

READING PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on
Friday 7th March 2025 at 7:26 p.m.

Present: 36 Members in person including two new members.
8 Partners in person
4 Members by Zoom.

Alex Miles hosted the meeting and welcomed all members to the meeting, with a particular welcome to two new members.

1. Apologies for Absence.

No apologies for absence had been received.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the AGM of 1st March 2024

The minutes of the AGM on 1st March 2024 had been unanimously approved on the 24th March 2024 by those 46 RPCSG members who attended the AGM. No comments were raised on the 2024 minutes.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes / Action Points from previous AGM.

No actions had been placed at the AGM of 1st March 2024. No 'Matters Arising' had occurred since then and no comments were raised by the audience.

4. Presentation of financial accounts.

The financial accounts for 2024 were included in the 2024 Trustee Report that had been distributed to members in advance of the AGM.

Treasurer Richard Joyes summarised that our financial position was better at the end of 2024 than at the beginning, and that our achievement of Charitable Status should help our finances in the future, including the recovery of Gift Aid on any donations.

No queries were raised on the accounts. Alex asked for a show hands by those members in favour of the examined accounts at which the majority (probably all) of the members, voted in favour.

Richard was thanked for his management of the treasurer role.

5. Trustee's Report

Thanks to extensive efforts by Beverley, the RPCSG achieved the status of Charitable Incorporated Organisation in November 2024. This will have several benefits including the ability to recover Gift Aid on any donations received.

The first Trustee Report covering 2024 had been distributed to members and will eventually be submitted to the Charities Commission. For completeness the report is reproduced below:

TRUSTEE'S REPORT FOR 2024

Covering period January 2024 to December 2024

ORGANISATION

At the AGM of 2023 our Chairman Chris Addison relinquished the role after serving for seven years on the committee of which the last four years were as chairman. We are very grateful to Chris for his excellent execution of the role.

We have been unable to fill the role of chairman since Chris relinquished the role, but the group has continued to remain fully functional, having devolved the responsibilities of the chairman to other trustees. The email account of chairman@rpcsg.org.uk remains active with the mailbox being monitored and responded to by several of the trustees.

Thanks to Chris Addison for continuing to perform the Meet and Greet role (i.e. welcoming current and new members, handing out badges and ensuring attendance is recorded) during our group meetings, which the committee very much appreciates.

This Trustee's report for 2024 has been written by the trustees to document the activities, events and achievements of RPCSG.

CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

In June 2024 the committee started to look into whether the RPCSG could become a registered charity, recognised some benefits and Beverley began work on adapting our constitution to the requirements of the Charity Commission. The proposal to become registered was put to the RPCSG membership at an EGM (Extraordinary General Meeting) held on 4th October 2024 with a motion that the RPCSG amends the constitution and applies for charitable status. This motion was unanimously approved by the membership. An application with a revised constitution was made and we are pleased to say that our application was successful on 5th November 2024 and that the RPCSG is a charitable organisation with the charity number 1210779.

Many thanks are due to Beverley, who did tremendous work in raising an application form and negotiating with the Charities Commission for a revised constitution.

The revised constitution can be seen in our web site (www.rpcsg.org.uk) in the 'About Us' tab.



FINANCIAL REPORT

At the end of 2024 Treasurer Richard Joyes compiled the following financial report for the year ended 31st December 2024.

The unit of the figures is pounds sterling (GBP £)

READING PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

A Registered Charity in England & Wales, No. 1210779

READING PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP			
A Registered Charity in England & Wales, No. 1210779			
ACCOUNTS 2024			
	RECEIPTS	EXPENDITURE	
Balance brought forward	2,311.67		
Refreshments	481.00	Website/PC costs	179.06
Donations received	954.82	Hall Rental	675.00
Summer Social	265.00	Insurance	352.98
Summer Raffle	184.00	Stationery/Printing	172.35
Christmas Social	1,230.00	Summer Social	189.57
Christmas Raffle	277.00	Christmas Social	1,050.60
Website Fee Overpayment	6.72	Gifts/Donations	15.00
		Telephone Helpline	27.05
		Awareness - Pitch Rental	72.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	<u>3,398.54</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>2,733.61</u>
		Balance carried forward	<u>2,976.60</u>
	5,710.21		5,710.21
Signed  6-1-25	Treasurer	Richard I. Joyes	
Signed  15-2-25	Examiner	Roslyn Brewster	

The above accounts have been examined by an independent qualified examiner.

NOTES CONCERNING THE FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

1. We ended the year with a healthier bank balance, some £665 more than at the start of 2024. This was mainly due to a number of very generous donations – from Members, from an awareness event and from other organisations – Wokingham Lions, Wokingham U3A and a Church Life Group.
2. Refreshment income: This covers donations given for the cups of tea and coffee at the ten Group meetings over the year (not including the two Socials).

3. The very well supported raffles at the summer and Christmas Socials raised a combined sum of £461.
4. Hall Rental costs: For the first nine months of the year we continued to pay £20 per hour; this increased to £22.50 per hour from October.
5. Insurance: We require this for Public Liability and Property Damage insurance cover.
6. Stationery/Printing costs: This was mainly for the printing of the new tri-fold awareness leaflets. The donation from Wokingham Lions covered this cost.
7. Gifts/Donations: We have been fortunate to continue to obtain help from guest speakers throughout the year. The cost of gifts is to enable us to provide a token gift to those speakers.
8. The Pitch Rental cost was for our Awareness event in Broad Street, Reading. We ran three other Awareness events in 2024 – at Tesco in Wokingham, Wokingham U3A and at the Trinity Concert Band Christmas concert in Reading Minster. All were very successful.

Many thanks to Richard Joyes for managing our finances and organising our meeting refreshment rota.

GROUP MEETINGS

The RPCSG held a group meeting on the first Friday of each month. The meetings included social events and group meetings at which guest speakers gave talks on subjects relevant to prostate cancer. At meetings involving a talk by a speaker we continued to have a Zoom connection which is advantageous for members who cannot travel and enabled some other prostate cancer support groups to participate remotely.

During 2024 the group meetings consisted of:

- 3 Open meetings – members free to chat among themselves
- 5 Speakers delivering talks on topics concerning prostate cancer
- 2 Social events (Summer and Christmas), including buffet meals
- 2 Question & Answer sessions – questions replied by senior oncology nurses

The Open Meetings have proved particularly welcomed by members.

Many thanks to Beverley for arranging a very successful programme of group meetings, with several interesting and informative talks by guest speakers.

The 2024 Annual General Meeting was held at the start of the group meeting in March 2024 and minutes of that AGM can be seen in our web site (www.rpcsg.org.uk) in the 'Newsletter and AGM' tab.

During 2024 the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH) introduced Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Cameras in the majority of their car parks, including the front car park on London Road for which they had previously granted RPCSG members permission to park on the Friday evenings of our Group Meetings – provided we displayed an approved permit. As luck would have it Beverley was working at RBH at the time and was able to negotiate permission to park in Melrose House West Car Park on Watlington Street (opposite the hospital, which does not have ANPR cameras) – provided we display a revised approved permit dated November 2024. Thanks to Beverly Skelton for negotiating this with RBH.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

The group undertakes support work in many forms. The group meetings are an opportunity for members to talk to each other for peer-to-peer support, and some experienced members also provide one-to-one support when members require this. We always allow time for this, even when there is a speaker or other scheduled activity at a group meeting. This support is also available on our Walk and Talk sessions. We also provide support via our telephone support line or occasionally over a one-to-one Zoom session. Over the year, we had around 55 calls to our support line totalling almost 12 hours. While some calls may be simple questions which are easily answered, others such as from a newly diagnosed patient considering treatment choices are often over an hour while we discuss their concerns and what treatment options are available. We can arrange follow-on conversations with other members who have had specific treatments.

Thanks to Steve Parkinson for producing the Pharos newsletter that is sent to all members, the AGM and EGM documentation plus the agendas and minutes of all our committee meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the RPCSG has always been free of charge. Many men choose to leave the group as their treatment and recovery take place, whilst others remain 'active' members who have involvement with the group.

During 2024 17 men joined the group, which is down from the 29 members joining in 2023, which was unusually high following Covid-19. During the year 12 partners also joined the group, which was only a slight drop from the 15 who joined in 2023.

AWARNESS AND PROMOTION

We have two target audiences we try to connect with:

- Those diagnosed with prostate cancer, for whom we can provide support.
- Those not diagnosed with prostate cancer, for whom we raise awareness of this cancer, which usually has no symptoms and for which there is no screening program. Early detection depends on the awareness of the individual.

We have developed promotional posters and A5 handouts with RPCSG contact information given to hospitals for inclusion in the pack which is given to all newly diagnosed patients. The latter have resulted in 1-3 new members joining in most months. Our posters are displayed in public places such as libraries, public conveniences, dental and medical surgeries and waiting rooms. A record is kept of the locations of our posters.

We hold occasional awareness events at which our stand is manned by volunteers, to inform the public about prostate cancer. During 2024 these have been held in Broad Street, Reading, Tesco in Wokingham, a Wokingham U3A meeting and during the Trinity Concert Band's Christmas Concert in Reading Minster. We have developed a tri-fold awareness leaflet that provides an overview in plain English of what prostate cancer is and we are now handing these out during our awareness events. Wokingham Lions kindly funded the first print run of 2,500 copies of the tri-fold leaflet, for which we were very grateful.

At our awareness events we have noticed an increase in the number of men who have either heard of prostate cancer or who have had PSA measurements. We are pleased with this result that indicates that the awareness of the disease is widening.

Two '*Value of being a member of RPCSG*' interviews were videoed in November and are in the process of being edited. Thanks to Steve Allen for conducting the interviews. The intention is to make these available on our website and also offer them to Tackle, the charity that supports prostate cancer support groups, including RPCSG. We also hope to video some further interviews during 2025.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

We held our usual two social events during the past year, being the Summer Social in July 2024 and the Christmas social in December 2024. Both of these events were very enjoyable and successful, with the number of guests being 43 and 41 respectively. The socials were held in the church hall, with a buffet meal provided by an external contractor for the Christmas social.

At the summer event the raffle raised a surplus of £184 that helped towards the cost of the evening. The Christmas raffle raised £277 that again helped towards the costs of holding the event. Many thanks are due to Alex Miles and Steve Allen for the organisation and management of the social events, and Beverley Skelton and Nigel Booth for managing the raffles.

WALK AND TALK SESSIONS, AND COFFEE MORNINGS

We held a walk in each month, each walk invariably ending in a pub or café for refreshments, to which non-walkers are invited to join.

The walks are very leisurely to enable as many members as possible to attend, and have been very enjoyable and a great opportunity to chat with members whilst taking some gentle exercise. These are a particularly valuable support resource to men with a recent diagnosis, for whom the walks are a great chance to discuss options in a relaxed atmosphere.

Many thanks to Richard Brown for a very successful programme of interesting and enjoyable walks during the year. Thanks also to Andrew Gabriel for his contribution to the walks and for issuing regular 'events' emails that advertise the group meetings, walks, events, and information on several other external meetings and events of interest.

TRUSTEES

The application for charitable status nominated eight persons as trustees:

Steve Allen	Awareness Secretary
Nigel Booth	Webmaster
Peter Dawe	Membership Registrar & OneDrive Admin
Andrew Gabriel	Membership Communications
Richard Joyes	Treasurer
Alex Miles	Social Secretary
Steve Parkinson	Secretary & editor
Beverley Skelton	Hospital Liaison

These trustees meet regularly as a committee, to manage the proceedings of the group. We can have up to 12 trustees so if you would like to help with the running of the group we would welcome new trustee members. Please let us know at any meeting. Further thanks are due to Nigel Booth and Peter Dawe. Nigel is a skilled webmaster, maintaining our web site which is invaluable for information and reference, and to Peter Dawe for managing our databases and records in the OneDrive workspace, and for his contribution in facilitating the Zoom connection for many of our group meetings.

Finally, a big thank you to all our group members for their support by attendance at our meetings and events. The average attendance at group meetings excluding socials was 34.

Wishing you the very best and good health in 2025.

The Trustees.

19/2/2025

6. Election of committee members.

Under the terms of the RPCSG constitution the following committee members (who are also trustees), are due to be re-elected for a further year of service:

Steve Allen	Awareness Officer
Peter Dawe	Membership Registrar & OneDrive Admin
Andrew Gabriel	Membership Communications
Richard Joyes	Treasurer
Alex Miles	Social Secretary and Chief Fire Officer
Steve Parkinson	Secretary and acting Editor

Alex asked for a show of hands by those in favour of the re-election of the above members for a further 12 month of service. All group members present voted in favour and there were no dissensions hence the members were unanimously elected.

7. Any Other Business

Steve Allen mentioned a big event for the RPCSG which is our annual awareness stand in Broad Street Reading. This is always a successful event with much interaction and the handing out of information to members of the public. The date is Saturday 28th June 2025 and any member who can spare some time to be present at the stand for any length of time will be most appreciated. You can volunteer by talking to a committee member or email to chairman@rpcsg.org.uk,

It was mentioned that we have not had a chairman for two years (although the chairman's mailbox is being monitored). It was said that if anything, the committee is working better in the absence of a chairman, as issues are being resolved at an individual level.

8. Date of next AGM.

The proposed date of the next AGM is the 6th March 2026.

Alex thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7:38 p.m.