (21 responses)
- Networking - 68.97% (20 responses)
- Helping new Queens – 65.52% (19 responses)
- Making new friends - 62.07% (18 responses)
- I don't see the need to have a Queen's Council – 13.79% (4 responses)
- Other (please specify) – 6.90% (2 responses)
 - I wouldn't normally attend, this was a "one off" I normally have other things to do weekends
 - To ensure that Red Hatting continues

Q2 - If you did not attend the 2017 Queen's Council (Rutherglen), please choose the reasons why

- Busy on that weekend – 52.63% (10 responses)
- Distance too far for a short event – 31.58% (6 responses)
- Transportation issues – 21.05% (4 responses)
- Didn't know it was on – 21.05% (4 responses)
- Accommodation issues – 15.79% (3 responses)
- Cost – 15.79% (3 responses)
- Distance too far away (for any size event) – 5.26% (1 response)
- Other Comments:
 - Lack of agenda available prior to the Council meeting
 - health issues - preparing for operation
 - family member health issues
 - Most weekends are spent on farm work.
 - Illness. I did respond to Queen Pam
 - I had attended the QC of 2016; an annual event is too frequent for me.
 - 93-year-old father fading away. I can't go anywhere that means an overnight stay, at least not for a while. I would have been there with bells on otherwise.
 - Supporting another Chapter member at her event.
 - Unable to travel comfortably for long distance in a car. There and back to Melbourne in a day to painful!
 - not sure if I would be able to attend due to family issues

Q3 - If you did not attend due to the distance being too far for just the Queen's Council - would you have attended if there was another activity on during the weekend?

- Maybe – 60.00% (6 responses)
- Yes – 20.00% (2 responses)
- No – 20.00% (2 responses)
- Comments:
 - It was not too far, we all have to travel at some time or other to meet. It was our group's weekend away
 - To make the drive worthwhile.

Q4 - What do you think of the arrangement to alternate between Melbourne Metro and Victorian Regional areas each year?

- I like the idea of alternating – 83.33% (20 responses)
- I don't like the idea of alternating and want it held somewhere central – 20.83% (5 responses)
- I don't like the idea of alternating and want it held in Melbourne – 0.00% (0 responses)
- Comments:
 - I don't mind either places to have it
 - Melbourne would be easier for me because of transport.
 - Travel for more than an hour not ideal due to back pain
 - I don't mind where it is

Q5 - Are the weekends of the 3rd or 4th weekend in May suitable for you?

- Yes – 87.50% (21 responses)
- No – 16.67% (4 responses)

- Comments:
 - 3rd probly better for me
 - I will keep them free for next year, it is a good idea to have the Queenathon on a regular date each year
 - Won't know till next year as I could be away or ill like I was passed week end
 - We have a farm and work away so it is hard to plan most activities.
 - If not busy with family occasions.
 - April and May are really busy months - would prefer June.
 - If we get sufficient notice of the date it will be fine, father permitting.....
 - Weekends are not suitable for me - that's normally my family time
 - the weather generally gets colder so maybe a little earlier around March
 - family and other committments

Q6 - Would you prefer the Queen's Council to be held on a Saturday or a Sunday?

- No preference – 77.78% (21 responses)
- Saturday – 22.22% (6 responses)
- Sunday – 3.70% (1 response)
- Comments:
 - Weekends are not suitable for me - that's normally my family time
 - leaves me time for family as I work full time

Q7 - Is there anything that could be changed about the Queen's Council events that would make them easier for you to attend?

- no i love the one o went to ,and yes they will be different and so they should be
- Knowing 12 months in advance date and venue would be helpful to everyone
- No I had a bad back and I was also away
- No. Time poor for added activities. Still working part time. Two red hat chapter events each month and volunteer work locally takes up most of time away from farm.
- No.
- I have only attended *2 QCs in *7 years. (I am not sure if they have been held annually.) There was not sufficient information exchange to warrant more frequent attendance. Distance is not such an issue, although it does add to the expense of fuel and accommodation; rather, I do not gain much learning.
- no
- More central.
- no

Q8 - Would you prefer the Queen's Council to be a single stand-alone lunch event with no other activities planned for the weekend? Or would you like an optional extra activity for the other day to be included, so that those travelling from across the state have something more to do?

- Queen's Council as stand alone event – 42.31% (11 responses)
- I would like an optional daytime event (open to all members) – 38.46% (10 responses)
- I would like an optional dinner event (open to all members) – 23.08% (6 responses)
- I would like an optional daytime event (for Queens only) – 15.38% (4 responses)
- I would like an optional dinner event (Queens only) – 7.69% (2 responses)
- Other (please specify) – 15.38% (4 responses)
 - Does it matter?
 - I'm happy with whatever is organized.
 - I think the Queens Counsel should be open to all Royal court ie vice queens and Queen Mums
 - I would like a weekend for all to attend with a morning or afternoon Queen council included. Possibly queen might be more interested in coming if they can bring their chapter's with them. More fun.

Q9 - If you would be travelling to the event with a husband or other chapter members (who would not be attending the Queen's Council) would you like the host to provide a list of activities/attractions in the area for husbands/members to do while you are Queening?

- I would not be travelling with non-attending people – 61.54% (16 responses)

- I would be travelling with other chapter members and would like an activities list – 26.92% (7 responses)
- I would be travelling with my husband and would like an activities list – 11.54% (3 responses)
- I would be travelling with other chapter members and don't need a list – 11.54% (3 responses)
- I would be travelling with my husband and don't need a list – 3.85% (1 response)
- Comments:
 - The Queens' Council by its very title is meant for Queens and Vice Queens.
 - If it was for a full week-end then some of my members may attend and if so planned activities would be good, as occur in a convention
 - I think we should not include activities for husbands that is not what Red Hatting is about, if husbands want to come they should organise their own activities. I have attended many meetings b
 - Queens might be more likely to come if you know more people other than just some or none of the other Queens.

Q10 - What comments or suggestions do you have for the running of the Queen's Council?

- Always include Vice Queens as well as Queens
- none think you have done a great job .I just don't know why I did not know it was on .I did forget it was said at last years meeting in May ,but I had other things going on in my family and it would of been a great distraction for me to have gone ,,it is disappointing for RHS if you did not have a good response
- A set agenda for the event. Sufficient opportunity should be afforded to all Queens to submit their "topic" for discussion to the hosting Chapter Queen. Time to speak to the topic at the Council to be made available (3 minutes) with discussion to follow (5-10 mins.) Appoint a chair person to keep order over the meeting. Also seek a venue with value for cost in mind.
- it suits me as it is
- dont see the need for a Queens council
- Firstly thank you to all of you who both organized and attended. I am sorry I was unable to attend. My ideas have been encompassed in the above replies. If I can assist for the next Council please let me know and I will advise if I am available to do some things.
- Well one as I have never been before or now
- Perhaps every second year would be enough.
- 1. Less frequently 2. Alternate town and country 3. Offer accommodation in RH homes; this would assist with costs and provide a more intimate networking friendship 4. Reduce the OTT aspect that some chapters lavish; this may encourage other Queens to host. That said, I noted in 2016 a resistance to chapters who were not registered with RHS - this may also reduce participation.
- Sorry that I did not reply but I did not get any notice of it happening. I would not have been able to attend for two reasons, it was my daughters 50th birthday and also I don't drive.
- I feel \$60.00 was too expensive for scones and sandwiches.I realise there were extras to pay for.Maybe we could go to a club or like and either have purchase your own meal or alternate drop.I think cost would keep people away.Also distance.
- Why not have an internet forum where people can have discussions and send messages so that everyone is included. Those Queens who don't use the internet can delegate to a member of their group for assistance. Many groups are getting away from the "fun & friendship" aspect and trying to do bigger and better things and this is causing a divide between those who can afford it and those who can't - I hate the thought of people resigning because it is out of their reach financially
- Different food to scones and sandwiches for someone who does not like either. Not knowing that was going to be the food I would have mentioned it when I registered.
- I think we have to get more Queens involved and participating in events and networking and this can only happen if we have a data base of chapters, up to date and chapter info if the Queen is open to her chapter and members being involved thus ensuring the continuance of Red Hatting
- Apologies for not attending. Kicking myself because I couldn't go.
- I enjoyed hearing all the ideas that came out.Was good to net work.
- Queens council 2to3hours tops. Then fun with chapter members.
- I'm sure those who attend are doing a great job I have other interests and don't have lots of spare time to devote to red hatting any more than one day a month