# Ealing U3A Autumn Term 2026 – Programme of Thursday talks & events

*NB – all talks run as 'hybrid' talks with some members in Ealing Green Church whilst other members watch at home on Zoom. All speakers will be present in Ealing Green Church.*

| DATES | SPEAKER | TITLE | PRECIS OF TALK |
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| 10 Sept 2026 | **Sarah Wilkie** is a former librarian and cultural services consultant. She is passionate about travelling, including its power to open people's eyes to other cultures and to build understanding. Her other passion is photography, and she is never happier than when combining the two. | **Why go to North Korea?** | Sarah will share her experiences of visiting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, aka North Korea, as a tourist in 2019. She will share a selection of photographs and talk about the challenges and rewards of visiting a country very few get to see with their own eyes. She will also give a very personal perspective on the country: its people, its history, and its place in the world. While Sarah has always travelled as much as possible, since retiring in 2020 she has been able to indulge those passions even more, and enjoys sharing her travel adventures and photos through her blog |
| 17 Sept 2026 | - | **Ealing U3A Coffee Morning** | In five venues around Ealing - check locations and times |
| 24 Sept 2026 | **Justin Dowdall** is an experienced counsellor and family therapist registered with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. He works with people facing a wide range of concerns, including stress/anxiety, family/relationship issues, and the emotional impacts of life transitions. | **The Only Constant: Dealing with Change** | We all face changes throughout our lives, yet fear change as unfamiliar. Whether you're navigating change due to life transitions or something more sudden, learn how to adapt your mindset to harness the positive side of change. |
| 1 Oct 2026 | **Veronica Green** has been nursing for over 40 years and worked as a Diabetes Specialist Nurse for over 30 years. She has worked in many different areas including Primary, Secondary and Intermediary care as well as the private sector. She has been a Nurse Prescriber and a Team leader of a multidisciplinary team both in hospital and the community. | **Diabetes, what it is, how to manage it and how to reduce your chances of developing it** | This talk will explore the various types of Diabetes, risk factors and how diabetes is treated. Veronica will discuss treatment options as well as complications associated with diabetes. She has a special knack for breaking down what can seem very complicated into easily understandable terms. |

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| 8 Oct 2026 | **Andy Smith** is an author and former business communicator who has two artificial limbs, a wonderful wife, three fine children and a whippet.<br>The bionic bard entertains, motivates and gently challenges his audiences with original poetry, humour and the occasional smattering of history | **Mysteries and Conundrums** | Has science and technology got it all worked out or are there aspects of our human existence and experience about which boffins and psychologists are still pretty clueless? Why do some beetles seem to have an integral satnav system? Why do we fall in love and then out of it again? Could you be swallowed by a whale and survive? Andy both offers a tentative response to such questions in this poetic presentation and comes to very few definite conclusions. |
| 15 Oct 2026 | - | **Ealing U3A Coffee Morning** | In five venues around Ealing - check locations and times |
| 22 Oct 2026 | - | **Photo Competition 2026 Results**<br>*followed by a short talk* | The results of this year's Ealing u3a Photographic Competition and award of the prizes, |
| | **Martin Partington*** had a career in the law, as an academic (he was Professor of Law at Brunel University in the 1980s, and at Bristol University in the 1990s), a barrister, and as a tribunal chair. He was a Law Commissioner from 2001-2007.<br>He moved to Ealing in December 2024 when he joined Ealing u3a | **Training Judges: From Impertinence to Importance** | Having spoken about the Law Commission last year, this talk is about the creation of another law-related body – the Judicial College – which I suspect fewer people will have heard of. I will show how it developed from rather basic sessions on sentencing to the wide programme of courses which are now provided by the College to judges across the English Legal System. I will talk about some of the key people who saw the need for judicial education and training – often in the teeth of considerable opposition. And I will offer some personal reflections on some of the contributions I was able to make to these developments |
| 29 Oct 2026 | **Sue Threader** is a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers with senior-level experience in the public, private and charity sector. She is the Chief Executive of the medieval charity that owns Rochester Bridge, the only bridge in the world, managed with Net Zero Carbon emissions. Specialising in pre-20th century bridges, Sue speaks regularly on a wide range of historic bridge topics | **The History of Bridges: Before and after the Menai Suspension Bridge** | Bridges are everywhere — and yet we rarely stop to think about them. Every bridge is a bold answer to a simple question: *how do we get from here to there?* This talk traces that question from its earliest solutions through centuries of innovation, fashion and ingenuity. It will explore how early societies crossed rivers, how Roman engineers pushed construction to astonishing new heights, and how medieval masons turned bridges into symbols of faith, power, and permanence. The story accelerates in the 18th and 19th centuries, an era when engineering began to redefine what was possible. At its heart stands a revolutionary structure: the Menai Suspension Bridge. Completed in 1826, it didn't just span water — it changed the future of bridge building forever. |

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| 5 Nov 2026 | **Barbara Beisinghoff** is a visual artist taking part in Communicative art projects such as Star tents, PoeTree and Enchanted Forest. Her works are found in international museums. Printmaking artists have worked in her etching studio on behalf of Women's Studio Workshop New York | **Grimms' Fairy Tales tell us about Resistance and Survival** | In Barbara Beisinghoff's artist's book *The Wild Swans*, even the paper made from nettle fibers tells a story of resistance and redemption. In the magic mirror of Grimm's fairy tales, power and fear are overcome by courage, cleverness and ingenuity. |
| 12 Nov 2026 | **Alex Brett** is the House Manager at Dr Johnson's House, a late-17th-century townhouse in Gough Square, just off Fleet Street. He holds a BA in History from the University of Warwick and has worked at a range of major London museums and historic sites, including the Design Museum, Buckingham Palace, the Charterhouse and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew | **Wits, Words and War: The Story of Dr Johnson's House** | The talk will be an introduction to the world of Dr Johnson's House and Samuel Johnson. Johnson was a remarkable man who, despite many personal struggles, became one of the most famous men of the 18th-century. The most well-known of his works was, understandably, his *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), which he completed in the garret of the House. He gathered an eclectic circle around him, including the illustrious members of 'The Club' such as David Garrick and Sir Joshua Reynolds, as well as those he invited to live with him such as Anna Williams and Francis Barber (his eventual heir). The House itself is a remarkable survivor from the 17th-century, and has weathered 19th-century neglect and 20th-century bombs to remain standing as the museum it is today |
| 19 Nov 2026 | - | **Ealing U3A Coffee Morning** | In five venues around Ealing - check locations and times |
| 26 Nov 2026 | **Bill Lindsay** who after retiring from a career in pharmaceutical marketing, has focussed on Victorian Merchant Shipping. He is Editor to the Online magazine *Topmasts* for the Society for Nautical Research. He is a member of many Historical Societies and has published articles on merchant shipping. | **William Schaw Lindsay MP: From Cabin Boy to Shipping Magnate** | This is a rags to riches true story - Lindsay was Bill's great-great-grandfather, he had an amazing life. Born in Ayr in 1815, he was orphaned aged 10, ran away to sea as a teenager and within 9 years was a captain of an ocean-going vessel. He retired from the sea, set up a shipbroking Company in London which very quickly became one of the largest in Britain. He then became an MP. His ships were involved in emigration, the Crimean War, and the American Civil War. He met many famous Victorians and his diaries are full of anecdotes on them. They include Brunel, Nightingale, Dickens, Disraeli, Lincoln, Queen Victoria, and many more. Bill recently published his biography. |

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| 3 Dec 2026 | **Rob Casey** is a Patron and Tour Guide at the London Museum of Water and Steam and a Past Master of the Water Conservators Company with an active interest in the environment and the history of London's water supply. Recently retired Rob was Water Strategy Manager for Thames Water Utilities and worked for over 40 years on the planning and operation of their water supply system network supporting over 7.5 million customers. | **Victorian London's Health Crisis - The Cholera Epidemics and their Resolution** | In 1831 a terrifying new epidemic arrived in London, there was no cure and doctors had no idea how the disease was spread. Rob will explain how the water supply and sanitation infrastructure made London particularly susceptible to the cholera disease and the drastic transformation that took place to resolve the crisis. These reforms still form the basis of London's current water supply and sewerage systems and were a blueprint for many systems throughout the world. Rob's talk will focus largely on the impact on the water supply infrastructure which is less well known than the sewage side |
| 10 Dec 2026 | - | **Ealing U3A Coffee Morning** | In five venues around Ealing - check locations and times |
| 17 Dec 2026 | Ealing U3A Members | **A Seasonal Entertainment** followed by refreshments | Details tbc |

* These speakers have all given talks at Ealing U3A previously

**Winter term talks 2027** start on **Thursday 8th January** and end on **Thursday 19th March** with our AGM