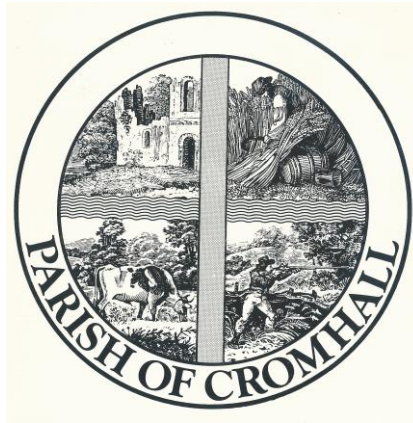




Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Held on Tuesday 5th May 2026 @ 7:30pm at Cromhall Village Hall

Chair: Hannah Bryan, Chairman of Cromhall Parish Council

Clerk: Emma Pattullo

Present: 9 residents and 5 non-residents (external speakers)

1. Welcome and introductions

Cllr Hannah Bryan welcomed residents to the Annual Assembly.

2. Approval of minutes of the 2024 Annual Assembly

The minutes of the 2025 Annual Assembly were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Report from the Parish Council

Cllr Bryan gave a report on the council's activities over the past year and plans for the coming year.

The council continues to maintain the children's playground at Townwell, and various open spaces around the parish including Hawkers Knapp, Bibstone Green, and The Green, Heathend. We also share costs with the school for maintenance of the school field.

We continue efforts to maintain a pleasant and accessible environment in and around Cromhall. A community litter pick was held recently which was very successful. Two more dog waste bins have been installed over the last year. The stile at the north end of the school field has been replaced with a kissing gate. Benches have been maintained or replaced, including a new bench at Bibstone Green. The council also maintains two defibrillators, at the De Smit building and Heathend Garage.

In an effort to reduce speeding through the village, the council has recently bought a flashing speed sign with built-in speed recording. It is hoped this data will help in our efforts to persuade South Glos. Council to take action to reduce speeding.

We have awarded grants to a number of community organisations, several of which are here tonight to report on how they have spent these funds.

Community grants have been awarded to several organisations, most of whom are here to speak tonight.

Planning continues to be a big issue for the council. We monitor planning applications across the parish and discuss at council meetings, submitting comments to South Glos. Council where necessary, and liaise with SGC about local planning concerns.

We also continue to press SGC for other improvements, including pothole repairs, footpath and stile maintenance, and an upgrade to M4 junction 14.

There is currently a vacancy for one parish councillor; anyone who might be interested is asked to approach one of the councillors or the Clerk for more information.

Residents were given chance to ask questions but none were raised.

4. Reports from local organisations and community groups

St Andrew's Church - Ann Greenhaugh, Churchwarden

The church currently has 19 people on the electoral roll, with a congregation of around 12 most weeks. Several special events have been held to involve more residents in church life; these have included the Flower Festival, harvest celebrations, a craft day, Remembrance service, carol service and a joint Christmas Eve service with the Chapel. An open day is to be held on July 18th.

Costs remain high, with £9000 paid to the diocese each year on top of utility bills, insurance and other running costs. The church is on the Historic England "Heritage at Risk" register, mainly due to the poor condition of the roof. The clock tower roof in particular needs urgent repair.

The church and churchyard are looked after by volunteers, more are always welcome. The congregation are also seeking an organist or other musician to accompany services and events.

Cromhall Chapel - Simon Carey, Pastor

The chapel is open to everyone. As well as regular Sunday worship, other events including bible study groups, coffee mornings, men's and women's breakfasts and outreach events.

The chapel hall is also available for use by external groups. It is regularly used for meetings and social events.

The congregation always seek to help others both financially and practically, in Cromhall and further afield. Local help has included collection of items for the food bank as well as financial support to locals in need of a helping hand. Other current projects include supporting a couple training to work in France, a couple translating the Bible in Brazil, a Chaplain working at Portbury docks and a mission providing famine relief and clean water projects.

More information is available on their website www.cromhallchapel.org.

St Andrew's School – Graham Pike, Headteacher

The school remains popular with 69 children on roll out of a possible 70 places. Nine new starters will join the Reception class in September.

The school manages to deliver a wide range of educational experiences despite limited resources. A recent Parish Council grant was used to buy new library books, with every child in the school getting the chance to choose one.

Other enhancements to the curriculum include music enrichment sessions, a high number of sporting events including a dedicated sports week, several clubs, and bike/scooter training to encourage sustainable travel to school.

Village Hall - Joanna Carr, Co-chair of hall committee

The past year has been a good one for the hall, with strong levels of bookings including craft groups, dance classes, martial arts and social activities. The committee organised popular fundraising events such as quizzes, a drinks festival and a carol-singing event; these have all been well supported by the village.

An online calendar system has been put in place where people can check availability and make bookings.

The committee continues to try and improve the facilities and are seeking grants towards installation of acoustic panels and a hearing loop.

Planned events include a clothes “swish” on 5th June, a visiting theatre company in October and the usual quizzes.

New committee members are always welcome. The AGN will be held on 15th June and residents are invited to come along to find out more about the plans for the coming year.

Village Agent Scheme – Kerry Griffiths, local Village Agent

The Village Agent Scheme is run by the West of England Rural Network. Agents are appointed to cover several villages and work with communities, organisations, groups and individuals to improve quality of life in rural areas, especially for the more vulnerable.

Village Agents are the ‘go to’ for support & advice services. They can provide free, confidential one to one support, help to connect with others and signposts to other organisations. Village Agents can provide practical support such provision of foodbank vouchers, help with financial concerns such as completing benefit applications, and advice on transport to medical appointments.

Since the Village Agent service began in Cromhall in June 2024, 50 residents have been supported. Typical local help has been assistance with Blue Badge applications, provision of foodbank vouchers and accessing activities to support wellbeing.

Kerry can be contacted on kerry@wern.org.uk or 07958 15859. More information about the Village Agent scheme is available on the WERN website at www.wern.org.uk/village-agents. People can self-refer or a friend or family member can get in touch on their behalf, although Kerry can only work with those who have given personal consent.

Community Hub plans – Elizabeth Woodward, Village Agent

Elizabeth is a Village Agent in another area, but also a resident of Cromhall. She has been working with the Parish Council and others to try and reopen the former shop premises as a Community Hub.

The loss of the shop meant a loss of services and connections within the Cromhall community. It is hoped that the proposed Hub will in some way make up for this loss. The building owners, Bromford housing association, have been approached and negotiations are underway for the parish council to lease the premises at a peppercorn rent.

The initial plans are to provide a warm social space with a food pantry and a children’s clothes and toy swap. Other uses may be developed in the longer term.

The community are invited to put forward any ideas as to how else the space might be used and to get involved with setting up and running the Hub. Practical support will be needed and there will be

opportunities to volunteer either occasionally or more regularly. Please contact Elizabeth on elizabeth@wern.org.uk or the parish council on clerk@cromhall-pc.gov.uk if you would like to get involved.

Cromhall Horticultural Society – James Imrie, committee member

The main focus of the Horticultural Society is to run the annual Cromhall Flower Show. The 2025 event attracted more than 500 people, mostly local to Cromhall. Entries were strong and the great weather and popular entertainment helped to make the event very successful.

Costs to run the Flower Show are over £3000 per year, including £500 for marquee hire which was covered by a grant from the Parish Council. Any profits are donated to local good causes, last year's profit went to the school.

The 2026 Flower Show will be held on 5th September in the school field.

1st Woodend Scout Group – Peter Carnegie, Group Scout Leader

1st Woodend is a very successful group with over 100 young people and around 20 adult volunteers involved. The group includes Beaver (from age 6), Cubs and Scouts (up to age 14.) They meet in Cromhall during the winter and at Avening Green in the summer months.

The group celebrated their 50th anniversary in 2025 with activities such as a badge competition, a group camp and an event to celebrate current and former members and volunteers.

A new website has been developed (www.1stwoodendscouts.org.uk) which includes an online joining process.

The group has recently received a grant from the Parish Council towards replacing out of date IT equipment, including a new projector.

Poors Allotment Charity

A written report was provided:

The object of the charity is for the relief of the poor in the parish of Cromhall by use of its income, through land grass keep rent. Individuals can apply for assistance if they find themselves in need, and all requests will be considered at any time in the year.

The charity is run by four Parish Council appointed trustees – currently, David White, Caroline Massey, Doug Collett and Clive Young. Caroline Massey and Doug Collett have reached the end of their 4 year appointments though both are prepared to continue for another term. The parish council will have to formally agree their re-election, or propose willing replacements, at its Annual Meeting in 2026.

A land agent is employed to oversee the the administration of the charity owned land.

Income was generated, as usual, by the Grass Keep, a Rural Payment Agency payment and electricity wayleave, plus, this year, a £900 compensation payment from Wessex Water for access over, and necessary reinstatement of, charity land. Total Income was £3,095.53. The RPA payment continues to be reduced annually and the amount paid this year was £400, £460 less than in 2024.

Expenditure included water rates, secretary fee, agent's fees plus, an additional £1,000 to St. Andrew's School to support pupils on a three-day activity camp. Their parents were all known to be in financial difficulties by the school. The accounts also show a payment of £1,890 to the village shop in payment of the Christmas Gifts distributed for Christmas 2024 and a grant of £250 was

made to T@3 (an open afternoon tea for anyone in the village to attend, aiming to reduce social isolation and encourage friendships) to assist in covering the cost of the hall fees. Expenditure totaled £3,887.39.

So this year, 2025, the charity spent another £800 more than its income, like last year, having to use reserves. With the trend likely to continue the trustees took the decision not to distribute vouchers to the elderly at Christmastime so that it remains possible to assist those in financial need.

Other than the school, individual requests for assistance continue to remain rare, and no other requests were made in 2025.

As ever, the charity is committed to fulfilling its brief and had no other matters to consider in 2025.

5. Items raised by electors

Noticeboards - Since the shop is now closed and the FiveAlive magazine is due to close soon, there are no longer many opportunities for advertising village events. Those who don't use social media, in particular, are unlikely to know what is going on in the village. Additional noticeboards around the village would help with communication and this would be a good use of parish council funds.

Potholes – The number potholes in local roads is very high. South Glos Council have a duty of care towards drivers and cyclists. Resident was advised that the "Your Voice" events are an opportunity to discuss this face-to-face with SGC staff.

There being no further matters raised, Cllr Bryan thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Signed at the next Parish Assembly:

Chair of Cromhall Parish Council