

## **Minutes from 61st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 16 October 2026 at St Mary's Perivale**

Present (committee): Gill Rowley (chair), Colin Easton (treasurer) Dorrie Baker (secretary)

Apologies (committee): Richard Partridge, Richard Norris, Anne Neville

Present (audience): Honor Phillipps (EON), Monica Cornforth (EON), Roger Nellist (St Mary's Perivale), Michael Pearce (St Mary's Perivale), Dermot Doughty (St Mary's Perivale), David Brown (St Mary's Perivale), Lokky Lau (Drama Studio), Christine Pearce (Rainbow Poetry Group), Jenni Trauton (Ealing Flower Club), Jenny Sturt (Ealing U3A), Ken Sturt (Ealing U3A), Humaira Sanders (Friends of Marcq-en-Baroeul)

Apologies (audience): Suzanne Gribble (Iyengar Yoga), Elizabeth Howard (EVS), John Hummerston (retired)

### **1 Welcome**

GR welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Dr Hugh Mather, chair of the Friends of St Mary's Perivale, for letting EA&L use the venue free of charge.

### **2 Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes of the last AGM, 21 October 2025, were accepted.

### **3 Matters arising**

Covered below.

### **4 Chair's report**

GR said that EA&L's focus has been, as ever, on providing low-cost publicity in print and online for our member organisations and any others that may wish to advertise in our events diary, *What's On*, which is published six times a year. All its information is replicated on the website, [www.ealingarts.org.uk](http://www.ealingarts.org.uk).

The printed diary is distributed to four supermarkets – Tesco, Ealing Broadway, Sainsbury, West Ealing, Waitrose West Ealing and Morrisons, Acton, and copies are taken to community centres, Questors Theatre, Pitzhanger Manor, health centres, churches, libraries, cafés and a few banks and shops, especially in central Ealing. Suggestions for new outlets, especially in areas beyond the town centre such as Acton or Northolt, would be welcome.

The hard-copy events diary is a boon for many local organisations, now that there's virtually no local press. *What's On* promotes all kinds of community activity, helping the societies to attract new members – or audiences for their productions, exhibitions and concerts.

In a brief update on the Victoria Hall campaign, GR said that the Council has been ordered by the court to renegotiate the lease with the commercial property developer Mastcraft and to have the boundaries of the charity's property independently assessed. A recent meeting between the Charity Commission and the Council followed up these issues but no information has been made available.

The Victoria Hall, paid for by Ealing citizens and constructed in the 1890s, has now been closed for over three years, and the 'Advisory Committee' that is supposed to run the Victoria Hall meets less than once a year.

GR also mentioned another issue that affects EA&L's membership, particularly those that focus on outdoor activities: the threat of a massive theatre tent occupying a large area of Walpole Park for 3½ years. This would destroy wildlife habitats and subject local residents to high-decibel noise from the eight shows a week being proposed, as there will be no soundproofing. The noise, and particularly the throbbing bass reverberations, would cause immense stress to children and adults alike over this period.

GR recalled that the short-term festivals held in recent years in the park have been the scene of a good deal of antisocial behaviour, and even stabbings, so local people are rightly worried that the policing of the facility will not be adequate.

The Leader of the Council has claimed that the tent will generate business in central Ealing, but as the theatre firm has its own bars and restaurants, as well as shops for its merchandise, this seems unlikely. And who goes to any theatre carrying bags of supermarket food and M&S underwear that they've picked up en route? All this, she suggested, makes any benefit to local businesses questionable.

GR was also mindful of the way the Council has managed Lammas Park, with its fenced-in pits and general desecration. And given what happened with Henry Construction, whose unfinished blocks of flats now litter the borough, she is also sceptical that Troubadour Theatres is a good business partner to get involved with, and is not alone in doubting that the Grade II-listed park would be properly restored after the tent is removed. In any case the parkland would take many years to recover.

GR had raised these two issues, the Victoria Hall and Walpole Park, as they are just two heritage locations that EA&L's membership is currently concerned about, and said that it was perhaps appropriate that our speaker today would be talking about heritage across the borough of Ealing.

## **5 Treasurer's report**

Copies of CE's receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 March 2026 had been distributed. CE said that the figures are broadly similar to 2025's, with some savings on printing. EA&L had also made a donation to the Friends of the Victoria Hall for their last legal challenge concerning the disposal of the Hall. EA&L's financial year ended with a healthy bank balance of just under £7,500.

## **6 Reports: membership, supporters, *What's On* and website**

RP, not present, had reported that on 30 September EA&L had 49 member societies or individuals, but last Sunday only 29 because 20 have not renewed. He hopes they will do so. RP is quite lenient with backsliders, but we do need to sustain the number of member organisations, which help to keep us viable.

He also mentioned that half-year membership is accepted for organisations with just one event in the year to publicise.

Overall, numbers over the last 12 months have been pretty stable, and new enquiries about membership are still coming in.

EA&L also has a number of 'supporters', who pay £10 a year to have *What's On* delivered, a service which is much appreciated.

RP had little to say about *What's On* itself, other than the fact that the last year had seen the innovation of a corner flash on the front cover. Stressing that online and printed versions of the diary are the same, he explained that he produces it using an elderly Adobe InDesign program, which is the only program he has ever found that is able to export online data to Apple software for creating the printed diary. When this program gives out, there will be rather a problem.

## **7 Election of officers and Executive Committee members**

Retiring officers:

Chairman: Gill Rowley/Hon. Treasurer: Colin Easton/Hon. Secretary: Dorrie Baker

Retiring ordinary committee members:

Richard Norris (indisposed)

Richard Partridge (membership, website, *What's On* editor)

Anne Neville

All were prepared to stand for re-election, and were duly re-elected.

### **8 Speaker: Mark Price**

GR introduced Mark Price, Principal Heritage Officer at the London Borough of Ealing, who has worked in built heritage and conservation for over 25 years, advising on historic buildings, conservation areas and heritage-led regeneration projects. He gave a most interesting presentation about some of his findings in Ealing, from the immense contribution of the Victorian Borough Surveyor Charles Jones, to churches and cinemas, pubs and memorials, the art deco Hoover Building, Pitzhanger Manor – and even a sarsen.

He then answered questions from the audience and was thanked by the Chair for a talk that highlighted places unfamiliar even to those who had lived for decades in the borough. Dr Mather presented Mr Price with a copy of his book about the church's history.

### **9 AOB**

As there was no other business, GR closed the meeting and invited everyone to stay for refreshments.