

STRABANE RDA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 31st. MAY, 2023

MADAM CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A warm welcome to you all for our 3^{2nd} Annual General Meeting which is back to its usual slot at the end of May.

Our last Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 28th September, 2022 when we had already started our new school year two weeks earlier on Wednesday, 14th September, 2022 so it was rather surreal!

We began this past year in a stronger position than the previous year as we were more familiar with all the new legislation required, we had enlisted a few more helpers to replace those who had left after the pandemic was over and we had most of the same pupils from Knockavoe as before so everything has been running quite smoothly.

Of the 3 new helpers who came in September, 1 dropped out after only her first session due to a cataract operation which, unfortunately, was not successful. The other 2 stayed the course, though intermittently, as they both have young children who are sometimes off school. Then, mid November, 2 more very welcome new helpers arrived who are very much staying the course. And, 2 weeks ago, another new helper turned up. This brings our total number of helpers to 14 which would seem ample enough but we still need to expand our pool of helpers. Not everyone can be present every week for various reasons and sometimes several helpers don't make it on a particular week. The highest number of attendees was 11 on 14th September, 2022 and then not until the 3rd May, 2023. The lowest number of attendees was 6 on the 8th March of this year. We always have to deduct 3 from those numbers as Julie is the coach, and Kathleen and myself are not physically able to work in the arena. So occasionally, we have had to rely on Knockavoe staff, who accompany the pupils, to make up the numbers required.

We are still operating with just 2 ponies but after many months of searching for another suitable pony, Julie has finally been successful. However, for the moment, we just don't have enough helpers to field 3 ponies.

We also had a visit by our 'boss' Marina Kidney on Wednesday, 28th September, 2022 (same date as AGM) who examined some pupils for their Grade 1 Test. She was well satisfied that all our records etc were in order.

We had earmarked the 7th December for a much lesser Christmas Party – no games in the arena, just a normal RDA session but Santa would arrive to hand out presents. But, it turned into quite a lively affair!! Julie had made a great effort to decorate the area outside of the

arena, Bruno and Jonnie were kitted out for the occasion and some helpers were also suitably attired! The atmosphere was buzzing!

We had a long winter break of 6 weeks and then resumed on Wednesday, 11th January, 2023. The beginning of 2023 was rather busy as we had to renew both our First Aid and Safeguarding courses which we have to do every 3 years. The first Aid course took place on Thursday 12th January, 2023 and the Safeguarding Course on Thursday, 16th February, 2023. Both courses were well attended.

On instructions from RDA HQ we also had to replace 7 of our riding hats by January 2023 to conform to new regulations. We were fortunate in that all 7 hats were sponsored by 2 local businesses as, once again, we have not been able to do any fundraising this past year.

And that brings us nicely to all things financial which I'm hoping our treasurer will clarify.

Next week, the 7th June, will be our last meeting before the summer vacation. We will have a small awards ceremony to which an invitation to parents has been extended. We tried this once before but no parents came so we just have to wait and see.

That ladies, is a brief summary of Strabane RDA group for the year. I hope I haven't left anything or anyone out. Last, but not least, my thanks to each of you, especially Anne our secretary and Maura our treasurer, for your input and commitment to Strabane RDA because without you we just couldn't function.

Thank you. ~

Signed: *Avril Pollock*
CHAIRPERSON

Date: *31, May 2023*



Normally the Group would have raised funds either through a Bag Pack at ASDA or a foyer collection, and also from collection boxes in local shops.

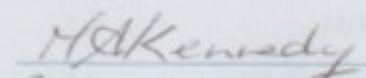
The main problems that the group is facing this year is a lack of volunteers and a need for fundraising to facilitate the running of the group.

Volunteers have been encouraged to use The Easyfunding App when shopping online and a percentage is donated to the group.

All volunteers and coaches have completed the Enhanced Access (N.I.) check. The Group has a Child Protection /Safeguarding Policy, updated annually and most volunteers have an up-to-date First Aid Certificate. There is always a nominated First Aider at each lesson.

The group has fulfilled the function in accordance with the Constitution and at all times has adhered to the Commission's guidance on Public Benefit and has met the obligations in regard to above.

Signed: Mrs. Avril Pollock


P.P. Chairperson / Trustee