



MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the BRITISH DRIVING SOCIETY LIMITED

Held at The Warwick Hilton Hotel, on Saturday 30th October 2010

The President Mr James Corbett welcomed members to the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the BDS

Members Attending – see list

Apologies were received from - Mr Terry Barrett, Mr and Mrs B Blundell, Priscilla Bubb, Mrs Caroline Dale-Leech, Mrs Yvonne Dobbie, Mrs Judy Green, Mrs Angela Sixsmith, Mrs Emma Stevens, Mrs M Travers and Mr Malcolm Berrow, Mr John Richards, Mr Dennis Walmesley, Mrs Kay Walton, Mrs Janette Watson, Mrs Betty Way.

1. **MINUTES** of the Annual General Meeting held on the 18th April, 2009 were circulated. Mr. David Faulkner then proposed and Mr Clive Rushton-Green seconded, that these minutes were a true and accurate record, so they were duly signed by the president Mr James Corbett.
2. **MATTERS ARISING** – There were no matters arising.
3. **THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT – MR JAMES CORBETT** – Mr Corbett reported to the meeting the sad news that Mr Jack Gillam from Yorkshire had died earlier this year. He was a great driving enthusiast and ran the driving and coaching classes at the Great Yorkshire Show. Mr Gillam was a Vice President of our Society from 1970 until his death in 2010. He served as Chairman after Mr Sanders Watney, from 1973 – 1975 after which Mr John Richards took over. He will be sadly missed.
The President asked for the members to stand for a minute's silence in remembrance of Mr Jack Gillam.
The President then carried on with his report. Although this has been a much more challenging year for all of us due to the Global Economy, I am pleased to report that the British Driving Society, has in the main, held its own and continues to make progress in many spheres. The benefits to the Society of issuing horse passports and assessing the WATO examinations, although still an extremely important responsibility, have now mainly caught up with initial demand. There is, however no shortage of Legislation which impacts on horses and the sport of Driving. Our Chairman Mr John Parker has had a busy year negotiating with VOSA and Government on the interpretation of Driver's hours amongst other things. I am sure that he will have more to say in his report.
Mrs Linda Tate Chairman of the Awards Board and Mr Brian Ball Chairman of Training and their Committee's, have been working very hard to get our new

and exciting test programme up and running. We have the facility to offer Driving as an option in The National Schools Curriculum from September of this year (2010) which is a golden opportunity to pass on traditional skills to a new generation. Together with the principals of responsibility, commitment and team work which are so essential to driving and not seen so often in modern society. It is thanks to the efforts of the BDS Awards Board that we now have a much more active working relationship with our neighbouring Equestrian Societies, the BHS, BSJA, RDA and BHEST (Racing Authority). Since our last AGM we have had two Smiths Lawns and two Towerlands and our thanks go to Charlotte Lawson, for all her hard work. The Society Show at Smith's Lawn was again a great day out, in beautiful weather and the end of the Season Show at Towerlands continues to be successful and well supported. The combination of the BDS and the Hackney Horse Society adds greatly to the atmosphere particularly in the indoor arena.

Because we have held the AGM later on in 2010 the elections to Council took place earlier this year and we are now able to introduce the newly elected Council to the members. As there were no further nominations to Council other than the four standing down offering themselves back for election it was not necessary to hold a vote. Mr Corbett thanked and congratulated the following members back to Council, Mrs Caroline Dale Leech, Mr Malcolm Salter, Mr Clive Rushton-Green and Mrs Angela Sixsmith.

He would also like to thank Council member Mrs Jo Halnan Blackwell for currently running a two hundred club in support of our BDS Shows, please give her your support (more details to follow from Jo Halnan Blackwell at the end of the meeting).

On the subject of election of Council members, this will be advertised later on in the year and Council take their place/retire next October at the subsequent AGM, providing we ratify item 5 on the Agenda.

Finally Mr Corbett thanked our Chairman and Council, our hard working Committees, Judges, Training, Awards and Finance, Miss Linda Swain, Chairman of the Area Commissioners, and all the hard working Area Commissioners and their volunteer helpers. Also our Sponsors particularly Mr Jeff Osborne for all their continuing support and unstinting efforts over the past year, without all of you, the Society would not be the success it is.

Thanks also go to our Area Chairmen, Mr Eugene Larkin for Northern Ireland, Mr Modris Kesans for Wales and congratulations to Mrs Joyce Simpson, the new Area Chairman for Scotland. Also a big thank you to Tess Styles and her BDS Office Team, for all their hard work throughout the last 18 months, trying to answer all your queries.

4. **THE CHAIRMANS REPORT- MR JOHN PARKER** - When I accepted the post of Chairman many years ago the Society had only 4,000 members. I felt that my main job would be not one of running the Society, but to represent the Society outside ourselves. We may have been considered a little cog, but now with representation at the highest level we have set ourselves to be a bigger cog nearer the engine. Things take time, for instance going back to the start of passports, this idea was brought in, in 1997 when David Clarke was Chairman of the BDS. 1997 also marked the time when we started consultation about WATO's (Welfare in Animals Transport Order). These came into legislation in 2003(Passports), and 2007(Watos), thus some legislation has taken over 10 years of consultation to come into being. We are still

looking into legislation which may affect us in the future. We are now under DEFRA and regarded as an agricultural product! One opportunity we missed was when they brought in WATOS, they also brought in inspection of lorries, in those days they did not need the over 8 hours inspection but now our lorries will need to be inspected at £150 a time, the inspection centres being at this present time in Kent, Milton Keynes, Oxford and Edinburgh. Had we gone into this we would be sitting on another £50,000 for the Society. Two years ago I was in discussion with Mrs Janet Williams AC for North West Wales about why we were not members of the BEF, since then she has helped with the fight with regard to lorry driving hours as we have fought to try and change this law so that our members may be exempt. But the rules are changing again and I am seeking an appointment with my new MP and also seeing Mr Robert Goodwill Chief Whip of the coalition. If a vehicle or vehicle combination now exceeds 3.5 tonnes and should such transportation result in their personal gain these vehicles must have a tachograph fitted. I have read in the EU paperwork that 'dual vehicles' are exempt. I feel that this needs to be investigated and questions asked. I have been contacted personally at my home, by over 80 people ringing up as they have been stopped by VOSA or need Insurance advice. For instance one man had a problem as his carriage was hit by a person driving a car, who was proved to be over the limit, however since he could not give the insurance company his registration number the claim was not proceeding, this is why he contacted me for advice and which has since been sorted by my intervention.

Recently I invited members from LANTRA(our Sector Skills Council) to visit my yard. I have now been able to convince them that driving should be delivered through a BDS approved yard and is not just an adjunct to riding/stable management as is delivered by Colleges who think that if you can ride you can also drive.

We are at present working with Harper Adams University to deliver a Professional Harness Horse Drivers Course, there are many complications I am trying to sort out with them. If this course is successful and we are able to iron out the problems, I hope that the course will be run again thus giving the BDS some revenue and perhaps gaining more experts in the driving field. The Showing world, due to the economic climate, has suffered badly this year with a lack of entries. If we do not support our shows we will lose the classes. National Driving Trials have already been down this route with less turnouts leading to fewer events.

I congratulate the Awards Board on the results they have achieved over the last few years. I have a very good Council who work very hard, they get up to spend all day at meetings with only the reward of their travelling expenses. We all try to do our best and we do listen to suggestions from our members.

5. **TO PROPOSE** that the Articles of Association of the Society be altered by Special Resolution as follows:- The words in article 4.3. shall be replaced entirely with the words 'An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held once a year at such time and place nominated by the Council'.

Mr Corbett explained to the members, that this has come about as we have tried to bring the AGM in conjunction with the Judges Conference and the AC 's Conference, followed by a Dinner Dance, to encourage the membership to come and socialise for the day at the end of the driving year. At present Article 4.3 reads that 'An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held

once a year, at such time (within six months of the end of the Society's financial year and not more than fifteen months since the date of the last Annual General Meeting) and place nominated by the Council. Mr Corbett stated that due to new regulations the Society is not legally required to hold an AGM at all, but feel that this is an opportunity for everyone to come together to air their views.

This alteration was proposed by Mr Mervyn Ward and seconded by Mr David Haig. All members present voted unanimously in favour of the resolution.

6. TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE ACCOUNTS FOR 2009 – MR RICHARD LANNI

Mr Richard Lanni, Chairman of the Finance Committee, briefly summarised the annual report and financial statement document which was circulated to all members of the Society in the May newsletter (for the year ending 31st December 2009), previous to the AGM.

Mr Lanni reported a deficit on ordinary activities, after taxation amounting to £47,567 with the full amount to be deducted from reserves. Mr Lanni highlighted that Council who held office during the year took their responsibilities extremely seriously. He also pointed out to members the small companies exemption on page 1 of the Annual Report and Financial Statement.

Income -Members will note a slight reduction of subscription rates for 2009 as opposed to 2008.

Surplus on passports reduced to £4,429 having caught up with the regulations. Likewise the WATO fees have now reduced significantly and are expected to reduce further through 2010 with the majority having now gained their certificate.

The Salisbury Bursary Fund finished its three-year term in April this year, with many members having taken advantage of this Bursary towards taking their Road Driving Assessment.

Brewin Dolphin, with regard to the financial situation saw fit to sell of some of our investments that suffered slightly (£3,000). He went on to congratulate Mr Sam Curtis (Treasurer of the BDS) who recouped £4,183 in Value Added Tax Repayment following reading an article in the Horse and Hound.

Expenditure – There has been a slight rise in expenditure for the production of the BDS Newsletter, Area Subsidies have also has a slight increase.

Test and Training costs are coming in at just under £30,000 the bulk of the work for the new tests now being completed. We have recognition for Levels 2 and 3 and are very close to achieving recognition for level 4.

Salaries show a slight decrease due to Mrs Anne Hawkins retiring and the post not being taken up for a couple of months.

Insurance costs kept pegged for 2009.

In essence the deficit accrued during this year has been as a direct result of the reduction of WATO income from 2008.

We have paid a little bit of taxation during 2009 and the deficit has directly affected the balance sheet resulting in less cash in the bank.

Smiths Lawn and Towerlands basically covered their costs with Towerlands showing a slight surplus and Smiths Lawn a slight deficit.

On the basis of this statement the British Driving Society is still in a strong financial position.

These accounts were approved by Council, on April 14th 2010.

Investment income was seen to suffer largely, due to the decrease in interest rates. Investments shown on page 6 are keeping abreast/ a little bit ahead of our original cost.

Page 8 - creditors represent those subscriptions paid in advance (pre 2010), these have shown a slight decrease due to members not paying their membership so promptly.

The British Driving Society is a company limited by guarantee, each member being liable to the sum of £1.

These accounts have been properly confirmed and no member has requested an audit.

Mr Lanni concluded by thanking the sponsors for their continuing support and proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Sam Curtis for all his hard work.

Mr Corbett then asked the members present for any questions on the accounts, there were no questions raised.

He then called for the adoption of the accounts by members present, proposed by Mrs Annie Rushton-Green and seconded by Mr Colin Pawson.

Mr Corbett went on to thank Mr Richard Lanni, Chairman of the Finance Committee for producing the accounts for 2009.

7. **COUNCIL** - Mr Corbett asked Council members present to introduce themselves to the membership and stated that they will be delighted to answer any questions you may have after the meeting.
8. **TO RECEIVE SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS** - Mr James Corbett informed the meeting that they had received a detailed list of questions from Mr Richard James. Council have been working to give detailed answers to the questions put forward. In order for members to understand the answers, a detailed response in writing has been given to all members present to read and if required ask questions on. If all members have read the paper, could I ask if there are any questions?

Mr Richard James – thanked Mr Corbett for the opportunity to talk, and thanked the Council for producing such a detailed answer to his questions, “not having had the time to read it, if I may Mr President I would like to respond to the President in writing. I will be writing to you with my reply”.

Mr John Parker asked if Mr James would be prepared to answer now. Mr James replied that he “will not be bullied into making a reply now”. That being the case Mr Corbett asked if there were any other questions/comments from other members attending the AGM?

Mr David Pritchard AAC for Surrey Area, stated that he was surprised by the tenor and details of the questions, he was nothing but impressed by the work Council have done in the last year. There was an immense amount of detail in the questions and in the reply. We look for the Society to represent us in government and to promote our sport and this is what they have done. They have also given us several successful shows. Major events such as Towerlands have been a great success and that is why we are thrilled with the work Council has done for us. The grass root members of the Surrey Area would like to thank the members of Council for this.

There being no further questions/comments the President Mr James Corbett thanked all the members present for coming to the meeting and restated that Council were available to talk to all members.

The meeting closed at 5.00pm.