

Lewes Astronomical Society

Constitution of the Society

1. General

- 1.1. The Lewes Astronomical Society, also known as the LAS, is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting interest and education in astronomy and related sciences for people who live in Lewes and its surrounding areas.
- 1.2. All income generated by the LAS will be reinvested in the Society to support its goals and objectives.
- 1.3. The LAS upholds a policy of political neutrality and does not affiliate with any political party.
- 1.4. The LAS will provide appropriate insurance coverage for everyone attending its events.
- 1.5. LAS events are open to individuals of any age, although restrictions may apply at specific venues. Children under 16 years old must be accompanied by a responsible adult when attending LAS events.
- 1.6. A majority vote is defined as more than 50% of members of the LAS (or members of the Committee depending on context) participating in a poll when attending a meeting in person. A majority vote is only valid if either the Chair, Treasurer or Secretary are in attendance and a quorum of the Committee is also present (a quorum being any 3 members of the Committee).
- 1.7. All voting is conducted by a poll in the form of a show of hands.

2. Goals & Objectives

- 2.1. The LAS aims to:
 - a) *Promote all aspects of astronomy to its members and the general public*
 - b) *Grow its membership base by raising awareness of the LAS in the local community and beyond*
 - c) *Provide relevant and engaging services and activities for its members*
 - d) *Build and maintain links and partnerships with other organisations that share an interest in astronomy*
 - e) *Organise monthly meetings and invite guest speakers to deliver informative talks to LAS audiences*
 - f) *Encourage members to participate in activities and share knowledge with other members of the Society*

3. Membership

- 3.1. LAS membership is inclusive and open to individuals of any age. Those who are at least 16 years old will be considered full members, while those under 16 years old will be classified as junior members.
- 3.2. Full members will be eligible to:
 - a) *Have a single vote in any poll held at meetings*
 - b) *Join the Committee*
 - c) *Nominate members to the Committee (self-nomination is accepted)*
- 3.3. All members will have the opportunity to participate in members-only events and activities, subject to any age restrictions that may be imposed at specific venues.
- 3.4. Membership is granted upon submission of a completed application form and payment of the membership fee, with the exception of honorary members.
- 3.5. Applications for junior membership from children under 16 years old must be accompanied by the written consent from their parents or legal guardians.
- 3.6. The membership fee for the year beginning 1st September will be determined by the Committee and communicated to members at the preceding AGM.
- 3.7. The Committee shall have the authority to exercise discretion in implementing temporary discounts or other special offers as deemed appropriate at any given time.
- 3.8. The membership fee is non-refundable.
- 3.9. Membership is valid from the date of joining for a period of up to 12 months (or part thereof) until 31st August after which membership must be renewed.
- 3.10. Members are expected to exercise due care and take necessary precautions while participating in LAS events to ensure their own safety as well as that of others.
- 3.11. Members are expected to represent the LAS in a responsible manner and use equipment and facilities appropriately.
- 3.12. Members must abide by the rules of this constitution. Any member breaking these rules can be subject to expulsion by a majority vote of the Committee.

4. Committee

- 4.1. Members of the Committee must be full members of the LAS.
- 4.2. Members of the Committee have an obligation to act in the best interests of the LAS in the pursuit of its goals and objectives.

- 4.3. A President, Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer shall normally comprise the core positions on the Committee. Other positions may be added (with or without designated roles) at the Committee's discretion to ensure that the LAS operates effectively.
- 4.4. The Committee shall run and manage the LAS.
- 4.5. The Committee shall reach decisions on non-trivial matters by majority vote.
- 4.6. In order for a full member to join the Committee, they can either be co-opted by a majority vote of the Committee or they must be all of the following:
 - a) *Nominated by any full member (self-nomination is accepted)*
 - b) *Elected by a majority vote at an AGM*
- 4.7. In the case of multiple nominees for the same designated role, the nominee with the most votes will be elected. If there is a tie in the number of votes, the Chair (or acting chairperson) will cast the deciding vote.
- 4.8. Committee positions are voluntary and take effect at the end of the meeting at which the members have been elected or co-opted. The positions remain valid until the close of the following AGM, at which time the newly-elected committee takes over.
- 4.9. Members are able to serve on the Committee an unlimited number of times.
- 4.10. Members of the Committee who wish to be re-elected should submit their self-nominations in writing to the Secretary (or, in the case of a vacancy occurring in the Secretary position, to either the Chair or Treasurer) at least 28 days before the AGM.
- 4.11. Nominations for new members to join the Committee can be made in writing to the Secretary (or, in the case of a vacancy occurring in the Secretary position, to either the Chair or Treasurer) at any time up to 24 hours before the AGM or otherwise in person at the AGM itself during the elections.
- 4.12. Nominees for the Committee are eligible to vote for themselves.
- 4.13. The proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalidated by any vacancy among their number or by any defect in the appointment or qualification of a member.
- 4.14. The Committee can confer honorary membership or lifetime honorary membership upon adults who have provided exceptional services to the LAS or have demonstrated a significant commitment to promoting astronomy to the public. Honorary members shall enjoy all the privileges and benefits of full members.
- 4.15. The Committee shall hold at least 2 committee meetings each year. A meeting may be called at any time by any 2 members of the Committee with at least 7 days' notice being given to the remaining members of the Committee.

4.16. The Chair shall act as chairperson at all meetings. If the Chair is absent from any meeting, the members of the Committee in attendance shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting before any other business is transacted.

5. Amending the Constitution

5.1. The Constitution can only be amended by a majority vote at an AGM.

6. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

6.1. An AGM will be held once per year.

6.2. A minimum notice period of 28 days must be provided to all members prior to an AGM

6.3. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall present reports to the LAS in person (or by proxy if pre-arranged) at the AGM.

7. Implementation

7.1. The interpretation of this constitution is the responsibility of the Committee

7.2. The following documents are rescinded in their entirety:

a) Any other (pre-existing) constitution dated before 7th June 2023

The above constitution was adopted by the Lewes Astronomical Society at its AGM held at the town hall in Lewes on 7th June 2023 (becoming effective immediately). It was ratified by a majority vote of LAS members in attendance.