

CREFFIELD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

on Thursday, 15 May in the Springfield Bowls Club

MINUTES

Present: Margaret Cunningham - Chair, Sue Creak, Pete Grist, Martino Smits, Malgosia Zajackowska, and 20 members of CARA.

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence**

Margaret Cunningham, Chair of CARA, welcomed those attending and read out apologies for absence from Bryony Franklin, and Narendra Gandhi.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting**

Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 9 May 2024 had been circulated with the Agenda, and were received and adopted.

3. **Matters Arising**

Margaret referred to a planning application for 16 Twyford Avenue, mentioned last year, which had been refused because the application required the removal of a street tree. A fresh application had subsequently been submitted that allowed the tree to remain, and this had been approved. However, as the works were undertaken the tree in question had disappeared. The Planning Enforcement officer had been informed. However, the Planning Enforcement officer was unable to take action until the works were finished, in the unlikely event that the same tree was to be reinstated. In any event, CARA would watch the situation, as we do not want street trees to be removed.

4. **Chair's Annual Report**

4.1 Margaret started her report by saying that although this was referred to as the Chair's Annual Report, it was actually a report on behalf of the whole committee, and she was most grateful for their support during the year. She warmly welcomed members, both long-standing and new, to the 2025 AGM.

4.2 She reminded CARA members of the committee membership from the 2024 AGM, in alphabetical order, with the end of their current term:

Martino Smits co-opted, Treasurer
Sue Creak (2025), Planning including the Conservation Area
Margaret Cunningham (Chair) (2025)
Narendra Gandhi (2025) Membership
Pete Grist (2026) Communications and web
Malgosia Zajackowska (2026)

4.3 This Committee was under-strength, and attempts to recruit new

members in the last two years had been unsuccessful. The Committee had managed between them to cover what CARA was committed to do, but now as well as the existing lack of individual members for some roles, (Minutes Secretary, Publicity, Social Secretary) there were resignations from several members (Sue Creak, Margaret Cunningham and Narendra Gandhi) who had all worked on the Committee for at least ten years. However, she was pleased to say that there were now nominations for election, which came up later in the meeting.

Membership

4.4 This year, CARA had welcomed new residents and some long-standing residents to membership, and she hoped they would enjoy the local contacts and benefits this brings. A few members had moved away, and sadly a few have passed away. Membership was then currently at about 130 households.

4.5 The annual membership remained at £10 per household, which included use of the Membership Card as a discount card in a number of local businesses. She said that CARA was always looking to increase Membership, so asked members present to suggest this to neighbours. She also asked that members let CARA know of new residents, so that they could be welcomed by CARA with an invitation to join.

Finance

4.6 She said that the Treasurer's Report would be given later in the meeting, by Martino Smits, who had been our Treasurer for many years.

Communications

4.7 The main means of communication with members was by email. Messages to members included CARA's concerns (especially on planning matters), and event information, and subjects of interest in the wider community.

4.8 Margaret gave her thanks to Pete Grist for handling all the communications and keeping CARA members informed. She also reminded members to let CARA know of any change of address, email or phone number. In particular, if members no longer had a landline, CARA needed to have a mobile number.

Website

4.9 The committee was in the process of updating the website with the local history of the Creffield area.

Social Events during 2024-25

AGM 2024

4.10 Margaret reminded members that at the 2024 AGM we had Councillor John Ball, as speaker. He is the Liberal Democrat Councillor for Ealing Common Ward, which includes CARA's streets west of Twyford Avenue. Praveen Anand, Labour Councillor for Ealing Common Ward, also attended, and after John's talk about Council policies there was an

interesting question and answer session in which they both responded.

5 November: Bonfire, fireworks and sausage-in-a-bun supper jointly with Springfield Bowls Club.

4.11 We were very grateful for Grimshaw Estate Agents' sponsorship of the fireworks party, which attracted 300 people and was a very sociable occasion, with many families including young children. Some of our members had had to be turned away because of the numbers.

31 January 2025 - Annual Dinner

4.12 The Dinner was attended by 56 members and guests, who enjoyed a delicious meal by Leila Restaurant, (a member of CARA's local business scheme), and a talk by local resident and well-known musician and comedian, Rainer Hersch. Rainer gave an amusing account of his early years and an illustration of his alternative approach to musical performance with fascinating video examples.

5 May 2025 - VE Day 80th Anniversary Celebration Community Street Party

4.13 This had been arranged jointly with St Martin's Church, with free entry and "bring a plate of party food", BBQ and Bar, Display (and mass participation) by Northfields Morris Dancers, Games for children, fancy dress competition and official visit by the Deputy Lieutenant. The weather stayed dry but unfortunately there was a cold wind which truncated both the pleasure of sitting longer with another drink, and the Bar takings!

Planning and Conservation

4.14 CARA continued to comment on planning applications that we knew about. CARA continued to see applications from developers to subdivide the houses in the area. Most recently this included some of the largest houses in Creffield from the late Victorian/Edwardian era.

4.15 She cited 1 Wolverton Gardens (at the junction with Creffield Road), 370 Uxbridge Road (the large corner house at the bottom of Birch Grove) and 1 Twyford Crescent (corner of Hale Gardens) one currently used as a single family home, and one unoccupied for years, had been sold during this year. Two had live planning applications. It would be good to see their redevelopment include comfortable apartments which would make a long-term home for several families, but the plans so far continue the process of barely (or not) meeting the minimum space standards, with crowded conditions for the anticipated number of residents.

4.16 The drawn-out period (over five years) for implementation of the Conservation Review, was hopefully coming to an end, with the recent appointment of a new Conservation Officer for Ealing. Sue Creak (our Committee member for Planning) and John Woodcock (who chairs the Conservation Panel for the Creffield and Ealing Common Conservation Areas) had met him, and taken him on a walking tour of the area. To date, the review has had statutory and public consultation stages, re the expansion of the Creffield Conservation Area boundary to include the

parade of shops on the Uxbridge Road, Fordhook Avenue, Byron Road, Chatsworth Gardens, some of Buxton Gardens, and the houses opposite the Japanese School in Creffield Road east. We hope this becomes official in the near future.

4.17 There will be a second phase to implement an Article 4 giving the planning department greater control on changes to houses in the Conservation Area under permitted development.

4.18 The generic management plan written for all conservation areas in Ealing, was now live, and was being used to assess planning applications. To supplement this, a design guide would be written for each Conservation Area in association with local residents and conservation panels. To get ahead, CARA had already written a draft version of this, which was available on the CARA website, on the recommendation of the Conservation Officer.

4.19 She was hopeful now of more planning compliance with the findings and recommendations of the Conservation Review.

4.20 Another drawn-out period had been the consultation, drafting and re-consultation stages of the new Local Plan. This was approaching the end with the opportunity for those who had previously commented to speak at sessions with the Independent Inspector, who was holding sessions in Ealing in June and September, in total for about 10 days. She hoped they would understand the concerns of local individuals and organisations, and will effect some changes to the Local Plan.

Street Trees in CARA's Area

4.21 As in previous years, she urged members to water any new street trees in your area. Although many will have had sufficient watering in over the winter, they need water through the summer months for the first few years whilst they are getting established.

CARA's Business Scheme

4.22 The scheme included fourteen local businesses which give discounts on production of your current membership card. *Your current CARA card **must** be shown when requesting a discount.*

4.23 Members of the Scheme (unchanged since last year):

Ta Ke Sushi	Press Gang
Ealing Butchers	Print Plus (at Ealing Common PO)
Goview Estate Agents	Shades Medical and Dental Clinic
Grimshaw Estate Agents	Universal Bikes
Indian Villa Restaurant	Twist and Loop Carpets
Leila Lebanese Restaurant	Craft Editions
R E Performance Physiotherapy/Fitness (the Gym at Twyford Avenue Sports Ground)	W5 Dental Care

CARA's Membership of other Organisations

4.24 **Neighbourhood Watch** information relating to crime and local concerns had been distributed electronically through the OWL network, which improved its immediacy and enabled interaction with the Safer Neighbourhoods Team. We can inform the police about concerns which had arisen in our streets.

4.25 **Safer Neighbourhood Panels** for Wards in the Borough provided a point of contact between residents and the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT). For CARA, Tina Crossley and Simon Tuke sit on the panels for Ealing Common and North Acton respectively. The panels met every three months and exchanged information about current experiences of crime and anti-social behaviour in the Ward, and discussed what actions could be taken to deter these.

She was pleased to welcome Police Sergeant Matthew Buckland who will give a talk after this meeting about his role as leader of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team for North Acton.

4.26 **Ealing Civic Society** was concerned with the history, architecture and preservation of Ealing. They monitored and commented on planning applications borough-wide, and promoted both good new architectural design, and conservation projects, with an Annual Award. They also hosted interesting lecturers.

4.27 **Save Ealing Centre (SEC)** is a campaigning group of local Residents' Associations formed to protect and enhance the centre of Ealing, shared by all groups. SEC has coordinated campaigns challenging proposed developments with potentially damaging implications, leading to modification and cancellations. Some of those are currently stalled or withdrawn or modified: eg. Perceval House, Ealing Town Hall, Gurnell Leisure Centre, 9-45 Ealing Broadway (and 40+ years ago, Ealing Town Centre),

4.28 **Ealing Matters** – a group which disseminates local information to residents, and had put a vast effort into assessing the different stages of the development of the Local Plan, advising local bodies of its implications. Libby Kemp, a member of CARA, had been much involved with this and liaised with CARA.

4.29 **Central Acton Neighbours Forum (CANForum)** – a statutory body formed by local groups, to inform longer-term local planning. It was formed several years ago, and was working with the council.

4.30 **The Open Spaces Society** is a national society which supported protection, preservation and enhancement of public open spaces, especially commons. It published a very informative quarterly magazine, and campaigned for access rights and supported efforts nationwide to resist violations of ownership and access rights.

4.31 **CARA Committee 2024-25**

Finally, she said, thanks must go from all of us to the Committee members who have worked together to run CARA, kept members informed, and contributed to outside bodies on your behalf.

CARA was an entirely voluntary Residents' Association; and was seen as representing the views of the residents of the area, and needed its members to fill the necessary administrative roles and to raise comments and suggestions as to where it can usefully put its efforts.

Adoption of the Annual Report was Proposed by Simon Tuke, Seconded by Sylvia Stirling, and accepted unanimously.

5. **Presentation and Adoption of the Annual Accounts**

5.1 Martino Smits, Treasurer, presented the accounts for the year ending 31 December. She reminded the meeting that CARA's financial year is 1 January to 31 December. She said that the accounts were broadly similar to those of last year.

5.2 Subscriptions were slightly lower for 2024 than the previous year, and the deficit on the dinner was higher than in the previous year. However, we had still finished the year with a surplus of some £298 which would be added to the main bank account. She said that we continued to keep a fairly substantial balance as a "fighting fund," in case there were threats to the area.

5.3 Asked if it was likely we could make up our level of subscriptions, she said that she hoped we might, but of course interest in the residents' association really flourished when there was an external threat to the area.

5.4 Asked if we tracked interest rates for the reserve or "fighting fund," Martino said that the committee had thought about it, and would be happy if someone was able to look at this and take over as Treasurer, because she definitely felt the reserve should be working for us.

Rather than increase the fee it would be better to increase the membership.

5.5 The event that really worked well was the Bonfire Night party at the Bowls Club. We could only accommodate 300 places and people were turned away because of the numbers. It was notable that this event was attended by parents with children, and that you did not have to be a member to attend.

5.6 Asked about financial controls on the accounts, Martino said that there had to be two signatories for every debit payment from the bank.

5.7 Adoption of the Annual Accounts was Proposed by Paul ?????? and Seconded by Malgosia Zajackowska, and adopted unanimously.

6. Appointment of reviewer of the accounts for the financial year to 31 December 2025

Martino recommended that we ask Amandit Ghopal to continue as the reviewer of our accounts. This recommendation was accepted unanimously.

7. Election of Members of the Executive Committee for 2025-26

7.1 Margaret reminded the meeting that Pete Grist, Malgosia Zajaczkowska, and Martino, would continue on the committee. Martino was co-opted to the Committee and would continue as Treasurer.

7.2 Other members of CARA who had come forward to join the committee were:

Geoff Payne, as Chair (*vice* Margaret Cunningham), Alasdair (? spelling) Close (*vice* Sue Creak) Planning matters; Sandra Tymms, Minute Secretary; Shivan and Pretti Iswaran would act jointly as Membership Secretary (*vice* Narendra Gandhi).

Vacancies still existed for the Social Secretary role, i.e. someone to take the lead on organising social events.

7.3 These CARA members were elected to the Committee unopposed, CARA members also thanked the retiring members of the committee for their long service for CARA.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Sandra Tymms suggested that it would be useful to have some leaflets to give to people about CARA.

8.2 It was also noted that we had once had a CARA Nextdoor method of communicating around the area, but that seemed to have fallen apart. It would be very useful to have a Facebook page, or something similar to Nextdoor, so that neighbours could communicate with each other, and CARA could advertise events.

----- AGM ended at 9.00 pm -----

Following the meeting Sergeant Matthew Buckland gave a very interesting talk about Safer Neighbourhoods Policing in North Acton and South Acton Wards and took questions. The talk was followed by refreshments provided by Margaret Cunningham.