



MEXBOROUGH & SWINTON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Annual Report & Statement of Accounts

For the year to 31 March 2020

Available online

 msas.org.uk/annual-reports/2020



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Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2020

The trustees of Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society are pleased to present their report and accounts for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Achievements and Performance

Meeting Programme

The meeting programme was as ever a core activity of the society in the year to 31 March 2020 with a total of 51 meetings being provided, of these 15 were delivered by our guest speakers with the remainder given by members of the society. As ever we wish to place on record our gratitude to all our speakers for providing a rich and diverse programme of talks but especially to our guest speakers: Jost Migenda, Prof Sean Paling, James Lees, Dr Allan Chapman, Katie Tehrani, Neil Haggath, Peter Lloyd, Dr Matthew Malek, John Cox, Kevin Kilburn, Gary Gawthrope, Sue Cartwright, Helouise Stevance, and Paul Money.

In the last few weeks of the year the UK started to be impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic and in response to Public Health England guidance we took the painful but, we felt, necessary decision to suspend both our meeting and community access programmes. Shortly after this, on 23 March 2020 the UK entered a full lockdown which is still in place as of 31 March 2020. The full impact of the pandemic and the response to it on our operations is unknown at the date of this report.

Observatory & Project Aquarius

Project Aquarius, our project to extend the J.A.Jones Hooper Observatory and improve welfare facilities by providing mains water and a toilet reached a formal completion after 5 years hard work with a formal re-opening of the building by the Mayor of Rotherham, Councillor Jenny Andrews, on Saturday 22 June 2019.

We were pleased that guests from Wentworth Parish Council, the West Riding Masonic Charity and The Rt. Hon. John Healey MP for Wentworth and Dearne were able to join us and that our Honorary President and Patron, Dr Allan Chapman, extended his usual visit and gave a talk at the event. Dr Chapman was joined by another excellent speaker and friend of the society, Paul Money.

The Mayor arrived at 13:00 and Paul D'Silva introduced her to the official party consisting of Chairman, Les Marsden, Curator of Instruments and Observatory Tony Morris, Honorary President Dr Allan Chapman.

Councillor Andrews gave a brief address that described the work of the society and aims of Project Aquarius before unveiling the plaque to re-open the observatory. Tony led the official party, at this stage joined by John Healey, on a tour of the observatory. Our guests were obviously engrossed because the tour went on for nearly twice longer than scheduled and at the end of it the Mayor was in no hurry to leave after the agreed half hour. Instead after a quick cup of tea she joined guests and members in the work room for the first of the afternoon's talks by Paul Money on his interest in astronomy told through the story of the telescopes he has used. After a buffet lunch Dr Allan Chapman gave his talk, Tycho and His Contemporaries, outside in the afternoon sunshine.

We would like to thank our guest for joining us to celebrate this important milestone, Jan at Swinton Bottom Club for providing a magnificent buffet lunch, Mick Collinson for organising the beverages and the loan of a gazebo from Warmsworth Community Library, and finally to all members who helped out on the day.

The J.A.Jones Hooper Observatory is now operational, with its new facilities it is available for a wider range of users and ready for many years of astronomy with the Society and the local community.

In the year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 16 members spent a total of 210 hours engaged in astronomical observing whilst some 274 hours were logged for maintenance activities thought with the official reopening of the observatory and completion of Project Aquarius this is perhaps not too surprising. A further 18 hours were given to publicity and press availability with the Sheffield Star and ITV Calendar.

Finally, some 236 hours were given over to our Community Access Programme and public events, including the observatory re-opening (102 hours) with 11 members volunteering to support our Community Access Programme events.

Community Access & Outreach Programmes

The society continued to offer access to the upgraded J A Jones Observatory, primarily through the Public Viewing Evenings (PVEs). These evenings are timed to coincide with the Moon's first quarter each month. On clear nights this affords the public the opportunity to explore the Moon's features in detail and depending on the time of year a chance to view planets, galaxies, star clusters and nebulae. This year seven such evenings were offered although one had to be abandoned because of seriously poor weather at the observatory. Over the six evenings some 108 members of the public took the chance to use the equipment at the observatory.

In addition to the PVEs the society opened the observatory to the public for a second 'So, Santa gave you a Telescope' event. This event, held on the 27 December 2019, invited people to bring their new (or unused) telescopes to the observatory if they needed assistance in setting them up and then using them. Some 17 members of the public with five telescopes turned out to discover how to assemble, orientate and use their instruments and this is becoming a popular event.

Other visitors to the observatory included beavers, cubs, scouts and church groups through the year. There were five groups from the scout movement and the 'Friday Night Fun Club' from St Margaret's Church, Swinton. We were pleased to welcome groups from 105th Hoyland Scouts, 82nd Chapeltown Beavers, Brookfield Primary School, 14th Sheffield (Grenoside) Beavers, and 25th Conisborough Beavers, in all some 136 young people and leaders used the observatory over the six nights.

The 50th Anniversary of the First Lunar Landing in July 2019 brought several requests for speakers and displays, and this shaped our own commemoration of the event. Along with several Thursday evening talks on the robotic surveying of the Moon by the Ranger, Surveyor and Lunar Orbiter programmes, the Apollo programme and specifically Apollo 11 the society took part in activities coordinated by and at the Swinton Community Library (Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council). We provided a display astronomical images taken by members as well the Skylark rocket display. In addition, members provided illustrated talks to parties of primary school pupils over a period of three weeks. These talks told the story of Apollo 11 and a mock-up of a Houston Control desk allowed students to 'control' the talk (thanks to Phil Muffett for constructing the desk). Members of the library staff provided a craft workshop to compliment the talk and displays. Over 160 students enjoyed the activities and many more members of the public visited the displays and gallery.

On the back of the work with the Swinton Library MSAS was asked to visit Wath Community Library where they had run a space picture competition for the Apollo anniversary. The display was taken over and members were present at the awards evening to answer question about anything astronomical.

The society sent a small team to Brookfield Swinton Primary Academy in February to talk to some 30 Key Stage 1 pupils about the Apollo missions. Members were chosen carefully as there was a requirement that the speakers had to be able to remember the events of 1969. Fortunately, those members available were retired!

The society held the ninth 'Planets in the Park' on the 29 February 2020 in the Walled Garden of Clifton Park, Rotherham. The event allows members of the public to access talks and displays on amateur astronomy and use the different types of telescopes provided by members. The event also allows the public to bring along their own telescopes to find out more about their assembly and use. Over 60 people attended the event and many questions were answered regarding the purchase and use of telescopes.

These events were excellent opportunities to promote the society to a wider and younger audience and no income was derived from them in the year to 31 March 2021.

The society was in great demand to visit other groups, providing talks and demonstrations. Roy Gunson was especially prominent in this respect visiting some twelve astronomical societies and other clubs across the region, addressing over 300 people. Roy talked on a wide variety of subjects, including Venus, Moons of Mars, The Kuiper Belt, Pickering's Hareem and Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle.

Messenger

11 issues of the society newsletter were issued through the year all ably edited by Deputy Chair Roy Gunson.

Online Presence

The society continues to develop its own web site and social media presence as a means of promoting the society to a wider audience and communication with those interested in our services.

The web site redevelopment has faced several technical challenges due to the major version change of the Content Management System used. An upgrade or migration path for all third-party components has been identified now and this will allow effort to focus on the bespoke development work required to complete the migration to a newer platform.

The society is active on both Facebook and Twitter social media platforms. Our Hootsuite report for the calendar year to 31 December 2019 records 71 new Facebook fans (total 483) and 156 posts. These generated 927 reactions, 131 comments and were shared 129 times. Our Twitter following increased by only 19 but to a total of 2,900 followers. The society posted 153 tweets in the year collecting 87 likes and 28 retweets.

The society continues to use traditional email to communicate with our members who are able and wish to receive such messages and we are increasingly mindful of the need to protect privacy and comply with the GDPR. A pilot has begun to evaluate the use of the Band chat app and website as means of sharing information with our members and allowing conversation between meetings.

Accommodation

In our report for the year ended 31 March 2013 we identified as a major risk the long-term future of our accommodation at Swinton Working Men's Club which is owned and operated by Swinton Bottom Club Ltd. (SBC Ltd) Several alternatives have been investigated but none, to date, has offered quality, dedicated alternative accommodation. The trustees invite suggestions for alternative accommodation from all members and urge them to keep a keen lookout for possible venues.

Financial Review

Financial Performance

Detailed accounts can be found on page 7.

Income

Figure 1 compares general fund income in the year to 31 March 2020 with the previous year.

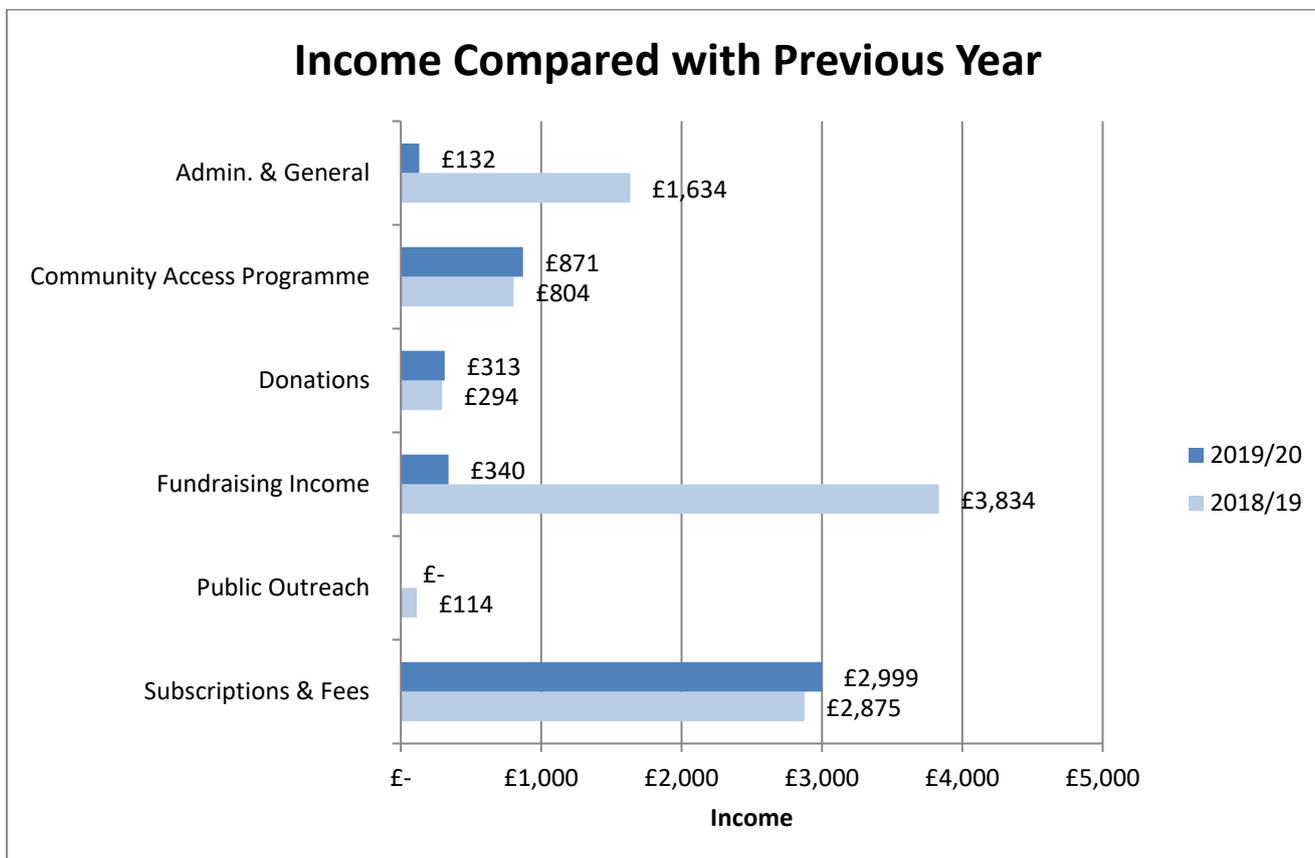


Figure 1 Comparison of General Fund Income with Previous Year

On first inspection income under the heading of Administration and General appears to have fallen significantly, however much of this is due to a short-term, interest free, cash loan of £1,500 made to the society by our Treasurer which is included in the previous year. Once the loan is excluded the figure is comparable to the previous years and is due to interest received on the Virgin Charity Account.

The Community Access programme income is broadly consistent with the previous year (£871 rather than £804).

As previously noted, there were no income generating Public Outreach income in the year to 31 March 2020.

Fundraising income shows a significant variation due to special events held in the year to 31 March 2019 which were not repeated in the year to 31 March 2020. These events include our 40th Anniversary “AstroCon” and Malham Observing Weekend.

Subscriptions and Fees income shows a headline increase of £124 to £2,999. Some of this is due to an increase in the number of members paying the full subscription rate, this also includes a Gift Aid claim (for the year ended 31 March 2015) which resulted in an additional £570 of income compared to a £474 Gift Aid payment received in the year to 31 March 2019.

The remaining backlog of Gift Aid claims will be processed in the coming year and it is anticipated by the time of our next report that all claims will be completed and up to date. The society's year-end and Gift Aid claim processes have been revised to ensure future claims will be made at the end of each financial year. At the date of this report a claim has been submitted for the year ended 31 March 2015.

Expenditure

General fund expenditure for the year totalled £3,865 – significantly less than the previous year (£23,424) and this is illustrated in Figure 2. It should be noted however that a significant decrease in expenditure is due to the completion of Project Aquarius as the figures to 31 March 2019 include our fund-matching to complete that project under the Observatory Development heading.

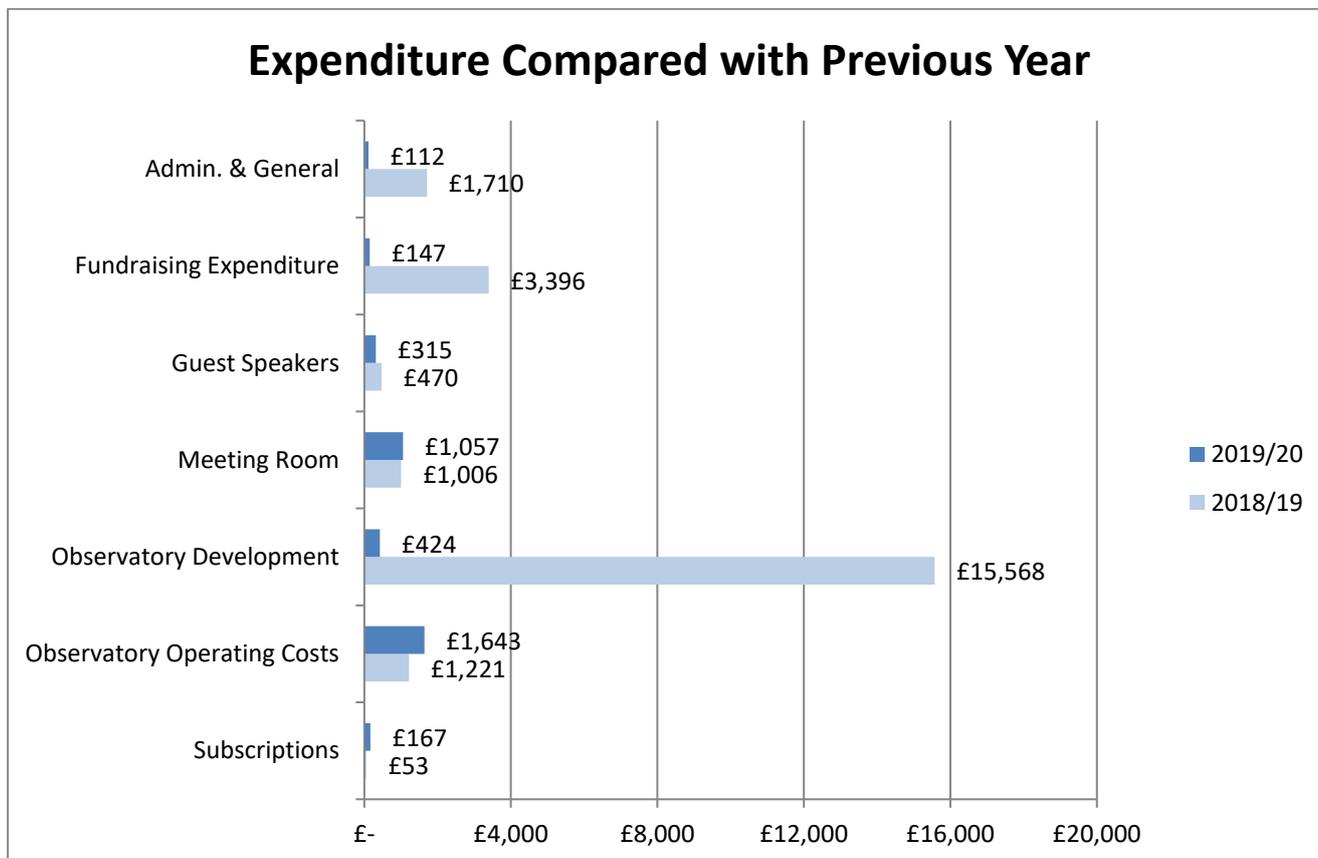


Figure 2 Comparison of General Fund Expenditure with Previous Year

Admin & General expenditure shows a significant decrease but as noted in the income review above £1,500 of this was due to a short-term interest free loan made to the society and its repayment which was included in the figure to 31 March 2019.

Fundraising expenditure likewise shows a notable decrease which is due to the special events held in the year to 31 March 2019.

Guest Speaker expenses show an 8% decrease year-on-year to £315 this variation is due mainly to speakers who, for various reasons, had to cancel their visit to us.

The major component of Meeting Room expenditure is room rent which was £990 in the year to 31 March 2020. This is an increase of £90 year-on-year following a rent review in October which increased monthly rent from £75 to £90 per calendar month. The total for the year to 31 March 2020 also purchase of paint and cleaning materials for on-going maintenance of the room.

Observatory Development expenditure really cannot be compared to the previous year as the main delivery phase of Project Aquarius was undertaken in the year 31 March 2019 and is reported in our Annual Report to that date. The total for the year to 31 March 2020 also includes the write-back of a cheque for £510 which for the purchase of carpets however the supplier kindly gave these as a donation. A new set of eyepieces was purchased at a cost of £604 as well as other smaller items needed to complete Project Aquarius.

Observatory Operating costs show a year-on-year increase of 422 (43%).

Finally, Subscriptions show a marked increase to £53 from £167 – this is due to having to renew the society website SSL certificate (£54) and SBC memberships (£60) being included, neither of which were included in the year to 31 March 2019.

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.

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

Funds Materially in Deficit

As at 31 March 2019 the Society had no funds in material deficit.

Major Risks

In our Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 we identified a single major risk relating to our accommodation at Swinton Bottom Club Ltd. It must be recognized that Swinton Bottom Club Ltd. is operating in a very difficult market and the ongoing use of our rented accommodation must continue to be considered a major risk to the society. We noted earlier the very real risk of an unsustainable rise in our operating costs in the short-to-medium term if temporary accommodation had to be rented.

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.

Reserves are held without any exposure to the stock market.

The Society operates with an unrestricted reserve at a level set by the trustees; currently this is £5,000 which equated to approximately 24 months running costs. The reserve is held to allow the Society to offset fluctuations in income receipts and to provide for contingencies.

At 31 March 2020, the General Fund had a balance £19,696 (compared to £18,907 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 are also mindful that the long-term future of Swinton Bottom Club Ltd. is difficult to guarantee and must be prepared to seek alternative accommodation, possibly at short notice.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on 27 January 2021 and signed on their behalf,



Leslie H. Marsden FRAS
Chairman

Accounts for the Year ended 31 March 2020

Receipts & Payments Account

	Unrestricted Funds to nearest £	Restricted Funds to nearest £	Total Funds to nearest £	Last Year to nearest £
Receipts				
Admin. & General	132	-	132	7,834
Community Access Programme	871	-	871	804
Donations	313	-	313	294
Fundraising Income	340	-	340	3,834
Public Outreach	-	-	-	114
Subscriptions & Fees	2,999	-	2,999	2,875
Total Receipts	4,654	-	4,654	15,755
Payments				
Admin. & General	112	-	112	1,710
Fundraising Expenditure	147	-	147	3,396
Guest Speakers	315	-	315	470
Meeting Room	1,057	-	1,057	1,006
Observatory Development	424	-	424	31,817
Observatory Operating Costs	1,643	-	1,643	1,221
Subscriptions	167	-	167	53
Total Payments	3,865	-	3,865	39,673
Net of receipts/(payments)	789	-	789	(23,918)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year end	18,907	-	18,907	42,825
Cash funds this year end	19,696	-	19,696	18,907

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Cash Assets

	Unrestricted Funds to nearest £	Restricted Funds to nearest £	Total Funds to nearest £
NatWest Current	6,025	-	6,025
<i>Add: Cheques not cleared at bank</i>	-	-	-
NatWest Savings (Closed)	-	-	-
NatWest Transfer Account	-	-	-
Virgin Charity Account	13,627	-	13,627
Petty Cash	44	-	44
PayPal	-	-	-
Total Cash Funds	19,696	-	19,696

Other Assets held for functional use

All assets shown belong to the Unrestricted (General) Fund

Observatory building and members' key sets.	54,600
Observatory Land (purchased 2017)	250
Paramount ME Robotic Telescope System	6,850
Takahashi TOA 130 wide-field telescope	3,710
Celestron C14 Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope	3,500
Focusser TCF-3 w/ Paramount Wiring Kit	1,400
Takahashi 50mm Eyepiece	355
2x Takahashi 2" Diagonal	600
Baader Hyperion 68° Eyepiece Set consisting of seven focal lengths (5, 8, 10, 13, 17, 21, 24 mm), incl. Eyepiece case	604
2x Personal Computers	1,000
Data Projector – Observatory Use	799
Data Projector – Outreach Use	400
ZWO ASI 071MC Pro (16-megapixel cooled colour camera)	1,400
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	
Optoma EH415e Video Projector & accessories (purchased 2016)	1,037
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	220
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
	95,605

Notes to the Accounts

Restricted Funds

The society is currently operating with no restricted funds.

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 31 March 2018; 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

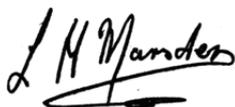
In the year ended 31 March 2020 gross income did not exceed £25,000 and therefore, in accordance with the sections 144 & 145 of the Charities Act 2011 no audit or independent examination is required, and no such scrutiny requirement is imposed by the Society's governing document.

Cheques not cleared at bank at 31 March 2020

At 31 March 2020, there were no cheques issued by the society which had not been presented at the bank.

For comparison, at 31 March 2019 there was one (1) cheque with a value of £510 issued by the society which had not cleared at the bank.

Approved and adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee on 27 January 2021 and signed on their behalf.



Leslie H. Marsden FRAS
Chairman

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 31 March 2020

Mr Leslie Holmes Marsden	<i>Chairman</i>
Mr Shaun O'Dell	<i>Secretary</i>
Mr Michael Kerry Collinson	<i>Treasurer</i>
Mr Roy Gunson	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Mr Glenn Michael John Marsden	<i>IT Officer</i>
Mr Anthony John Morris	<i>Curator of Instruments & Observatory</i>
Mr Stephen Taylor	<i>Programme Co-ordinator</i>
Mr Andrew Kirton-Vaughn	<i>Observations Officer</i>
Mr Peter Jalowiczor	<i>Librarian</i>
Mr Philip John Muffett	<i>Committee Member</i>
Mr Paul D'Silva	<i>Committee Member</i>
Mr Kristian Keith Hudson-Lee	<i>Committee Member</i>

Patrons as of 31 March 2020

Dr Allan Chapman	<i>Patron & Honorary President</i>
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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 and is governed by a constitution adopted August 1996 and last amended 23 May 2013; this is available from our website at msas.org.uk/about/constitution-and-rules.

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 31 March 2020, the Society had a membership of 32.

Trustee Selection and Management

The Society is managed by an Executive Committee which consists of all the appointed trustees. Several the trustees also hold offices within the society, these officers are noted in the list of current trustees above.

The Executive Committee meets typically once per month.

At each meeting, the Treasurer presents the latest accounts, 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. 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 presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

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.

A trustee of Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society, Shaun O'Dell, has in the year to 31 March 2020 served on the Council of the FAS; all FAS Council members are drawn from the Federation's member societies.

The Society made a subscription payment to the FAS of £25 in the year and purchased additional Public Liability Insurance, to cover events held away from the Observatory and meeting room, as part of a group scheme at a cost of £28.

The Society's meeting room is a rented room in the Swinton Bottom Club Ltd. (formerly Swinton Working Men's Club & Institute). It is a requirement our tenancy that all adult members of the society must be members of the Swinton Bottom Club, this is managed by the society. In addition, room rent was paid in the amount of £990.

Conflicts of Interest

In the year to 31 March 2020 the society has employed the services of Safron Electrical Safety to provide security, fire, safety and electrical services to the J.A. Jones Hooper Observatory, the total amount paid to this company in the year is £43. Mr Kristian Hudson-Lee is both a trustee of the society and owner of Safron Electrical Safety.

Mr Hudson-Lee is asked to withdraw from any trustee meeting where employment of Safron Electrical Safety is being discussed.

The trustees feel the prices charged by Safron Electrical Safety are competitive and the society benefits from having the work carried out by someone who has great familiarity with the observatory and its systems and who has unsupervised building access.

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 31 March 2020.

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 public safety and our assets. 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 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.

Approved and adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee on 27 January 2021 and signed on their behalf.



Leslie H. Marsden FRAS
Chairman