

About my MBE Award

Just before Christmas 2002, I received a letter from The Foreign & Commonwealth Office dated 19th December, informing me that this honour was conferred on me - 'by Her Majesty in recognition of (your) services to the charity RoadPeace'.

My MBE ceremony was held on 25th March 2003 in the Houses of Parliament in a beautiful room accessible from Westminster Hall and was attended by very many RoadPeace friends, my daughter, personal friends and co-campaigners, many MPs from our APPG including Andrew Miller, its chair, and the German Ambassador. The award was presented by Lord Falconer, at the time Minister at the Home Office, later Lord Chancellor, who said it was the first time he had performed such a task.

I learnt that RoadPeace patrons and board members had applied for my award during the Summer of 2000. The following are quotes from the many letters of application.

Andrew Miller MP

As a Patron of the charity, I have known Mrs Chaudhry for about seven years. Despite losing her son in a road crash, she has worked tirelessly in the interests of other road traffic victims and their families.As a result of her leadership, RoadPeace now supports people up and down the country, fulfilling a role that had been largely ignored in the past. The campaigning work that Mrs Chaudhry also leads is having a real impact on policy and the attitude of the media in a very difficult area.

Caroline Williams

I have known Mrs Chaudhry for eight years and have worked closely with her on the national committee for six.....In spite of the enormous workload that has built up over the years, Brigitte never lost sight of her main concern, that is supporting the bereaved and injured. She will still spend long sessions with family members, giving all her sympathy and understanding, as well as help from her prodigious knowledge and phenomenal memory. I can think of few people who would deserve an honour more and sincerely hope this application is successful.

Colin Ettinger PI lawyer

....There is no doubt that RoadPeace would not have grown to its size and credibility had it not been through the hard work, conscientiousness and sheer ability of Brigitte. She is just about the most dedicated person I have met. She is committed to the cause of improving the lot of road crash victims, as well as road safety. Her continuous drive and support of these aims is quite simply formidable.... Her hard work and dedication deserve to be recognised.

Joanne Browning

I wish to support the nomination for a national honour of Mrs Brigitte Chaudhry, whom I have known and held in the highest esteem since being helped by RoadPeace after my baby was killed by a negligent driver six years ago. I have seen her work at close hand through subsequent years when I was a member of the RoadPeace national committee, as a friend, and also objectively as a career journalist.....Brigitte Chaudhry turned her personal tragedy into the first campaign in this country to help any and every victim of a road crash.....she took on this massive problem single handedly with a unique blend of stoical determination and dedicated compassion. She started by advertising her own plight and offering her phone number to anyone similarly affected, and then she spent hours every day (every week, every month and eventually every year) listening to the torment of one survivor after another....Mrs Chaudhry wept with us and then became angry, and her compassion would not allow her to just mop up the tears of all the people whose lives have been ruined....Her campaign quickly moved into the arena of prevention, reducing danger for all road users....Her vision has afforded policy makers fresh insights into this country's traffic problems and given them, for the first time in many instances, the victims' point of view and positive suggestions for change.

Her tireless work for prevention alone deserves the gratitude of all of us....None of us helped by her can think of an accolade high enough for such selfless striving for the greater good....

Professor Marcel Haegi, President of FEVR

Mrs B Chaudhry fully deserves a national honour for her outstanding contribution to the assistance of road traffic victims....She is also very active in our European Federation of Road Traffic Victims, a Non Governmental Organisation (ONG) recognised by the United Nations, where successful actions undertaken by RoadPeace are often replicated in other countries. She is also at the origin of several successful international initiatives, such as the Remembrance Day, mutual assistance agreement to victims outside their home country, etc. For all this and her full devotion for the cause of road victims, we propose her for the attribution of a national honour.

Jay Calascione

I am writing in support of Brigitte Chaudhry who I fervently believe deserves this award for her selfless devotion to improving the plight of victims of road traffic crashes. My own son was killed at Christmas 1985....I met Brigitte in 1990 when she too was going through the early experience of the dreadful injustice and abandonment of those affected by road death....She determined to do something and drew together a small band of other victims and so the nucleus of RoadPeace was born....She has worked tirelessly with the various agencies involved so that the plight of those affected is not made worse. She has started to get this abuse onto the political agenda. Because of RoadPeace there is now a network dedicated to advice and reform. It would not have happened without Brigitte. She has committed herself completely to this cause, and she has stayed the course when so many others have not. I believe she has created an environment for change and that because of her selfless service there is a glimmer of hope that after all these deaths – more than have died fighting for this country – the carnage must stop.....Brigitte Chaudhry deserves more than this award, she deserves a monument.

Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

I have known Brigitte Chaudhry for several years. She first contacted me as her local Member of Parliament, asking for my help when her son was killed in a road crash. I supported her in her legal battle and when she set up RoadPeace I became one of its patrons....She set up the charity because of the distress and anger she suffered when she felt that her son's death was ignored by the law and because of the lack of information available to families in a bewildering legal process. She is dedicated to the cause, and the growth of the charity is largely due to her dedication and commitment....I am very happy to endorse this application and hope that it is successful.

Rita Taylor

When my husband was knocked from his bicycle by a motorist at the end of March 1996, our lives changed for good and I was devastated. My husband suffered a fractured skull and was left registered blind, with other effects of brain injury. The fight for compensation was horrific and we often felt like giving up and so alone....A year after the crash I read about RoadPeace in a magazine and contacted the organisation. It was such a relief to talk to people who had been through similar experiences and knew exactly what we suffered....The help and support I received gave me the will to go on fighting. Much of the support came personally from Brigitte, who I later found out, had started RoadPeace after the death of her son in a road tragedy. Out of her grief came a helping hand for other road victims. I was amazed that someone so dedicated and busy as Brigitte could spare time to ring me up and encourage me to talk, sometimes in my darkest moments.....When my husband's claim was settled, I applied to work on the helpline, received training and in 1999 began the work. I am often in tears myself and cannot begin to imagine how Brigitte had managed so long, almost alone – the emotional strain alone must have been enormous....I am proud to be associated with a person so dedicated to helping victims of road crashes and want to go on working with the team she has inspired and who also gives so much of herself.

Noreen Tehrani, Occupational, Health & Counselling Psychologist

....I have only known of the work of RoadPeace for two years....I was giving a paper on the psychological impact of traumatic incidents on physical and psychological functioning of victims. Brigitte wanted to know more about my work and invited me to meet with her and some of the other members of the organisation. What I saw was remarkable. At that time RoadPeace was run from Brigitte's home. There was one paid worker and a mass of other people involved in providing an extremely comprehensive support service for fellow road crash victims. I was impressed by the single minded drive to champion the cause of the road crash victim....and providing support and succour to the injured and bereaved.....Brigitte is not just someone who is gentle and kind, she also has the tenacity and energy of a lion, never leaving a stone unturned when there is a need to promote and champion the cause of the victims of road crashes. Meetings are organised, letters written, media contacted and members of RoadPeace mobilised. I am constantly amazed at the level of press coverage and national impact achieved by this small charity under Brigitte's guidance....The world is short of people who like Brigitte are able to transform the bitterness of personal tragedy into a positive way to help others.

John Stewart

I first knew Brigitte Chaudhry shortly after RoadPeace was formed. With a background in transport, I was invited to be a Transport Adviser. I came to chair the organisation for several years during the mid-late 1990s. Currently I am Vice Chair and Transport Adviser.....Brigitte Chaudhry's achievements have been immense.....RoadPeace, from the smallest and most tragic of beginnings, has become a respected charitable organisation whose views are sought by government ministers, civil servants, magistrates, lawyers, transport organisations and the police....the undoubted driving force behind the success of the organisation has been Brigitte Chaudhry. It has been her vision, her determination and her dedication (often working, unpaid, to the early hours of the morning) that has made the organisation what it is today – a notable achievement for anybody, an astonishing one for a bereaved person....And yet, in the days after the death of her son, Brigitte Chaudhry did not intend to set up an organisation. At first, she tried to persuade other organisations to take up the cause of road traffic victims. But as no organisation did so, she set up RoadPeace....Without RoadPeace a lot of road traffic victims would have been left floundering with no advice or support. Without RoadPeace, a number of transport organisations would not understand road victims' concerns. Without RoadPeace, the issue of road traffic victims would be much further down the political agenda. Without Brigitte Chaudhry, there would have been no RoadPeace.

Nicholas Atkinson QC

Having worked in the criminal courts for almost thirty years, I have sadly been aware of where in my view the system fails those that it is supposed to serve – victims and their families....The failure of the system has been particularly acute in cases involving death on the roads....By chance, in the early nineties I met Brigitte Chaudhry, who was clearly determined to do something about those whose lives had been devastated by a road death and the way in which the police and courts worked....Since that time I have been involved as a patron of RoadPeace and have seen Brigitte Chaudhry's working methods and infectious enthusiasm. Despite many setbacks.....she has continued to inspire others by her determination.....My experience of seeing her work has involved television and radio interviews, public conferences both here and abroad, and meetings with members of Parliament and Ministers. She has always impressed me and equally clearly impressed others....Whilst I am aware that RoadPeace is run by many devoted volunteers and committees of members, I always associate the charity in my mind with its dynamic founder.