



MEXBOROUGH & SWINTON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Annual Report & Statement of Accounts

For the year to March 31st 2013

Annual Report for the year ended March 31 st 2013	1
Reference and Administrative Details	1
Charity Name	1
Charity Number	1
Principal Address.....	1
Charity Trustees as of March 31 st 2013.....	1
Other Charity Trustees in the year to March 31 st 2013.....	1
Patrons as of March 31 st 2013.....	1
Advisors	1
Structure, Governance and Management.....	2
Governing Document and Constitution	2
Trustee Selection and Management	2
Related Organisations	2
Objectives and Activities.....	3
Charitable Objects	3
Public Benefit Statement.....	3
Summary of Main Activities	3
Achievements and Performance	4
BBC Stargazing Live.....	4
Community Access Programme & Outreach	5
Meeting Programme	6
Charities Online Financial Reporting and Accounts Awards.....	6
Web Site	6
Observatory.....	7
Refurbishment of Society Solar Telescope.....	7
Membership	7
Imaging Group.....	8
Transit of Venus	8
Financial Review.....	8
Financial Management and Reserves Policies	8
Financial Performance	9
Income.....	9
Expenditure	10
Gifts and Support in Kind	11
Funds Materially in Deficit	11
Major Risks	11
Accounts for the Year ended March 31 st 2013	12
Receipts & Payments Account.....	12
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	12
Notes to the Accounts	14

Annual Report for the year ended March 31st 2013

The Trustees of Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name

The Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society which is also known as MSAS.

Charity Number

Registered Charity in England & Wales, N^o.1064103

Principal Address

147 Queen Street
Swinton
Mexborough
South Yorkshire
S64 8NG

Charity Trustees as of March 31st 2013

Mr Leslie Holmes Marsden	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr Shaun O'Dell	<i>Secretary</i>
Mr Michael John Waterfield	<i>Treasurer</i>
Mr Gary James Gawthrop	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Mrs Joyce Mary Botterill	<i>Librarian</i>
Mr Paul D'Silva	<i>Fundraising Officer</i>
Mr Glenn Michael John Marsden	<i>IT Officer</i>
Mr Anthony John Morris	<i>Curator of Instruments & Observatory</i>
Mr Philip John Muffett	<i>Programme Co-ordinator</i>
Mr Trevor Worrall	<i>Observations Officer (Co-opted September 12th 2012)</i>
Mr Michael Kerry Collinson	
Mr Stephen Taylor	
Mr Barry Jackson	

Other Charity Trustees in the year to March 31st 2013

Mr Arthur Wallace Rodman	<i>Did not seek re-election at the Annual General Meeting</i>
Mr Michael Paul Nicholls	<i>Resigned from office 22nd July 2012</i>

Patrons as of March 31st 2013

Dr Allan Chapman	<i>Patron & Honorary President</i>
------------------	--

Advisors

Banking	National Westminster Bank PLC. Bank Street Mexborough South Yorkshire S64 9QE	Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL
Insurance Broker and Underwriter	Access Insurance Services 50 Chapel View South Croydon Surrey CR2 7LF	Ansvar Insurance Company Ltd. Ansvar House St. Leonards Road Eastbourne East Sussex BN21 3UR

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document and Constitution

The Society is an unincorporated association governed by a constitution adopted August 1996 and last amended June 24th 2010.

The Society is run entirely by its members who pay an annual membership subscription and are not eligible for reimbursement of any out-of-pocket expenses. As of March 31st 2013 the Society had a membership of 50.

Trustee Selection and Management

The Society is managed by an Executive Committee which consists of all the appointed trustees. A number of the trustees also hold offices within the society, for example the Curator of Instruments and Observatory. These officers are noted in the list of current trustees above.

The Executive Committee meet typically once per month; in the year to March 31st 2013 a total of twelve formal meetings took place. Attendance at these meetings, shown as meetings attended/meetings eligible to attend was as follows: Leslie Marsden 12/12, Shaun O'Dell 12/12, Glenn Marsden 10/12, Joyce Botterill 4/12, Phillip Muffett 8/12, Michael Collinson 10/12, Michael Waterfield 11/12, Gary Gawthrope 12/12, Anthony Morris 8/12, Paul D'Silva 11/12, Arthur Rodman 1/2, Stephen Taylor 10/12, Barry Jackson 6/10, Trevor Worall 7/7 and Michael Nicholls 2/2.

At each meeting the Treasurer presents the latest accounts and these are reviewed against budgets and forecasts; spending is discussed and approved. Officers may authorise some spending, between meetings, within set limits but must ensure such spending is reported at the next meeting.

The meetings also offer a forum to review recent activities within our programme and to plan forthcoming events. Correspondence and applications for membership received are considered; in addition officers report on their areas of responsibility - typically reports are made quarterly. Further *ad hoc* meetings are called if required, for example to plan and manage special events or projects.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts are approved by the trustees and then presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

The Society has also appointed a Finance sub-committee which meets on an *ad hoc* basis to advise on budget and financial management matters, the sub-committee is chaired by the treasurer, Michael Waterfield and its members are Shaun O'Dell, Gary Gawthrope, and Michael Collinson.

Related Organisations

The Society is a member of the Federation of Astronomical Societies (FAS), a national body established to promote co-operation between astronomical societies and provide information and advice to its members; for further information see the FAS website www.fedastro.org.uk/fas.

Two trustees of Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society, Mr O'Dell and Mr Gawthrope, serve on the Council of the FAS; Mr O'Dell as Secretary & PLI Officer and Mr Gawthrope as President and Deputy Treasurer; all FAS Council members are drawn from the Federation's member societies.

The Society made a subscription payment to the FAS of £28 in the year and also purchased additional Public Liability cover, to cover events held away from the Observatory and meeting room, as part of a group scheme at a cost of £20.

The Society's meeting room is a rented room in the Swinton Working Men's Club & Institute (SWMC). It is a requirement our tenancy that all adult members of the Society must be members of the SWMC, this is managed by the Society and subscription payments totalling £96 were made to SWMC, in addition room rent was paid in the amount of £900.

The J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory is built on land rented from Yorkshire Water Services Ltd. for an annual rent of £75.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable Objects

The object of the Society as set out in our Constitution is the advancement of education for the public benefit in astronomy and its associated sciences.

The Society aims to promote astronomy as a recreational activity for its own sake but also aims to promote public awareness and understanding of science and the scientific method. A scientifically literate community is, in our view vital, in the modern world.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society confirm that they have complied with their duty under section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the Society in the year to March 31st 2013.

In evaluating public benefit the trustees note that membership of the society is open to all who share an interest in astronomy and its associated sciences. Whilst we would encourage those with interest to join our ranks we also strive to make our services and facilities available to non-members and ensure that restrictions placed on that availability are both necessary and reasonable. Our meeting programme for example is open to all whilst public access to the observatory or solar telescope is only available when supervised by the society; this is to protect both our assets and public safety. A society member, once suitably trained, may choose to use the observatory at any time.

Summary of Main Activities

The core activities of the Society are:

- Delivery of a weekly meeting programme covering a wide range of astronomical topics
- Developing and maintaining the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory
- Offering a Community Access Programme at the observatory
- Providing an Outreach Programme within the local area
- Offering support and advice to the public on matters related to astronomy

Our philosophy is to offer access to all regardless of personal circumstances, race, gender, ability, or faith. The Society operates mainly in South Yorkshire however visitors from further afield are always welcome. The programme of weekly meetings is open to all, although disabled access to our meeting room is sadly limited.

Our Community Access Programme opens the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory to give supervised access to the general public and to organised groups such as schools, Scouts, and Round Table. Disabled access to the observatory is limited as the telescopes are on the first floor however we do have facilities to take portable instruments outside to visitors who are unable to access the building.

With our Outreach activities we take solar telescopes out to fetes and galas or to public spaces such as country parks. In recent years we have increasingly worked in partnership with other organisations and venues in our community, this helps us to reach a wider audience.

Fees are charged for these services but these are kept at a low level, concession rates do not apply as the full fee is small and the administrative overheads of concession rates would be disproportionate.

Achievements and Performance

BBC Stargazing Live

The BBC's Stargazing Live series returned for a third, annual, series in January 2013 and the society once again participated providing eighteen events across our Community Access, Outreach, and Meeting Programmes in January and February 2013. In summary the added public interest generated by the Stargazing live broadcasts combined with a very active programme resulted in a successful third year of Stargazing live for the society.



All events were published on the *BBC Things To Do* web site (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/thingstodo>), the clubbz.com events listing site, FAS website Society Events page (<http://fedastro.org.uk/fas/society-events/>) and the BBC Sky at Night magazine What's On page (<http://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/whats-on>) and local radio and press.

Much of our weekly meeting programme for the two-month Stargazing live period was given over to events under the Stargazing live banner. The programme commenced on the January 3rd with Paul D'Silva speaking on Meteor Showers, the following week saw Tony Morris speaking on Basic Astro Photography. On January 17th Trevor Worrall, our Observations Officer, gave the regular quarterly observing update as he told us what to look out for in the Winter Sky.

As a society we always seek new ways to assist the public and our members to get started or get the most out of their interest in astronomy and to promote hands-on practical participation so were very pleased to launch our Astro Clinic to coincide with Stargazing Live, the first clinic being held on 24th January. Everyone who sought our assistance and advice was aided by our panel of experienced and knowledgeable members and all the problems put before us were resolved. We intend to offer several Astro Clinic style meetings throughout the year.

January was rounded off with The Annual Imaging Competition, this year saw several new entrants participate, Trevor Worrall being the worthwhile winner, with an excellent set of images.

Our Honorary President and Patron Dr Allan Chapman opened our February programme when he gave an enthralling talk on Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington – The Man Who Proved Relativity.

Member Phil Muffett spoke on a Clockwork Cosmos on February 7th and Roy Gunson took us on a tour of the Moons of Jupiter (all 67 of them!) on February 14th.

Our Stargazing Live meeting programme drew to a close in style with two guest speakers, we were delighted to welcome a BAA president and Lunar section direction Professor Bill Leatherbarrow visited February 21st to give a very interesting talk on Observing the Moon. The final event of our Stargazing Live programme on February 28th saw our old friend Paul Money entertain us with his talk on Images of Earth.

In addition to our meeting programme four Community Access Programme events took place at the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory over the period. The first followed our meeting of January 3rd at which meteor showers were discussed; allowed visitors to observe the Quadrantids Meteor. Two further events were held on January 17th and 18th and the last event of the Stargazing Live season took place on February 15th when members and visitors gathered to view and image Asteroid 2012DA14.

Our Outreach Programme also made a huge contribution to our Stargazing Live efforts. On Saturday, January 5th we were at Wentworth Castle, Stainborough. Two hundred and twenty people attended what our partners at Wentworth Castle described as a very successful event.

The RSPB reserve at Old Moor was our venue for two evenings entitled Galaxies & Geese held on Saturday January 12th and February 16th. Saturday February 23rd of saw the society team up once

again with the Friends of Clifton Park for Planets in the Park II at the Garden House, Clifton Park Rotherham.

Should the BBC commission a fourth series of Stargazing Live in 2014 we would strongly recommend more notice be given to allow for planning and scheduling of events. We would also encourage greater promotion of local events through the BBC channels.

Community Access Programme & Outreach

In addition to the events described above held under the BBC Stargazing Live banner the society has delivered its normal Community Access and Outreach programmes throughout the year, there has been a slight shift in balance between the two programmes however.

The demand from our Outreach partners, such as RSPB Old Moor Reserve and Wentworth Castle, has been increasing and we have found it difficult to fulfil these requests and run our typical 2 or 3 events per month at the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory as part of our Community Access Programme. In view of the larger audiences which can be accommodated at our partner sites, and the greater potential reach derived of their existing communication and marketing channels we have chosen to support these opportunities and reciprocally reduce our observatory based Community Access commitments. We anticipate this model continuing unless additional volunteers can be drawn from our membership to support additional events.

The society has provided a total of 12 Outreach events including those described as part of our BBC Stargazing Live efforts; total attendance at these events in the year was 810.

In addition to the two BBC Stargazing Live events we were guests of the RSPB Old Moor Reserve for an evening event on 17th November. The society also visited the RSPB reserve on 2 Sundays during the summer to show members of the public the Sun through specialist equipment and offer a short presentation on the Sun, our nearest star.

Staff at Thrybergh Country Park again asked the society to put on a public event to show the autumn skies and "A Night under the Stars" was held on 20th October 2012. Thrybergh Country Park is owned and run by Rotherham Council and is situated in a semi-rural location on the outskirts of Rotherham, it has a lodge with a large south facing grassed area in a relatively light pollution free area. The public (some 50 visitors) was given the opportunity to use six telescopes to observe the Moon, Andromeda and various nebulae and clusters and the International Space Station pass overhead.

The event also featured lectures on the Solar System, we also gave advice on how to set up and use telescopes to several members of the public; we have found the offer of this practical "hands on" advice has been welcomed and valued by our visitors.

We are delighted to report that our list of partner organisations has expanded to include Wentworth Castle and Gardens at Stainborough, Barnsley – the only Grade 1 listed landscape in South Yorkshire, see <http://www.wentworthcastle.org/>

Our first joint event with Wentworth Castle was "Stargazing at Stainborough" on 27th October 2012. This event included seven telescopes for use by the visiting public and presentations in the Long Barn with a Stellarium (<http://www.stellarium.org/>) virtual sky presentation in St James Chapel. As ever Society Members were on hand to answer the visitor's questions. There were forty eight visitors of various ages throughout the evening. This event was promoted as part of the UK Dark Sky Discovery project. A second event at Wentworth Castle took place on 16th March 2013 which was sadly let down by poor weather; it should also be noted that income from this event does not show in the accounts presented here as it will be received after March 31st 2013.

The society once again took part in the Wentworth Village Family Day, we are pleased to participate in this event as Wentworth village is close to the observatory.

We extend our grateful thanks to the staff and volunteers of our partner organisations for their assistance and support which have enabled us to deliver a substantial Outreach programme, we look forward to working with RSPB Old Moor, Thrybergh Country Park, Wentworth Castle Gardens, and Friends of Clifton Park in future to build on this success.

The society is grateful to its members for bringing their own equipment on all these events to supplement the society's equipment.

As a society we need to encourage more members to become involved and support our efforts. We also recognise a need for each event to have a designated manager within the society to liaise with venues, agree volunteer resourcing and so forth.

Our Community Access Programme of events at the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory has not been neglected with a total of eleven events being planned; sadly two planned events had to be cancelled due to severe weather conditions and a third was booked by a group which failed to attend. Total attendance at the remaining 8 events was 126.

In addition in the year to March 31st our member Tony Morris has given talks to the Rotherham Photographic Society, The Heart of England Astronomical society and been a speaker at the BAA Back to Basics day at Durham University, Tony also organised a DSLR Astrophotography workshop for the BAA in September 2012 at the Royal Astronomical Society, Burlington House, London.

Meeting Programme

A total of 54 society meetings took place in the year to March 31st 2013; our weekly Thursday meetings were supplemented by a few Friday meetings to accommodate the travel arrangements of some of our guest speakers. Total attendance for the year was 1,339 – of which 69 visits were by none members; average weekly attendance was 25.

We place on record our thanks to all our speakers, both our members and especially our guest speakers: Dr Sue Cartwright, Martin Dawson, Dr Allan Chapman, Neil Haggath, Professor Bill Leatherbarrow, Paul Money, and Dr Lee Sproats. Guest speaker expenses for the year totalled £335.

We greatly value the time and effort given by all our speakers to provide entertaining, informative, and stimulating presentations on varied and stimulating range of topics, without their help we would be unable to deliver the programme we do.

Charities Online Financial Reporting and Accounts Awards

The Society once again entered in to the Charities Online Financial Reporting and Accounts Awards organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). The Awards aim to:

- increase transparency by rewarding best practice in financial reporting
- raise the standard of web-based financial reporting for greater impact and accessibility
- encourage more charities to do their financial reporting online

The winners were announced at the ICAEW Charities Awards evening on June 25th 2012 at Chartered Accountant's Hall, London. The society's Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended March 31st 2011 was runner-up in the category Charities with income below £250k.

We were pleased that we appeared in the top 3, as we have each year since the 2008 awards and we look forward to taking part in the competition in future in the hope of regaining the top spot. The runner-up prize of £1,000 was a welcome addition to society funds.

Web Site

The society website (msas.org.uk) has undergone a further major overhaul in the past year with a completely new, fresher appearance being applied which is also intended to improve the user experience when using smartphone and table browsers which are becoming increasingly common. The Joomla! Content Management System and third party components were upgraded or replaced to the latest versions to improve security and robustness.



Towards the end of the year with the upgrade completed the number of site editors was increased with a view to keeping the site content more up-to-date and relevant; this change is still at a very early stage of development with initial training yet to be completed; we will be better able to assess the impact of this change in our next report.

The website also provides quick links to our social media and social network pages – Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, and Pinterest. We see these low cost channels as an effective way of increasing the society's profile and generating additional web traffic.

Observatory

The dome and shutter automation project has finally been completed with both the shutters now fully under electronic control. The control box has proved easy to operate especially with the safety features built-in. The control box has a measure of speed adjustment built-in which has been invaluable as one of the upper bearing assembly's needs some attention as it is putting an extra load on the top motor; the bearing will need replacing during the summer months.

Many members came forward to help with the final installation but special thanks must go to Kristian Hudson-Lee who has installed the all the conduits, cables and junction boxes on the dome walls. Gary Gawthrope was a key player once again in the final build and fitting of the mechanical components.

To aid long term reliability and maintainability all electrical and electromechanical components are industry standard devices purchased from Farnell electronic components.

We have been able to remove the large "A" frame step ladders as they are no longer needed because of the shutter automation. These have been replaced by a set of multi-fold ladders which take up less space, are easy to handle and can safely reach the top of the dome from the inside should the need arise.

Refurbishment of Society Solar Telescope

It had been identified that the society's Coronado 60 Solarmax telescope was not performing as well as expected. The UK distributor was contacted but offered no guarantee of resolving the issues even if it was sent to the US based manufacturer.

It was decided to investigate the issues further and discovered that after the specialist filters had been removed the optics were left wanting, the filters were tested independently on a different telescope. It was decided to replace the optical elements with a new telescope. A suitable telescope was identified (a Williams Optics 80mm Zenithstar 2) and member Gary Gawthrope manufactured a suitable adaptor to allow the specialist filters to fit to the new telescope.

The new telescope was first used at the Wentworth village day and both members and the public were very impressed with the new telescope and were amazed to be able to see the active surface of our nearest star, the Sun. A further incidental outcome from this work was that the society now has a short focal length telescope for use during the winter observing season (when the specialist filters have been removed).

A gradual change out of any rusty bolts to stainless steel items on the dome has also continued over the last year.

Membership

At March 31st 2013 membership of the society was 50; the society has accepted eight new members in the year and we extend a warm welcome to them.

We must also record with sadness the death of our long standing member Mick Parkin, Mick frequently took part in our meetings and will be greatly missed. Our thoughts are with Mick's wife and family.

Thirty one members, families, friends and visitors participated in the society trip on Saturday 14th July. The day began with a visit to Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre where after viewing the displays and radio telescopes we were entertained with a talk on the history of Jodrell Bank and its telescopes. In the afternoon we were met Tony Cross the Publicity Officer for the Manchester Astronomical Society who escorted us to their Godlee Observatory which is situated on the top of

Manchester University's Sackville Building. We were warmly welcomed by Kevin Kilburn with refreshments before an excellent tour and historical presentation of the history of their society and observatory. We extend our warm thanks to the Manchester Astronomical Society for their hospitality.

It was intended that the costs of the visit would be borne by the members and guests taking part and be cost-neutral to the society. However a slight shortfall in final numbers resulted in a small deficit of £40 which was met from society funds.

Imaging Group

Several members have formed an astronomical imaging group which meets every couple of weeks, either at the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory or at the club room depending on the weather to image and process various astronomical objects; this has promoted greater use of the society's resources and stimulated interest in the art of astronomy without eyepieces.

The group's members have varying levels of experience and have had a great deal of support from Gary Gawthrope and Tony Morris. Several participants submitted their processed images in to the annual Image Competition this year; it is good to see ever increasing number of individuals entering the competition year on year.

Transit of Venus

The society mounted an observing event on 5th/6th June 2012 to for the transit of Venus to compliment the one carried out in 2004 during the last transit. Transits of Venus are among the rarest of predictable phenomena, they occur in pairs separated by eight years with successive pairs being separated by long periods of 121.5 years and 105.5 years. The first of the next pair of transits will occur December 2117 – the society's plans for this event are only at a very early stage!

A group of members and visitors based at the J.A. Jones observatory aimed to observe and time the event and record images, unfortunately the home event was clouded out and no observations were made, however, a great deal of practical experience in using the Takahashi telescope for solar observing was gained during rehearsals. In addition a method of using webcams and linking them to the main room down stairs was designed and implemented and this method of presentation will become more common in future.

On the day itself six members of the public turned out before dawn to witness the transit, fortunately we could provide live images via an internet link of the NASA coverage, tea and bacon sandwiches

Several society members ventured to Hawaii to observe the transit from a location with a greater change of clear skies. The transit was successfully observed from Big Island and the members present were fortunate to have seen both of the pair having been in Egypt for the 2004 event. The trip was combined with visiting the observatories at the 14000ft summit of Mauna Kea and the summit of Haeleakala on Maui.

Financial Review

Financial Management and Reserves Policies

The Society has a Financial Management Policy which meets the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charity Commission guidelines "Internal Financial Controls for Charities" and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)".

The General Fund is unrestricted and is used for the day-to-day operation of the Society.

The New Horizons restricted fund was closed on March 31st 2012 as we reported in our Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of that date; therefore the society is currently operating without any restricted funds. The New Horizons restricted fund is included in this report only to allow comparison with previous years.

The Society operates with an unrestricted reserve at a level set by the trustees; currently this is £4,500 which equated to approximately 18 months running costs. The reserve is held to allow the Society to offset fluctuations in income receipts and to provide for contingencies.

Reserves are held without any exposure to the stock market; in the year to March 31st 2013 the trustees reviewed how reserves were held. The interest rate attracted to on our longstanding NatWest Savings account was virtually zero therefore a Virgin Charity Deposit Account was opened

to hold the greater portion of reserve funds in low risk, easy access manner whilst attracting a higher return. At the time of writing the Annual Equivalent Rate of the Virgin Charity Deposit Account was 2.61%.

At March 31st 2013 the General Fund had a balance £17,084 (compared to £14,216 at the same date last year).

Whilst the current unrestricted fund level is above the reserve we feel it is prudent in the current economic climate; maintaining a substantial reserve will better allow the Society to meet the funding challenges which the wider economic situation may impose. We also note that securing external funding is becoming increasingly difficult as sponsors and grant making bodies are forced to address their own funding issues. We are also mindful that the long-term future of Swinton WMC is difficult to guarantee and that we must be prepared to seek alternative accommodation, possibly at short notice, should our current venue cease to be available. After a period of significant and sustained investment the trustees have also decided to pause and reflect on the next step in our development.

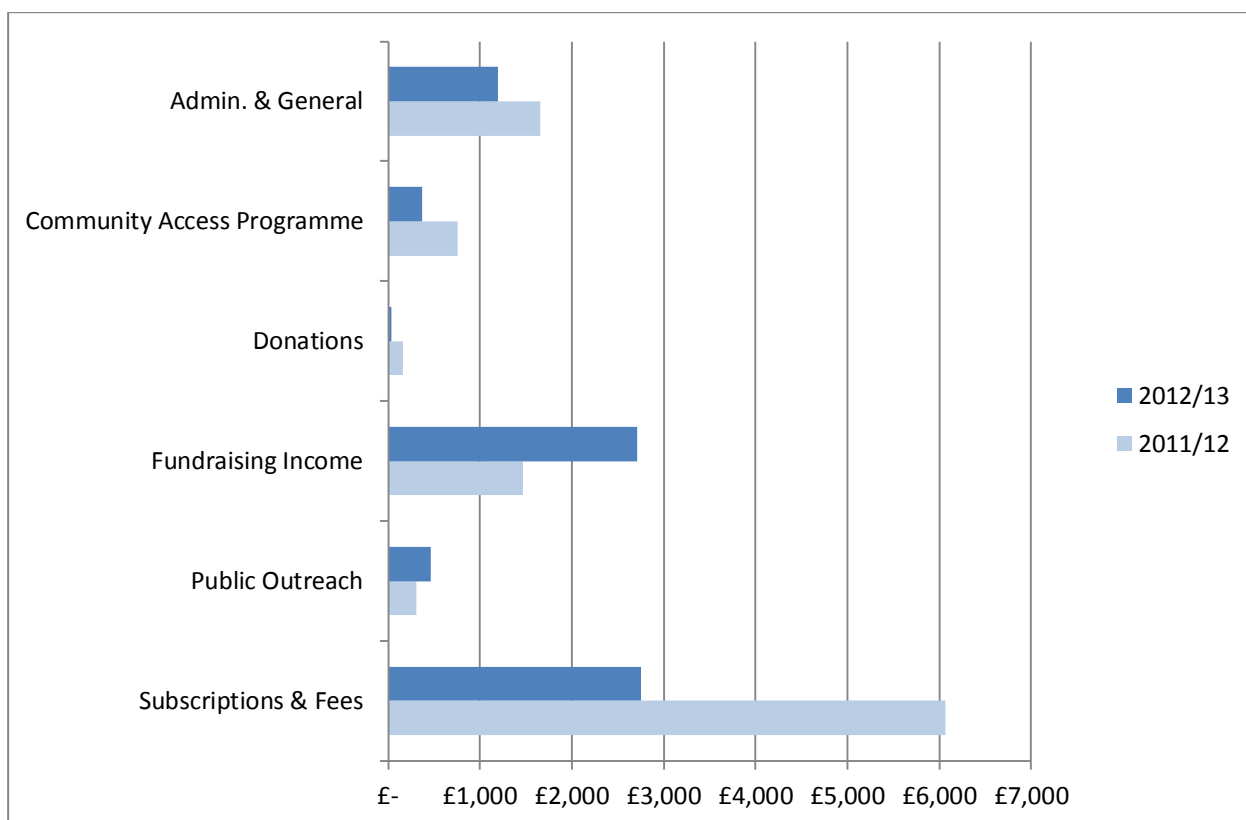
We have also attained our long standing goal of member subscriptions meeting core operating costs, something we have been working towards for a number of years. No increase in subscription rates is to take place in the year commencing April 1st 2013 and the finance sub-committee are recommending that subscription rates are held for the year commencing April 1st 2014.

Financial Performance

Financial performance in the year to March 31st 2013 has been broadly consistent with the trustee’s forecasts and expectations.

Income

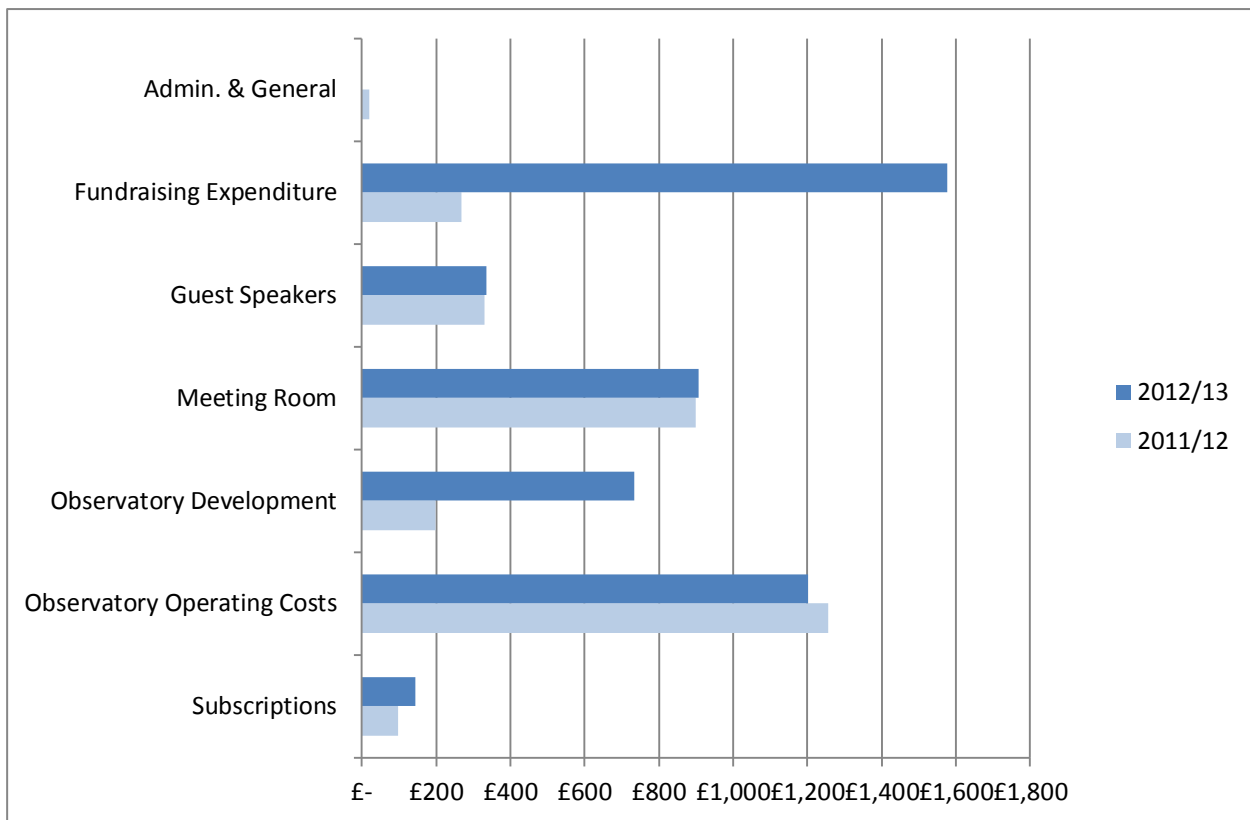
Income shows a 27.5% drop year-on-year from £10,399 to £7,535 as illustrated below – however this direct comparison is misleading as the previous year accounts include back-dated Gift Aid for the period April 1st 2006 to March 31st 2010.



The gift aid claim accounts for the significant change to Subscription & Fees income; the income stream to show a significant change is Fundraising Income. This shows a marked change due to the inclusion of £775 income from the Manchester trip which is offset by related expenditure and income for the society’s 35th anniversary event of £935 – as of March 31st only £200 had been paid to the venue with the remaining £735 to be paid in April 2013.

Expenditure

Overall general fund expenditure shows a 59.7% increase on the previous year as illustrated below – this is mainly due to the refurbishment of the solar telescope and inclusion of society trips in fundraising expenditure.



Meeting room expenditure of £908 shows only a very slight increase (£8) on the previous year. The bulk of this expenditure, £900, is due to rent payments for our meeting room at Swinton WMC; the increase is replacement consumables such as OHP projector bulbs.

Observatory operating costs show a year-on-year fall of £53 to £1,203 – this is due to reduced BT bills for the observatory telephone line rental and call charges. It should be noted that the premium for the society's main insurance policy is reported as an observatory expense as historically this was the case; the current policy replaced an earlier building and contents only policy for the observatory and the attribution has been retained for comparison purposes. The current policy covers a wider range of charitable activities and employers and public liability however the premium is not broken down by our provider.

Observatory development shows a significant increase of over 270% to £734 although it should be noted this expenditure category is, historically, quite volatile depending upon the needs of the society. In the year to March 31st some £643 was invested in the refurbishment of the solar telescope with a further expense of £86 on a new folding ladder.

Subscriptions show a marked year-on-year increase from £98 to £144, nearly 47%, which is directly attributable to an increase per-person membership fees to Swinton WMC.

Fundraising Expenditure is another area showing significant increase on the previous year – from to £276 to £1,576 . There are several factors which contribute to this. Firstly the members' visit to Manchester has been managed by the society this year rather than being run separately from but with the support of the society, this accounts for expenditure of £815 though this is offset by income of £775. In addition £200 was spent on the society's forthcoming 35th anniversary weekend at Malham.

A further expenditure of £289 was made in purchasing books which are sold at our outreach and community access events.

Guest speaker expenses have remained almost the same at £335 compared to £330 in the year to March 31st 2012.

Gifts and Support in Kind

In assessing the finances and assets of the society it must be noted that many members and trustees give a great deal of support in kind. Many purchases are made and the payment never claimed back; for example printing and postage costs, stall fees at events, and web hosting have all been paid for by members but the cost not claimed despite such a claim being perfectly legitimate.

Members also give generously of their time; without the many hours given to preparing and delivering talks, running community access and outreach events, and managing the society its growth and success could not be achieved.

We undertook an analysis of the time which trustees and members give to the society to support our Community Access and Outreach programmes, preparing and delivering presentations, and on trustee and officer duties. The total exceeds 4,500 hours which equates to £27,855 at National Minimum Wage of £6.19 per hour. The value of this time to the Society is, of course, much greater.

The trustees wish to place on records their recognition of and gratitude for all these contributions.

Funds Materially in Deficit

As at March 31st 2013 the Society had no funds in material deficit.

Major Risks

The only major risk identified by the trustees relates to our accommodation at Swinton WMC. The Swinton WMC is reporting year-on-year losses which cannot be sustained indefinitely; if the Swinton WMC were to close our low-cost, dedicated accommodation would cease to be available possibly at very short notice. In this scenario the trustees anticipate a short to medium term spike in operating costs driven by the need to hire alternative meeting venues and storage. It might also be reasonable to expect that any permanent alternative accommodation would be significantly more expensive than that which we currently occupy.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on April 10th 2013 and signed on their behalf



Leslie H. Marsden FRAS
Chairman

Accounts for the Year ended March 31st 2013

Receipts & Payments Account

	Unrestricted Funds to nearest £	Restricted Funds to nearest £	Total Funds to nearest £	Last Year to nearest £
Receipts				
Admin. & General	1,196	-	1,196	1,659
Community Access Programme	370	-	370	757
Donations	37	-	37	155
Fundraising Income	2,714	-	2,714	1,461
Public Outreach	463	-	463	303
Subscriptions & Fees	2,755	-	2,755	6,063
Total Receipts	7,535	-	7,535	10,399
Payments				
Admin. & General	-	-	-	20
Fundraising Expenditure	1,576	-	1,576	267
Guest Speakers	335	-	335	330
Meeting Room	908	-	908	900
Observatory Development	734	-	734	198
Observatory Operating Costs	1,203	-	1,203	1,256
Subscriptions	144	-	144	98
Total Payments	4,899	-	4,899	3,068
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,636	-	2,636	7,331
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year end	14,447	-	14,447	4,772
Cash funds this year end	17,084	-	17,084	14,447

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Cash Assets

	Unrestricted Funds to nearest £	Restricted Funds to nearest £	Total Funds to nearest £
NatWest Current	2,009	-	2,009
<i>Add: Cheques not cleared at bank</i>	35	-	35
NatWest Savings	1,000	-	1,000
NatWest Transfer Account	-	-	-
Virgin Charity Account	14,000	-	14,000
Petty Cash	75	-	75
PayPal	-	-	-
Total Cash Funds	17,119	-	17,119

Other Assets held for functional use

All assets shown belong to the Unrestricted (General) Fund

	Value
Building and contents including astronomical telescope and associated sundries insured value. Includes members' key sets.	55,300
Paramount ME Robotic Telescope System	6,850
Takahashi TOA 130 wide-field telescope	3,710
Celestron C14 Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope	3,500
Focuser TCF-3 w/ Paramount Wiring Kit	1,400
Takahashi 50mm Eyepiece	355
Takahashi 2" Diagonal	300
Takahashi 2" Diagonal	300
2x Personal Computers	1,000
Data Projector – Observatory Use	799
Data Projector – Outreach Use	400
Solar Max Telescope (purchased June 2003)	
H-alpha filter	3,154
Williams Optics 80mm Zenithstar 2	648
Eyepiece set for Solar Max	246
Orion optics field tripod	289
GPDx Mount	695
Sky Sensor 2000	859
Dovetail plate and counterweight	54
Meeting Room (Rented) Contents	
Phillips Data Projector (purchased 2000)	3,500
Overhead projector (purchased 1996)	300
Kodak Slide Projector (purchased 1996)	1,300
Panasonic AG7350 SVHS video recorder (s/h price)	1,000
DVD Player	60
Amplifier	20
Furnishings (purchased 1999)	500
Library	
Books, DVDs, videos, CD-ROMs; all in good condition (items of varying age)	2,600
Telescope 76.2 1250mm + 3 eyepieces & tripod	100
Tasco Refractor Telescope (9TE-5)	50
Dell Remote control keyboard	30
Meade LXD 55F/U 5" Refractor Telescope	150
Canon EOS 350D Digital SLR Camera	200
Sale Items for Fundraising	
Books – Assorted stock	137
Phil Turner Legacy	
Telescope – 14 inch Dobsonian	1,600
Telescope – 5" Celestron "Go to" Telescope	700
Telescope – Coronado PST 40mm	479
Telescope – Orion Optics 5" Reflecting Telescope	300
Binoculars – Helios	200
Assorted Eyepieces, filters and tripods (no item over £75)	450
	93,535

Notes to the Accounts

Restricted Funds

The society closed its New Horizons restricted fund on March 31st 2012 and is currently operating with no restricted funds; they are included here for consistency and to simplify comparison with previous years.

Trustees' Expenses

No expenses were paid to any of the Trustees during the year except to reimburse them for purchases made on behalf of the Society.

Trustees' Indemnity Insurance

No charitable funds have been used to purchase insurance to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part.

Accounting Policies

Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 permits a charity to prepare a receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities where gross income in the financial year does not exceed £250,000, therefore receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities has been prepared and presented for the year ended March 31st 2013; this is consistent with previous years.

Bank Interest is included in the Admin & General category.

All Income, including grants and investment income is recorded when received.

All Expenditure is recorded when paid.

Gift aid reclaimable on donations is included in the amounts of income once received.

Basis of Valuations

Valuations have been provided for assets held for functional use; where possible the brand new purchase price/replacement cost is given. If this is not readily available a second-hand purchase price is given.

Independent Scrutiny

In the year ended March 31st 2013 gross income did not exceeded £25,000 and therefore, in accordance with the sections 144 & 145 of the Charities Act 2011 no audit or independent examination is required and no such scrutiny requirement is imposed by the Society's governing document.

Cheques not cleared at bank at 31st March 2013

At 31st March 2013 there were 3 cheques issued by the society, with a total value of £35.00, which had not cleared at the bank.

For comparison, the value of cheques not cleared at 31st March 2012 was £20.00.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on April 10th 2013 and signed on their behalf



Leslie H. Marsden FRAS
Chairman