

## The History of the BADIs

Even before he qualified as an ADI on 21 March 1996, David Wilkinson was aware of a widespread attitude amongst ADIs which he thought futile.



This amounted, at times, to complaining that the DSA owed a living to the ADI; that the DSA register should be closed; that the DSA should make lessons with an ADI compulsory and set a minimum fee and a minimum number of hours.

All were clearly ludicrous, anti-competitive, illegal under EU law, and against the public interest. This was a frightened, ineffective and ignorant crying-at-the-moon. David's soon-to-be business partner, Lisa Attwell, thought similarly. Were they alone, or did other ADIs agree? They needed to join a local ADI association and find out.

"Driving Magazine", the bimonthly glossy from DIA—which both Lisa and David had joined long before becoming ADIs—offered little hope. It had some constructive articles, but the letters page seemed to be full of whining, failing ADIs, many of whom (they supposed) were ADIs only because they'd been sacked from some other job, and thought "I can drive, therefore I can become a driving instructor". If the letters page reflected the membership, a self-selecting organisation of perhaps the "top" third of ADIs, then things looked bleak.

They searched for a local (i.e. Birmingham-based) ADI association, but failed to find one. In May 1996 David wrote to the DIA asking if they knew of one, and a day later the DIA replied to suggest they start one, enclosing some guidance notes. The hidden irony was that an ADI association did already exist, but had contrived to make itself invisible—the new 'BADIs' which David and Lisa later former subsequently came to meet in exactly the same building (the Quinborne Community Centre, Birmingham) as they had!

So, the reason for forming BADIs was to establish a sorely-needed ADI association in Birmingham: one in which the members would not whine but get off their seats and better themselves. You don't get to the top by dragging everyone else down to below your level. You do so by surrounding yourself by your betters, and hanging on to their coat-tails. This, surely, stands to reason.

Oh, and "BADIs"? Well, the last thing we wanted was to form an association whose members believed in an "Us and Them" and that we (ADIs) were the Goodies and they (DSA), the Baddies.

And so, on 27 January 2000, David Wilkinson and Lisa Attwell hired a large hall with a bar in Selly Oak, Birmingham, the then meeting hall of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society. With the help of many friends and contacts, and announcements in both the DIA's "Driving Magazine" and the MSA's "Newslink", BADIs had its inaugural meeting, excellently chaired by Steve Tew.

Following initial formalities, and decisions about meeting frequencies / venues, we were pleased to welcome DSA's Barry Goodwin as Guest Speaker. Barry presented on the wide variety of work he did for DSA, with cars, trucks and buses, and then took questions. BADIs members got first-hand answers from a man who knows, and on a wide range of problems. BADIs had begun.

By June 2000, at the far cheaper venue of a classroom within the Joseph Chamberlain College, Highgate, we adopted a constitution, elected the first committee, and set our membership fee at £5. Our guest speaker, Julie Hughes, spoke about the various courses at Matthew Boulton College which can help ADIs develop both their teaching and business skills: there were even government grants to help. That autumn, our first DSA individuals joined us ... and we've enjoyed significant figures to learn from—as well as continuing to learn among ourselves—in the twenty-plus years since!