

# Basingstoke Breast Cancer Self-help Group

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

Chairman: Angela Bennett

Treasurer: Renee Smith

Newsletter: Liz Janes

Secretary: Heather Bounaouara

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### Apologies

Kirsten Johnson, Sheila Glover, Sue Seymour, Brigitte Sullivan, Corine Thomas, Janet Webster, and Anne Parry

### Approval of Last Year's Minutes

Approval was given and the minutes were signed.

## Angela's report

Welcome everyone to the 2024 Basingstoke Breast Cancer Self Help Group Annual General Meeting.

Last year was a very special year for the group as we celebrated our 20th anniversary on 14th January 2023. The group chose to celebrate this occasion with dinner here at the Ark. On arrival, we were offered a glass of Bucks Fizz followed by a delicious three-course dinner with waitress service. Prior to dinner being served, Mr Myrddin Rees Consultant Surgeon and Chairman of Fundraising for the Ark Charity made a surprise visit to congratulate us on this special occasion by saying a few very kind words about the group and a brief history of the Ark.

Not many of you will know Mr Rees was instrumental in us being given permission to hold our meetings here and continues to this day to be very supportive of the group. Without his initial involvement over 20 years ago, I don't think we would have been granted permission to hold the first of our many meetings here. Our anniversary evening was certainly one we will, as a group, remember for some time.

What was special about last year was, on 15th February, we were once again able to meet face to face as a group after the Covid restrictions were lifted. During the Covid period, we kept in touch via Zoom meetings, but I think we will all agree, it's so much nicer to be able to meet together again here at the Ark.

As many of you know we are not a registered charity, but I feel it is very important we start each year with an AGM in order that you all know where and how the money that has been donated to us has been spent. This, as in any of our monthly meetings, gives you ladies the opportunity to ask any questions about the group's finances plus the opportunity to make any suggestions regarding the running of the group. It also gives you an opportunity to put your names forward if you would like to come onto our committee.

### REFERRALS

I am very pleased to tell you that the number of referrals increased from 22 in 2022 to 32 last year. An increase of 10

Referral breakdown:

DTC	9
DTC support worker	1
Group members	3
Website	9
Macmillan	1
Brochure	1
Other:	
Moving Forward course	5
5KYW	2
Previous group member	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	<u>32</u>

## **Meetings**

Last year, when we resumed face-to-face meetings, Mrs Sandra Fell, chairman of the Ark, requested we change our meeting times to 6pm to 8pm. I know this has been a problem for a few ladies, but the time of our monthly meetings is out of my hands.

## **Guest speakers**

For many years, guest speakers have come to the group to talk on a variety of very interesting subjects, and last year was no exception. We are most fortunate that we have three speakers who come every year and are all from the medical profession here at our hospital.

In May, the group welcomes Mr Kevin Harris Consultant Surgeon, who tells us about the latest surgical methods being used in breast surgery, plus up-to-date information on new treatments and medication. He is also happy to answer any of our questions.

October is reserved for the nurses at the DTC unit - each year around five nurses come and tell us what is new in the unit and how they are able to help newly diagnosed ladies plus existing patients still undergoing treatment. It is from the DTC the majority of referrals and enquiries about the group are made, plus they are my first point of contact should I have any queries regarding medical enquiries from ladies.

Mrs Rosie Stanton, Consultant Surgeon, was our guest speaker in November and she gave a most interesting talk and was happy to answer questions both during and after her presentation. For a variety of reasons this was Mrs Stanton's first visit to the group, and she will now be our permanent November speaker.

I am pleased to say all these speakers have agreed to come back next year.

Other speakers last year included Sarah Sharpe, Breast Team Dietitian; David Close, Head Judge for Cake International; two nurses from the DTC, who came to talk about lymphoedema and how to manage it; Kelly Gibson fundraising manager from Against Breast Cancer. At the meeting when we don't have a speaker, a quiz is very popular and is organised by Renee or Doreen.

## **Donations made/received**

These will be outlined in our Treasurer's report. Grateful thanks to everyone who has donated funds to the group. I always send a card of thanks to anyone who makes a donation to us.

## **Fundraising events**

Last year was our busiest fundraising year for a long time because of the recent Covid restrictions. I am delighted to tell you that from May to October we held five events raising much needed funds for the group. These events were a cake sale, two 'Nearly New' sales, quiz, and line dancing evenings. All these events were very well attended, and I would like to thank you all for your help and support in whatever way in making these events such a success.

## **Social events**

Over the years we have held many social events and now two are permanent fixtures in our social calendar. One is our canal trip on the Basingstoke canal in July and the other is a Skittles evening in August. As with all our social events, these are open to ladies plus their family and friends.

Our quiz evenings are always very popular and last year Renee organised one held in Kempshott Village Hall, which was very well attended and enjoyed by everyone. For the first time we had a line dancing evening held in Newnham Village Hall, organised by Liz, and enjoyed by all who attended. Both these social events were very popular and well supported. Grateful thanks to Renee and Liz for organising these two very popular social events, which together raised a considerable amount of money for group funds.

A small group of us are members of 5k Your Way which meets in the Memorial Park on the last Saturday of the month. All are welcome and afterwards we go for a coffee at Gaberdines leaving around 11.30am. Everyone is welcome - please contact Liz or Angela for more information.

As in previous AGM reports I like to thank publicly people who have helped me throughout the year, and this year is no exception.

**RENEE - GROUP TREASURER.** Renee continues to be a great help and support to me in the general day-to-day running of the group. Her main responsibility is looking after both the group's main and Cadbury bank accounts, which she does in a very professional and thorough manner. Part of Renee's responsibilities are:-

- a) Looking after the group's finances on a daily basis
- a) Producing a monthly spreadsheet
- b) Banking all cheques and cash
- c) Writing cheques for payments incurred by me in the running of the group

Knowing the group finances are in safe hands gives me comfort in the knowledge I can concentrate on other aspects associated with running the group. I am sure you all would like to thank Renee for all her hard work and commitment to being the group's Treasurer, which we all know is one of the most responsible positions a committee member can hold because it is based on honesty, integrity and trust. Thank you Renee.

#### **HEATHER - GROUP SECRETARY**

Heather has been the group's secretary for a number of years producing excellent and meticulous minutes, which she forwards onto Paula who uploads them into our website. As we're not a charity, we are not legally required to produce minutes of our meetings, but like our finances, I feel it is very important that we have a record of all our actions and transactions throughout the year. Heather is very conscientious in all aspects of her role as group secretary, making sure I sign and date each set of minutes and keeping them as a record of our meetings. Thank you Heather for all your help and being a member of our committee.

#### **LIZ - NEWSLETTER/IT CONSULTANT**

Some years ago, Liz offered to design and produce our own monthly newsletter. This publication has become an important source of information not only for the ladies in the group but other key members of the hospital staff. In each edition, Liz gives a brief report on events that have or are going to take place with relevant information such as dates, times, venues etc. Liz's attention to detail, including dates and speakers for the following five meetings, plus attaching a separate sheet with contact numbers for other organisations such as Macmillan and Breast Cancer Care, results in a very professional-looking and informative newsletter and one we are extremely proud of. Ladies who do not have access to email are sent a copy in the post.

Liz is also the Group's IT consultant, for which I am extremely grateful. Not having any IT skills myself, I relied on Liz when we were holding Zoom meetings. Thank you Liz.

Thank you Sheila for collecting the tea/coffee money at the start of each meeting; this goes into group funds.

#### GROUP WEBSITE

Paula very kindly continues to look after the group's website adding up-to-date and relevant information about the group where appropriate. At the beginning of the year, she uploads the dates and names of speakers for all our upcoming meetings. Paula also very kindly uploads the photographs taken during our social events adding them onto our gallery page.

It was at Paula's suggestion we resume our annual cake sale, which took place in October outside the Health Information Point in the hospital. Thanks to Maureen, Liz and Corrine who helped on the morning along with everyone who made or donated cakes.

I have, in the past, said our website is the "shop window" of the group, and I am very proud of it and want to thank Paula for looking after it for us so professionally. As our website is printed on our date cards and leaflets, it is often the first place newly diagnosed ladies will log onto to see what type of group we are and what help and support we are able to give them.

As we start our 21st year, I would like to thank you all for your continued support in making the group so special. We have made and unfortunately lost good friends during our journey of being diagnosed with breast cancer, but knowing our group is available to anyone at a very difficult time in their lives is so important. As a group, we want people to know that help, friendship, and support is just a phone call away. May 2024 be a good and healthy year for us all.