

**CREFFIELD AREA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday, 14th May 2026 in the Springfield Bowls Club

MINUTES

Present: Margaret Cunningham (President), Geoff Payne (Chair), Pete Grist, Martino Smits, Malgosia Zajaczkowska, Al Close, Andrew Snellgrove, Alex Brannan, and Sandra Tymms (secretary) and eighteen members of CARA

Apologies: Clare Taylor

Welcome. Geoff Payne welcomed the members and apologised for not circulating last year's AGM Minutes before the meeting. He asked Margaret Cunningham to summarise the main points. He promised that the 2025 Minutes would be circulated on the website together with his report.

Minutes of the last meeting: These summarised by Margaret who highlighted the main points from last year: the social occasions, like Bonfire night, the Annual Dinner, etc. She reviewed the other organisations CARA was affiliated with, the membership, planning issues, etc. She reminded the members about watering the street trees and notifying the committee if they had changed their contact numbers. Last year's speaker was Matthew Buckland, our police liaison officer, whose subject had been Safer Streets. Approval of the Minutes would have to wait until they were circulated online. The Chair suggested a period of ten days, after which the Minutes would be taken as 'approved'

Report by the Chair: Geoff Payne: This report will be circulated online with last year's minutes. This is his first year and there have been changes in the membership of the Committee. He thanked Margaret for her guidance and support. He reviewed his career researching and advising on Housing and Urban Development for the British Government, EU, UN and World Bank over the last 55 years. He reinserted himself into the local issues in his field and has used the last three years making useful contacts in the area and with Ealing Council, especially the Local Plan and the issues round the CARA area. Since becoming Chair, he has been dealing with the planning problems and need for new Members. A Flyer was circulated in the area to alert any new arrivals to the area of the Association and its aims. This resulted in at least 20 new members and brings the membership total to over 200. Alex Brannan, a new committee member, has agreed to be Membership Secretary and continue with this effort. Any suggestions for increasing the membership are welcome. Andrew Snellgrove will continue as liaison between CARA and the police. Clare Taylor has agreed to take over as Treasurer, having spent the last year looking after the Social events, especially the Annual Dinner, which was catered by Leila's like last year. Eric Leach was the Speaker and entertained the members with tales of the area. He is also the editor of the Neighbourhood Paper. Martino Smits has decided to stand down as Treasurer after many years in the post. Everybody thanks her for all her hard work. Hopefully, she will continue to be available as an advisor. Pete Grist, who runs the website and keeps it up-dated, will continue with this vital work. Finally, he mentioned a new initiative which hopefully will take off: our members come from

many nationalities and we feel it would be interesting if individual groups would offer to inform the members of their cultures. Malgosia Zajackowska has agreed to begin with a presentation on Poland and the Polish community in the CARA area. The Chair then asked the current treasurer to present her report.

Treasurer's Report: Martino Smits: Martino distributed copies of the Statement of Accounts for the year ending December 2025. They had been reviewed and certified by Amandeep Singh Bhogal and provided a healthy result. The question of what to do with the excess money was raised as was the problem of getting the signatories settled. There was some discussion about slight differences in the catering for the annual dinner, but in general, the accounts were accepted. Martino was thanked again for the work done.

Planning Report. Al Close, who is a professional town planner, gave a review of problems that have come up over the year. One point was to do with the notices on the trees in the area. Recently they had all been out date (ie.the,consultation period had already closed). Al explained why this is happening - delays in the planning department means delay in the Notifications being posted. He has managed (with the help of some long -time Cara members, especially John Woodcock) get closer to the Council Planning Department. He's also reached out to some of the developers and been able to discuss with them possible objections that CARA might raise to their plans. In the meantime, CARA's influence in planning matters has improved. One example is the Panel Court, which was planned to be built in the WASPS grounds, was objected to because of the noise, extra cars etc, and the objections were upheld. A member of CARA raised an issue about building works next to her house where the plans kept changing and the building got higher and higher. Geoff asked her to contact the Committee with the details so the case could be looked into.

Committee Matters: The committee is still in need of a Social Secretary. It is to be hoped that Cara members will step forward. Any suggestions for events etc., will be welcome.

AOB: Street Trees: There was discussion about the care of these trees. It was felt that if the Council involved the people in the neighbourhood in the choice of trees, care of them etc. it might encourage the residents to take better care of them. Bill from the Bowls Club, our host for the evening, invited closer ties with CARA for other social events. Both groups need to raise their membership numbers.

After a ten-minute break, during which the attendees indulged in the delicious snacks provided for them by Malgosia, the Presentation began.

Malgosia (Malgorzata) began with a preview of Polish history. Through her slides, she introduced aspects of Polish culture. The different areas in the country are quite individual in their approach to embroidery, fashion and dancing, as well as craft work. She talked about various annual festivals and how they are celebrated here and in Poland. Her grandson, Karol, had come in traditional dress to talk about the Polish organisation in this area, for which he recently received an MBE for the Polish YMCA of which he is chair. Malgosia had brought printed information about the Blessed

Ulma Family and examples of craftwork, done by herself.

A very interesting talk. Let's hope Malgosia's example will be picked up and other members of the community offer to present their own cultures on future occasions.