



ERA Secretary's report up to end of April 2024

It really feels like the weather has given us the worst half a year we've had in my memory (for astronomy)-do I say that every year? But let's be positive, we have had some nights of OK & we must be due some good luck.

Woodmansey grounds very saturated this winter, just reaching the grass level at the container. Glad we have placed it higher than the hall floor.

We've had a successful run of meetings at Woodmansey. Chris has taken charge of having a bit of entertainment, for the monthly meetings, during the almost relentless cloud cover. Thanks Chris.

Zoom meetings are still very regular, thanks Lee. Almost unwavering dedication! Just the usual few attend. These might have to have a simple address change when Lee retires & we may have to jiggle off... then on, when our free time runs out..? Any change will be easily communicated.

We renewed affiliation to Federation of Astronomical Societies, they had a hard time finding Public Liability Insurance to cover societies as a group, but did so in the nick of time. Saving us more than their membership fee. If we do outreach especially, we ought to be covered & even for anything at Woodmansey really.

Current Bank account & Savings eventually sorted, but will need names changing again after this meeting. I'll let the treasurer's report cover the financial standings. To note, it costs approx. £5to6 per month to run the bank account!

Member numbers have plateaued a bit, but my simple arithmetic thinks we just need a few more members & we're stable. We currently have 25 paid up members.

A few out-reach events we were going to help with that never happened, Beverley's Saint Mary's display with an astro theme. One or two scouts / cub groups & another GCSE astronomy enquiry. There were a few that happened, a guide group came to visit at Woodmansey & we visited a scout group. And the Yorkshire County Women Guild were interested. A few of us visited Beverley Photography Club, a busy room!

The container has had a little bit more organisation. Lee has made an inventory and we'll rationalise what we have. Don't forget there's a decent library in there for you to browse and return. Paving slabs now tidied, helps Woodmansey cut the grass & us not get muddy!

We definitely have a band of active astrophotographers now. Some lovely images shared on the WhatsApp group



There was a trip to Leicester's National Space Centre. Travelled in cars – hiring a mini bus would have been considerably more. 15th July.

Solar observed 10th June, using a good selection of different scopes. The PST h-alpha, various 'white light' filtered & a solar projecting using the club's refractor.

Lunar observing 29th June. Good amount of equipment set up & a clear night. Again on 19th Dec

Beverley Market stall held 29th July meeting Dr Mitch, leading to the Jodrell Bank trip & Dr James from Hull uni & him giving u a talk at Woodmansey.

Meteor party, Perseids 11th 12th Aug. Partial cloud & an officially low count this year, but we saw enough to keep us there for a while.

The 'rocket to Hull' on display in Victoria square in Hull, 17-21st Aug. Nothing involved from us, or local clubs. Good educational set up for kids and maybe an adult basic introduction – "space for everyone".

Wallace Sargent tribute statue in Winterton unveiled, attended by Mark T & Mark G, along with a good number of American relatives & other folk. Oct 7th Oct



Visit to Jodrell Bank 17th Nov. Including private tour of the “scientific back rooms”. Then at our next meeting, nicely followed up with a talk at Woodmansey from Dr James from Hull Uni helping to explain pulsars & why Jodrell Bank are looking at them.

A lack of attendance from us at the Practical astronomy show, we must all have enough equipment!

Physical projects. Building Dobsonian mounts for the clubs 6” & 10” Newtonian. Lots of effort from Lee & Mark G. They are looking good! So, we’ve got some great scopes to get out easily & set up quick. Both the Dob’s have an azimuth setting circle.

As always, work on the TS20 has kept it going well & some minor improvements. There’s now a marked place on the tarmac, for the levelling base.

Plans for the neighbouring ‘vertical farm’ (plant growing indoors) seem to have paused or stopped. I don’t think it’s been cancelled, we can only imagine it’s because of the energy price increases...

Thoughts of us setting up an observatory are surfacing! No dissuading after visit to Local club York Astronomers Society at Beetle Bank community farm.