

Minutes of the 79th Annual General Meeting of the Crofton Residents' Association
St Paul's Church Hall, Crofton Road – 19.30 on Friday 17th April 2026

Attendance:

Chris Ford (Chairman)
Don Benjamin (Treasurer)
John Greeves (Newsletter Editor)
John Perkins (Roads & Infrastructure)
Peter Bridges (Planning)
Steve Skinner (Trees)
Ted Fenwick (Social)
Mike Lawson (Secretary)

Residents as per attendance register.

Guests:

Lead Ward Councillor
Gareth Bacon MP for Orpington
Thomas Turrel GLA
F&C Police Team – PS Hammick-Smith, PC Ben Cross, PC Shannon Pews and PCSO Harden
Julia Smith

a) welcome from the Chairman, Chris Ford.

Chris Ford welcomed participants to the meeting, pointed out the location of toilets, explained that copies of the agenda had been placed on every other seat. He also explained that minutes of the last AGM – together with the agenda for this meeting – were available on the CRA Website. All present were invited to stay for refreshments at the end of the meeting. Ted Fenwick then explained the procedure to follow in the event of an emergency.

b) Agreement of Oregon Park RA to amalgamate with CRA.

A request was made that only members of the current Crofton Residents' Association should vote on this issue. The incorporation Oregon Park Residents Association into the Crofton Residents Association was *proposed by Jo Parker and seconded by John Watts*. The addition of 460 households from the OPRA area will give a combined association membership of over 2,700 households.

A vote was taken and in the absence of any votes against the resolution was deemed to have been adopted unanimously,

c) Treasurer's Report and the Adoption of Accounts. Appointment of the Independent Examiner. (CRA Accounts were published in the Spring Newsletter)

Don Benjamin presented the accounts for the year ending 31st December 2025. He began by thanking residents for their support of the association. He also thanked our road stewards for their much-appreciated job of being collection points for cash subscriptions and donations. Despite almost one third of subscribing residents now paying on-line, road stewards remain essential to the smooth running of our finances.

Beginning with income, Don reported that nearly 800 residents paid subscriptions, of whom many also gave donations. This total, £2,728, was an increase compared to 2024, reflecting continued and much-appreciated community support. We also earned interest on our deposit account and received £900 in filming donations. Filming donations can be a significant source of additional income, but one that is unreliable, as I try to keep reminding everyone.

Turning to expenditure, Don reported that total payments for the year came to £4,719, which is higher than in 2024. This was largely due to one-off project costs. The most significant item was the purchase and installation of a community defibrillator, which, together with website development costs, accounted for just under £2,000.

Don reported that our regular running costs were well controlled. Newsletters and related expenses reduced compared with 2024 though core items such as insurance and AGM expenses were broadly in line with expectations.

We also made £750 in charitable donations, supporting bench repairs and the Bromley Borough Foodbank. As an aside, it's pleasing to note that Biggin Hill Airport had a scheme which meant they would match our donation to Foodbank – not something we can show in our accounts, but nonetheless something we triggered and of further help to the broader community.

As a result of the higher project spending, total payments exceeded receipts this year, leading to a modest reduction in overall assets. Total funds at year end stood at £12,896, down from £13,774 at the end of 2024.

Looking to the future, the inclusion of Oregon Park Residents Association into our fold will mean that next year a direct comparison with 2025 will not be valid. However, CRA can be confident of its place in representing the community and being sufficiently resourced to fulfil its aims.

Don concluded by re-iterating his thanks to everyone who has supported the Association financially over the past year and indicated that he was happy to take questions before moving to adopt the accounts.

Just one question was asked:

What were the financial implications of merging the two Residents' Associations?

Don replied that the small residual funds of the OPRA had been paid into the CRA Accounts. OPRA members had been charged the same subscription rate as CRA Members - £1 per year.

The issue that led the OPRA to seek amalgamation was not financial but their difficulty in getting people to serve on their committee.

Alexandra Lewis thanked members for welcoming her and the other members of OPRA present and expressed their eagerness to contribute fully to the new amalgamated Residents' Association.

Don informed the meeting of a proposal that this year we will have two Independent Financial Examiners – Andrew Bird and Martin Moss. The idea was that if one was not available the other could deputise, although the job would only be done by one of the two.

Adoption of the accounts and appointment of the Independent Financial Examiners was *proposed by Ron Bell, seconded by Keith Austin*, and agreed unanimously.

d) Endorsement of Subscriptions to remain at £1 per household.

This was *proposed by Lynn Hairewood, seconded by Rodger Allard* and agreed unanimously.

e) Election/re- appointment of the CRA Committee.

The Chairman introduced the members of the Committee and asked for their re-appointment.

This was *proposed by Barbara Blackmore, seconded by Joy Heath* and agreed unanimously.

f) Chairman Report.

Chris Ford reported on several challenging issues facing our Association and on some of the activities that we are involved in.

1 *Filming*

Chris described this as a “marmite topic”, in that some benefit and are financially rewarded but others are disadvantaged and their lives disrupted. Driveways become blocked, residents experience environmental disturbance, subjected to operation outside of agreed hours, unsavoury behaviour on the common areas, tuck wagon disturbance and disregard for road safety.

Lengthy discussions with BFF and LBB Officers lead to the conclusion that there is little that can be done to avoid this bad behaviour in that the process is likened to a neighbour having late night parties.

The scope of activity is an influential factor. Small scale can be a couple of actors and 5 crew with minimal infrastructure impact to residents to large scale productions involving large lorries, several generators, numerous vans, road closures etc.

Chris made it clear that CRA do not support filming neither do we encourage donations. We remain impartial and try to protect both for and against.

We have a code of practice agreed with BFF and hence LBB which is provided to production companies and tries to limit filming to one location per month in a specific area (4 on Crofton Heath) but this works against the spirit of donation as several can be undertaken but only one funded and indeed supported by BFF. Furthermore, if it is small scale the headroom for donation is limited.

BFF manage the activity on behalf of LBB and CRA have little if any involvement in planning and pre-filming arrangements.

Filming by Baby Cow Productions for the young Alan Carr last Summer was particularly difficult. A donation was agreed. However, unknown to CRA a rogue resident correspondence with Baby Cow, using a “croftonresidentassociation” email address which was wrongly interpreted as originating from CRA which caused additional financial burden to Baby Cow. We realised this when the promised donation had not been made. Negotiations with Baby Cow and sight of the email trail unravelled the situation and thankfully the donation was re-established as was the lines of communication for the future.

Earlier this year a concerned resident made contact following notification by letter of a filming incident involving a fire stunt. Here a stunt man would emerge on fire from the footpath in Highwood Drive. The resident was worried that her fence would be set alight. We negotiated with the production team and the activity was relocated to Bluebell Close.

2 *Roads & parking*

Our roads & parking committee member, John Perkins, keeps a close eye on all road related issues in our area, making and following up on Fix My Street reports, and liaising with highways department staff and councillors to ensure that road defects are dealt with as soon as possible and that we are notified of planned highway works.

As we are all aware, the pothole situation is bad across the whole country. In Bromley there was a noticeable deterioration in January & February when it appeared that the council's contractor, Riney, were unable to cope with the volume of work. Since then, two actions have been taken to try to improve the situation:

- Riney have agreed that all pothole repairs notified to them before 26 January will be completed by the end of April.
- Four teams are using a new type of cold tarmac which can be laid much more quickly than traditional hot tarmac and should increase the number of repairs that can be completed each day.

Despite these measures, there are currently still a lot of outstanding repairs. The contract with Riney ends on 30 June and it is hoped that there will be a noticeable improvement in performance once the new contractor takes over. Furthermore, we have struggled to understand how LBB manage the works and our observation is that there is little accountability.

It is good news that the council now have more money available for road resurfacing, but still not enough to deal with all the roads that have suffered from underinvestment for many

years. In particular we continue to press for the resurfacing of Crofton Road from Ormonde Avenue to Locksbottom, however, this is complex as it involved LBB and TfL.

3 Nature Friendly Verges

We are now into the start of the second year of the 2 year Nature Friendly Verge trial in Crofton Road. All the information we have obtained from residents, including a Facebook survey, a vote at last year's AGM, and responses to the council's online questionnaire, indicate that 80-90% of residents are opposed to the scheme in Crofton Road. We have made representations to the council to end the trial early, but without backing from our ward councillors they will not take any action.

4 Litter picks

We arranged two resident litter picks in the last year and we are aware that many individuals also do their best to keep our area free of litter and we are grateful for everyone's efforts.

5 Biggin Hill Updates – more of a worry for those to the North of the area.

Chris highlighted two significant aspects of this matter, although he reminded members that many more are being negotiated with the airport. The first is a review of the complaint process and the second an update on the R03 route.

CRA with Keston RA have worked with the airport to review the complaint process. Through the Airport Resident Noise Action Forum Committee we have reviewed the Airports website and agreed an update which is in the process of review and upload. This defines the details of a 5 stage process, set KPIs for the stages and outlines a customer complaint survey which is targeted at improving the overall process and improvements to responses. Through the Biggin Hill Consultative Committee we have reviewed the complaints for 2025. Here there were 744 with 62% direct from residents and the remainder Auto detected violations. 66% of the 744 were deemed compliant and closed at Stage 3. The remainder (244) were reviewed by the airports Safety Abatement Review Board termed Stage 5 of the process these 22% were deemed No Fault Attributable, 68% given a first warning, 7 given a final warning with 1 ban and 13 blocked Prior Permission Requests. We should bear in mind that the airports Noise Safety Sub-Committee review all complaints and report to the Consultative Committee. Track Violation limits have also been added to "WebTrak" to assist residents in determining whether a flight is compliant or not.

For R03 the current trial is reported to be concluded on the 30th April. Those residents to the North of CRA reside under the Instrument Landing System route progressing from Crittalls Corner over Chislehurst, Petts Wood, Crofton, Locksbottom (PRUH), Keston Park, Leaves Green into the airport. The revised route has a similar starting point but the aircraft start much higher, fly overhead of the M25, turning right, routing over the airfield at height till above the A23 when it engages in what is termed a radius to fix circling approach in a declining route to land at the opposite end of the airfield to the ILS entry point. The new route overflies less densely populated areas, at a higher level. There are some restrictions in that the Operator, the aircraft and the Pilot need to be approved to fly this new route. One benefit is that the newer aircraft have the capability to fly this R03 route hence for Crofton

we are likely to see a 35% reduction in overhead traffic and applicable to the larger aircraft. However, I will be monitoring this very closely.

Chris concluded by saying that it is evident that the movement of aircraft in and out of the airport is seeing a periodic reduction.

6. Road Stewards.

Chris expressed his thanks to our army of Road Stewards. Which, he said reminded him of a story. He had gone to deliver a batch of newsletters to Ann McIntyres in Oakwood Gardens but was greeted by a Care Worker. In the background Ann hobbled to the Door, and it was evident that she was very frail. She apologised profusely for not being able to deliver the Newsletters. It made him sad and he realised how diligent our Road Stewards are in keeping residents informed with their newsletters.

We are therefore reviewing the delivery rounds and are always looking for willing helpers to give an hour of their time three times a year.

7. Communication – should we do more?

- Our principle source of comms is via the Newsletter. The additional 463 household in OPRA, brings the CRA total to 2620.
- Our FB page has 648 members; we don't allow advertising and limit the membership to CRA residents. A quick analysis shows the post views vary from around 100 (call for Road Stewards) views to 465 (filming with many of the neighbourhood posts in the 350 mark.
- We have revised our website which is gradually being populated, and our intent is to make it more informative for residents.

A question was raised over the RO3 trial. Why should pilots use it when it is a longer approach to the runway? It was explained that this approach is automated and requires far less input from air crew than the manual approach system and has proved popular with pilots using the airport.

Chris concluded his report and handed over to our Speakers.

a) Cllr. Bob Evans (Lead Ward Councillor)

Bob passed on apologies for absence from his two colleagues. He explained that Cllr. Charles Joel was suffering from a bad reaction to a shingles vaccination and reminded us of the work that he has done on hundreds of Town Planning Applications, from which many of our residents have benefited. Charles had served as a councillor for 24 years.

Cllr. Christopher Marlow had been responsible for running the Council's finances and had been the Council's chief negotiator with the management of Biggin Hill. He reminded us that Christopher has now joined another political party. Bob reminded us that he was responsible for health issues and was a member of the board of King's Healthcare. He reminded us that he had served as our councillor for 16 years, having previously been a Councillor for Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom Ward for four years. He explained that the three

Councillors shared their caseload so that each issue raised was directed to the most appropriate Councillor for their attention

Bob reported that our Councillors had attended to their duties in an efficient and well-meaning manner with positive results such as:

Securing the future of the Churchill Theatre,

Proceeding with the refurbishment of the Walnuts Leisure Centre, which is nearing completion and

Securing £10,500 in Community Funding for Farnborough Church Hall.

Bob referred to several hot topics that had cropped up.

Nature Friendly Verges – he said that he thought they should be trimmed, but he had been over-ruled due to the priority of bio-diversity.

The cycle-path on Crofton Road had, he accepted, turned out to be ‘a disaster’ with very little use.

Parking continued to be a problem.

Bob expressed disappointment at the claim in our newsletter that Councillors are not responsive to their concerns and insisted that the claim was not true. He reminded us that our councillors can’t always agree with everyone, and can’t always get the results they aim for, but that they have a significant number of complaints to deal with and work very hard for their local residents.

Bob went on to say that Bromley Council was facing financial difficulties and that there were worse things to come. He concluded by expressing his best wishes for the next three Councillors who will be elected on 7th May.

b) Rt Hon Gareth Bacon, MP

Gareth began by conceding that we are going through turbulent times for politicians. He went on to pay tribute to the hard work done by our Ward Councillors, who don’t have any professional support, and to express thanks to the Chairman and Committee of the Crofton Residents’ Association for the good work that we do without payment, also to thank our Police Officers for their thankless but vital work. Bromley might be a low-crime Borough, he said, but it is not entirely safe, and our local police could be called away at any time to deal with dangerous situations anywhere in London.

Gareth then devoted the remainder of his allotted time to taking questions from members.

1. What is his opinion on housing developments on Greenbelt land? He said that he opposed it and expressed his concern that the Government definition of ‘Greybelt’ often included good agricultural land.
2. What can be done about the fact that ‘slow’ and ‘fast’ trains from Orpington to Charing Cross coincide when they could alternate to give a 15 minute frequency? Gareth explained that passenger numbers had not recovered from the Covid pandemic, but the situation was under review. It was noted that there were four fast trains per hour through Orpington, but only two of them stopped there. Gareth

agreed to see what could be done about it, and reminded us that there are now four trains per hour to Victoria instead of just two that ran until quite recently.

3. What three things do you love about Orpington and what three things would you like to change? Gareth said that he loved the people that he met – good people trying their best to do good things, next the green nature of the constituency – two-thirds of it is made up of green fields, and not like London at all, and finally the way in which little villages maintain their own identity, surrounded by open countryside. Concerning the things that he wanted to change, Gareth said that first and foremost he wanted to stop bad people from doing bad things, then he wanted to see a fairer allocation of Government funding for Councils, which should lead to more funding for Bromley Council, and finally he wanted to see more funds for the police.

c) GLA Member for Bexley and Bromley - Thomas Turrell

Thomas emphasise his main purpose – of holding Mayor Khan to account – especially concerning issues of the Green Belt, potholes in roads, and policing.

1. The Greenbelt. Thomas had walked the London Loop to raise funds for charity and had seen the need to preserve green spaces for all of the people in London. He accepted that prioritising building on 'brown-field' sites was a good idea, but pointed out that construction costs on that kind of land made it far cheaper to build on green-field land. Property developers in Bromley had planning permission to build on brown-field sites but were not building because they could not recover their costs on the schemes authorised, so they were also buying up green field land.
2. Potholes – funds allocated to dealing with them had been cut from £21 million in 2016 to just £1.5 million now. He went on to explain that all road safety project funding is controlled by GLA, and Councils have to bid for projects. 20 mph speed limits seem to attract more funds than fixing potholes. He called for the GLA to work with Borough Councils and not against them.
3. On Policing he drew attention to the work of the British Transport police in dealing with of assaults on trains and stations, particularly at Victoria and Charing Cross.

Thomas then agreed to answer questions. He was asked:

Why doesn't Sadiq Khan answer questions properly? He replied that the theatrical side of Mayor Khan's character led him to evade difficult issues, although such matters were more effectively dealt with in committees where there was less publicity – in particular issues like vehicle theft.

Would he support moving Bromley out of London and into Kent? He replied that he would not because it would deprive our pensioners of their freedom passes and reduce our bus services and cut our police funding, as well as making housing more expensive.

d) Ben Cross– Police Update.

PS Hammick-Smith and her colleagues from the Police Force explained their strategy of targeting prolific serial offenders, in particular shoplifters, drug dealing and vehicle crime. They had also focussed on vulnerable targets, such as the Co Op at Green Street Green and Lidl. Twelve offenders have been charged with hundreds of offences and had been served with a range of banning orders so that they can now be arrested just for being in the wrong place. They also reminded us of the action they had taken over Cash Convertors in Orpington High Street, where 90% of the things sold were stolen property, to illustrate the point that actions taken outside of Farnborough & Crofton Ward can have a big impact on our people.

Conclusion

In closing the meeting, the Chairman expressed his thanks to our committee for supporting him and our residents. He also thanked our Councillors for their past Service. He explained that Christopher Marlow has served since 2018 but has decided to stand as a reform candidate for St Pauls Cray. Charles has decided not to stand, and we should recognise and thank him for his 24 years of service. Bob has stood for 4 years as a Chelsfield Councillor but has represented Farnborough and Crofton for the past 16 years. Chris also thanked our team of volunteers who have supported this event.

He expressed special thanks to PC Julia Smith who has served F&C as our PCSO for 16 years and at one time was our only source of Police Support. She has been an excellent servant to our community, always willing to help and give advice.

A floral tribute was presented to PC Julia Smith

The formal meeting was closed at 21.18 and members were invited to stay for Refreshments.

Michael Lawson
CRA Secretary
April 2026