



## Bedford Group RoSPA Advanced Drivers

RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders Accredited

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2022** **held at 8pm on Tuesday 17 May 2022 at the Training Centre,** **Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue HQ, Southfields Road, Kempston, Bedford** **and via Skype**

**Present:** David Chamberlain, Alan Freeman, Jenny Holliday, Val Jones, Martin Kidds, Rosemary Whittington, David Worgan  
(and joining on Skype) Bob Bethell, Tony Glasson, Judith Slaymaker

Martin Kidds in the Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

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

Apologies were received from Mary Arnold and Melia Taylor.

#### **2. Minutes of 2021 AGM**

The minutes of the AGM held on 8 June 2021 had been publicised prior to the meeting, including via the Group's website. A correction had previously been made under item Under item 6. Election of Officers for 2021/22 when an error had been discovered – and the corrected version had been publicised.

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 to our first face to face AGM since 2019 - both to those in the room and those joining via Skype, it is great to see you all. Thank you to Martin Smith and his colleagues here at BFRS for allowing us to hold the AGM at their HQ today.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve as your Chairman and Secretary during the last year. I would like to start by thanking and paying tribute to the support from the committee and our Tutors who give up their time voluntarily each year. I'd also like to thank all our members - full members, Associates and social members - for continuing to support the group.

This has been another year of keeping the group going during covid restrictions, which continued to curtail our activities - both due to restrictions and, increasingly as the 'omicron' wave hit, through members including the committee being affected by the virus itself. Thankfully as far as we know everyone in the group is safe and well. Our thoughts are with any of our members who may have suffered personal loss or serious illness due to the virus and we hope everyone who has been ill is fully recovered or recovering as best they can.

As we'll be hearing from David our Treasurer shortly our membership has remained relatively stable - in fact we have been able to recruit a few new members during the year, some of whom have gone on to receive tuition. With the restrictions that interrupted tutoring and testing now eased I'm pleased to say we have a few Associates now working towards their test and we hope to have good news to share soon.

We have also been pleased to hear of a few good passes for group members at their retests. There is an item coming up on this later but please do reach out to us in good time if you have a retest coming up and you'd like some support.

One of the highlights of the year for me was a meeting of our Tutors in August which was a great opportunity to meet (outside!) and share experiences of tutoring and how we wanted to work as a group in the future (as well as benefitting from Val's generous hospitality). As a result of those discussions, we've streamlined and improved some of our admin. David Chamberlain our Training Co-ordinator has worked hard along with our Tutors to get the waiting list for tuition down to virtually zero. A priority for the year ahead will be to offer further support and development for our tutors. I hope we'll also be able to revive our Better Driving Course before too long.

Our main means of communication with members have been through our newsletter and the group's website. Val has continued to do a fabulous job pulling together interesting articles, snippets and quiz items and there have been contributions from a number of members. You sometimes also get to read the Chairman droning on about something or other - sorry about that! Please keep the contributions coming and thank you to Val and all those who've helped fill the newsletters' pages. Alan also does a great job keeping the website up to date and we've made some subtle but significant improvements to some of the content this year.

Speaking of Alan, I'm delighted to say that thanks to him the group was able to have a stand at the Elstow May festival earlier this month, which attracted some interest from those attending. Thanks to those who helped us with the event - it was great to get outside and promote the group in a modest way in a beautiful setting and the weather was kind.

Jacqui Adams and Rebecca Evans from RoSPA HQ kindly supplied some supporting material for our stand at Elstow. I must thank them and Andy Nixon at HQ for their support throughout the year giving advice and responding to members' queries. They are a small team but a very valuable support and like many have had to adapt to the demands of remote working and other covid restrictions whilst continuing to support us. It was good to see their work highlighted in a recent issue of the RoADA house magazine 'Care on the Road'. Also thanks to our local examiners and Simon Burgin our Regional Co-ordinator who combines this role with serving as a police motorcyclist and whose regular 'View from the East' columns add further interest to our newsletter.

These are challenging times for local RoADA groups. It is ironic that while the need for advanced driving skills has never been greater some groups are struggling to continue. We also have the looming cost of living crisis, the impact of which is uncertain, but is unlikely to be trivial. The biggest challenge I think facing our group is the lack of an Advanced Tutor - particularly as we're also down to four Tutors. We are seeking ideas and support from HQ, Simon and our neighbouring groups as this is something we must address if the group is to continue to thrive. I hope to share some positive news soon.

That aside I remain optimistic for the year ahead and I hope what I've said demonstrates why my role is such a pleasure and a privilege. Thank you all once again for your support.

#### 4. Treasurer's Report

The Account Summary for the year ending 28 February 2022 was 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 and this was agreed unanimously.

David Worgan presented the following summary:

Again, it has been a strange year due to the Covid-19 restrictions that came into effect in March 2021 and continued throughout 2021, with various 'lockdown' events and Tier restrictions. The restrictions were only finally lifted on 25 February 2022. This affected what the Group could achieve during this financial year.

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. However, tutoring was allowed at some points, though it was severely restricted at other times. I attribute the success in keeping the membership to the sterling work that Val Jones has put in to producing a newsletter of quality every month to keep the membership engaged.

The opening balance for the Group was £5381.62 but a cheque for £53 was outstanding from the previous year and was presented to the account late, giving a true opening balance of £5346.62.

From the accounts it can be seen that 4 people joined and with their joining fees totalling £100, 48 people renewed and with kind donations of £10 from Paul Burchell, £10 from Val Jones and a further £10 from Wendy Gilbert giving the income for the year of £650.00.

The outgoings this year are modest with postage of £31.68 plus the repayment of £35 for a 'would-be' new member who needed motorcycle tuition which the Group do not offer. There was also £10 repaid to Paul Millbank who had paid his renewal twice due to a change of bank account whilst leaving the old payment in place.

The actual closing balance at the end of the financial year amounts to £5919.94.

The accounts were audited by Graham Follett on the 17/3/2022 without any problems. The accounts are self-balancing so that any discrepancy will be detected and the accounts being presented will be error free.

Martin thanked David for his work as Treasurer through the year and drew attention to the Auditors' report included in the summary distributed, which showed the high standard of care with which the accounts are looked after.

## 5. Election of Officers for 2022/23

The unusual circumstances of the last year had led to the committee combining the Chair and Secretary's role on an interim basis. Therefore:

**Chairman** Martin Kidds nominated by Rosemary Whittington and seconded by David Chamberlain. No other nominations and agreed unanimously that Martin Kidds be elected Chairman.

**Secretary** Martin Kidds nominated by Rosemary Whittington and seconded by David Chamberlain. No other nominations and agreed unanimously that Martin Kidds be elected Secretary.

**Treasurer** David Worgan nominated by David Chamberlain and seconded by Tony Glasson. 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 2022/23

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

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. Adoption of updated Group Constitution

The committee had drafted an updated Group Constitution which was now available on the Group's website. The main change was to introduce a new clause 6. Relating to on-road incidents during training or tuition, where RoSPA HQ needed to be informed and details would need to be passed on. The opportunity had also been taken to amend a provision relating to test fees, as the group no longer takes these – once an Associate and their Tutor agree they are ready for the RoSPA test the candidate simply contacts RoSPA direct and pays the fee to them.

It was proposed by Martin Kidds that the new Constitution presented be accepted by the meeting and this was agreed unanimously.

## 8. Group Re-accreditation with RoSPA

In 2018 RoSPA introduced an Accreditation scheme for RoADA groups and the Bedford Drivers Group had been accredited for 3 years beginning on 31 March 2018. This had been due to expire on 31 March 2021 but in common with other groups we had been granted a year's extension to 31 March 2022 due to the Covid pandemic.

With the support of the committee Martin had submitted paperwork to RoSPA HQ and Andy Nixon, RoADAR manager, has confirmed that once the updated constitution is formally adopted at this AGM our Accreditation will be renewed for 3 years; we understand this will be effective from 31 March – so until 31 March 2025.

## **9. 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.

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.

## **10.AOB**

Judith Slaymaker proposed a vote of thanks for the committee for keeping the group going under recent challenging circumstances. This was warmly appreciated by the committee members present.

Val Jones advised that the committee hoped to organise a face-to-face meeting for members soon. Details would be advertised once confirmed.

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

To be confirmed – likely to be in May or June 2023.

Meeting declared closed at 20:45