

SOLENT AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

England & Wales · Charity number 1206419

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2024-01-08

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 16 The Vikings
Romsey
SO51 5RG

Phone 01794523850

Email webmaster@solentastro.org

Website <http://www.solentastro.org>

Activities

Objects: TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE SCIENCE OF ASTRONOMY IN SOUTHAMPTON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Hampshire
- Southampton City

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£4,051	£3,207	-	-
2024-08-31	£1,004	£1,316	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Alastair Donald Acheson	Chair	
PAUL ANTHONY KINNON		
Peter Howard Ransom		
Roger Vian Nelson		
STEPHEN MCCANN		
Sally Jane Towlson		

SOLENT AMATEUR ASTRONOMERS

England & Wales - Charity number 1206419

Accounts

Report of The Activities of Solent Amateur Astronomers – CIO from 01/09/2024 to 31/08/2025

Registered Charity Number 1206419

Introduction

Solent Amateur Astronomers (SAA) is a vibrant and very active charity based in Southampton whose stated objectives are:

“to advance the education of the public in the science of astronomy in Southampton and the surrounding area”

There are currently 87 members of SAA whose subscriptions contribute to the maintenance of its facilities and the running of its meetings and activities. However, it is important to remember that all these meetings and activities are open to non members who may make voluntary donations.

There are also 9 active committee members and 6 or 7 other society members who regularly volunteer at the open nights and group visits – see below. The Committee, which includes all 6 trustees, meets monthly by Zoom.

The events and activities undertaken by SAA comprise:

- Talks held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month either at Oasis Academy, Lordshill, or by Zoom,
- Open nights at its observatory nr Southampton twice each month, weather permitting, except in June and July.
- Pre-arranged openings of the observatory to groups of visitors, usually from schools, cubs and brownies (Group Visits)
- Occasional openings to observe particular phenomena.
- The publication of a monthly newsletter
- The maintenance of a website
- The maintenance of a Facebook page

Toothill Observatory

During the period in question the observatory opened to the public on 16 occasions as follows: twice in September, twice in October, twice in January, once in February, three times in April, and three times in August. Detailed reports were published on our Facebook page and in our monthly newsletter.

A log is kept of all visitors to the observatory. 449 visitors attended during the period and £1,457 was raised in donations.

A maintenance morning was held every Wednesday between 10 and 12.

Other Outreach

In July 2025 SAA manned a stand at the Nursling & Rownhams May Fair.

Monthly Talks

Public talks were held at Oasis Academy on the 3rd Tuesday of each month except January and December when they were held by Zoom. A link to the Zoom meeting appeared on the website and was sent to all who requested it. £343 was taken in donations at the meetings, defraying the cost of hiring the classroom. Subjects covered are shown in the list below. They were chosen to appeal to all levels of knowledge from basic outreach to 1st year undergraduate level.

The program of talks was publicised on the website and the local media and comprised:

17/09/24	Steve Bosley	Measuring the Speed of Light
19/11/24	Dr Sadie Jones	Radio Astronomy and Black Holes.
10/12/24	Dr Jane Clark	Photographing Galaxies: my Learning Journey
21/01/25	Hugh Allen	Reaching Across the Gulf of Space - the life and work of William Huggins
18/02/25	Prof.Christian Knigge	Cataclysmic Variables As Universal Accretion Laboratories
18/03/25	Steve Broadbent	Astronomical Spectroscopy
15/04/25	Prof. Matt Middleton	Hidden black holes in the Galaxy
20/05/25	Prof. Nick Evans	The Quantum Gravity Problem
17/06/25	Jerry Workman	The Curiosity Mission
15/07/25	Steve Tonkin	Pseudoastronomy: Planet X, Zetans, and Lost Civilisations.
19/08/25	Derek Haselden	Voyager 1 mission.

Newsletter & Publicity

The newsletter was sent to all members every month, often with supplements containing outreach from NASA. Copies were also available for distribution to members of the public at talks and open nights.

The newsletter gave information on forthcoming meetings and open nights and tables showed upcoming astronomical phenomena.

In addition to publishing the newsletter articles were written for The Scene Magazine, which covers local events – www.scene-media. Our activities were also publicised on the Go Stargazing portal, URL, <https://gostargazing.co.uk/> and each month in the Nursling and Rownhams news.

We also maintained a Facebook page which had 1200 members in August 2025. This gave updates on whether scheduled Observatory openings would go ahead later that day, in light of weather forecasts. In addition, members posted observations and astro-photographs. The moderators also answered queries from members of the public, covering topics such as how to set up telescopes properly and how to observe the night sky.

Website

SAA maintains a website, www.solentastro.org, at the personal expense of the Chairman of Trustees.

The website gives background information about SAA and shows the programs of activities: the Oasis talks and observatory open nights. It also provides links to useful internet resources. In the

2024/25 session it received 12,900 visits. At the end of the session the website was transferred to Wordpress and a new hosting platform, Godaddy.

Signed:

A.D Acheson

Chairman of Trustees

Income Statement up to 31/08/2025									
	1st Sep	Budget	Variance	Budget					
	31st Aug	2024/25		2025/26					
Income									
Membership Subscriptions	1,149.75	1,100.00	49.75	1,100.00					
Public Viewing	1,456.70	850.00	606.70	800.00					
Hire of Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00					
Meetings Donations	342.65	250.00	92.65	300.00					
Group Visits/Talks	255.15	50.00	205.15	150.00					
Interest Received	66.18	25.00	41.18	50.00					
Misc Income Sales	230.00								
Miscellaneous Income	46.50	50.00	(3.50)	600.00					
Total	3,546.93	2,325.00	991.93	3,000.00					
					Categories in Charity Commission Return				
					Summary				
					Other	1,700.25			
					Donation	2,054.50			
					Trading	230.00			
					Investments	66.18			
						4,050.93			
						-4,050.93	Reconciliation		
						0.00			
Expenditure									
Contents Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00					
Public Liability Insurance	55.00	53.00	2.00	55.00					
Toothill Maintenance	278.28	200.00	78.28	300.00					
Toothill Ground Rent	135.00	400.00	(265.00)	400.00					
Toothill Electricity	441.14	300.00	141.14	450.00					
Oasis Academy Rm Hire	222.30	216.00	6.30	230.00					
Newsletter & Administration	0.00	40.00	(40.00)	30.00					
Speakers' Expenses	278.42	300.00	(21.58)	300.00					
Zoom Costs	62.36	60.00	2.36	65.00					
F.A.S & SAGAS Affiliation	5.00	20.00	(15.00)	20.00					
New Facilities and Equipment	1,686.95	150.00	1,536.95	300.00					
Bank Charges				50.00					
Contingency Fund Contribution				100.00					
Miscellaneous Expenses	42.70	50.00	(7.30)	50.00					
Total	3,207.15	1,789.00	1,418.15	2,350.00					
Accumulated Fund: 01/09/2024									
	3,324.48	3,324.48	0.00	3,664.26	01/09/2025				
Increase/(Decrease) in Accumulated Fund									
	339.78	536.00	(426.22)	650.00	increase/(Decr)				
Accumulated Fund: 31/08/2025									
	3,664.26	3,860.48	(196.22)	4,314.26	31/08/2026				
Plus Life Membership Fund: 01/09/2024									
	0.00	0.00	0.00	504.00	01/09/2025				
Change in Life M/ship 2024/25									
	504.00	0.00	504.00	(56.00)	increase/(Decr)				
Life Membership Fund 31/08/2025									
	504.00	0.00	504.00	448.00	31/08/2026				
Sinking Fund 01/09/2024									
	2,360.94	2,360.94	0.00	2,360.94	01/09/2025				
Plus increase in Sinking Fund									
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	increase/(Decr)				
Sinking Fund 31/08/2025									
	2,360.94	2,360.94	0.00	2,360.94	31/08/2026				
Contingency Fund 01/09/2024									
	370.27	370.27	0.00	370.27	01/09/2025				
Increase in Fund									
	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	increase/(Decr)				
Observatory Roof Rep. Fund 31/08/2025									
	370.27	370.27	0.00	470.27	31/08/2026				
Summary of All Funds									
Opening Balance	6,055.69	6,055.69	0.00	6,899.47					
Movement of Funds	843.78	536.00	307.78	694.00					
Closing Balance	6,899.47	6,591.69	307.78	7,593.47					

Balance Sheet - 31/08/2025			
Assets			
	Accrued Interest Rec	60.00	
	Prepayments	0.00	
	Bank	7,543.77	
	Cash	181.45	
			7,785.22
Less liabilities			
	Subs in Advance	287.00	
	Acc. Expenses / Creditc	598.75	
			885.75
Net assets			<u>6,899.47</u>
Comprising			
	Acc Fund 01/09/24		3,324.48
	Plus surplus/defecit		339.78
	Accumulated Fund 31/08/25		3,664.26
	Life Membership		504.00
	Roof Replacement Fund		370.27
	Insurance Fund		2,360.94
	Total Funds & Reserves		<u>6,899.47</u>
Notes			
A Expenses / Creditors			
	Ground Rent		433.75
	Key Deposits		165.00
			<u>598.75</u>

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Report of The Activities of Solent Amateur Astronomers – CIO from 08/01/2025 to 31/08/2025

Registered Charity Number 1206419

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“to advance the education of the public in the science of astronomy in Southampton and the surrounding area”

There are currently 60 members of SAA whose subscriptions contribute to the maintenance of its facilities and the running of its meetings and activities. However, it is important to remember that all these meetings and activities are open to non members who may make voluntary donations.

There are also 9 active committee members and 6 or 7 other society members who regularly volunteer at the open nights and group visits – see below. The Committee, which includes all 6 trustees, meets monthly by Zoom.

The events and activities undertaken by SAA comprise:

- Talks held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month either at Oasis Academy, Lordshill, or by Zoom,
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- Pre-arranged openings of the observatory to groups of visitors, usually from schools, cubs and brownies (Group Visits)
- Occasional openings to observe particular phenomena.
- The publication of a monthly newsletter
- The maintenance of a website
- The maintenance of a Facebook page

Toothill Observatory

During the period in question the observatory opened to the public on 8 occasions as follows: once in February, once in March, once in April, twice in May and twice in August. In addition the observatory opened once in June in the day to show the Sun. Detailed reports were published on our Facebook page and in our monthly newsletter.

A log is kept of all visitors to the observatory. 142 visitors attended during the period and £495 was raised in donations

A maintenance morning was held every Wednesday between 10 and 12.

Other Outreach

On 21/02/24 3 SAA members visited Orchard School in Southampton with a pair of binoculars and a small telescope and showed the pupils: Jupiter, the Moon and the Pleiades.

On 6th May 2024 SAA manned a stand at the Nursling & Rownhams May Fair.

Monthly Talks

Public talks were held at Oasis Academy on the 3rd Tuesday of each month except January when it was held by Zoom. A link to the Zoom meeting appeared on the website and was sent to all who requested it. £196 was taken in donations at the meetings, defraying the cost of hiring the classroom. Subjects covered are shown in the list below. They were chosen to appeal to all levels of knowledge from basic outreach to 1st year undergraduate level.

The program of talks was publicised on the website and the local media and comprised:

16th January – The Alien Perspective
Dr David Whitehouse

20 February – How Old Is It?
Stephen Tonkin

19 March - 300 years of Astronomy in South Africa
Prof. Malcolm Coe

16 April - Astrophotography and Image Processing
John Tarling

28 May** - Solar Eclipse Chasing
Steve McCann

18 June - Mars Rover
Jerry Workman

16 July - The High Energy Universe
Prof. McHardy

20 August - Quasars and Galaxy Evolution
Dr. S Molyneux

Newsletter & Publicity

The newsletter was sent to all members every month, often with supplements containing outreach from NASA. Copies were also available for distribution to members of the public at talks and open nights.

The newsletter gave information on forthcoming meetings and open nights and tables showed upcoming astronomical phenomena.

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We also maintained a Facebook page which had 755 members in February 2024. This gave updates on whether scheduled Observatory openings would go ahead later that day, in light of weather forecasts. In addition, members posted observations and astro-photographs. The moderators also

answered queries from members of the public, covering topics such as how to set up telescopes properly and how to observe the night sky.

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Signed:

A.D Acheson

Chairman of Trustees

Solent Amateur Astronomers - CIO 1206419

Income Statement January 8th to Aug 31st 2024

	8th Jan 31st Aug
Income	
Membership Subscriptions	134.75
Public Viewing	494.68
Hire of Equipment	0.00
Meetings Donations	196.40
Group Visits/Talks	0.00
Interest Received	0.00
Miscellaneous Income	178.06
Total	1,003.89

Expenditure	
Contents Insurance	0.00
Public Liability Insurance	53.00
Toothill Maintenance	147.49
Toothill Ground Rent	400.00
Toothill Electricity	293.53
Oasis Academy Rm Hire	152.41
Newsletter & Administration	0.00
Speakers' Expenses	157.70
Zoom Costs	46.77
F.A.S & SAGAS Affiliation	20.00
New Facilities and Equipment	44.98
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00
Total	1,315.88

Accumulated Fund: 08/01/2024	3,636.47
Increase/(Decrease) in Accumulated Fund	(311.99)
Accumulated Fund: 31/08/2024	3,324.48

Plus Life Membership Fund: 08/01/2024	0.00
Change in Life M/ship 2023/24	0.00
Life Membership Fund 31/08/2024	0.00

Sinking Fund 08/01/2024	2,360.94
Plus increase in Sinking Fund	0.00
Sinking Fund 31/08/2024	2,360.94

Observatory Roof Rep. Fund 08/01/2024	370.27
Increase in Fund	0.00
Observatory Roof Rep. Fund 31/08/2024	370.27

Summary of All Funds	
Opening Balance	6,367.68
Movement of Funds	(311.99)
Closing Balance	6,055.69

Income	
Donations & Legacies	869.14
Charitable Activities	0.00
Other Trading Activities	0.00
Investments	0.00
Other	134.75

Notes

These accounts reflect activities for only that part of the 2023/24 financial year for which S.A.A was a CIO.

Most of the membership subscriptions, for example, were received and accounted for prior to 8th Jan 2024

	31/08/2024 Closing	31/08/2024 Closing	08/01/2024 Opening	08/01/2024 Opening	Movement	Movement
Balance Sheet						
Assets						
Prepayments	0.00		101.25		(101.25)	
Bank	7,405.95		6,432.06		973.89	
Cash in Hand	33.49		149.37		(115.88)	
		7,439.44		6,682.68		756.76
Less liabilities						
Subs in Advance	770.00		0.00		770.00	
Acc. Expenses / Creditors	613.75		315.00		298.75	
		1,383.75		315.00		1,068.75
Net assets		6,055.69		6,367.68		(311.99)

