

ROSPA

**Advanced Drivers
and Riders
West Yorkshire**

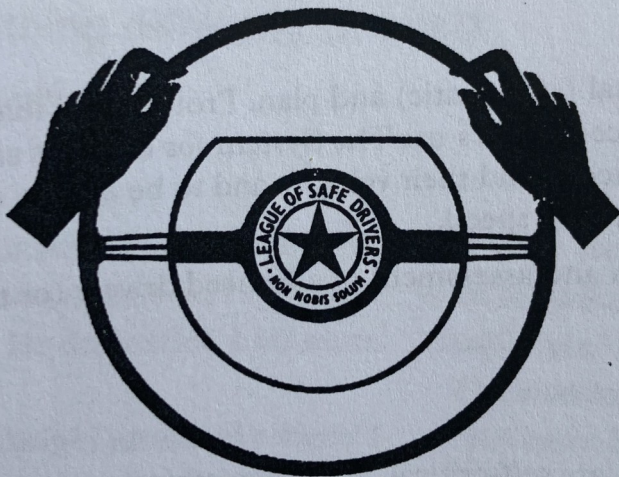
Drivers



WYG-RoADAR

History 1987-2025

LEAGUE OF SAFE DRIVERS



Riders

West Yorkshire RoSPA Advanced Drivers & Riders

Group History-Martin Jones April 2025

TIMELINE

April 1987 Inaugural meeting and committee formed.

April 1987 first newsletter

May 1987 first group meeting, committee becomes thirteen members.

June 1987 first president announced.

June 1987 group meetings to WY Fire Brigade HQ

August 1987 David Falkingham became newsletter editor.

December 1987 First Group Advanced Test Results announced.

January 1990 Group meetings moved to QEGS.

April 1990 Subs raised.

April 1990 First Group Constitution

1991 Group became a registered charity.

March 1996 Newsletter named TORQUE.

1999 New Group website went live.

May 2000 West Yorkshire Police launched Bikesafe 2000+

March 2006 Group renamed West Yorkshire RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders

Dec 2006 New President Kevin Sharp

April 2007 Group meetings moved to Bishopgarth.

June 2009 Group offers Advanced motorcycle tuition.

2014 Bishopgarth closed, Group meetings moved to Garforth.

2016 New Torque Editor Geoff Blackburn Full colour publication

2019 New Torque Editor Martin Jones. Torque becomes on-line publication.

2023 The group offer free membership to under 25-year-olds.

2023 15 Year Life members do not pay subs confirmed by committee.

2023 Subs remain at £20 for all members with motorcyclists paying an initial £15 as an Associate. Early payment £4 discount remains for existing members paying by bankers' draft.

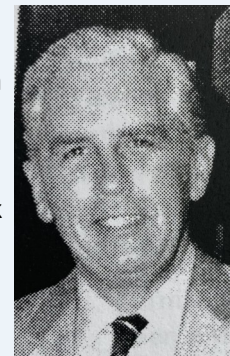
Introduction

Some of the group history was collated by our chairman at a meeting to present to the West Yorkshire Deputy Lord Lieutenants after the group was nominated for the Kings Award for Voluntary Service. I have managed to fill in some of the gaps with the help of long-standing group members Helen Stapleton and Bob Joyner and more information verified from early group newsletters, later to be named TORQUE. Helen provided me with the first fifteen newsletters other than issue thirteen and Mike Bell had all except issues sixteen and nineteen.



Keith Bamford

Keith Bamford, a chartered Physicist, and a Science teacher at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School (QEGS) in Wakefield was also a RoSPA Diploma holder. He had also been a member of the “Bradford 30” Advanced driving club with a desire to improve the standard of driving on the roads of West Yorkshire. He contacted RoSPA head office in Birmingham to seek guidance on forming a Yorkshire branch of the RoSPA Advanced Drivers Association (RoADA). He received a response from Mike Collins, a West Midlands Police Traffic Officer and the RoADA Chief Examiner.



Mike Collins

Meetings

An inaugural meeting was held at Horsforth Town Hall in April 1987, when the group were addressed by Sgt Rodgers of the West Yorkshire police driving school who gave an inspirational talk on advanced driving. A committee was formed with the Chairman being Eric Fenton, Treasurer Keith Beaumont, and General Secretary Bob Joyner. Keith was appointed Roadcraft Secretary, named so because all tuition would be based on “Roadcraft, the Police Drivers Manual.” He would be responsible for receiving applications for tuition, allocation of pupils to tutors and the preparation of new tutors.

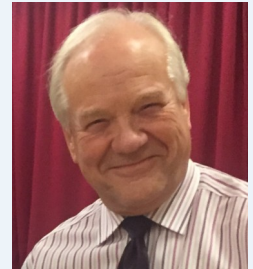
The committee decided there would be a charge for membership of the Yorkshire RoADA group, £6 per annum for those who were already RoSPA ADA members and £12 for an Associate member. There would be no fee for tuition, but the group would charge £5 for training materials which included a copy of Roadcraft and the Highway Code. The committee also decided there would be group nights held on the last Tuesday of every month except December. The first of these would be held at 1930 on 26th May 1987 at the Wakefield Road Safety Office, Cliff Field House, Burton Street, which would take the form of an assessment drive for any members wishing to have one. Members of the Manchester branch of RoADA also attended the May meeting and gave helpful advice and information to the group. These facts were all relayed to members in the first group newsletter put together by Keith in April 1987.

The second newsletter announced that future group meetings would be held at West Yorkshire Fire Brigade HQ at Birkenshaw. This arrangement only lasted until the end of 1989 when it was decided to charge the group £35 per visit to cover the cost of heating and lighting. The newsletter also asked for members to encourage others to join the group and attend the group meetings. Further committee members were appointed in various roles, Alan Fleet for Publicity, Alan Spencer for visits and Steven Moore for Liaison. A further six group members formed the rest of the committee making a total of thirteen.

Monthly committee meetings were held in the Music Lecture Room at QEGS and Group meetings were moved to QEGS in January 1990 and remained there until April 2007 when the new venue at Bishopgarth, the Police Training College at Wakefield was used. Bishopgarth closed in 2014 and although West Yorkshire police moved their training facilities to Carr Gate on the outskirts of Wakefield, security of the new site meant it was not possible to facilitate a meeting venue for outside groups such as ours. The group and committee meetings were moved to Garforth Miners Welfare Hall which we pay to hire on an hourly basis. West Yorkshire Fire Service have community rooms at some Fire Stations which are free and the one at Stanningley Fire Station in Leeds has been used for some tutor’s meetings.

Group President

The group has had nine presidents so far, the majority of whom were high ranking police officers in West Yorkshire Police Operations Division. The second newsletter published in June 1987, announced the appointment of a group president, Chief Superintendent Alan Charlesworth (*opposite*). He was succeeded by Chief Superintendent J Ellis from 1989 to 1992. Superintendent P Westwood from 1992 to 1994. Assistant Chief Constable Med Hughes from 1994 to 1997. Alan Charlesworth returned at the rank of Deputy Chief Constable in 1997 to 1999. Assistant Chief Constable Steve Smith from 1999 to 2000. Chief Superintendent Gavin Edwards, who was president from 2000 to 2004. He passed the Advanced driving test and achieved a Gold and was also a keen motorcyclist who wrote several articles for Torque. Chief Inspector Gary Parker from 2004 to 2006 before our current President, retired Police Inspector Kevin Sharp (*opposite*) who took on the role in 2006.



Group Chairpersons

Although the group was started by Keith Bamford, the first chairman was Eric Fenton who remained so until January 1996 when he was replaced by Nadia MacGranthin. Nadia served for three years and was replaced by Dr Jenny Caddy in January 1999 who stayed in the post until January 2004. Alan Secker then served for just one year until Robin Jones became chairman in January 2005 until January 2008. Keith Bamford did step up for just one year and then Phil Steward became chairman from January 2009 until 2014. Mike Suggitt followed until 2023 then the role was taken by our eighth and current chairman Jon Taylor.



Nadia MacGranthin



Dr Jenny Caddy



Robin Jones



Keith Bamford



Mike Suggitt



Jon Taylor

Group Treasurer

Keith Beaumont from 1987 for the first year and then Jean Hilliam from 1988 to 1990 with Debbie LePoidevin from 1990 to 2001. Peter Stirk (*opposite*) then became the longest serving group treasurer in 2002 until handing over the finances to Ellen Clayton in 2024.



Group Secretary

Keith Bamford was classed as the Roadcraft secretary initially with Bob Joyner taking on the role of General Secretary for three years. In 1990 Robert Harland became secretary for three years when Norman Stitt took over from 1993 until at least 2011. He had a one-year break in 2003 when Keith Bamford stepped in, even though he was training officer. By 2016 the role had been taken on by Allan Wragg who remained secretary until 2020 when the reins were passed to the group's current secretary, Nigel Storey.



Bob Joyner



Allan Wragg



Nigel Storey

Training Officer

Keith Bamford was classed as the Roadcraft secretary initially until 1996 when his title was changed to Training Officer. A role he kept until his death. Along the way he had assistants in John Mosby for 2005 and 2006, then Angela Wilson in 2007 and 2008. The role of assistant was then taken on by Mike Bell until he inherited the Training Officer role upon Keith's death. Then once the motorcycle section became established, he became Car Training Officer. Mikes assistant was Ken Sykes for a short while until Dave Green stepped up to assist in 2020. Martin Jones took over as Deputy Car Training officer to assist Mike in 2023.



Mike Bell



Dave Green



Martin Jones



Pete Fenlon



Richard Hirst

When the motorcycle section started, all training had to be organised via the Training Officer but as the motorcycle membership grew, Mike Suggitt, who was now a committee member, became the motorcycle co-ordinator in 2011. Pete Fenlon also joined the group that year and having passed his advanced test and then the diploma in 2014, became the Motorcycle Training Officer in 2015. Richard Hirst took on the role in 2022 and Pete stepped down to become deputy where he remains today. Dave Green became Motorcycle Training officer in 2023 and remains in post.

Group Subscriptions

1987 Full RoADA members-£6. Associate members-£12.

1988 Full RoADA members-£6. Associate members-£17. Associate members under 21-£14.50 Associate members received free Roadcraft and |Highway Code.

1990 Full RoADA members-£10. Associate members-£20. Associate members under 21-£15. Family membership of £8 each per Full RoADA member.

1995. Full RoADA member-£15, Associate members-£27.50. Intermediate Associates (17-21)-£16. Family members-£12.50 per person.

1999 Full RoADA members-£17. Associate members-£35. Intermediate Associates-£17. Family members-£15 per person.

2001 Full RoADA members-£17. Associate members-£17. Family members £2 discount per person.

2004 Full RoADA members-£20. Associate members-£20. £4 discount for members who paid by bankers' draft.

2016 All membership categories-£20. Family members £2 discount per person. Motorcyclists-£35 (Associate members pay an extra £15 upon joining to cover the cost of the group hi-vis vest and towards the cost of the tutors' fuel for the IAR and PTA.)

2023 All membership categories-£20. All discounts removed. Free membership for under £25's. Fifteen years continuous membership entitles free Lifetime membership.

TORQUE Editors

Keith Bamford had been responsible for producing the first two newsletters. The first consisting of a single A4 sheet typed on both sides. By the third newsletter, published in August 1987, the role of editor had been taken over by group member David Falkingham. This consisted of seven pages printed on one side only with the following ones being printed on both sides of the paper. Although they still appeared to have been typed on a typewriter, the RoADA logo appeared on the front cover. They were now printed on both sides of an A4 sheet stapled together with the top left corners before being posted to members. There were four issues printed in the first year but only one in April 1988. 1989 through to 1995 saw three issues printed each year.

By issue fourteen, Torque appears to have been compiled with the use of a computer as the layout became more adventurous and included articles from members and other sources which were copied into the pages of the newsletter. Issue twenty had the newsletters first black and white photographs. Two side by side photos of a woman pushing a child in a pushchair in front of a car which were supposed to show the driver's view and demonstrate the difference between normal vision and low luminance myopia. The editor had to ask the reader to make allowance for the quality of the photocopier which obviously only printed in black ink. It's known that although David edited and produced the newsletter, the finished publication was taken to Keith to copy on a photocopier leased by the group specifically for the task.

Issue 27, printed in March 1996, saw the newsletter now named TORQUE. Printing also became more regular with issues published every three months in March, June, September and December until 2011. David remained editor until his last issue, number 72 which he published in June 2007. There was no issue in September that year which would have been issue 73. Keith once more took on the role of Editor in December 2007 and produced issue 73, but then missed-out issue 74 as March 1987 became issue 75. Torque now became a folded A3 document with a green outer cover and usually around 22 or 24 pages. Some articles could be as long as five pages, but more black and white photographs appeared, and it was now printed professionally, but was still being posted to members. The last Torque produced by Keith Bamford for the group was edition 89 in September 2011. Keith sadly passed away the following year.

With a four-year gap in the publication of the group newsletter, Geoff Blackburn took on the role of editor of Torque. As a motorcyclist, the articles leaned towards those on two wheels and the absence of articles written by car members was evident. Using Microsoft Publisher, he produced three editions in 2016 and a further three in 2017. These were now professionally printed as an A5 folded booklet in full colour. They were still put in stamped addressed envelopes and posted out to members. The accounts show a cost of £575 in February 2018 for the publication of Torque. It's not known if this was for the 2017 year or per publication.

Another year gap and Martin Jones volunteered to take on the role of editor in 2019. With no knowledge of any previous editions before he joined the group in 2017, he had only seen the professional job Geoff had made. Wanting to save the group the costs involved, the committee agreed Torque could stop being printed and posted to members. They have since been published every three months in line with the seasons and emailed to about two hundred members and other interested parties such as guest speakers and RoSPA Head Office staff. A few were printed at first and taken to meetings but now they are sent out only by email and are also available on the group website. To date Martin has edited twenty-five issues of Torque and has taken the decision to re-number them to fall in line with those previously published. Therefore, the Summer 2025 issue is number 121.

Items of note in Newsletters and Torque

Having looked through all the issues of newsletters and Torque, there were several recurring things. Members had to be reminded that RoSPA subs and group subs were entirely separate, and group subs were due on 1st January. There were lots of requests for articles and it seemed to be the same people writing them. There were always articles written about the group meetings and the Annual General Meetings. Test passes were always published. The newsletter supplied by the Groups Advisory Panel (GAP) which no longer exists, was often reproduced. Examiners and Senior examiners contributed with articles. Know your tutor articles became prevalent.

1987 April. The first newsletter was published and consisted of a single A4 sheet typed on both sides.

1987 December The fourth newsletter published and announced the group first test passes. Karen Sanderson was the first group member to pass with a Grade 2 (Silver) on 14th August 1987. Keith Bamford had passed his RoSPA Advanced Drivers Diploma refresher which intimated he had passed it three years previously. Gareth Green and Paul Ripley had achieved a Grade 1 (Gold) .

1988 April In the fifth issue there were nine more test passes. Three new Diploma passes and one refresher, two Grade one (Gold) refreshers and one Grade one (Gold) initial and two Grade two (Silver) passes. With thirteen test passes and a membership of 22 Associate Members and 29 Full Members, all within the first year of the inaugural meeting showed the group was well on its way to success.

1989 Test gradings were changed from 1, 2 and 3 to Gold, Silver, and Bronze. This was because police drivers were graded that way and RoADA drivers are not trained to police standard.

1990 the group published their first Group Constitution.

1991 January Keith Bamford was elected as a member of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving. The Group became a registered charity (No.702531) and from the start was self-financing.

1994 April RoADA regalia and items were being sold at group meetings and advertised in the newsletter. Clothing, mugs, pens, and stickers were all there, which we give away today but other items such as driving jacket £27-99, lambswool sweatshirt £10 and acrylic £8, similar to the softshell fleece and polo shirts we also give away to tutors and committee members. Metal Car Badge £4.75, tax disc holder £1.15 and adhesive car sticker £1.15 all bearing the RoAD emblem were available to purchase, but only to those who had passed the advanced driving test,

1996 March newsletter now named TORQUE.

1996 June The group leased a new photocopier which could be used by any member of the group.

1996 September The group has its own website programmed and designed by member John Skilliter. Know your Tutors articles started to appear.

2000 new group President, Chief Superintendent Gavin Edwards announced that West Yorkshire Police would be launching Bikesafe 2000+ and the group were hoping to start their own motorcycle training. In March, after working with DIAMOND, RoADA and IAM, the DSA agreed a benchmark for advanced driving by creating an overall standard.

2002 March The constitution was changed after advice from the Charity Commission. The revised constitution had been sent out with the December v2021 edition but may have been a separate document as it does not form part of it.

2006 March Issue 67 published the group now became West Yorkshire RoSPA Advanced Drivers and Riders, although it didn't start to introduce motorcycle membership or tuition until 2009.

2007 March issue of Torque, the report on the AGM welcomed the new president, Kevin Sharp and stated Kevin had been a RoSPA examiner from 1981 to 2006. However, in my interview with him recorded in the Autumn 2019 issue, he had said he became an examiner in 1983 and still is to this day.

2009 June issue of Torque reported that the group could now offer a limited amount of motorcycle training to members. This was offered by Ian Cook, a West Yorkshire Police motorcyclist who had been involved in *Bikesafe* for several years. He hoped to encourage riders to join the group and receive training up to the standard of the advanced test. In the same edition it was reported that members could now receive their copy of Torque electronically instead of by post.

2010 December issue showed that twenty-six car drivers passed advanced tests that year. Within a year of commencement of motorcycle training, nine motorcyclists had also passed the advanced test.

2011 June issue shows Mike Suggitt as Motorcycle coordinator, and it is reported there are now forty motorcycle members.

2016 and 2017 Three issues published each year. They are available as a pdf.

2019 to 2025 25 issues available as pdf and available on website.