

THINGS ARE LOOKING UP

BRIGHTON ASTRO

BRIGHTON AND HOVE'S ASTRONOMY CLUB

Rules and Constitution



WWW.BRIGHTONASTRO.COM



Rules and Constitution

February 2023
Version 1

1. Title

The society shall be known as “Brighton Astro”, henceforth known as the *Society*.

2. Objectives

The Objectives of the *Society* shall be:

1. To promote participation in and provide facilities for the study of astronomy including equipment loan.
2. To encourage amateur astronomy as a scientific, educational and enjoyable recreation.
3. To promote good fellowship amongst its members and those of other societies/organisations.
4. To organise meetings, lectures and other events deemed to further the Objectives. This shall include both theoretical and practical activities.
5. To concern itself with any objective which will benefit those interested in astronomy in the locality.
6. To provide a balance of knowledge and experience from within its membership for a wide range of astronomical interests.
7. To make beginners in astronomy feel as welcome as those with greater experience.
8. To be a member of the *Southern Area Group of Astronomical Societies (SAGAS)* and the *Federation of Astronomical Societies (FAS)*.

3. Membership

1. There will be no formal membership requirements, and no costs or barriers involved in becoming a member of the *Society*.
2. The *Society* will use an online membership platform to allow people to register for membership without requiring formal acceptance.
3. Membership of the *Society* shall be open to anyone interested in astronomy regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other benefits.
4. The *Committee* may refuse membership only for good cause, such as conduct or character likely to bring the *Society* into disrepute.
5. The *Committee* may expel from membership of the *Society* any member who has breached any of the rules of the *Society* or who has, in the opinion of the *Committee*, been guilty of any conduct derogatory to the character, or prejudicial to the interest, of the *Society*.
6. Before expulsion, the *Committee* shall allow the member to appeal the decision and provide an explanation of the conduct in question and allow a proper opportunity of answering the allegations against them.



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4. Administration: The committee

1. All powers of management shall be vested in the *Committee*, which shall comprise, as a minimum, a *Secretary* and *Treasurer* plus one other member.
2. Additional *Committee* members may be elected to undertake such roles as Programme Organiser, Publicity, Membership, and Equipment/Technical as required.
3. The *Secretary* or *Treasurer* plus at least four other *Committee* members shall form a quorum.
4. Members are eligible for election to the *Committee*.
5. Members elected to the *Committee* are expected to contribute to the general running of the *Society*.
6. *Committee* members will be elected at the AGM.
7. The quorum for an AGM shall be 25 members.
8. *Committee* meetings will be arranged as necessary, with a minimum of two per year.
9. *Committee* meetings and AGMs can be chaired by the *Secretary*, *Treasurer* or another *Committee* member.
10. Meeting minutes containing a summary of discussions and actions will be taken by the *Secretary*, *Treasurer* or another *Committee* member, and will be distributed to members via email, password-protected website or similar.
11. The *Committee* shall have the power to fill any vacancies arising on the *Committee*.
12. Members who are not *Committee* members may be assigned one-off or on-going tasks or responsibilities, reporting back to the *Committee* as required.
13. The decision of the *Committee* shall be final unless overruled at a General Meeting.
14. The *Committee* shall be the sole authority for the interpretation of the rules or for anything relating to the *Society* not provided herein and its decision shall be final and binding on members.
15. The *Committee* shall be responsible for arranging suitable insurance to cover Public Liability by *Society* members at *Society* functions.
16. The *Committee* may elect an honorary President for the *Society*, who will represent the interests of the *Society* but have no formal responsibilities.

5. Subscription and Fees

1. The *Society* intends for there to be no annual subscription, and no formal admission fee due at each monthly meeting.
2. The *Society* will keep any costs to a minimum so not to pose a significant obstacle to people participating.
3. Wherever possible, money required to cover costs (such as venue hire for monthly meetings) will be collected by donation.



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6. The Annual General Meeting

1. The AGM shall be held each year to transact the following business:
 - a. To appoint an honorary auditor from the membership to review the *Society's* accounts.
 - b. To receive and, if approved, to adopt a Statement of the *Society's* Accounts to the end of the preceding year.
 - c. To elect *Committee* members.
 - d. To deal with any special matter which the *Committee* may desire to bring before the members and to receive suggestions from members for consideration by the *Committee*.
2. A notice convening the General Meeting, along with the agenda, shall be sent to all members not less than 21 days before the meeting.
3. Nominations for election to the *Committee* and/or items for inclusion at the AGM must be submitted to the Secretary not less than 14 days before the AGM.
4. The AGM will normally take the form of a meeting allowing attendance by all members (subject to the capacity limits of the venue).
5. In exceptional circumstances that prevent such a meeting taking place, alternative arrangements will be made.

7. Special General Meeting

1. A Special General Meeting may be called by the *Committee*, or by a request to the Secretary signed by not fewer than ten members, specifying the business to be discussed.
2. The Secretary shall give all members at least four weeks' notice of the date of such a meeting and shall specify in such notice matters to be dealt with at the meeting.
3. Notice may be given to any member by sending it to their given e-mail address.

8. Meeting Frequency and Content

1. At the discretion of the *Committee*, the *Society* will meet monthly, unless exceptional circumstances prevent this.
2. Currently meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month.
3. The *Society* intends to have a main speaker at each monthly meeting.
4. Members are encouraged to contribute to meetings.
5. An invited guest of a member may attend a monthly meeting.
6. Meeting attendance is subject to capacity limits, and where possible this will be organised in advance.



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9. Special Events

1. The *Society* may organise additional events, e.g., viewing evenings and/or one-off talks, on a regular and/or ad-hoc manner.
2. These events may be attended by members only or may also include invited guests and/or be open to members of the public.
3. Any costs incurred by the *Society* through the running of such events will be agreed in advance by the *Committee* and efforts will be made to recover such costs by charging an admission fee or by voluntary donation.
4. Any person under the age of 18 attending such an event must be accompanied by a guardian or responsible adult.

10. Society Accounts and Income

1. The *Society* shall maintain a suitable bank account into which all monies shall be deposited.
2. The account shall be administered by the *Committee*, with the day to day running by the *Treasurer*.
3. The signatories to this account shall be any two of the *Treasurer* and the other two *Committee* members nominated by the *Committee* as signatories.
4. The *Treasurer* shall maintain proper accounting records of income and expenditure of the *Society*, which shall be subject to audit.
5. Copies of un-audited draft accounts shall be circulated to members not less than 14 days before the AGM.
6. Final audited accounts shall be presented members at the AGM and shall be adopted if accepted.
7. An *Honorary Auditor* shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting from the *Society's* membership who shall inspect the accounts and make such enquiries of the *Treasurer* and other officers as is deemed necessary. They shall submit and sign a report on the *Society's* accounts to the AGM. The *Honorary Auditor* shall retire at the AGM but shall be eligible for re-appointment. If an *Honorary Auditor* is not available for appointment from the membership, the *Committee* shall be empowered to consider an alternative.
8. The *Honorary Auditor* shall not be a member of the *Committee*.
9. Any surplus income is to be reinvested in the *Society*. No surpluses or assets will be distributed to members or third parties, unless considered and approved by an AGM.

11. Society Rules and Constitution

1. These rules may be amended by resolution at any Annual or Special General Meeting, provided that no such resolution shall be deemed to have been passed unless carried by a majority of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting thereon, and provided that prior notice has been sent to all members stating the proposed amendments.
2. All members shall be provided with a current copy of the *Constitution*.



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12. Insurance, Liability, and Information Management

1. The *Society* will hold Public Liability Insurance, tailored for Astronomical Societies, provided by the *Federation of Astronomical Societies* (FAS) or other suitable provider.
2. All information held by the *Society* about individual members will be with their full knowledge and consent. Such information will be kept in a secure manner and not be disclosed to, or shared with, other parties without the consent of the individual concerned.
3. The *Society* will maintain compliance with current UK national legislation regarding information management.

13. Astronomical Equipment Loan

1. Equipment owned by the *Society* may be loaned to individual members for their personal use only.
2. The equipment loaned shall be the sole responsibility of the person to whom the equipment is loaned.
3. In the event of loss or damage to equipment either belonging to the *Society* or on loan to the *Society*, the member(s) responsible shall bear the cost of repair or replacement unless exempted in part or whole by the *Committee*.

14. Equal Opportunities

1. The *Society* is fully committed to maintaining an environment in which the interest and science of astronomy is paramount. We will ensure that no member (or applicant for membership) is treated less favourably on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, age, religion or belief, or any other condition which cannot be justified in membership terms.

15. Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

1. Definitions

- a. 'Child' is defined as a person under 18 years of age.
- b. 'Vulnerable Adult' is defined by the Government as 'a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation'.
- c. 'Abuse' is defined by the Government as 'violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons'. This can include physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, or neglect.



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- d. For the purposes of this document, the term 'child' can also be read as 'children'. The term 'vulnerable adult' can also be read as 'vulnerable adults'. Unless otherwise stated, any mention of child or children shall automatically also apply to vulnerable adult/s, and vice-versa.

2. Principles

- a. The *Society* will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure environment for children when they take part in *Society* activities.
- b. Any *Society* member who is, or will be, in close contact with children or vulnerable adults must have cleared a check by the Criminal Records Bureau. The *Society* will ensure this is upheld and maintained.
- c. The *Society* will adhere to the laws relating to children in respect to children taking part in *Society* activities.
- d. Any member noticing the abuse of a child has a legal responsibility to immediately report it to either the Police or the Local Authority Child Services.
- e. Any member witnessing abuse during the *Society's* activities, who is unsure about abuse, or to whom to report such matters, should discuss the issue with a *Committee* who will, if necessary, seek advice and act accordingly.
- f. At no time will any member of the *Society* act 'in loco parentis'.
- g. Future decisions regarding policy or the activities of the *Society* will be mindful of, and not contradict, the principles of safeguarding children.

3. Society Activities

- a. Children must be accompanied and supervised by a parent (or guardian) at all times when undertaking *Society* activities.
- b. The parent (or guardian) remains responsible at all times for the safety, security, and actions of their child.
- c. If organisations (such as Scouts, Cubs, Guides, Brownies, etc) partake in *Society* activities, it is the responsibility of the visiting organisation to ensure that there are sufficient accompanying adults, and that these adults have been vetted in accordance with the latest legislation as being suitable to work with children. The *Society* takes no responsibility for the vetting or supervision of third parties.
- d. Any party or organisation not adhering to the above terms will not be admitted to *Society* activities.



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16. Society Dissolution

1. The *Society* may be dissolved with the approval of not less than half of the attendees at a special general meeting called for that purpose.
2. At the dissolution of the *Society* all funds and effects of the *Society* shall be used first to discharge any liabilities of the *Society*.
3. Any remaining assets shall be given or transferred to another registered *Astronomical Society* or a registered charity for use by them in related community activities.

Summary of officers and details

The current details of Brighton Astro are as follows (correct as of February 2023):

Secretary: Pete Goodman

Treasurer: Phil McAllister

Accessibility Officer: Keith Turner

Committee members: Christine Graves, Sue Lewis, Leena Sule, Jason Wye

Contact: hello@brightonastro.com

Website: www.brightonastro.com