

BYE-LAWS

OBSERVATORY

1 Observatory Secretary

The trustees should appoint a fit and proper member to:

- a) take responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the observatory and all of its associated equipment,
- b) manage and enable all aspects of public access, including the safety and suitability of both visitors and volunteers, and
- c) manage the funding requirements for both maintenance and any future expansion of facilities

For the purposes of these rules, this individual is referred to as the Observatory Secretary.

2 Volunteers

The Observatory Secretary has responsibility for all volunteers that assist with both maintaining the observatory and opening it to the public.

2.1 Training and appointment

The Observatory Secretary should oversee the appointment of volunteers and ensure that they have received sufficient training in both their duties and any safeguarding requirements.

2.2 Record keeping

There should be sufficient record keeping that it is possible to know:

- a) the names, contact details, status of background checks and training received for all current volunteers
- b) the names of all volunteers that attended any particular event such as public opening, or maintenance session

2.3 Requirements

All volunteers must be:

- a) over the age of eighteen,
- b) current members, in good standing within the society,
- c) subject to appropriate background checks as mandated by the Observatory Secretary

2.4 Categories

The Observatory Secretary will maintain such categories of volunteers as are appropriate for the safe and effective running of the observatory. These include, but are not limited to:

- a) Keyholders,
- b) Demonstrators,

The Observatory and the Cooke telescope represent unique assets that the community have enjoyed for over a hundred years. The charity has a duty of responsibility towards these assets that requires specific organisational structure and care embodied by these rules.

Given the responsibilities and risks associated with both the physical fabric of the observatory and equipment and the nature of public access, it is important that all people representing the society at the observatory be fit and proper, subject to the Constitution of the society and have access to the same rights of care as members

To work safely with both the fabric of the observatory and the complex equipment within requires extensive training and experience.

- c) Ordinary Volunteers

3 Public sessions

3.1 Requirements for opening

In order to open the observatory to the public, there should be at least:

- a) a Keyholder, and
- b) as many Demonstrators as required to safely operate the equipment, plus
- c) as many Ordinary Volunteers as a Keyholder present considers appropriate.

3.2 Public safety

- a) The Observatory Secretary should ensure that sufficient policies are in place, along with appropriate training, to safeguard both the public and volunteers during public sessions.
- b) Any Keyholder present at the observatory takes responsibility for the safety of the public during opening, and must consider whether the conditions and the number of volunteers available are appropriate when allowing opening to take place.
- c) Keyholders and demonstrators should have appropriate up-to-date DBS checks.

Policies for safeguarding and appropriate training are key for managing the liabilities associated with public opening

3.3 Out of bounds

No member of the public should enter the annexe during a session.

3.4 Under 16s

All members of the public under 16 years in age should be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times.

3.5 Exclusions

Any Keyholder present has the right to exclude any member of the public from the observatory (including volunteers) if there is sufficient reason to believe that not doing so may cause harm or bring the society into disrepute. Issues with any exclusions can and should be raised later with trustees, but at the time the Keyholder is free to act, lawfully and within reason, to ensure the safety of the public, volunteers and the observatory.

3.6 Reporting

A keyholder present should be responsible for all record keeping and reporting with respect to a public visit. This includes, but is not limited to:

Any record keeping should be managed within the relevant laws on data protection

1. A record of the volunteers that have been in attendance,
2. Information about public visitors,
3. Any safety issues that arose during the session,
4. Any damage to observatory fabric or equipment

Any safety issues or damage should be communicated as soon as is practical to the Observatory Secretary.

3.7 Star parties

All keyholders have the right to organise ad-hoc observing sessions at the observatory and to use observatory equipment. The same obligations and responsibilities hold as for scheduled public events.

4 Maintenance

The Observatory Secretary should ensure that the fabric of the observatory and associated equipment are kept in good condition.

4.1 Maintenance sessions

Regular maintenance sessions should be organised, particularly during the summer months, so that:

1. paths and areas outside the observatory can be kept clean and safe
2. the observatory building can be kept watertight, secure and functional
3. electrical and other infrastructure can be kept safe and functional

4.2 Attendance

Given that the public is not present during maintenance sessions, the Observatory Secretary is free to relax some of the constraints associated with public visits, as appropriate or required.

Specifically, non-members can attend to assist with maintenance work as long as they are appropriately supervised and full responsibility is taken by a Keyholder present.

MEMBERSHIP

5 Categories

There are two categories of members:

- a) Members - full membership, with voting and attendance rights as per the Constitution, and
- b) Junior Associates - for people under the age of 18.

Membership shall be open to any person interested in actively furthering the objects of the Society and contributing an annual subscription of such reasonable amount as shall from time to time be determined. As per the Constitution, full members must be eighteen years or older - the category of Junior Associate is available for people under 18.

6 Subscription

6.1 Annual amounts

Current membership fees are:

- a) Members: £20
- b) Discounted members (under 21, country > 30 miles): £5
- c) Junior Associates: £5

The trustees reserve the right to waive fees where appropriate to recognise unique or important contribution to the society.

6.2 Conditions

- a) All subscriptions fall due on 1st October of each year.
- b) Members joining after 30th April in any one year on payment of a first annual subscription shall be considered to be fully paid up until 30th September in the following year.

- c) Any person whose subscription is in arrears for three months shall cease to be a member of the Society and shall only be re-eligible on payment of those arrears and the current subscription.