

EALING U3A - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019

Although this brief report covers activity within Ealing U3A for the year to the end of 2019 I cannot fail to mention the ongoing Coronavirus epidemic currently sweeping the United Kingdom and especially the U3A organisation and Ealing.

You will now be aware that the activity our 40+ Interest Groups and our usual Thursday morning meetings have been suspended from mid-March and we cannot be certain when we will be allowed to recommence these activities. The committee will do its best to keep members informed by way of Email messages via our BEACON communications system and phone/text calls to members who do not have internet access. I really must emphasise that members should look to the Ealing U3A website for up to date information and possible initiatives/information during this shut down period.

We have a vibrant U3A, with a membership of 457 at the end of 2019 up 9% on 2018.

I am not going to spend much time praising the work of all the hard-working committee members but briefly list below just a few of the achievements of 2019:

1) Enhanced BEACON system of communication to direct information to groups, group leaders and the membership as a whole.

2) Jill Thumpson, our membership secretary for many years, helped the Beacon team with the migration of the membership records which has also been added to this system which now has the ability to pay your annual subscriptions directly through your bank account. Jill has been awarded Life Membership recognising her years of service to the U3A committee and has now retired. Jill Winter and Lyn Duffus are the new Membership Secretaries.

3) The replacement of the retiring Marie Todman from the role of Speaker arranger with Rosemary Richardson with the assistance of Yvonne Hughes. At the National Conference in Nottingham last August the delegates were amazed by the frequency of talks and the quality of our speakers.

4) The innovative way that the chairs and balcony at the Church have been configured to allow for the 140+ regular members attending the Thursday morning meetings.

5) The start of a Shared Learning Project to assist in the research of Boston Manor House in conjunction with Hounslow Council.

6) The successful Summer talks organised by Gillian Dare who is a newish and popular member of Ealing U3A.

7) the increase of new members coffee mornings

FINALLY

I have been honoured to serve as your Chairman during 2019 which has seen many changes (both regulatory and administratively) and would advise you that when the nominations for election to the committee for 2020 closed in early March only the existing committee members had put themselves forward for election. As a result, the committee will remain as before for the upcoming year though we will look to co-opt suitable members to bring different skills to it.

I wish to thank each and every member, whether they only come to a Thursday morning meeting or take part in one or more of the activities groups and especially the group leaders who provide the service to our members and make this organisation such a success-without them there would not be a U3A in Ealing.

My original full statement, drafted in February, will be available upon request once we meet again after the Government and U3A national Office gives permission.

Derek Atkinson, Chairman