

Constitution of the Wessex Astronomical Society
2007 November 6th

1. Name

The Name of the Society is the Wessex Astronomical Society (in this document called “the Society”).

2. Objects

To promote and advance public education and interest in the science of astronomy and related sciences and to provide facilities for the encouragement and pursuit of observational astronomy.

3. Means

The Objects will be achieved by any means that may be deemed effective and which are consistent with Registered Charity status, including but not limited to the following

- a. Holding regular public meetings using lectures, discussions, films and any other means open to the Society.
- b. Providing facilities and support for those who wish to study and practise astronomy.
- c. Affiliating with other groups of amateur astronomers.

4. Membership

- a. Membership shall be open to any person wishing to assist in achieving the objects of the Society and who pays the subscription current at the time. Membership by young persons is particularly welcomed.
- b. Members will be required to register with the Secretary a contact address, telephone number and e-mail address if available.
- c. Members may participate in the activities of the Society by giving lectures, giving short talks, presenting results of their practical astronomy, assisting at public observational astronomy events, using the library and by using the Society’s telescopes and other facilities.
- d. Expenditure of effort on behalf of the Society shall normally be unpaid but expenses reasonably incurred on behalf of the Society may be reimbursed.
- e. Members may express their views on the activities of the Society and will be eligible to vote at General meetings. They will also be eligible to be elected to serve on the Committee.
- f. The Committee can decide for good reason to terminate or refuse the membership of any individual provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the committee accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

5. Membership Subscriptions

- a. The amount of the annual subscription shall be recommended by the Treasurer and approved first by the Committee and then by a General Meeting.
- b. The subscription shall be due at the first meeting of the year (normally early January).
- c. Subscriptions for members aged under sixteen years shall be half the full amount.
- d. New members joining the Society after June 30th shall pay half the full amount.

e. A member shall be deemed to have resigned from the Society if the subscription has not been paid after three months following the due date.

6. Management

a. The management of the Society shall be vested in the Committee

b. The members of the Committee are the Trustees of the Society.

c. The Committee shall consist of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and up to eight other members.

d. The members of the Committee shall be elected or re-elected annually by a General Meeting.

e. The Chairman may hold office for a maximum continuous period of two years.

f. The Vice Chairman shall normally be the immediate past Chairman. If the immediate past Chairman is not a member of the Committee then the Committee shall appoint a Vice Chairman from amongst their number.

g. The Committee may co-opt new Members subject to not exceeding the number in paragraph 6c.

h. Any Committee Member may resign for good reason during the year between General Meetings.

i. If the number of members of the Committee falls below six the Committee shall use best efforts to co-opt a new member or members to restore the number to at least six.

j. The Committee shall take decisions by simple majority vote of those present.

k. The quorum of the Committee shall be four members, two of whom must be office holders.

l. Minutes of Committee meetings shall be made available for inspection.

7. Finance

a. Any account shall be kept in the name of the Society.

b. All money received by the Society shall be promptly deposited in the Society's account, with the exception of a cash float which should not normally exceed fifty pounds.

c. Withdrawals shall require the signature of any two of out of three named Committee members decided by the Committee. The Treasurer shall be one of the three named persons.

d. The funds of the Society shall be applied only in furthering the Objects.

8. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

a. An Annual General Meeting shall be held within twelve months of the date of adoption of this Constitution. Subsequent AGMs shall be held one in each year and at intervals not exceeding 15 months.

b. The quorum for the AGM shall be one sixth of the members.

c. Each Member shall have one vote and decisions will require a simple majority of those present and voting.

d. The agenda for the AGM shall include:

1. Apologies for absence;
2. Chairman's report;
3. Treasurer's report;
4. Election of new Committee;
5. Presentation of the Helen Bagaineey Award;

e. Nominations for Committee members will be valid only if confirmed by the nominees at the meeting, or previously in writing to the Chairman or Secretary.

9. Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

a. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by the Committee, or, upon petition to the Secretary, by at least 12 members of the Society. The EGM will then take place within 60 days.

b. Members must be informed of the EGM at least 14 days in advance, together with a statement of the purpose of the meeting.

c. The quorum and voting rules shall be the same as for an AGM.

10. Amendments to the Constitution

a. The Society may amend any provision contained in this Constitution provided that no amendment be made that would have the effect of making the Society cease to be a Charity at law;

b. The Constitution may be amended only at an EGM called for that purpose.

c. Members must be notified of the general nature of the proposed changes at least 14 days in advance of the meeting.

11. Winding Up of the Society

a. The decision to wind up the Society, or amalgamate with another organisation, may be taken only at an EGM.

b. If the Society is wound up, the funds of the Society shall, after the sale of all assets and the payment of all outstanding debts, be disposed of by one or more of the following ways

(1) in furtherance of the Objects of the Society,

(2) by transferring them to another Registered Charity having similar or related Objects

(3) in such other manner as the Charity Commission for England and Wales may approve in writing in advance.

This Constitution was approved at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society held on 2007 November 6th.

Signed

James Fradgley, Chairman

Alan Jefferis, Secretary