



Minutes of The KRA Annual General Meeting – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 – Kingswood Village Hall.

Attendees:

Caroline Neame, Richard Lewis, Adrienne Light, Helen Preest, Chantal Cox, Zaid Sethi, David Mushens, Dave Saunders, Valerie Evans, Sapna Dhami, Laurence Teague, David Floyd, Cllr Parnall, Cllr. Newton, Cllr Dwight

The meeting was also attended by circa 100 residents.

1. Apologies:

Bob Gunn, Alistair Sinclair, Amanda Smith, Mike Gibson, Deborah MacKenzie and Rebecca Paul MP.

2. Guest Speaker:

Mark Nuti, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing, Public Health, Communities, Welfare, and the Voluntary and Charity Sector at Surrey County Council, attended as a guest speaker on behalf of Tim Oliver, Chief Executive of Surrey County Council. He delivered an insightful and informative presentation on local government reform and devolution, which prompted a lively and engaging discussion followed by a question-and-answer session.

A question was raised in writing by Peter Harris, the Copthill Lane Road Fund Secretary, to Mr Tim Oliver. In Mr Oliver's absence, Mr Nuti took the question and said that he would endeavour to get a response.

3. Guest Speaker:

Simon Vernon-Harcourt Design and Restoration Director from City and Country Group. He explained that they have exchanged contracts and will complete later this year. He briefly spoke about City and Country and about their initial ideas for the L&G site. They will organise a public consultation in due course. There was a brief question and answer session which followed.

The Chair, Caroline Neame, expressed her appreciation to Simon and his colleague for attending the meeting. She noted how encouraging it is that the development has been acquired by individuals who are keen to involve the community.

Caroline highlighted that, once the project is operational, regular meetings will be held with the KRA. Updates will be shared with members to ensure transparent and factual communication, helping to dispel any rumours or misinformation.

The speaker was warmly welcomed, with the hope that they will become valuable partners in the future.

#### 4. Previous meeting

The minutes were agreed - no matter arising. Proposed by Janine Yiannakis and seconded by Valerie Evans.

#### 5. Action points from the previous meeting

None

#### 6. Treasurer's report

Adrienne Light advised that our subscription income levels have stayed constant since last year.

Chantal Cox applied and succeeded in obtaining a £10,000 grant which enabled the Association to complete many successful projects.

Dave Saunders, our Membership secretary explained to one resident that we have around 1300 residents in the village. We currently have 642 members.

The report was agreed and proposed by Richard Lewis and seconded by David Mushens.

#### 7. Election of the Auditor.

David Buckley has been our auditor for many years, and he has kindly agreed to carry on.

This was proposed by Richard Lewis and seconded by Michelle Bromley.

#### 8. Election officers and committees

Caroline expressed how proud she was to be the Chair of the KRA and acknowledged her committee. All attendees were shown photographs, and the names were read out of each Committee member. All attendees raised their hands to say that they accepted the Committee. There were no objections.

## 9. Road Representatives (“Road reps”)

The names of each road rep were on a screen for everyone to see. The Chair explained that they were very important. Every street in Kingswood has a Road rep and they are residents’ first line of contact for the KRA. She acknowledged that they are all very important, and they were given a round of applause.

The Chair noted that Alistair Sinclair and Stephen Gale-Batten, two road reps who have both stepped down for personal reasons. She thanked them for all their hard work. We are looking for a new road rep on The Glade.

Very sadly we lost Andrew Gray very suddenly last year. Andrew was a long-standing road representative and a real centre of the KRA, and the Chair said to his family that he is truly missed.

## 10. Membership Fee Proposal

The current membership fee of £5 per year has remained unchanged since at least 2008. A proposal was put forward by the Chair to increase the annual membership fee to £10, reflecting the expanded scope of the organisation’s activities.

The Chair explained that while the committee unanimously supports the increase, it was important to seek the wider community’s agreement, as members are directly affected by the change.

A show of hands was requested, and the proposal to raise the membership fee to £10 per year was unanimously approved by all members present. There were no objections.

### Discussion on Life Membership

A question was raised by David Mushens regarding whether Life Members should be encouraged to make voluntary annual contributions. In response, Dave Saunders noted that he had written twice to all Life Members inviting them to contribute annually on a voluntary basis. There are currently 51 Life Members.

The Chair acknowledged the point raised but clarified that Life Membership was originally offered on the basis of a one-time payment, and it would not be appropriate to revoke that status. Life Members retain full entitlement to their membership. She confirmed that while Life Members have been encouraged to contribute voluntarily on an annual basis—and many have done so—there is no obligation to do so. The Chair emphasised her preference to retain Life Members as part of the association, highlighting the importance of having as many voices as possible to represent the wider community effectively.

The KRA values the input of all residents in ensuring the community’s concerns are heard.

## 11. Borough Councillors

The Chair invited the Borough Councillors to introduce themselves to the community.

Rebecca Paul MP was unable to attend

Shelly Newton, Jed Dwight and Simon Parnell explained their roles.

Many people expressed concern over the following:

Lack of maintenance particularly of overgrown vegetation/shrubbery in and around the village.

The 20mph limits which are often ignored

Greenbelt/Grey belt land. We need to treasure the land that provides a separation that gives this community a physical representation of it's identity.

The land talked about is Greenbelt now, but it might need to be changed to Greybelt land in the future.

Any new Mayor will have powers over strategic planning so it will generally be very large developments that they will be looking to approve. If you look at the demographics we have in our borough, we believe they will look at other areas with key infrastructure.

## 12. Village Improvements

The Chair shared a few of the projects that the KRA have funded or assisted with funding.

Upcoming projects:

Fish & Chip Christmas Quiz held in May

Curry Night

Meet and talk to Councillors face to face

Poppy appeal

Christmas lights event

## 13. AOB

13.1 12 Waterhouse Lane. Unfortunately, as the developer had not, the KRA and Village Litter Pickers recently cleared all the rubbish from Waterhouse Café. The planning permission is to demolish the entire block and build new shop units with flats above and behind. We have been told by the developer that they are looking to start the works in July.

- 13.2 We have been talking to National Highways about the bridge. The bridge can't hold the weight of two-way traffic. It is likely to remain with traffic lights for the foreseeable future. However, as the single-way traffic has slowed the traffic down through the village, it was agreed it was a definite benefit.
- 13.3 The shopkeepers are not keeping their exterior frontage tidy, as there are often many weeds outside. The Chair has said that she is considering offering them an associated membership, and it is hoped that would encourage them to keep the area outside their businesses clean and tidy.
- 13.4 There are owl nesting boxes at the L&G. City and Country have agreed to keep them.
- 13.5 The farmer has now put fencing around his fields to stop trespassing, which is causing damage to his crops. As this is private land and there are public footpaths adjacent to it, it is his right to do so.

Meeting ended at 9.32pm