

Ancient World Breakfast Club – a history

The first meeting of the then 'Ancient Greek Breakfast Club' took place on Friday 9th September 2005. It was instituted by the then Head of Classics at Godolphin and Latymer School, Jenny Gibbon, who was inspired to share her enthusiasm for her subject more widely. The only requirement for membership was to desire to learn more about the ancient world. Consequently a very diverse group of all ages and backgrounds, with varying knowledge, met on that first day and looked at the relationship between the Ancient Greek language and its influence on modern English.

The Breakfast Club is renowned for the quality of its speakers, the first of whom was Dr Peter Jones in October 2005, followed in November by Tom Holland. Judging by the number of repeat appearances, the speakers also hold the club in high esteem, with many marvelling that so many people are prepared to rise early on a Friday morning for a talk at 8am. In those early years, talks came to focus on areas far beyond Greece and Rome, including Egypt, Carthage and Persepolis, and so in 2010 the decision was taken to rename it the 'Ancient World Breakfast Club' to reflect this wider ancient hinterland.

In 2015 the AWBC celebrated its 10th anniversary with Bettany Hughes as guest speaker. The event was organised by the then club coordinator Alastair Vettese and was attended by many members and speakers for whom Friday mornings are such a focal point. Membership of the club is now approaching 200 and interest in the ancient world has continued to grow to the extent that the Ancient World Breakfast Club has now become a fixture in cultural and educational life of west London.