

Bridgend Astronomical Society Constitution 2021

1. NAME

The Society shall be called the Bridgend Astronomical Society, hereinafter referred to as 'the Society'.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Society shall be to:

2.1 Promote interest in all aspects of astronomy;

2.2 Encourage observational work for members and the general public by running observing events;

2.3 Arrange regular, wherever possible monthly meetings where a guest speaker may be invited or where members' practical work may be presented and discussed;

2.4 Assist members in the best use of their personal equipment and where possible provide suitable equipment that members may use to develop their interest in astronomy;

2.5 Provide a focal point for astronomical activity in Bridgend and the surrounding area;

2.6 Provide a channel of communication with other local, regional and national astronomical societies; and

2.7 Provide an educational service to local schools and local community groups, by offering presentations, exhibitions, etc., as required.

3. AFFILIATION

3.1 The Society may be affiliated to other astronomical societies such as the **Federation of Astronomical Societies** and **South Wales Astronomical Societies** as the Committee sees fit.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Classes of Membership: The Society shall have five classes of membership:

4.1.1 Adult membership, for persons aged 18 years or over

4.1.2 Junior membership for persons under 18 years of age

4.1.3 Family membership for immediate members of a family living in the same household

4.1.4 Student membership for those over 18 and in full-time education

4.1.5 Honorary Membership which the Committee may award to persons who have contributed greatly to the Society over a period of time or to persons whose Honorary

Membership the Committee feels would increase the status of the Society or would benefit the Society in some way.

4.2 Voting Rights: Members in categories 4.1.1, 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 shall be known as 'Voting Members' and shall have full voting rights. Members in categories 4.1.2 and 4.1.5 will not be classed as 'Voting Members' and will have no voting rights.

4.3 Membership Application: To gain membership, all applicants must satisfy the following conditions, unless specifically exempted by the Committee:

4.3.1 Be nominated by a Voting Member of the Society

4.3.2 Be elected by the Committee

4.3.3 Pay the appropriate subscription

4.4 Committee members shall be responsible for presenting potential new members to the Committee for approval. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording the details of their initial contact with the society.

4.5 Removal of Membership. The Committee has the absolute discretion and power to remove from membership any person whose conduct at Society functions or elsewhere is objectionable or likely to bring the Society into disrepute. No such member shall have any claim on the Society for monies paid.

5. ADMINISTRATION

5.1 President: A position of 'President (Honorary)' may be filled or remain vacant at the discretion of the Committee. A person nominated for this position shall have been a member of note for some years and have been a Committee member for a period

5.2 Committee: The Society shall be administered by a Committee consisting of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer who are persons elected from and by the voting membership and shall be deemed Executive Officers. No person may hold more than one Executive post at a time but Executive Officers may also hold Non-Executive positions (see Section 5.3). The quorum for committee meetings shall be Chairman or Vice Chairman and at least one other Executive Officer and at least half of the other committee members. The Chairman will have a casting vote.

5.3 Other Officers: For the efficient running and promotion of the Society the Committee may at any time introduce Non-Executive positions such as Press and Publicity Officer, Education Officer, Observations Officer, Liaison Officer, Newsletter Editor, Website Manager, etcetera to be filled from within the membership and appointed by the Executive. The Society shall also appoint a suitably qualified person who may be a member, but not a committee member, to act as verifier for the accounts. Ex-officio committee members shall have full voting rights.

6. ELECTIONS

6.1 Officers: The posts of all Executive Officers shall be subject to election at the AGM and shall take immediate effect. Non-Executive positions are also subject to election by the Executive at the AGM and shall take immediate effect.

6.2 Nominations: Nominations, obtained with the prior consent of the nominee, for the posts of Executive Officers must be proposed and seconded by voting members. Nomination papers are not required for Executive Officers seeking re-election. Nominations must be submitted to the Secretary on the appropriate form not less than one calendar month prior to the AGM. In the event of only one nomination being received then the nominated person shall be elected to the post provided that the election is approved in accordance with sections 8 & 9 of the Constitution. The nominee receiving the most votes will be elected to the post. Persons may be nominated as committee members without having any specific role. In the event of no nominations being received for a post the current post holder may be re-elected should they wish and subject to sections 8 & 9 of the Constitution being met.

6.3 Unfilled/Vacated Posts: Elections for unfilled or vacated posts may take place at ordinary meetings of the Society provided nominations, proposed and seconded as above. In the event of only one nomination being received then the nominated person shall be elected to the post, provided that the election is approved in accordance with sections 8 & 9 of the Constitution

7. MEETINGS

7.1 Annual General Meeting: An Annual General Meeting shall be held in May of each year.

7.2 Ordinary Meetings: The Secretary, in conjunction with members of the committee, shall arrange for ordinary meetings of the Society to be held at regular intervals throughout each season. Meetings may consist of lectures, visits to shows, observatories or similar events.

7.2.1 A designated committee member will be responsible for ensuring that members and guests sign an attendance book at every meeting.

7.3 Committee meetings shall convene as necessary for the efficient running of the Society and take place not less than once every three months.

7.4 Sub-committees may be formed as and when the efficient running of the society requires, as agreed by the committee. They will be chaired by an Executive Officer.

7.5 Special General Meetings: At the request of Committee members or at the written request of at least one sixth of the voting membership of the Society, the Secretary shall convene a Special General Meeting of the Society and give one month's notice to members of the date and the nature of the business to be discussed. Where a Special General

Meeting is called for by either the membership or the committee the reason(s) for doing so must be detailed

7.6 Attendance at Meetings: All members shall have the right to attend the AGM or SGM and all ordinary meetings of the Society. At the discretion of the Committee, non-members may be allowed to attend one meeting free of charge whilst they decide whether they wish to apply for membership. All Executive Officer members shall have the right to attend committee meetings and shall have full voting rights except the Chairman (or acting chairman) who shall have an additional casting vote.

8. QUORUM

8.1 The quorum at the AGM and SGM shall be one-sixth of the voting membership. The quorum at committee meetings has been dealt with in section 5.2.

8.2 In the event of an AGM or SGM not being quorate, the AGM or SGM will be closed. The meeting may continue with business that is deemed to be outside of the AGM or SGM.

8.3 Under exceptional circumstances the Chairman may call an AGM at a date after May and deem it to be quorate when the meeting consists of the four Executive Officers and at least five members in which there is a combination of non-executive officers and ordinary members

9. VOTING

9.1 At all ordinary and committee meetings, the AGM and SGM the Chairman (or Acting Chairman) shall have an additional casting vote. A resolution shall be passed if supported by a simple majority of votes cast provided Section 8 above is satisfied.

10. FINANCES

10.1 Administration of Finances: The Society's financial year shall run from 1st May for a twelve-month period. The Society shall maintain a suitable bank account into which monies shall be deposited. The account shall be administered by the Treasurer. The signatories to this account shall be the Treasurer plus any one of the two remaining authorised Officers. The Treasurer shall maintain proper accounting records of income and expenditure of the Society and provide a financial report at each committee meeting. Copies of draft accounts for the past twelve months, shall be circulated to all members in an approved format not less than 14 days before the AGM. Final accounts, independently validated, shall be laid before members at the AGM and shall be adopted if accepted in accordance with sections 8 & 9 of the Constitution. The Treasurer shall also make available to the committee members a copy of records and supporting bank statements as requested

10.1.1 Where there is more than one Executive Officer in a family/household only one member of that family/household may act as a signatory.

10.2 Subscriptions: At the AGM, the Executive Committee shall put forward a proposal for raising or maintaining the cost of subscriptions for the year. Such a proposal shall be adopted if passed in accordance with sections 8 & 9 of the Constitution. Renewals due at the start of the new year that is September 1st should be paid no later than the date of the October meeting. Members in arrears after this date will be deemed to have resigned from the Society. Such persons shall have the right to re-apply for membership of the Society if they so wish. Subscriptions for new members become due one month after their first attendance at an ordinary meeting.

10.3 New members who join during or after March 1st are only required to pay half of the regular subscription. This concession will be granted once only to any one person but may be waived at the discretion of the committee. Prospective new members will be deemed visitors and not charged for the first week's attendance.

11. RECORDS

11.1 The minutes of the AGM, ordinary meetings, committee meetings and any special general meetings shall be held by the Secretary and be available to all members on written request.

12. SOCIETY EQUIPMENT

12.1 The Society shall make available equipment that members may use to develop their interest in astronomy. The use of such equipment shall be at the discretion of the Observations Officer, who will arrange a timetable for use with the member(s) concerned. 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.

13. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY

The Society may be dissolved with the approval of not less than half of the membership of the Society, at a special general meeting called for that purpose. At the dissolution of the Society all funds and effects of the Society shall be transferred by gift to one or more societies or bodies having similar objectives to those of the Society. Such transfers shall be approved by the Society members attending the meeting at which the dissolution of the Society is agreed.

14. INSURANCE

14.1 Public Liability Insurance: The Committee shall be responsible for arranging suitable insurance to cover any liability to the Society at Society meetings and events.

14.2 Equipment Insurance: The Committee shall be responsible for arranging suitable insurance to cover the Society's equipment plus members' equipment loaned to the society for the approved business of the society.

15. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

15.1 The Secretary shall give at least one month's notice to all members of the society of any motion setting out the terms of the changes, proposed and seconded by members of the Society, which seeks to alter the Constitution. Such a motion shall be carried if approved by not less than two-thirds of members present at a meeting of the Society

16. ACCESS TO THE CONSTITUTION

All members are entitled to have a current copy of the Constitution. Copies will be held in a secure file within our website and members' Facebook page.

17. CHILD & VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

17.1 Definitions

17.1.1 'Child' is defined as a person under 18 years of age.

17.1.2 '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 him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.

17.1.3 'Abuse' is defined by the Government as 'violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons'. This includes physical, sexual, emotional/psychological abuse or neglect.

17.1.4 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.

17.2 Principles:

17.2.1 The Society will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure environment for children when they take part in the Society's activities

17.2.2 Any Society member who is, or will be, in regular contact with children or vulnerable adults must be in possession of the relevant certification from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The committee will oversee the continued validity of a member's certificate but members themselves remain fully responsible for applications and costs.

17.2.3 The Society will adhere to the laws relating to children in respect to children taking part in Society activities

17.2.5 Any member witnessing abuse on the Society's premises and/or during its activities, who is unsure about abuse or how to report such matters should draw it to the attention of a committee member who will, if necessary, seek advice and act accordingly.

17.2.6 Future decisions regarding policy or the activities of the Society will be mindful of, and not contradict, the principles of safeguarding children

17.3 Society Activities

17.3.1 Children must be accompanied and supervised by a parent (or guardian) at all times when participating in Society activities.

17.3.2 The parent (or guardian) remains responsible at all times for the safety, security, and actions of their child.

17.3.3 At no time will any member of the Society act 'in loco parentis'.

17.3.4 Where external organisations that consist primarily of minors, that is, under 18, partake in Society activities, it is the responsibility of the visiting organisation to ensure that there are sufficient accompanying adults/parents and that where appropriate those 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.

17.3.5 Any party or organisation not adhering to the above terms will not be admitted to Society activities.

18. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

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.

19. THIS CONSTITUTION:

This constitution was amended for and on behalf of Bridgend Astronomical Society at committee meetings held on 5 and 12 May 2021 and was ratified by members at the Annual General Meeting on 23 June 2021

S. I. Radford. – Chairman

J. Mead – Vice Chairman

J. Radford – Secretary

C. J. Gaudion – Treasurer

D. A. Sanders – Committee member

This edition - History:

- Original March 2009 - Last edited in committee 2 February 2018
- Accepted as it stands in committee 6 Apr 2018
- Edited 5 May & 12 May 2021
- Transcribed 6 May 2021 & 15 May 2021
- Accepted at the AGM 23 June 2021

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AMENDED May 2023

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RATIFIED MAY 2023 meeting