

# CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 1187803

## Details

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Other names	CAS, CROYDON ASTRO, CROYDONASTRO.ORG.UK, KENLEY OBSERVATORY, NORMAN FISHER OBSERVATORY
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2020-02-07
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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**Website** [www.croydonastro.org.uk](http://www.croydonastro.org.uk)

## Activities

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**Objects:** TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN THE SCIENCE OF ASTRONOMY AND RELATED SUBJECTS FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT IN CROYDON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA BY: A) ENCOURAGING A POPULAR INTEREST IN ASTRONOMY AND ALLIED SUBJECTS;B) HELPING BEGINNERS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR AGE, TO ACQUIRE A KNOWLEDGE OF ASTRONOMY AND ALLIED SUBJECTS; ANDC) PROVIDING FACILITIES FOR PRACTICAL WORK AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATION.

**Activities:** We hold public talks on astronomy and related subjects in Central Croydon approximately every two weeks during school term time. We also maintain an observatory located at Kenley, and aim to open this for public outreach each Saturday evening (provided there is a sufficiently dark and clear sky), and also for pre-arranged group visits (eg Scout association) midweek.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

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- **Area of benefit:** LOCAL
- Bromley
- Croydon
- Kent
- Lambeth
- Lewisham
- Merton
- Southwark
- Surrey
- Sutton
- Wandsworth

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£4,738	£2,535	-	-
2024-03-31	£4,099	£3,453	-	-
2023-03-31	£4,743	£2,765	-	-
2022-03-31	£4,707	£2,385	-	-
2021-03-31	£242	£1,355	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
<b>Stefan Francis Blakemore</b>	Chair	2022-07-08
Antony Albert Roberts		2020-02-07
Carolyn Raishbrook		2020-02-07
Christopher Jon Entwistle		2023-06-14
Graham Cluer		2020-07-15
Laura Jayne Quayle		2022-07-08
Paul William Stenning		2020-12-16
Roy Easto		2025-06-06

**CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187803

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# Accounts

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# CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025

### 1. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

<b>REGISTRATION NUMBER:</b>	1187803
<b>LEGAL FORM:</b>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) formed under the Charities Act 2011 (the "Act").
<b>CHARITY TRUSTEES (COMMITTEE):</b>	7 as at the date of this report (see section 2).
<b>GOVERNING DOCUMENT:</b>	Constitution dated 7th Feb 2020 as amended on 5th June 2021.
<b>OBJECTS:</b>	<p>To advance education in the science of astronomy and related subjects for the public benefit in Croydon and the surrounding area by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) encouraging a popular interest in astronomy and allied subjects;</li><li>b) helping beginners, irrespective of their age, to acquire a knowledge of astronomy and allied subjects; and</li><li>c) providing facilities for practical work and active participation in astronomical observation.</li></ul>
<b>ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:</b>	82 as of 31st March 2025 (for the membership year to 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025).
<b>BANKER:</b>	NatWest / Charities Aid Foundation / SumUp.
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="https://croydonastro.org.uk">https://croydonastro.org.uk</a>

## **1. SOCIETY ACTIVITIES**

The society meets for talks about astronomy (and related subjects) approximately every two weeks during school term time at a venue located close to (and with good transport links to) central Croydon.

As an ancillary activity, the society maintains the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory in a relatively dark sky location on Kenley historic aerodrome. The observatory is primarily used for outreach and is open to the public every Saturday evening from September to April provided the sky is clear and sufficient society volunteers are available. For larger scale public events (such as watching the Perseids meteor shower) the society uses the public perimeter track around Kenley airfield. Information about such outreach events is posted on the society's Facebook page and website. Visiting groups (youth organisations, schools, U3A etc) are welcomed by prior arrangement at the observatory on weekday evenings for a nominal minimum donation.

The observatory is also available for use by members of the society (with appropriate training). However, members who are interested in observing or astrophotography generally prefer to use their own equipment at home.

The croydonastro Forum (hosted on Google Groups) has been set up by members of the society to allow current and previous members to discuss various aspects of astronomy and astrophotography. It should be noted that a few members of the Forum have never been a member of the Society.

The society is unusual amongst astronomical societies in that it does not charge a membership fee, nor a fee to attend talks or to attend a public opening of the observatory. The society is funded by donations from its members and visitors.

The society is a member of the Southern Area Group of Astronomical Societies (SAGAS).

### **Public Benefit**

Committee members confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

## **Activities During the Financial Year**

### *Talks Programme*

During the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 the public talks took place on Thursday evenings at Trinity School. With effect from May 2025, in response to feedback from members who generally preferred to meet on a Friday evening, the talks venue was moved to Shirley Methodist Church.

During the year the society held 19 meetings (including the Annual General Meeting). Average attendance was 20.8 persons.

### *Outreach at the Norman Fisher Observatory and Kenley airfield*

After a promising start in September and October, we found that the weather prevented us from opening the observatory at all for four months. Because of the limited opportunities to open on a Saturday, we did open on one Thursday (during the school holidays) and on one Sunday. Both times we attracted 80 or so visitors. On one occasion when we did open after a long period when we were closed, we had in the region of 450 visitors.

On two occasions (in May and in August) we were treated to seeing the aurora borealis. This is a rare occurrence for us as we are so far south.

Unfortunately, our planned dedicated solar observing day in July and our Perseid meteor shower observing session in August had to be cancelled due to the weather. However we ran an eclipse viewing in a park near central Croydon which attracted well over 100 visitors. We took part in the London Open House Festival weekend in September at which we also conducted some solar observing. We had approximately 25 visitors, many of whom had no previous interest in astronomy.

In October the society held an observation session at Kenley airfield to observe the comet Tsuchinshan–ATLAS and this was attended by about 30 members of the public.

Sixteen observatory group visits took place comprising eight visits from youth organisations, three visits from local schools and five adult groups. In total we welcomed over 250 visitors. In addition three visits were made to groups at their own premises - two to children's groups and one to an adult group.

There is a shortage of volunteers who are willing and able to run such outreach events at the observatory and at the airfield, but we are seeking additional volunteers.

## 2. COMMITTEE AND VOLUNTEERS

The society's Committee can have up to ten charity trustees.

- All Committee members (apart from the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) retire at every AGM.
- Those holding the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are required to retire at every second AGM, with the Chair and Treasurer retiring in the same year and the Secretary in the alternate year.
- Retiring trustees are immediately eligible for re-election.

### Committee Members during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to the date of this Trustees' Report

Name	Role as at the date of this report	Committee as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024	New Joiners - Date Joined Committee	Date Left Committee	Committee as at the date of this report
Tony Roberts	Chair	•			•
Graham Cluer	Secretary & Outreach	•			•
Colin Weightman	Treasurer	•			•
Stefan Blakemore	Membership & Vice-Chair	•			•
Christopher Entwistle		•			•
Laura Quayle		•			•
Carolyn Raishbrook		•			•
Paul Stenning		•			•
Andrew Hossain		•		6 Jun 24	
Gareth Howells		•		6 Jun 24	
<b>TOTAL</b>		10		2	8

No charity trustee was paid during the period (other than for out-of-pocket expenses).

### **3. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

#### **Basis of Accounting**

- The society has elected to prepare accounts on a 'receipts and payments' basis.
- The 'Accumulated Fund' represents the cash at bank and in-hand adjusted for observatory key deposit liabilities and for significant accruals or prepayments (if any).

#### **Accounts Examiner**

- It is our practice to ask a member of the society (the 'CAS Accounts Examiner') to examine the society's accounting records and confirm to the Committee that nothing has come to their attention that would cause them to believe in any material respect that accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act, or that the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

#### **Financial Review**

We present on page 6 income and expenditure accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025:

- During the period the society received income of £4,738 and incurred £2,535 in expenditure, giving an overall surplus of £2,203.
- As of 31st March 2025, the Accumulated Fund stood at £12,992 (after deduction of observatory key deposits of £25 which are repayable by the society on the return of the keys).
- Explanatory notes to the accounts are set out on pages 7-9.

This Trustees' Report and Accounts was approved by Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Signed: Tony Roberts, Chair

Colin Weightman, Treasurer

## Croydon Astronomical Society

Amounts in £

### Income and Expenditure for

		Year to 31-Mar-25	Year to 31-Mar-24
<b>Income</b>	<b>Notes</b>		
<i>Donations and Legacies</i>	<b>1</b>	3,755	3,326
CAF Donate		1,305	1,089
Grey Box (cash + contactless)		1,027	1,258
Observatory (cash + contactless)		636	321
Other Donations and Legacies		50	80
Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme		737	578
<i>Charitable Activities</i>	<b>2</b>	860	654
Group Visit Donations		757	449
External Talk Donations		-	80
Refreshments		103	125
Other		-	-
<i>Investment Income</i>		124	119
Bank Interest		124	119
<i>Other Income</i>		-	-
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>4,738</b>	<b>4,099</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
<i>Talks</i>			
Room Hire	<b>3</b>	(972)	(840)
Speakers' Expenses		(139)	(207)
Cost of Refreshments		(52)	-
Computer and technology	<b>4</b>	(548)	(467)
Other		-	-
		(1,711)	(1,514)
<i>Kenley Observatory Maintenance &amp; Costs</i>			
Observatory Buildings		(20)	(1,068)
Observatory Equipment		-	(300)
Electricity		(210)	(207)
Non-Domestic Rates	<b>5</b>	(75)	(72)
Other		-	(72)
		(305)	(1,719)
<i>Other costs</i>			
Website, Email & Videoconferencing	<b>6</b>	(283)	-
Insurance (Public and Employers Liability)	<b>7</b>	(151)	(151)
Membership Fees - SAGAS		(15)	(15)
Bank Charges	<b>8</b>	(70)	(54)
Miscellaneous		-	-
		(519)	(220)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>(2,535)</b>	<b>(3,453)</b>
<b>Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure</b>		<b>2,203</b>	<b>646</b>
<b>Accumulated Fund as at</b>		<b>31-Mar-25</b>	<b>31-Mar-24</b>
Carried Forward	<b>9</b>	<b>12,992</b>	<b>10,789</b>
<i>Represented by:</i>			
Cash at Bank and in Hand		13,017	10,814
Deduct: Deposits for Keys to Observatory		(25)	(25)
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>		<b>12,992</b>	<b>10,789</b>

NB:- Columns may not add due to rounding.

## **Notes to the accounts**

### Note 1 – Donations and Legacies Income

Donations and legacies income is, in substance, a gift made to the society on a voluntary basis, and which does not provide any significant benefit to the donor in return for their payment other than the knowledge that the society must use the gift to further its purposes.

This includes online donations made through the CAF Donate system (a system set up by Charities Aid Foundation to process donations subject to Gift Aid), 'Grey Box' cash and contactless donations at the society's talks, and the observatory cash boxes and contactless donations.

This income category also includes tax refunds from HMRC under the Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS).

### Note 2 – Charitable Activities Income

Charitable activities income is earned from the supply of goods or services under contractual arrangements for the charitable purposes of the charity.

This includes group visits to the observatory where the society sets a minimum required donation amount and also donations for talks given externally (if any).

Also included in this category is income earned from refreshments provided at the society's meetings.

### Note 3 – Room hire for meetings

The termly charge for room hire at Trinity School became subject to value added tax (VAT) for the autumn 2024 and spring 2025 terms. This is because Trinity School was required to register for VAT ahead of the requirement to charge VAT on tuition fees from January 2025.

### Note 4 – Computer and Technology for Meetings

A high-definition projector (cost £479) was purchased in preparation for the talks venue moving to Shirley Methodist Church. Additionally it was necessary to replace the Sum-Up contactless terminal at a cost of £69.

#### Note 5 – Non-Domestic Rates – Norman Fisher Observatory (NFO)

The Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 (NDRA) introduced a new duty to ratepayers to provide the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) with information about themselves and their business, and also about their property to allow the VOA to establish an accurate rateable value.

It was discovered that the previous rateable values of the Norman Fisher Observatory (NFO) related to the Observatory Dome building alone and did not include the Clubhouse nor the Alan Treayes Dome.

The required information was provided to the VOA, and in May 2024 the rateable value of the NFO was re-assessed at £1,725.

At a rateable value of £1,725 the annual business rates cost for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 would have been £172 (0.499 small business rates multiplier less charitable relief of 80%). However transitional arrangements to moderate the speed of any increase in non-domestic rates have reduced the amount payable for the year to £75.

The NDRA has also reduced the period between valuations to three years (previously five), and so the next revaluation of the NFO will take place in 2026.

#### Note 6 – Website, Email and Video Conferencing

This comprises £259 payable to Wix to operate the society's website for three years to November 2027, and £24 payable to 3aIT to host the society's internet domain name *croydonastro.org.uk* for two years until October 2026.

#### Note 7 – Insurance

The society has put in place £10 million public liability insurance (PLI) and £10 million employers' liability insurance (ELI) through Hiscox Insurance. ELI is necessary to protect members who volunteer for the society and who would therefore not be covered by PLI.

Committee has concluded that it is not possible to obtain insurance on the NFO buildings or contents at the NFO at an affordable cost.

## Note 8 – Bank Charges

Bank charges mainly relate to the costs of using the CAF Donate system.

## Note 9 – Accumulated Fund / Reserves Policy

Committee is required to retain only those cash reserves that are appropriate to the society's needs and ambitions. However, in reviewing the amount of the reserves to be retained, Committee's aim is to ensure the society will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in donation income or if unexpected expenditure arises.

A significant item of expense (and Committee time) is the ongoing maintenance of the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory is located within a small fenced-in site within the RAF Kenley historic aerodrome with access provided by the London Loop long distance footpath which runs directly through the society's land. The observatory consists of a brick-built building with a fibreglass dome which was constructed in 1979 to house the society's then self-built 18-inch telescope, and a substantial self-built felt-roofed wooden clubhouse which was constructed and then extended in the 1990s. Additionally, there is a small commercially made fibreglass dome (the Alan Treayes Dome) which is believed to be of a similar date to the clubhouse.

The site is in an elevated and exposed position. The buildings are likely to require substantial future maintenance.

Although the observatory and clubhouse were originally self-built, some items of ongoing building maintenance may need to be done professionally. The substantial costs of professional maintenance, the limited number of members who now use the facilities, and the shortage of volunteers to run outreach events at the Observatory need to be balanced against the society's other priorities, its limited income and Committee time. At some stage Committee may conclude that it is appropriate to reduce the size of the observatory facilities, and funds will be required to make this adjustment.

**CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187803

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# Accounts

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# CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2024

### 1. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

<b>REGISTRATION NUMBER:</b>	1187803
<b>LEGAL FORM:</b>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) formed under the Charities Act 2011 (the "Act").
<b>CHARITY TRUSTEES (COMMITTEE):</b>	10 (see section 3).
<b>GOVERNING DOCUMENT:</b>	Constitution dated 7th Feb 2020 as amended on 5th June 2021.
<b>OBJECTS:</b>	<p>To advance education in the science of astronomy and related subjects for the public benefit in Croydon and the surrounding area by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) encouraging a popular interest in astronomy and allied subjects;</li><li>b) helping beginners, irrespective of their age, to acquire a knowledge of astronomy and allied subjects; and</li><li>c) providing facilities for practical work and active participation in astronomical observation.</li></ul>
<b>ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:</b>	31 as of 31st March 2024 (for the membership year to 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2024).
<b>BANKER:</b>	NatWest / Charities Aid Foundation.
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="https://croydonastro.org.uk">https://croydonastro.org.uk</a>

## 1. ACTIVITIES IN PERIOD

The society meets for talks about astronomy (and related subjects) approximately every two weeks during school term time on a Thursday evening. The talks are held at a school located close to, and with good transport links with, central Croydon.

Our general aim is to alternate between having a 'short talks' meeting where two or three members of the society each present a short talk, and a 'long talk' meeting where we invite an expert third party speaker such as from a university or from another astronomical society. Increasingly external speakers join the meeting using Zoom.

As an ancillary activity, the society maintains the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory dates from 1979 and is located on a small plot of land in a relatively dark sky location on Kenley historic aerodrome. The observatory site is within easy reach by car from central Croydon, but it is not close to public transport links.

- The observatory is open to the public every Saturday evening when it is clear and dark, provided qualified volunteers are available. Information about observatory openings and other outreach events is posted on the society's Facebook page and website.
- Pre-arranged visiting groups (youth organisations, schools, U3A etc) are welcomed at the observatory at other times during the week.

The croydonastro Forum (hosted on Google Groups) has been set up by members of the Society to allow current and previous members to discuss various aspects of astronomy and astrophotography. It should be noted that a few members of the Forum have never been a member of the Society.

The society is unusual amongst astronomical societies in that it is funded by donations from its members and visitors and does not charge a membership fee.

The society is a member of the Southern Area Group of Astronomical Societies (SAGAS). The society has not renewed its membership of the Federation of Astronomical Societies with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

## Regular Activities

### *Talks Programme*

- During the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 the society held 19 Thursday meetings (including the Annual General Meeting). Average attendance was 25.5 persons.
- From January 2024 the Thursday meetings have been held in the school's staff dining room. This is a larger and more informal location than the previous meeting room, and has the benefit of a higher definition video screen.

### *Norman Fisher Observatory*

- *Outreach*
  - During the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024:
    - the observatory was opened to the public 11 times with the number of visitors on each evening varying significantly with some evenings attracting in excess of 100 people!
    - nine group visits took place comprising six visits from youth organisations, two visits from a local schools and one adult group.
  - There is a shortage of volunteers who are willing and able to run such outreach events at the observatory and, if this situation does not change, regrettably the society will need to scale back or even cease such activities entirely.
- *Members' Evening*
  - For several years it has been apparent that few members use the observatory. Those interested in observing or astrophotography generally prefer to use their own astronomical and photographic equipment choosing to set up at home (or another convenient location) rather than making the journey and then setting up at the observatory. With the change of the day of the week for talks to a Thursday in 2023, Friday evenings have been set aside as an informal Members Evening. So far, uptake has been quite limited.

## **Special Outreach Activities**

### *Solar Observing Event*

- The society hoped to run a mid-summer solar observing event at the observatory to allow the public to safely view the sun both in white light and in hydrogen alpha light. The first scheduled date had to be cancelled due to heavy rain. The event ran on the back-up date, but, despite promising weather forecasts, persistent cloud cover meant that the sun was only visible briefly. The event attracted around 10 visitors.

### *Astronomy at the RAF Kenley Historic Airfield*

- Unfortunately, the society had to cancel its annual Perseid meteor shower event in August due to cloudy weather.

### *London Open House Festival Event*

- The historic RAF Kenley airfield is recognised as the most intact fighter airfield remaining from World War 2 and was listed with the London Open House Festival which took place in September 2023. Recognising that this listing would attract additional visitors to the area, the society listed the Norman Fisher Observatory for one of the festival afternoons, and this attracted 25 visitors.

## **Other Notable Changes**

During the period:

- Substantial maintenance work has taken place on the clubhouse. The felt roof was replaced and the heavily deteriorated plywood cladding on the east side of the clubhouse was replaced with shiplap.
- The dome doors were further reinforced with woodfiller.

## **Public Benefit**

- Committee members confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

## 2. COMMITTEE AND VOLUNTEERS

The society's Committee can have up to ten charity trustees.

- All Committee members (apart from the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) retire at every AGM.
- Those holding the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are required to retire at every second AGM, with the Chair and Treasurer retiring in the same year and the Secretary in the alternate year.
- Retiring trustees are immediately eligible for re-election.

### Committee Members during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to the date of this Trustees' Report

Name	Role as at the date of this report	Committee as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023	New Joiners - Date Joined Committee	Date Left Committee	Committee as at the date of this report
Tony Roberts	Chair	•			•
Graham Cluer	Secretary & Outreach	•			•
Colin Weightman	Treasurer	•			•
Stefan Blakemore	Membership & Vice-Chair	•			•
Christopher Entwistle			14 Jun 23		•
Andrew Hossain			8 Jun 23		•
Gareth Howells			8 Jun 23		•
Laura Quayle		•			•
Carolyn Raishbrook		•			•
Paul Stenning		•			•
<i>Martin Gaiger</i>		•		8 Jun 23	
<b>TOTAL</b>		8	3	1	10

No charity trustee was paid during the period (other than for out-of-pocket expenses).

In addition to the Committee there were 5 volunteers.

### **3. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

#### **Basis of Accounting**

- The society has elected to prepare accounts on a 'receipts and payments' basis.
- The 'Accumulated Fund' represents the cash at bank and in-hand adjusted for observatory key deposit liabilities and for significant accruals or prepayments (if any).
- The society's income is now reported using the categories set out in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102).

#### **Accounts Examiner**

- It is our practice to ask a member of the society (the 'CAS Accounts Examiner') to examine the society's accounting records and confirm to the Committee that nothing has come to their attention that would cause them to believe in any material respect that accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act, or that the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

#### **Financial Review**

We present on page 8 income and expenditure accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024:

- During the period the society received income of £4,099 and incurred £3,453 in expenditure, giving an overall surplus of £646.
- As of 31st March 2024, the Accumulated Fund stood at £10,789 (after deduction of Observatory Key Deposits of £25 which are repayable by the society on the return of the keys).
- Income
  - Donations and legacies income is, in substance, a gift made to a charity on a voluntary basis, and which does not provide any significant benefit to the donor in return for their payment other than the knowledge that the charity must use the gift to further its purposes.
    - This includes online donations made through the CAF Donate system, Grey Box cash and contactless donations at Thursday meetings, and the observatory cash boxes. This also includes tax refunds under the Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS).
    - Included in the Other Donations is an amount of £60 which was a refund made under the Government's Coronavirus Additional Relief Fund to substantially offset the cost of business rates incurred in 2021.

- Charitable activities income is earned from the supply of goods or services under contractual arrangements for the charitable purposes of the charity.
  - This includes group visits to the observatory where the society sets a minimum required donation amount and donations for external talks. Also included in this category is income earned from refreshments provided at the Thursday meetings
- Investment Income represents the interest earned on the society's instant access Business Reserve Account.
- Expenditure
  - The computer and technology expense of £467 represents the purchase of an additional laptop for Thursday meetings. This is a reconditioned machine, and has a significantly higher specification than the existing club laptop which is slow to update and struggles to run Zoom software. The existing laptop remains satisfactory to run powerpoint presentations for group visits to the observatory.
  - The Observatory Buildings expense includes the costs of re-felting the roof of the clubhouse, replacing the outer sacrificial layer of plywood on the east side of the Clubhouse building and further strengthening the observatory dome doors with filler. The time expired fire extinguishers have been replaced with 'service-free' powder extinguishers.
  - Observatory Equipment expenditure of £300 represents the cost of the assessment of the condition of two Coronado Personal Solar Telescopes (PSTs) that were donated to the society and the repair of one, with the other deemed to be economically irreparable.
  - In April 2023 the rateable value of the Observatory Dome building was increased by the Valuation Office Agency to £1,325 from £650. Transitional arrangements have reduced the business rates that would have been payable for the financial year from £136 to £72.
  - Bank charges of £54 principally relate to the costs of using the CAF Donate system.
  - In September 2023 society has resigned from the Federation of Astronomical Societies public liability insurance (PLI) scheme and has put in place £10 million PLI and £10 million employers' liability insurance (ELI) through Hiscox Insurance. ELI is necessary to protect members who volunteer for the society and who would therefore not be covered by PLI.

## Croydon Astronomical Society

Amounts in £

Income and Expenditure for	Year to 31-Mar-24	Year to 31-Mar-23
<b>Income</b>		
<i>Donations and Legacies</i>	3,326	3,771
CAF Donate	1,089	1,320
Grey Box (cash + contactless)	1,258	1,513
Observatory Cash Boxes	321	110
Other Donations and Legacies	80	247
Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme	578	581
<i>Charitable Activities</i>	654	951
Group Visit Donations	449	648
External Talk Donations	80	140
Refreshments	125	163
Other	-	0
<i>Investment Income</i>	119	20
Bank Interest	119	20
Other Income	-	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,099</b>	<b>4,742</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<i>Cost of Thursday Meetings</i>		
Hall Hire	(840)	(990)
Speakers' Expenses	(207)	(115)
Cost of Refreshments	-	(60)
Computer and technology	(467)	-
Other	-	(18)
	<u>(1,513)</u>	<u>(1,183)</u>
<i>Kenley Observatory Maintenance &amp; Costs</i>		
Observatory Buildings	(1,068)	(831)
Observatory Equipment	(300)	(200)
Electricity	(207)	(187)
Council Tax	(72)	(67)
Other	(72)	(15)
	<u>(1,719)</u>	<u>(1,300)</u>
<i>Other costs</i>		
Website, Email & Videoconferencing	-	(145)
Insurance	(151)	(32)
Membership Fees (FAS and SAGAS)	(15)	(45)
Bank Charges	(54)	(60)
Miscellaneous	-	-
	<u>(220)</u>	<u>(282)</u>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(3,453)</b>	<b>(2,765)</b>
<b>Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>1,978</b>
<b>Accumulated Fund as at</b>		
Carried Forward	<b>31-Mar-24</b> <b>10,789</b>	<b>31-Mar-23</b> <b>10,143</b>
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Cash at Bank and in Hand	10,814	10,143
Deduct: Observatory Key Deposits	(25)	-
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>10,789</b>	<b>10,143</b>

NB:- Columns may not add due to rounding.

## Reserves Policy

- Committee is required to retain only those cash reserves that are appropriate to the society's needs and ambitions. However, in reviewing the amount of the reserves to be retained, Committee's aim is to ensure the society will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in donation income or if unexpected expenditure arises.
- A significant item of expense (and Committee time) is the ongoing maintenance of the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory is located within a small fenced-in site within the RAF Kenley historic aerodrome with access provided by the London Loop long distance footpath which runs directly through the society's land. The observatory consists of a brick-built building with a fibreglass dome which was constructed in 1979 to house the society's then self-built 18-inch telescope, and a substantial self-built felt-roofed wooden clubhouse which was constructed and then extended in the 1990s. Additionally, there is a small commercially made fibreglass dome which is believed to be of a similar date to the clubhouse.
- The site is in an elevated and exposed position. The buildings are likely to require substantial future maintenance.
- Although the observatory and clubhouse were originally self-built, some items of ongoing building maintenance may need to be done professionally. The substantial costs of professional maintenance, the limited number of members who now use the facilities, and the shortage of volunteers to run outreach events at the Observatory need to be balanced against the society's other priorities, its limited income and Committee time. At some stage Committee may conclude that it is appropriate to reduce the size of the Observatory facilities, and funds will be required to make this adjustment.

This Trustees' Report and Accounts was approved by Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024.

Signed: Tony Roberts, Chair

Colin Weightman, Treasurer

**CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187803

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# Accounts

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# CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2023

### 1. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

<b>CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER:</b>	1187803
<b>LEGAL FORM:</b>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) formed under the Charities Act 2011 (the "Act").
<b>CHARITY TRUSTEES (COMMITTEE):</b>	8 (see section 3).
<b>GOVERNING DOCUMENT:</b>	Constitution dated 7th Feb 2020 as amended on 5th June 2021.
<b>OBJECTS:</b>	<p>To advance education in the science of astronomy and related subjects for the public benefit in Croydon and the surrounding area by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) encouraging a popular interest in astronomy and allied subjects;</li><li>b) helping beginners, irrespective of their age, to acquire a knowledge of astronomy and allied subjects; and</li><li>c) providing facilities for practical work and active participation in astronomical observation.</li></ul>
<b>ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:</b>	78 as of 31st March 2023 (for the membership year to 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2023).
<b>BANKER:</b>	NatWest / Charities Aid Foundation
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="https://croydonastro.org.uk">https://croydonastro.org.uk</a>

## **2. ACTIVITIES IN PERIOD**

The society meets for talks about astronomy (and related subjects) approximately every two weeks during school term time on a Thursday evening (Friday evenings prior to January 2023). The talks are held at a school located close to, and with good transport links with, central Croydon.

Our general aim is to alternate between having a 'short talks' meeting where two or three members of the society each present a short talk, and a 'long talk' meeting where we invite an expert third party speaker – perhaps from a university or from another astronomical society.

As an ancillary activity, the society maintains the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory dates from 1979 and is located on a small plot of land in a relatively dark sky location on Kenley historic aerodrome. The observatory site is within easy reach by car from central Croydon, but it is not close to public transport links.

- The observatory is open to the public every Saturday evening when it is clear and dark, provided qualified volunteers are available. Information about observatory openings and other outreach events is posted on the society's Facebook page and website.
- Pre-arranged visiting groups (youth organisations, schools, U3A etc) are welcomed at the observatory at other times during the week.

The society encourages members to use an online forum 'croydonastro' (hosted on Google Groups) where astrophotography and other astronomy-related topics are discussed.

The society is unusual amongst astronomical societies in that it is funded by donations from its members and visitors, and does not charge a membership fee.

The society is a member of the Federation of Astronomical Societies (FAS) and the Southern Area Group of Astronomical Societies (SAGAS).

## Regular Activities

### *Talks Programme*

- During the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 the society held 23 meetings (including the Annual General Meeting and two Christmas quiz meetings (one postponed from the previous year). Average attendance was around 26 persons.
- With effect from January 2023, the day of the meeting changed so that the talks programme now takes place on Thursday evenings rather than on Fridays, and strictly within school term time. This change allows our host school to better manage its energy costs.

### *Norman Fisher Observatory*

- *Outreach* - During the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 the observatory was opened to the public 12 times with the number of visitors on each evening varying significantly from a low of nine to an estimated 130+. Additionally, nine group visits took place comprising six visits from youth organisations and three visits from a local school.
  - There is a shortage of volunteers who are willing and able to run such outreach events at the observatory and, if this situation does not change, regrettably the society will need to scale back or cease such activities entirely.
- *Members Evening* – For several years it has been apparent that few members use the observatory. Those interested in observing or astrophotography generally prefer to use their own astronomical and photographic equipment and would choose to set up at home (or another convenient location) rather than making the journey and then setting up at the observatory. Now that the society's meetings have changed to take place on Thursday, Friday evenings have been set aside as a Members Evening to encourage members to visit the observatory and use either their own equipment or equipment belonging to the Society, or just turn up for a social gathering.

## Special Outreach Activities

### *Astronomy at the RAF Kenley Historic Airfield*

- The society held its *Annual Perseid Meteor Shower event in August 2022*
  - The Perseid Meteor shower occurs when the Earth passes through debris left by comet 109P Swift/Tuttle.
  - As well as meteor observing, the society provided telescopes to view the planets, and a "smart telescope" to look at some deep sky objects.
  - About 80 members of the public attended in addition to society members, and it is thought that everyone saw at least one meteor. The moon washed out the feinter ones but there were some very bright events, with one observer remarking she saw the biggest, brightest trail that she had ever seen.
  - Members of the society were kept busy answering questions and pointing out astronomical sights.
  - Some members of the public stayed until well after midnight. Many of our visitors expressed their intention to visit the observatory during one of our Saturday public openings.
- The society also attempted to organise a walk around the perimeter track of Kenley Aerodrome themed around the *Harvest Moon*, but unfortunately this had to be called off due to cloudy weather.

## Other Notable Changes

During the period substantial maintenance work has been done to the observatory buildings:

- *Main Dome:* The fibreglass dome was washed down and given a base coat of white yacht paint. The wooden dome doors have also been strengthened.
- *Clubhouse:* The heavily deteriorated plywood cladding on the west side and around the door of the clubhouse was stripped off and replaced with shiplap,

## Public Benefit

Committee members confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

### 3. COMMITTEE

The Committee can have up to ten charity trustees.

- All Committee members (apart from the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) retire at every AGM.
- Those holding the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are required to retire at every second AGM, with the Chair and Treasurer retiring in the same year and the Secretary in the alternate year.
- Retiring trustees are immediately eligible for re-election.

#### Committee Members during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to the date of this Trustees Report

Name	Role as at the date of this report	On Committee 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022	New Joiners - Date Joined Committee	Date Left Committee	On Committee as at the date of this report
Tony Roberts	Chair	•			•
Graham Cluer	Secretary & Vice-Chair	•			•
Colin Weightman	Treasurer & Membership	•			•
Stefan Blakemore			8 Jul 22		•
Martin Gaiger	Outreach	•			•
Laura Quayle			8 Jul 22		•
Carolyn Raishbrook		•			•
Paul Stenning		•			•
<b>TOTAL</b>		6	2	0	8

No charity trustee was paid during the period (other than for out-of-pocket expenses).

## 4. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Basis of Accounting

- The society has elected to prepare accounts on a 'receipts and payments' basis adjusted for any significant (>£300) accruals and prepayments with the net amount being the 'Accumulated Fund').
- It is our practice to ask a member of the society (the 'CAS Accounts Examiner') to examine the society's accounting records and confirm to the Committee that nothing has come to their attention that would cause them to believe in any material respect that accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act, or that the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

### Financial Review

We present on page 7 accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023:

- On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, the Accumulated Fund stood at £8,165. During the period the society made a surplus of £1,978 and, as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the Accumulated Fund stood at £10,143.
- Donations of £3,979 include amounts collected through CAF Donate, 'Grey Box' cash and contactless donations made at the Thursday/Friday meetings, cash donations boxes at the observatory and donations for Group Visits. The Society claimed a total of £581 from HMRC in Gift Aid and under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme.
- With increasing interest rates on bank deposits, the society opened an instant access interest-bearing Business Reserve Account in December 2022.
- The Observatory Buildings expense include an amount of £333 to replace the outer sacrificial layer of plywood on the west side of the clubhouse building, £193 for the first coat of yacht paint for the main dome, and £269 to strengthen the dome doors,
- The Observatory Equipment expense includes £200 for the purchase of a handset and cable for use during public openings and group visits.
- Bank charges of £60 principally relate to the costs of using the CAF Donate system.

## Croydon Astronomical Society

Amounts in £

### Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st March 2023

Cash at Bank and in Hand	10,143
Add: Debtors and Prepayments	-
Deduct: Creditors and Accruals	-
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>10,143</b>

### Movements in Accumulated Fund as at 31st March 2023

<b>Accumulated Fund Brought Down</b>	8,165
Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure for Period	1,978
<b>Accumulated Fund Carried Forward</b>	<b>10,143</b>

### Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March 2023

#### Income

Donations	3,979
Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme	581
Refreshments	163
Bank Interest	20
Other	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,743</b>

#### Expenditure

<i>Cost of Meetings at Trinity School</i>	
School Hall Hire	(990)
Speakers' Expenses	(115)
Cost of Refreshments	(60)
Other	(18)
	<b>(1,183)</b>
<i>Kenley Observatory Maintenance &amp; Costs</i>	
Observatory Buildings	(831)
Observatory Equipment and Computing	(200)
Electricity	(187)
Voice and Data	-
Council Tax	(67)
Other	(15)
	<b>(1,300)</b>
<i>Other costs</i>	
Website, Email & Videoconferencing	(145)
Insurance	(32)
Membership Fees (FAS and SAGAS)	(45)
Bank Charges	(60)
Miscellaneous	-
	<b>(282)</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(2,765)</b>
<b>Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>1,978</b>

*NB:- Columns may not add due to rounding.*

## Reserves Policy

- Committee is required to retain only those cash reserves that are appropriate to the society's needs and ambitions. However, in reviewing the amount of the reserves to be retained, Committee's aim is to ensure the society will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in donation income or if unexpected expenditure arises.
- A significant item of expense (and Committee time) is the ongoing maintenance of the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory is located within a small fenced-in site within the RAF Kenley historic aerodrome with access provided by the London Loop long distance footpath which runs directly through the society's land. The observatory consists of a brick-built building with a fibreglass dome which was constructed in 1979 to house the society's then self-built 18-inch telescope, and a substantial self-built felt-roofed wooden clubhouse which was constructed and then extended in the 1990s. Additionally, there is a small commercially made fibreglass dome which is believed to be of a similar date to the clubhouse.
- The site is in an elevated and exposed position. The buildings are likely to require substantial future maintenance.
- Although the observatory and clubhouse were originally self-built, some items of ongoing building maintenance may need to be done professionally. The substantial costs of professional maintenance, the limited number of members who now use the facilities, and the shortage of volunteers to run outreach events at the Observatory need to be balanced against the society's other priorities, its limited income and Committee time. At some stage Committee may conclude that it is appropriate to reduce the size of the Observatory facilities, and funds will be required to make this adjustment.

This Trustees' Report and Accounts was approved by Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

Signed: Tony Roberts, Chair

Colin Weightman, Treasurer

**CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187803

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# Accounts

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# CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2022

### 1. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER:** 1187803

**LEGAL FORM:** Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)  
formed under the Charities Act 2011 (the  
"Act").

**CHARITY TRUSTEES (COMMITTEE):** 6 (see section 3).

**GOVERNING DOCUMENT:** Constitution dated 7th Feb 2020 as amended  
on 5th June 2021.

**OBJECTS:** To advance education in the science of  
astronomy and related subjects for the  
public benefit in Croydon and the  
surrounding area by

- a) encouraging a popular interest in  
astronomy and allied subjects;
- b) helping beginners, irrespective of their  
age, to acquire a knowledge of  
astronomy and allied subjects; and
- c) providing facilities for practical work  
and active participation in  
astronomical observation.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:** 84 as of 31st March 2022.

**WEBSITE:** <https://croydonastro.org.uk>

## **2. ACTIVITIES IN PERIOD**

The society holds meetings about astronomy (and related subjects) approximately every two weeks during school term time on a Friday evening. These are held at a school located close to, and with good transport links with, central Croydon.

Our current aim is to alternate between having a 'short talks' meeting where typically two or three members of the society each present a short talk, and a 'long talk' meeting where we invite an expert third party speaker – perhaps from a university or from another society.

As an ancillary activity, the society maintains the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory dates from 1979, and is located on a small plot of land in a relatively dark sky location on Kenley historic aerodrome. Although the observatory site is within easy reach by car from central Croydon, it is not close to public transport links.

- The observatory is open to the public every Saturday evening when it is clear and dark, provided qualified volunteers are available. Information about observatory openings and other outreach events is posted on the society's Facebook page and website.
- Pre-arranged visiting groups (Scouts organisation, Schools, U3A etc) are welcomed at the observatory at other times during the week.

The society is unusual amongst astronomy societies in that it is funded by donations from its members and visitors and does not charge a membership fee.

The society is a member of the Federation of Astronomical Societies (FAS) and the Southern Area Group of Astronomical Societies (SAGAS).

### **Response to Coronavirus Restrictions**

Following the introduction of Coronavirus restrictions in March 2020, the society was unable to either hold in-person talks or open its observatory until the latter part of 2021.

During the restrictions the society arranged a programme of online talks and a number of social meetings at the society's virtual pub, the 'Altair Arms'. The society's online Forum (hosted by Google Groups) also remained active throughout, particularly in respect of astrophotography.

## Regular Activities

### *Friday Talks*

- In-person talks recommenced in September 2021.
- Unfortunately, due to the rapid spread of the Omicron coronavirus variant around Christmas 2021, it was considered prudent to protect members by cancelling the two meetings either side of the Christmas break.
- During the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 the society held 10 talk evenings, with average attendance of 27.

### *Norman Fisher Observatory*

- Committee re-opened the society's observatory in August 2021.
  - *Outreach* - During the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 the observatory was opened to the public 11 times with the number of visitors on each evening varying significantly from a low of three to an overwhelming 80+. Additionally 19 group visits took place comprising 14 visits from Scout association groups and 5 visits from local schools.
    - There is a shortage of volunteers who are willing and able to run such outreach events at the observatory and, if this situation does not change, regrettably the society will need to scale back or cease such activities entirely.
  - *Members' Usage* - Few members choose to use the observatory facilities.
    - Members interested in observing or astrophotography generally prefer to use their own astronomical and photographic equipment, and would choose to set up at home (or another convenient location) rather than making the journey and setting up at the observatory.

## Special Outreach Activities

### *Astronomy at the RAF Kenley Historic Airfield*

- Coronavirus lockdown and work-from-home advice has resulted in many exploring their local area. Walks in and around the RAF Kenley historic airfield (which is adjacent to the society's Norman Fisher Observatory) have become popular.
- During the period, the society organised three public events on the RAF Kenley Historic Airfield.
  - *Annual Perseid Meteor Shower (August 2021)*
    - The Perseid Meteor shower occurs when the Earth passes through debris left by comet 109P Swift/Tuttle.
    - About 30 members of the public attended in addition to society members, and it is thought that everyone saw at least one meteor with one observer spotting nearly two dozen.
    - As well as meteor observing, the society provided telescopes to view the planets, and a system to detect meteors using radar. Members of the society were kept busy answering questions and pointing out astronomical sights.
    - Some members of the public stayed until well after midnight. Many of our visitors expressed their intention to visit the observatory during one of our Saturday public openings.
  - *Moon-lit night walks around the perimeter of RAF Kenley Historic Airfield (February and March 2022)*
    - The society organised two family-oriented moon-lit night walks around the 1.8-mile airfield perimeter track, pointing out features of interest in the night sky. A third walk themed around the September 2021 Harvest Moon was planned but was cancelled due to cloud cover.
    - At the end of the second walk, a telescope was provided to view the Moon and other objects.
    - Both walks were well attended with around 30 visitors for each.

## **Other Notable Changes**

Other changes that took place during the period include the following:

- *Refractor Telescope Loan* - a high quality 165mm aperture refractor telescope has been loaned to the society. Views through this refractor are often sharper than through the society's principal telescope – a 14-inch Meade LX-200 Schmidt Cassegrain - as a smaller aperture is less impacted by poor atmospheric conditions.
- *Improved Website and Membership Application Process* - The society has moved to a premium website service. This now allows membership applications to be made online and for the website to be kept up to date more easily.
- *Online donations through CAF Donate* – Many members choose to donate to the society when they join or renew their membership. As membership applications are now made online, the society has set up an account with CAF Donate (a service run by Charities Aid Foundation) to collect online card and Paypal donations, and to claim Gift Aid on the society's behalf.
- *Email Communications* – The society has set up a pay-as-you-go account with a specialist email marketing firm. This allows the society to send bulk emails which are optimised for viewing on mobile devices, and which provide convenient links to the society's website, Facebook page, and Twitter feed.
- *Registration of Observatory Site* – On 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021 the land on which the observatory is built was transferred from the four 'land trustees' (who held the land as nominees) into the society's name.

## **Public Benefit**

Committee members confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

### 3. COMMITTEE

The Committee can have up to ten charity trustees.

- All Committee members (apart from the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) retire at every AGM.
- Those holding the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are required to retire at every second AGM, with the Chair and Treasurer retiring in the same year and the Secretary in the alternate year.
- Retiring trustees are immediately eligible for re-election.

#### Committee Members during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to the date of this Trustees Report

Name	Role as at the date of this report	On Committee 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	New Joiners - Date Joined Committee	Date Left Committee	On Committee as at the date of this report
<b>Tony Roberts</b>	Chair	•			•
<b>Graham Cluer</b>	Secretary & Vice-Chair	•			•
<b>Colin Weightman</b>	Treasurer & Membership	•			•
<b>Martin Gaiger</b>	Outreach	•			•
<b>Carolyn Raishbrook</b>		•			•
<b>Paul Stenning</b>		•			•
<i>Alice Ardis</i>		•		4 Jun 21	
<i>Joanne Ardis</i>		•		4 Jun 21	
<i>Jonathan Barrott</i>		•		19 May 22	
<i>Will Stewart</i>		•		4 Jun 21	
<b>TOTAL</b>		10		4	6

## 4. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Basis of Accounting

- Under Section 133 of the Act, since the society's gross income is below £250,000, we have elected to prepare accounts on a 'receipts and payments' basis, together with a statement of our assets and liabilities (with the net of the assets and liabilities being our 'Accumulated Fund').
- We do not meet the threshold required for an audit nor for an independent examination of the accounts. However, it is our practice to ask a member of the society (the 'CAS Accounts Examiner') to examine the society's accounting records and confirm to the Committee that nothing has come to their attention that would cause them to believe in any material respect that accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act, or that the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

### Financial Review

We present on page 8 accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022:

- On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, the Accumulated Fund stood at £5,842. During the period the society made a surplus of £2,322 and, as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, the Accumulated Fund stood at £8,165.
- Donations of £3,981 include amounts collected through CAF Donate, 'Grey Box' cash donations made at Friday meetings, cash donations boxes at the observatory and donations for Group Visits. The Society claimed a total of £632 from HMRC in Gift Aid and under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme.
- The Observatory Buildings expense include an amount of £367 to create a rainwater soakaway (being the cost of materials used and the disposal of surplus soil).
- The Observatory Equipment expense includes £113 for the purchase of a Celestron Finder-scope and £123 on dovetails.
- Bank charges of £87 principally relate to the costs of using the CAF Donate system.

## Croydon Astronomical Society

Amounts in £

### Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st March 2022

Cash at Bank and in Hand	8,165
Add: Debtors and Prepayments	-
Deduct: Creditors and Accruals	-
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>8,165</b>

### Movements in Accumulated Fund as at 31st March 2022

<b>Accumulated Fund Brought Down</b>	5,842
Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure for Period	2,322
<b>Accumulated Fund Carried Forward</b>	<b>8,165</b>

### Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st March 2022

#### Income

Donations	3,981
Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme	632
Raffles	-
Refreshments	95
Other	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,707</b>

#### Expenditure

<i>Cost of Friday Meetings</i>	
School Hall Hire	(630)
Speakers' Expenses	(20)
Cost of Raffle and Refreshments	(45)
Other	(37)
	<b>(732)</b>

#### *Kenley Observatory Maintenance & Costs*

Observatory Buildings	(564)
Observatory Equipment and Computing	(300)
Electricity	(210)
Voice and Data	-
Council Tax	(67)
Other	(32)
	<b>(1,172)</b>

#### *Other costs*

Website, Email & Videoconferencing	(238)
Insurance	(28)
Membership Fees (FAS and SAGAS)	(45)
Bank Charges	(87)
Miscellaneous	(83)
	<b>(480)</b>

**Total Expenditure** **(2,385)**

**Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure** **2,322**

*NB:- Columns may not add due to rounding.*

## Reserves Policy

- Committee is required to retain only those cash reserves that are appropriate to the society's needs and ambitions. However, in reviewing the amount of the reserves to be retained, Committee's aim is to ensure the society will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in donation income or if unexpected expenditure arises.
- A significant item of expense (and Committee time) is the ongoing maintenance of the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory. The observatory is located within a small fenced-in site within the RAF Kenley historic aerodrome with access provided by the London Loop long distance footpath which runs directly through the society's land. The observatory consists of a brick-built building with a fibreglass dome which was constructed in 1979 to house the society's then self-built 18-inch telescope, and a substantial self-built felt-roofed wooden clubhouse which was constructed and then extended in the 1990s. Additionally, there is a small commercially made fibreglass dome which is believed to be of a similar date to the clubhouse.
- The site is in an elevated and exposed position. The buildings are likely to require substantial future maintenance. Fortunately, the buildings managed to weather Storm Eunice in February 2022 without evidence of damage or leakage.
- Although the observatory and clubhouse were originally self-built, ongoing building maintenance will need to be done professionally. The substantial costs of professional maintenance, the limited number of members who now use the facilities, and the shortage of volunteers to run outreach events at the Observatory need to be balanced against the society's other priorities, its limited income and Committee time. At some stage Committee may conclude that it is appropriate to reduce the size of the Observatory facilities, and funds will be required to make this adjustment.

This Trustees' Report and Accounts was approved by Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Signed: Tony Roberts, Chair

Colin Weightman, Treasurer

**CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 1187803

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# Accounts

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**CROYDON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD 7<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021**

**1. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

<b>CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER:</b>	1187803
<b>LEGAL FORM:</b>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) formed under the Charities Act 2011 (the "Act").
<b>CHARITY TRUSTEES (COMMITTEE) (SEE SECTION 3):</b>	10
<b>GOVERNING DOCUMENT:</b>	Constitution dated 7 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2020.
<b>OBJECTS:</b>	<p>To advance education in the science of astronomy and related subjects for the public benefit in Croydon and the surrounding area by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) encouraging a popular interest in astronomy and allied subjects;</li><li>b) helping beginners, irrespective of their age, to acquire a knowledge of astronomy and allied subjects; and</li><li>c) providing facilities for practical work and active participation in astronomical observation.</li></ul>
<b>CONVERSION TO A CIO</b>	At an Extraordinary General Meeting held in December 2019 members voted unanimously to change the legal structure of the society from a Charitable Association to being a CIO. The CIO was registered on 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2020, and the assets and liabilities of the Charitable Association were transferred to the CIO on 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2020.
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	69 as of 31st March 2021.
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://croydonastro.org.uk">http://croydonastro.org.uk</a>

## 2. ACTIVITIES IN PERIOD

The Society carries out its purposes by:

- arranging talks held in a school hall on subjects which are related to astronomy approximately every two weeks during school term time on a Friday evening. To ensure that we cater for all levels of interest and knowledge there are typically two talks each meeting – a short talk which is presented by a member of the Society and a longer talk which is usually presented by a visiting expert speaker from a university or another society.
- maintaining the self-built Norman Fisher Observatory on a small plot of land in a relatively dark sky location at Kenley which is within easy reach of central Croydon. The observatory is open to the public every Saturday evening when it is clear and dark, provided qualified volunteers are available. Pre-arranged visiting groups (scout organisation, U3A etc) are welcomed at other times during the week.

The society is unusual amongst astronomy societies in that it does not charge a membership fee but is funded by donations from its members and visitors.

Following the introduction of Government COVID-19 restrictions in March 2020, the Society has not been able to physically meet or open its observatory. Committee has therefore moved activities online and has arranged a short programme of talks and social meetings at the society's virtual pub, the 'Altair Arms'.

Committee members confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

### 3. COMMITTEE

The Committee can have up to ten charity trustees.

- All Committee members (apart from the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) retire at every AGM.
- Those holding the offices of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are required to retire at every second AGM, with the Chair and Treasurer retiring in the same year and the Secretary in the alternate year.
- Retiring trustees are immediately eligible for re-election.

**Table 1** – Committee members during the period 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020 to the date of this report:-

Name	Role as at the date of this report	On Committee 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	Date Joined Committee	Date Left Committee	On Committee as at the date of this report
<b>Tony Roberts</b>	Chair	•			•
<b>Graham Cluer</b>	Secretary & Vice-Chair		15 Jul 20		•
<b>Colin Weightman</b>	Treasurer & Membership	•			•
<b>Alice Ardis</b>			4 Dec 20		•
<b>Joanne Ardis</b>			4 Dec 20		•
<b>Jonathan Barrott</b>			4 Dec 20		•
<b>Martin Gaiger</b>	Outreach		15 Jul 20		•
<b>Martin Hogbin</b>		•		9 Apr 20	
<b>Carolyn Raishbrook</b>		•			•
<b>Paul Stenning</b>			16 Dec 20		•
<b>Will Stewart</b>		•			•
<i>Dave Burfoot</i>		•		15 Dec 20	
<i>Paul Harper</i>		•		4 Dec 20	
<b>TOTAL</b>		7	6	3	10

## 4. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Basis of Accounting

Under Section 133 of the Act, since our gross income is below £250,000, we have elected to prepare accounts on a receipts and payments basis and a statement of our assets and liabilities (with the net of the assets and liabilities being our 'Accumulated Fund').

We do not meet the threshold required for an audit of the Society's accounts under section 144 of the Act 2011 nor for an independent examination under section 145 of the Act.

It is our practice to ask a member of the Society (the CAS Accounts Examiner) to examine the society's accounting records and confirm to the Committee that nothing has come to their attention that would cause them to believe in any material respect that accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act, or that the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

### Financial Review

We present accounts for the period from 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021:

- The CIO was dormant from its date of registration of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.
- On 1st August 2020, the Accumulated Fund of £6,956 was acquired from Croydon Astronomical Society charitable association (251560).
- COVID-19 restrictions have severely impacted our donation and other income. Although expenses are lower than usual since we could not physically meet, and therefore did not need to hire the school hall, we have incurred exceptional legal costs to transfer the observatory land into the society's name (previously held on trust for the society by four land trustees). Overall, expenditure exceeded income in the period by £1,114.
- As of 31st March 2021, the Accumulated Fund stood at £5,842.

### Reserves Policy

Committee is required to retain only those cash reserves that are appropriate to the Society's needs and ambitions. However, in reviewing the amount of the reserves to be retained, Committee's aim will be to ensure the society will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in donation income or if unexpected expenditure arises.

The trustees will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

This Trustees' Report and Accounts was approved by Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Signed: Tony Roberts, Chair

Colin Weightman, Treasurer

## **Croydon Astronomical Society**

Amounts in £

### **Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st March 2021**

Cash at Bank and in Hand	6,591
Add: Debtors and Prepayments	102
Deduct: Creditors and Accruals	(851)
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>	<b>5,842</b>

### **Movements in Accumulated Fund as at 31st March 2021**

<b>Accumulated Fund transferred from charitable association (251560) on 1st August 2020</b>	6,956
Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure for Period	(1,114)
<b>Accumulated Fund Carried Forward</b>	<b>5,842</b>

### **Income and Expenditure for the 8 month period ended 31st March 2021**

#### **Income**

Donations (Incl Gift Aid)	242
Raffles	-
Refreshments	-
Other	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>242</b>

#### **Expenditure**

##### *Cost of Meetings at Royal Russell School*

School Hall Hire	-
Speakers' Expenses	(30)
Cost of Raffle and Refreshments	-
Other	-
	<b>(30)</b>

##### *Kenley Observatory Maintenance & Costs*

Observatory Buildings	-
Observatory Equipment and Computing	-
Electricity	(198)
Voice and Data	(282)
Council Tax	-
Other	(720)
	<b>(1,200)</b>

##### *Other costs*

Website, Email & Videoconferencing	(67)
Insurance	(28)
Membership Fees (FAS and SAGAS)	(30)
Miscellaneous	-
	<b>(125)</b>

<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(1,355)</b>
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<b>Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(1,114)</b>
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*NB:- Columns may not add due to rounding.*