



## Bedford Group RoSPA Advanced Drivers

RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Accredited

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2023 held at 8pm on Tuesday 6 June 2023 via Skype**

**Present:** David Chamberlain, Alan Freeman, Jenny Holliday, Val Jones, Martin Kidds, Judith Slaymaker, Rosemary Whittington, David Worgan

**In attendance:** Douglas Palmer

Martin Kidds in the Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Wendy Gilbert, Tony Glasson and Carol O'Brian.

#### **2. Minutes of 2022 AGM**

The minutes of the AGM held on 22 May 2022 had been publicised prior to the meeting, including via the Group's website. There was one matter arising – under item 8, confirmation that the Group's Re-accreditation with RoSPA had been accepted and would run for another three years.

The minutes were then unanimously agreed and signed as a correct record.

#### **3. Chairman's Report**

Martin Kidds presented the following:

A very warm welcome via Skype to our AGM and thank you for joining us. We had hoped to hold this in person at BFRS HQ and although things didn't work out this time, we are grateful again to Martin Smith and his colleagues for offering to host us and for their support to the group at other times.

Once again it has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve as your Chairman and Secretary during the last year. This has I think been a year of consolidation for the group following the hiatus during the covid years; it feels as though we have got back to something approaching normal with several new members coming through and some good test passes both for new Associates and existing members on retests. Our congratulations to you all and thank you to many of you who've allowed us to share your success through the newsletter.

We've also welcomed a new Tutor Mike Hitchcock from the former RoADA Northants group, which gives us five Tutors and we're very pleased to have Mike on board.

We're enormously grateful as ever for the continuing support of our members. As a group we're run as you know entirely by volunteers who give up their time. Along with support of our members, the group's success is I think founded on four main elements:

1. Our 'vital infrastructure' – the group's bank account and website are the fundamental things that enable us to keep going and David Worgan our brilliant Treasurer and Alan Freeman our webmaster has each done a sterling job as ever keeping things in order. Another word about Alan a little later.
2. Our voluntary Tutors and our Training Co-ordinator David Chamberlain who pairs up our Associates with a Tutor to set them up for success. With their efforts we've been able to substantially reduce our waiting time for tuition.
3. Communication with our Members – this is spearheaded by Val Jones who puts together our wonderful newsletter several times per year with remarkable energy and enthusiasm. There is so much of interest, and I always learn something – usually several things – every time there's a new one.
4. Our committee – they make the day-to-day decisions that keep the group running and keep the Chairman in order (as much as anyone can) and I'd like to record my thanks to them for their support to me during the year.

This time last year I reported on the challenge facing us of a lack of an Advanced Tutor - something we needed to address if the group is to continue to thrive. After considering our options and taking some advice I was, with the committee's support, able to take RoSPA's Level 3 course in Advanced Driver Coaching. This is a relatively new course replacing the old Diploma. This is great news for the group as it will enable us to train new Tutors in future and extremely fortunate for me and I spent an intense two days near St Neots learning some new skills and re-learning some existing ones. Now just waiting for final confirmation that I've passed! Improving the support that we offer our existing Tutors will be a priority for the coming year.

Another potentially exciting development is being able to offer advanced motorcycle training for the first time, thanks to an approach from Dougie Palmer, a Diploma holder living in the area – who joins us at the meeting tonight. Look out for more news on that in due course.

Sadly, the group wasn't able to have a stand at the Elstow May festival last month – due to a change of date caused by the King's Coronation. However, we do hope to promote the group by attending events in the future and hope to be back at Elstow next May.

I must thank Andy Nixon, Jacqui Adams, Rebecca Evans and Elaine Ellis from RoSPA HQ their support throughout the year giving advice and responding to members' queries. They are a small team but a very valuable support to groups like ours. Jacqui retired earlier this year and it was good to see her contribution acknowledged in the RoADA house magazine Care on the Road. Also, thanks to our examiners and Simon Burgin our Regional Co-ordinator whose 30-year career as a police motorcyclist finally came to a close last summer – recorded in one of his regular View from the East columns in our newsletter.

I mentioned earlier about the group being entirely run by volunteers. The biggest challenge this brings is time – certainly for me – at times it feels like progress is painfully slow. However, I do believe we as a group are moving in the right direction. We couldn't do it without you – so thank you all once again for your support.

Comments/questions on Martin's report are covered under item 9. Any Other Business.

## 4. Treasurer's Report

The Account Summary and Audited Accounts for the year ending 28 February 2023 were distributed prior to the AGM to all members of the Group. It was proposed by Martin Kidds that the audited accounts presented be accepted by the meeting, seconded by David Chamberlain and this was agreed unanimously.

David Worgan presented the following summary:

We are now venturing out from the Covid-19 pandemic and the group is beginning to look to the future.

I am pleased to say that the vast majority of the membership supported the Group by renewing their membership even though we could not carry out any activities for members. However, tutoring has continued with Martin Kidds, Carol O'Brian and Michael Hitchcock all taking their tests and achieving gold passes. We lost four members and gained Chris Barker, Michael Hitchcock, Paul Garvey and Sonja Neall. I attribute the success in keeping the membership to the sterling work that Val Jones has put in to producing a newsletter of quality throughout the year to keep the membership engaged.

The opening balance for the Group was £5919.94.

From the accounts it can be seen that 4 people joined and with their joining fees totalling £75, 46 people renewed and with a kind donation of £10 from Paul Burchell and £15 from the Elstow Abbey Fun Day giving the income for the year of £600.00.

The outgoings this year are postage of £79.20, website domain renewal and security licence came to £152.33, and we paid £10 to the Elstow Abbey Fun Day giving a total expenditure of £241.53.

The actual closing balance at the end of the financial year amounts to £6,278.41, resulting in a profit of £358.47 for the year.

The accounts were audited by Graham Follett on the 11/3/2023 without any problems. The accounts are self-balancing so that any discrepancy will be detected, and the accounts being presented will be error free. Graham has indicated that he is happy to audit the accounts once again for us next year.

Martin thanked David for his work as Treasurer through the year and observed that through David's efficiency and the clarity of the accounts made the task look easy, but it required a lot of hard work to keep things that way.

## 5. Election of Officers for 2023/24

The unusual circumstances of the last two years has

led to the committee combining the Chair and Secretary's role on an interim basis. Therefore:

**Chairman** Martin Kidds nominated by David Worgan and seconded by Val Jones. No other nominations and agreed unanimously that Martin Kidds be elected Chairman.

**Secretary** Martin Kidds nominated by David Worgan and seconded by Val Jones. No other nominations and agreed unanimously that Martin Kidds be elected Secretary.

**Treasurer** David Worgan nominated by Jenny Holliday and seconded by Alan Freeman. No other nomination and unanimously agreed that David Worgan was elected Treasurer.

**Training Officer** No nominations, therefore position remains vacant.

## 6. Election of Committee Members for 2023/24

Existing Committee Members: David Chamberlain, Tony Glasson, Jenny Holliday, Val Jones and Rosemary Whittington were nominated by Martin Kidds and seconded by David Worgan, so were duly re-elected.

**Alan Freeman:** The meeting noted that Alan was standing down from the committee this year after many years of service as Webmaster. Martin thanked Alan for all his support on behalf of the committee, and for kindly agreeing to do a handover of the webmaster role. A small token of appreciation would be passed to Alan in due course.

No other nominations were received but we will always welcome any members interested in joining the committee – please contact the Secretary.

Martin thanked the committee for agreeing to stand again and for their support.

## 7. Future Direction of the Group

Martin presented this as an information item. The committee had been discussing ways to ensure the group continued following the loss of Tutors. We had set ourselves some milestones through a paper called “Future Direction” first written in May 2021.

We had made progress with the first of our aims, to have a stable committee, stable membership, had gained a Tutor and had reduced waiting times for Associates.

The next milestone in this ‘roadmap’, which we were close was to achieving, was to have an Advanced Tutor trained so we train more Tutors. With that achieved we could begin to promote the group more proactively to grow the membership, e.g., by attending events.

What we hadn’t anticipated was the possibility of expanding to cover motorcycle training as well – made possible by Dougie’s offer to the group (see the Chairman’s report above). The addition of a motorcycle section would require an update to the Group’s constitution, which would probably need to be ratified by an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) and to then go through the Re-accreditation process with RoSPA HQ. This added a new dimension to the group and was a very welcome and exciting development.

Val Jones commented that development of group Tutors was also an important area for the group to progress. David Worgan added that the group needed to run another Better Driving Course, as a way to promote the group. Martin agreed with both points.

## 8. Support to Members with retests

This was an information item. On behalf of the committee Martin wished to remind full members that they can seek support ahead of their free retest, for example an observed drive with a Tutor. Please contact any member of the committee in good time and we can arrange for the support that is needed. This reminder is now regularly included in the group’s newsletter.

There was also a request to let the committee know of any successful retests and, if the member was comfortable for us to do so, this could be publicised via the newsletter. We again thank those members who have shared news of their success with us through the year.

Martin also suggested that any member seeking support with driving between tests, or independent of preparing for a RoSPA test, was welcome to seek the support of the group – again, please contact a member of the committee.

## **9. Any Other Business**

Dougie offered to meet with members of the committee to discuss the practicalities of getting the motorcycle training established. This was enthusiastically agreed – Dougie would send dates he was available to Martin who would circulate to the committee. He would also write a short article for the newsletter to introduce himself to members.

David Chamberlain drew the group's attention to an article in the most recent issue of *Care on the Road* where Cambridgeshire RoADAR group had arranged a test drive of electric cars for Tutors through a local car dealership. It was suggested we could explore similar opportunities for our Tutors, and gaining confidence in driving electric cars was an important development area for Tutors.

Dougie commented that developments with electric bikes mirrored those of electric cars, with an apparently modest machine offering comparable performance to a large sport's bike!

### **Date of next AGM:**

To be confirmed – likely to be in May or June 2024.

Meeting declared closed at 20:47