Ealing
Arts &
Leisure

Minutes from 59th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
16 October 2024 via Zoom

1 Attendees and apologies for absence

Gill Rowley (Chair)
Colin Easton (Hon. Treasurer/Pisces Players)
Dorrie Baker (Hon. Secretary)
Richard Partridge (committee member/Ealing Symphony Orchestra)
Anne Neville (committee member/Questors Theatre)
Richard Norris (West London Sinfonia)

Margaret Partridge (HEOS)
Carol Wilkes (Ealing Quilters)
Sam Horne (Ealing Choral Society)
Derek Atkinson (Ealing University of the Third Age)

Apologies:
Hugh Mather, Roger Nellist (St Mary's Perivale)
Cath Barnes-Holt
Don Kennedy (Rainbow)
West London Sinfonia
Andrea Bugari (Fireside Lodge)
Suzanne Gribble

2 Welcome

Gill Rowley, Chair of EA&L, welcomed all attending.

3 Minutes of previous AGM (3 October 2023)/matters arising

These were accepted and there were no matters arising.

4 Chair's report

GR explained that this would be a short, business-focused meeting and that there was very little to report since last year. She said that after a couple of years of very

steep increases in printing and distribution costs, EA&L's finances look healthier since we changed printers earlier this year. Distribution continues to be a challenge. EA&L has to pay for supermarket placement of the events diaries, so stock goes to only three big food stores, where the footfall is greatest – Tesco, Ealing Broadway, Sainsbury, West Ealing and Morrison, Acton.

Otherwise, copies of *What's On* go to community centres, Questors Theatre, Pitzhanger Manor, health centres, churches, libraries, cafés and a few banks and shops, especially in central Ealing. However, a few of the retail outlets have closed down, including, very soon, and very sadly, the wonderful City Radio Stores in Bond Street. So if anyone is prepared to find some new outlets, the committee would be most grateful. Help is always needed with distribution, too, so if anyone can take a few copies to places beyond central Ealing, that would be very useful.

GR said that our events diaries are much appreciated by those who like to have information in hard copy rather than having to subscribe to email lists or look at websites. *What's On*:
– attracts new members for our member organisations,
– generates audiences for local productions, exhibitions and concerts, and
– provides a means for new groups to get themselves known in the local area which matters most.

She also gave a brief update about the Victoria Hall campaign. This building with the Prince's Hall below it, is the part of the Town Hall owned not by the Council but by a charitable trust. The Council included the Victoria and Prince's Halls in its disposal of the Town Hall to a developer in 2016, but was then challenged by the community. A charity, The Friends of the Victoria Hall, was set up – EA&L was a founder member – to prevent the disposal of the charity space. It eventually took the Charity Commission and Council to a tribunal, last year, to try to save the Halls for the community that paid for them in the 1890s.

As a result, the Council – which had appointed itself sole trustee of the charitable trust some years ago – has been ordered to relinquish control of the trust property, which it has treated as its own for many decades, and appoint more independent trustees.

That was some months ago, and as far as we know absolutely nothing has been done about it. The entire Town Hall has been shut for over a year, for reasons that

are apparently health and safety-related, but the Council will not reveal what the problems are, and it is not certain that any of them apply to the Victoria Hall itself. So this large central Ealing venue, the only one that can be accessed easily from all parts of the borough by public transport, has now been denied to the community since July 2023.

The Friends of the Victoria Hall are enlisting the help of Rupa Huq MP to try to get some action taken, as well as exerting continued pressure on the Council and the existing Trust to carry out the instructions of the tribunal.

5 Membership report

Richard Partridge reported that although three members had left this year we have 47 who remain.

6 Treasurer's report

Colin Easton had prepared a Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The Account showed net receipts of £365 compared with the deficit of £214 of the previous year. The main reason for the turnaround can be explained by the decision to increase membership subscriptions for the year. In addition, there were increases in revenue from advertising and extra lineage charges. Overall expenditure was virtually unchanged from the previous year.

As for the current year, a change of printer since May had already brought about savings in the printing of *What's On* for the first half of the year of just over £600. If this rate of savings were to continue for the rest of the year, then we would be able to put back into the funds £1,200.

The balance of £5,742 in the funds at the end of the last financial year remained comfortable.

7 Reports: supporters, *What's On* and website

Richard Partridge said there was little to report other than an increase in 'supporters' (people signing up to have *What's On* sent to them by mail). We now have 20. He reminded everyone that the website was essentially a 'feeder' for the printed events diary, but of course any item that arrived too late for the latter could be included on the website.

8 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
Richard Partridge (membership, website, *What's On* editor)
Anne Neville

All officers and committee members were happy to stand for re-election and all were duly re-elected.

9 Members' forum

Comments included thanks for the work done by the committee and acknowledgement of the events diary's effectiveness in topping up organisations' membership, there being few other ways of attracting people apart from social media.

10 AOB

None. GR thanked everyone for attending and expressed the hope that next year's AGM could be held 'in the flesh'. Any suggestions for a speaker would be much appreciated.