

## BRISTOL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

Adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

1. **Name** The Society shall be named the **Bristol Astronomical Society**
2. **Aims** The aims of the Society shall be to advance the education of the public in astronomy
3. **In Furtherance** of the foregoing aims, the Society may:
  - (a) Provide facilities for the furtherance of the objects of the Society.
  - (b) Promote and carry out or assist in promoting and carrying out research, surveys, and investigations and publish the useful results thereof.
  - (c) Employ and pay any person or persons not being members of the Committee to supervise, organise and carry on work of the Society.
  - (d) Bring together in conference representatives of voluntary organisations, Government Departments, statutory authorities and individuals.
  - (e) Collect and disseminate information in all matters affecting the said objects and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objects whether in this Country or overseas.
  - (f) Undertake, execute, manage or assist any charitable trusts which may lawfully be undertaken, executed, managed or assisted by the Society.
  - (g) Cause to be written and printed or otherwise reproduced and circulated, gratuitously or otherwise, such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets or other documents as shall further the said objects.
  - (h) Purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the said objects and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections necessary for the work of the Society.
  - (i) Make regulations for any property which may be so acquired.
  - (j) Subject to such consents as may be required by law, sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of the Society.
  - (k) Subject to such consents as may be required by law, borrow or raise money for the said objects and accept gifts on such terms and on such security as shall be deemed to be necessary.
  - (l) Raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscriptions and otherwise provided that the Society shall not undertake permanent trading activities in raising funds for the said objects.
  - (m) Invest the moneys of the Society not immediately required for the said objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may from the time being be imposed or required by law.
  - (n) Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

#### 4. **Membership**

Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons interested in astronomy and in furthering the work of the Society, and who have paid the annual subscription as set out in clause 5. The committee shall have the right to approve or reject applications for membership, and have the power to terminate the membership of any member if deemed necessary, this to be by letter. A pro-rata refund of membership fees is to be made in such instances. Retiring Members must inform the Secretary of the Society in writing.

#### 5. **Subscription**

The Membership Fee shall be such annual sum as may be decided by the Society at an Annual General Meeting, and become payable from the first meeting of each new session. Visitors are most welcome, but on second and subsequent visits will be invited to donate to the Society such sum as is decided at an Annual General Meeting. These payments will be deducted from the membership fee if membership is taken up within seven days and the subscription paid.

Where a person takes up membership for the first time after the third main meeting of the Winter Session, and providing no visitor's charges have become due, then the membership fee shall be reduced with regard to the number of main meetings remaining in the session.

6. There shall be no entrance fee on joining the Society.

## Meetings

7. The Society shall ordinarily meet at such frequency as decided by the Committee.
8. A General Meeting shall be called upon a written request signed by not less than ten members of the Society, or otherwise at the discretion of the Committee. The notice of such a meeting shall include the Agenda, and the business transacted at the meeting shall be limited to that shown on the Agenda.

The Annual General Meeting shall be held on a date to be determined by the Committee between the 1st January and 31st March each year. The business shall include reports on the work of the year, consideration of the statement of accounts, determination of subscription rates and election of officers and committee. If the date is not printed in the Society's programme each member shall receive notice of the AGM either by announcement at not less than two preceding ordinary meetings or with 21 days' notice by post.

The notice for other General Meetings (except under Clause 28) shall be either by announcement at not less than two preceding ordinary meetings or with 21 days notice by post.

9. The Quorum for the Annual General Meeting, or for other General Meetings, shall be fifteen or two-thirds of the membership, whichever is the fewer, and for Committee Meetings shall be six.

## Committee

10. The general management of the Society shall be directed by a Committee which shall consist of the four named officers under Clauses 15 to 18 hereof, not more than nine further elected members who must all be at least 18 years of age, and up to two Junior representatives as in Clause 22. The Committee may co-opt up to four further members who shall serve until the conclusion of the next AGM. Co-opted members shall be entitled to vote at meetings of the Committee.

All Officers and Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, shall retire at the next AGM and shall be eligible for re-election. Nominations may be made at any time up to the commencement of the AGM, and the consent of the nominee shall be given, either in writing or in person. When there are more nominations than vacancies for Officers and/or Committee, then the retiring Chairman shall organise a secret ballot.

11. **Trustees** For the purposes of the Charities Act the Trustees of the Society shall comprise the current Officers and elected and co-opted committee members, but not the Junior representatives.
12. The Committee shall:
  - a) meet at least once a quarter
  - b) control Expenditure and Finance
  - c) see that the policy of the Society is carried out
  - d) arrange a programme of meetings for each session
  - e) arrange Publicity
  - f) arrange the premises of the Society
  - g) be presided over by the Chairman
  - h) have minutes recorded by the Secretary and published
  - i) be empowered to terminate membership
  - j) make arrangements for observing
  - k) keep an Inventory of Assets of the Society
  - l) adequately insure the Assets and Liabilities of the Society
  - m) be responsible to and report to the Society at the Annual General Meeting
  - n) be empowered to fill casual vacancies among the Officers or Committee until the next following AGM

## Honorary titles

13. The title *President* shall be honorary.

The title *Vice-President* shall be honorary, awarded in recognition of services to Astronomy or to the Society

14. The power to elect or remove the President and Vice-President(s) shall be vested in the members in General Meeting.

### **Officers**

15. The *Chairman* shall preside at all meetings at which he is present, unless circumstances require that he delegates the task.
16. The *Vice-Chairman* shall preside at all meetings not attended by the Chairman. In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, any officer or elected committee member may preside.
17. The *Secretary* shall be responsible for all correspondence of the Society subject to the instructions of the Committee, for keeping the Minutes of the Society, and for the keeping of the register of attendance.
18. The *Treasurer* shall be responsible for all monetary transactions of the Society subject to the instructions of the Committee, shall keep the Committee regularly informed about the financial affairs of the Society and shall produce a certified statement of accounts at each AGM.
19. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Vice-Chairman shall be appointed by the Committee from among their number at their first meeting after the AGM.
20. The Committee may appoint other officials and subcommittees for the proper conduct of the Society's activities, and delegate to them such of their powers as they shall see fit from time to time. Officials shall be members of the Society but need not necessarily be from among the members of the Committee.
21. **Honorary Membership** may be bestowed by the Committee in recognition of services to Astronomy or to the Society.
22. **Junior Membership** may be accorded to persons up to the age of 18.

The subscription for juniors shall be decided at the AGM. Junior members may be represented at the meetings of the Committee by up to two junior members, who shall be elected by junior members only, normally at the AGM, or otherwise at an ordinary meeting. Such representatives shall not have reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday at the time of their election. They have the right to contribute to Committee discussions, but not to vote.

**Student Membership** Special subscription rates may be accorded to persons up to the age of 21 who are full-time students, as decided at the AGM.

23. **Family Membership** may be taken by a family group at one address, under subscription terms decided at the AGM.
24. **Senior Citizens and the un-waged** Special subscription rates may be accorded to senior citizens and the un-waged, as decided at the AGM.

### **Finance**

25. All monies raised by or on behalf of the Society shall be applied to further the objects of the Society and for no other purposes provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of the Society or the repayment to officers, officials or members of expenditure properly incurred for the benefit of the Society.
26. The AGM shall consider a statement of accounts prepared by the Treasurer and certified by a suitably qualified or experienced person elected by the members.
27. A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Society with such bank as the Committee shall from time to time decide. The committee shall authorise in writing the officers of the Society to sign cheques on behalf of the Society. All cheques must be signed by not less than two of the authorised signatories and where possible shall normally be signed by the Chairman and the Treasurer.

28. **Dissolution of the society**

If the Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that on the ground of expense or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Society it shall call a meeting of all members of the Society who have the power to vote, of which meeting not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat) shall be given. If such decision shall be confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at such meeting the Committee shall have power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Society. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Society as the Committee may determine, and insofar as effect cannot be given to this provision then to some other charitable purpose.

29. **Amendments to the constitution**

The Constitution may only be amended at a General Meeting of the Society.

Notice of any proposed amendment must be given to the Secretary in writing at least one month before the General Meeting, and the amendment will be effected if approved by a minimum of two-thirds of the members present at the General Meeting, provided that no alteration shall be made to Clause 2, Clause 28 or this Clause until the approval in writing of the Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction shall have been obtained and no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Society to cease to be a charity at law.

30. **Points not covered in the constitution**

The Committee shall carry out the will of the Society in all circumstances not covered by the Constitution.