

# The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

<https://www.astronomyedinburgh.org/Registered>

Scottish Charity SC022968

## Annual Report 2018

Trustees' annual report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2018

### Constitution and management of the Society

Charity name: The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

Registered charity number: SC022968

Principal address:

c/o Sean Wixted,  
Secretary of the Astronomical Society of Edinburgh,  
16/7 Salamander Street,  
Edinburgh EH6 7HR

*Names of the charity trustees on date of approval of the trustees' annual report*

<b>Trustee name</b>	<b>Office(if any)</b>	<b>Dates acted</b>	<b>Appointed by</b>
1 Mr Andrew Farrow	President	from June	Council
2 Mr Andrew Mackie	Vice-President	from June	AGM
3. Mr Peter Black	Vice President	from June	Council
4 Mr Sean Wixted	Secretary	from June	AGM
5 Mr Alan Ellis	Treasurer	whole year	AGM
6 Mr Dave Archibald	Councilor	whole year	AGM
7 Mr Carl Dennis	Councilor	whole year	AGM
8 Dr Geraldine Dennis	Councilor	whole year	AGM
9 Mr Jim Nisbet	Councilor	from June	Council
10 Mr Mark Phillips	Councilor	from June	AGM
11 Hugh Somerville	Councilor	from June	AGM

*The names of all other charity trustees during the period*

<b>Trustee name</b>	<b>Office(if any)</b>	<b>Appointed by</b>
1 Mr Andrew Farrow	Vice-President	AGM
2 Mr Andrew Mackie	Vice-President	AGM
3. Mr Peter Black	Councilor	Council
4 Mr Sean Wixted	President	AGM
5 Mr Alan Ellis	Treasurer	AGM
6 Mr Dave Archibald	Councilor	AGM
7 Mr Carl Dennis	Councilor	AGM
8 Dr Geraldine Dennis	Councilor	AGM
9 Mr Jim Nisbet	Councilor	Council
10 Mr Jonathan Watson	Councilor	AGM

The Society is an unincorporated association founded (as the Edinburgh Astronomical Association) in 1924 and is governed by a Constitution most recently modified on 30 March 2012. The Constitution may be referred to on the Society's web site at :<https://www.astronomyedinburgh.org/about/constitution.html>.

Clause 1 of the Constitution is:

The name of the Society shall be **The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh** and its objects shall be to advance the education of the public about the science of Astronomy and to promote astronomical research chiefly in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood. In furtherance thereof:

- (a) to circulate information on astronomical matters by the publication of articles, books etc;
- (b) to encourage astronomical study and observation; and
- (c) to increase popular interest in astronomy.

The Management of the Society is vested in a Council, elected from the Ordinary Membership of the Society at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). In the event of any vacancy arising in the Council, the Council has power to co-opt a Member of the Society to fill such a vacancy.

On 31 December 2018, the membership of the Society was 94 of which six were honorary members. Honorary members are Dr H. Ford, Dr D. Gavine, Dr N. Grubb, and Prof D. Heggie. The Honorary Presidents are Prof Andrew Lawrence (Regius Professor of Astronomy at the University of Edinburgh) and Prof John Brown (Astronomer Royal for Scotland).

## **The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trustees**

A former Vice-President of the Society, Mr John Henry Lorimer, left a substantial bequest to the Society when he died in 1936. This bequest has been assigned to "The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trustees" and is managed by them under conditions set forth in a Deed of Trust granted in favour of Rev Dr James Patrick and others, dated 10 December 1937.

Astronomical Society of Edinburgh Trust is registered Scottish Charity SC013921. As of 31 December 2018, the following are the trustees in terms of that deed:

Mr Jim Nisbet (secretary and treasurer)  
Mr Alan Ellis  
Mr Andrew Farrow  
Mr Alan Pickup

All of the above trustees are past or current Presidents of the Society; Mr Ellis is also Treasurer of the Society; Mr Nisbet is also on the Council of the Society.

## **Organisation of Council Business**

The Council, which took office in June 2018, decided to appoint a number of council members to assist with various functions of the Society secretariat. The following Council members undertook to discharge the following functions-

- Carl Dennis – Speaker programme
- Dr Geraldine Dennis – External events coordination
- Mr Mark Phillips – Webmaster and IT support
- Mr Jim Nisbet – Data Protection/Privacy Notices

Furthermore, during the reporting period, the following Council members undertook coordination of the Society's activities in the following areas-

- Mr Peter Black – Society's participation in the Charles Piazzi Smyth 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary events.
- Mr Andrew Mackie advised the Council of the Society on responses to the issue of light pollution with various public bodies. This issue was first raised by Society member, Steuart Campbell, who made a presentation to the Society about his efforts to highlight the problem of light pollution in the Edinburgh area. Following a request by Mr Campbell for the Society to address this issue, the Council asked Vice President Andrew Mackie to liaise with Mr Campbell and take forward communications with various public bodies, such as the City of Edinburgh Council, British Astronomical Association and the International for Dark Skies, on the problem of light pollution. As this work was ongoing at the end of the 2018 reporting year, the Council agreed to continue to engage with these public bodies, and others, in an effort to address the issue of light pollution and sky glow.

## **Activities during 2018**

The Society continues to hold meetings throughout the year with educational talks on different aspects of astronomy. The Council wishes to thank Alan Pickup and Horst Meyerdierks for kindly presenting the "Monthly Sky" talk to the Society.

## **Meetings**

The Annual General Meeting was held on 1 June 2018.

### *Meetings and events.*

Jan 5 <sup>th</sup>	The Era of Multi-message Astronomy	Prof. Giles Hammond
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Gravity Sensors	Prof. Giles Hammond
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Cancelled due to bad weather	
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	13 Journeys Through Space and Time	Colin Stuart
May 4 <sup>th</sup>	Storing Skies as Stone	Adrienne Macartney
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	AGM	
July 6 <sup>th</sup>	Finding Space Rocks	Will Joy
September 7 <sup>th</sup>	Hubble's Variable Nebula	Dr John Lightfoot
October 5 <sup>th</sup>	Recording Meteors from Deckchairs to Desktops	Alex Pratt
Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	METI , Messaging Extraterrestrial Intelligence	Dr Alan Penny
Dec 7 <sup>th</sup>	Making Stars and Planets 'The HOYS CAPS project	Dr Alex Sholz

## **Publications**

The Society's Journal continues in the form of an on-line blog coordinated by Rachel Thomas. This is available to the public at <https://asedinburghjournal.wordpress.com/>.

Similar to Alan Pickup's sky preview at monthly meetings, his monthly astronomy article for "The Scotsman" – with kind permission of the paper's publishers – is republished in the Society's Journal.

Members are issued with the latest edition of the Federation of Astronomical Societies' "Astrocalendar" on payment of their subscription to the Society.

There are three handouts – beginners' seasonal star charts, planisphere and sundial that have been uploaded to the Society's website and are available to the public. They are available under the Creative Commons by Attribution License, so that others can redistributor amend and distribute these documents, requiring only that the Society be acknowledged. 'The Beginners Guide to buying a telescope' has been published on our website as has the 'ASE 24', a table of the 24 celestial objects for beginners to find in the night sky. The society wishes to thank Mark Phillips for producing these. Various other hand outs have been produced in association with our Outreach programme to help beginners set up and use their telescope. These included Basic Telescope Set up procedures, Observers check list and information on eyepieces

## **Electronic communication**

The Society's website may be found at <https://www.astronomyedinburgh.org/>.

Email contact addresses have been set up for some Society Officers and the Journal coordinator:

[president@astronomyedinburgh.org](mailto:president@astronomyedinburgh.org)

[secretary@astronomyedinburgh.org](mailto:secretary@astronomyedinburgh.org)

[treasurer@astronomyedinburgh.org](mailto:treasurer@astronomyedinburgh.org)

[journal@astronomyedinburgh.org](mailto:journal@astronomyedinburgh.org)

An ASE observers' email list was set up to help members organise observing activities. At the end of the year, 24 members were subscribed to this list.

Full details of the Society's activities and information about how to join are on the website. Certain announcements are publicised through the Society's Twitter account at <https://twitter.com/ASEdinburgh>, which had over 2000 followers at the end of the year.

The Council expresses its thanks to Mark Phillips for providing web space and redesigning our website. Also for providing the monthly meeting slide presentation. The council would also like to thank the ROE for hosting our website for many years and Host Meyerdierks for acting as the society's Secretary for nine years.

## Further Activities

A number of actions and activities have helped enable the society to progress with its objects:

- The attendance of the ROE's Doors open event:
  - Supervising and helping members of the public to use a number of telescopes including two solar scopes
  - Engaging with the public on astronomical themes and highlighting opportunities to engage in astronomy
  - This event attracted approximately 3300 visitors over the weekend.
- The development of a new website which provides access to members and the public for:
  - Providing information on talks, astronomical news, observing suggestions, events, publications and in addition a repository of knowledge which we are looking to develop and expand. Much of this focussed on guiding beginners and new starters to astronomy.
  - showcasing the societies activities and provides access to our Education and outreach activities
  - answering question from the public
- Charles Piazzi Smyth's bi-centenary:
  - With the celebration of Charles Piazzi Smyth's bi-centenary, the societies council meeting on 6th Nov was held at the ROE where, Dr Andrew Lawrence gave a presentation on the proposed events to celebrate this occasion. The activities include a symposium, an exhibition, a lecture tour, film screening and activities for schools.

- the society was asked if it would support these events and the council decided to make a donation of £4000. Our Vice President, Peter Black, is helping lead this activity and Bruce Vickery is playing a major role in organising the exhibition and film funding. The society would like to thank Bruce for his work in the area.
- The City Observatory at Calton Hill
  - the Collective Gallery opened it's new gallery space to the public on 24th of November at Calton Hill.
  - This included the refurbishment of the site and building's including the Playfair building and the dome above, which houses the Cooke telescope.
  - Bruce Vickery has worked very hard to ensure that key historical elements of the site have been recognised and retained. We owe Bruce a debt of gratitude for his work as does the wider world of astronomy.
  - Discussions have started to understand how the society can help engage with the Collective Gallery and restart public observing at the site.
- The further use of social media including our Facebook and Twitter pages:
  - highlighting news items, activities open to the general public and encouraging wider participation in astronomical activities and society events.
- The development of an educational/outreach programme consisting of four elements:
  - **A buyers guide to telescopes** (published on the website before Christmas 2018) This talks through the options that should be considered when starting out to look at astronomical observing and the main options and recommendations for consideration.
  - **A Telescope Help Shop** (public workshop planned for Feb 9th 2019) Advertised on our website, Eventbrite and social media this workshop will offer members of the public an opportunity to bring their equipment along and talk to experienced members of the society about any issues or problems they have experienced in its setting up and use. A number of short themed talks during the session will cover some common elements for new astronomers. These will include: Basic set up hints, Equipment checklist, eyepieces and the ASE 24 celestial objects to observe.
  - **What to see** (A list of key targets for astronomers and a guide to navigating the night sky). The ASE has produced a target list of the 24 objects for the new astronomer to identify and observe as a way of helping newcomers to appreciate what can be seen. This was published on the website. An event for beginners to cover the basic elements of navigating the night sky is in preparation.
  - **Astrophotography for beginners.** This is planned to cover the use of all the

main options for astrophotography and provide a practical guide. This will cover equipment, setting up, capture and post processing albeit at a basic level.

### Summary

The objective is to develop and refine these modules so they can be delivered as demand dictates. Thus providing the new starter with the necessary information and skills to succeed in the early stages of their journey into astronomy.

### **The Imaging group**

Meeting monthly, this group has developed to provide a forum for members to improve their understanding and use of software and equipment for imaging. Members post images to The Society Flickr page providing a showcase for our astronomical images. A number of new members are now attending this meeting regularly as well as the core of established members.

### **Observing**

While the Society has no permanent base of operations, the society arranges 'impromptu' observing sessions which members attend on an ad-hoc basis. Many members have their own equipment set up at home and understandably prefer to use that when the Scottish weather allows. (The society is in need of a permanent location to base it's activities and store equipment which currently is housed by members on a voluntary basis. The Society is grateful to members for undertaken this task). Resolution of the storage needs of the Society will be a major task for the future.

### **Equipment**

Two 'Feather Flags' display banners were purchased for advertising the societies presence at events and meetings.



## Financial Review

The Society did not request a grant from the ASE Trust (SC013921) during the year. In the years since 2011, the annual grant from the Trust has led to a surplus each year, which explains the healthy bank balance in spite of member subscriptions not covering cost. In the absence of the grant in 2018, the deficit of £934 is entirely expected; the bank balance remains healthy.

### Declaration

The trustees' annual report presented on pages 1 to 7 was approved by the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh (the trustees of the charity).



*Andrew Farrow, President, 1 May 2019.*

*For and on behalf of the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh.*

## Receipts and payments accounts

### Statement of balances

	Notes	2018		2017	
		£	£	£	£
Bank balances at start of year					
Current Account		7,222		7,838	
Total balance at start			7,222		7,838
Plus receipts		1,593		1,647	
Less payments		-2,526		-2,263	
Total balance at end			6,288		7,222
Bank balances at end of					
year Current Account		6,288		7,222	
Total balance at end			6,288		7,222
Assets and liabilities at end of year	1		-25		0

### Income and expenditure report

	Notes	2018		2017	
		£	£	£	£
Income					
Donations					
ASE annual subscriptions		1,341		1,405	
Other donations		13		6	
Gift Aid		239		236	
Donations total			1,593		1,647
Grants					
ASE Trust	2	0		0	
Grants total			0		0
Bank interest					
Current Account		0		0	
Bank interest total			0		0
Other charitable activities					
Other charitable activities total			0		0
Asset sales					
Books		0		0	
Asset sales total			0		0
Income total			1,593		1,647

	Notes	2018		2017	
		£	£	£	£
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
Meeting expenses	3	1,274		1,149	
Memberships and affiliations	4	30		30	
Astrocalendas		106		106	
Stamps		43		8	
Stationery		5		0	
Public liability insurance	5	28		28	
Member expenses		0		271	
ASE Internet domain		0		112	
ASE events		0		159	
Publicity Items	6	475		0	
Charitable activities total			1,961		1,863
Governance costs					
Independent examination		100		100	
Governance costs total			100		100
Asset purchase and upkeep					
Equipment	7	100		0	
Repairs and maintenance	8	65		0	
Storage rental	9	300		300	
Asset purchase and upkeep total			465		300
Expenditure total			2,526		2,263
Income minus expenditure			-934		-616

## Assets

	Notes	2018		2017	
		£	£	£	£
Library	10	7,700		7,700	
High-value books for disposal	10	11,000		11,000	
Low/medium-value books for disposal	10	12,000		12,000	
Artwork	11	4,000		520	
Telescopes etc., historic	12	2,300		2,300	
Telescopes etc., current		7,300		7,300	
IT equipment	13	300		300	
Educational equipment	14	5,200		5,200	
Assets total			49,800		46,320

## Notes to the accounts

### General notes:

- All funds are unrestricted, i.e. available for any of the Society's purposes.
- No grants were made in 2018.
- No remuneration was paid to any trustee (Council member) of the Society, nor to any person connected to a trustee of the Society.
- Trustee expenses: None
- Transactions with trustees: None.

Specific notes referenced above:

1. There is a liability of £25 from a 2018 uncleared cheque 012121 for Imaging Group room hire which was not cleared until 2019. This will appear in the expenditure for 2019.
2. Lorimer Trust income from investment income on financial assets management by the ASE Trust. No grant was requested in 2018.
3. Meeting expenses comprise of:
  - o £828 room hire at the Augustine United Church;
  - o £50 for Imaging Group room hire;
  - o £101 meeting refreshments;
  - o £295 speakers' travel.
4. Federation of Astronomical Societies annual membership.
5. Public Liability Insurance is with the Federation of Astronomical Societies.
6. Outreach/Publicity items: ASE brochures £85, Feather flags (x2) £312, Business cards £78.
7. Purchase of unassigned Lorimer Medal from Collector in US.
8. President's medal box inscription maintenance.
9. Annual cost for storage at the Augustine United Church.
10. Values, for each book, are very rough estimates. They are cost of replacement, whereas revenue from disposal would yield only a fraction of these figures.
11. This figure estimates the value of the four remaining Lorimer Medals, a recently purchased blank medal from a US collector and of the President's Medal. Note that the total value of these items have been revised upwards from £520 to £4,000 due to a revaluation of the President's medal by Alex Kirkwood & Son Ltd. The President's medal is considerably more valuable than originally assumed being made of 9ct gold and along with the presentation case is valued at £3,500. The Lorimer award medals are silver gilt and value estimated at £500 for the four remaining medals and the unassigned collector's Lorimer medal. Not included in the value are a number of large photographs, three science displays, and two 20th century water colour paintings of the City Observatory.
12. This includes estimated values of the modern instruments available to members, and of three historic telescopes.
13. The value is for the data projector purchased a number of years ago. While our main venue provides data projectors, this is used regularly at other venues.
14. This figure is a rough estimate of the value of three globes plus the 1990s valuation for a "starfinder" instrument by Sir William Peck.

## Declaration


The receipts and payments accounts presented on pages 9 to 10 were approved by the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh (the trustees of the charity).



*Andrew Farrow, President, 1 May 2019.*

*For and on behalf of the Council of The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh*

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

<b>Report to the trustees/members of</b>	The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh		
<b>Registered charity number</b>	SC022968		
<b>On the accounts of the charity for the year ended</b>	31st December 2018 which are set out on pages 8 to 11		
<b>Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner</b>	<p>The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act') and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) (the '2006 Regulations'). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.</p>		
<b>Basis of independent examiner's statement</b>	<p>My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.</p>		
<b>Independent examiner's statement</b>	<p>In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and</li> <li>○ to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting record and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations,</li> </ul>                     have not been met, or                 </li> <li>2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</li> </ol>		
<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	20/5/19
<b>Name:</b>	Helen Bourquin Associate Member ACIE		
<b>Address:</b>	The Dell East End Garden Barnscliffe TD 3 6JJ		