

## Cotswold Astronomical Society – general information for potential new members

### Membership eligibility

Membership of the CAS is open to anyone aged 18 or over. Persons aged 11-17 may become Junior members in association with an adult member - please contact our Membership Secretary if you would like more information. Membership is not available to anyone under the age of 11. Beginners and experienced astronomers are equally welcome.

### Society meetings

Society meetings are the main regular activity of the CAS. They are held on the 2nd Saturday of every month at Century Hall, Shurdington at 7.45pm. The general format is (brief) Society news and announcements followed by a talk for around 50 minutes-1 hour, mostly by an outside speaker but at some meetings by one of our members. Over the course of a year we try to cover a wide range of astronomical topics from very general to quite technical so as to accommodate the equally wide range of astronomical knowledge and expertise amongst our members.

The talk is followed by a tea/coffee break where you can speak to other members, giving you the chance to seek help on any astronomical matters if you wish. If skies are clear after the break we plan to set up telescopes outside for viewing. Otherwise there may be a short informal talk or two from members, possibly about some recent activity they've undertaken, or failing that the meeting will simply come to an end.

The two exceptions to this general pattern are the AGM in April which is of course mainly concerned with the necessary formal business, though we try to have some other informal activities to lighten the evening, and the Christmas meeting in December where informal talks are followed by social (astronomical) conversation around a light buffet.

With the exception of trial visits described below, meetings are for members only and are not open to visitors.

### Observing evenings

Observing evenings are organised at various times around the county and information about these will be found on the website when appropriate.

### Other activities

Active observers are encouraged to submit astro-photographs to the Society's website to help build a permanent record of members' achievements, and to join in observing projects that the Society arranges from time to time.

### Equipment

The Society has a range of equipment - including several telescopes, binoculars and an electronic "sky navigation" instrument - available for loan to members free of charge.

### Newsletter

The Society's newsletter *Mercury* is issued every other month. Members can download a full-colour version from the Society's website or can receive a printed black-and-white copy.

### Subscriptions

The Society has an annual subscription covering the year April-March, but in the first year of membership this is reduced pro rata to the number of months remaining in the year at the time of joining. For example therefore, anyone joining in January would pay only one quarter of the annual subscription. The full subscription for the following year becomes due after the new year's rate has been set at the AGM in April.

A concessionary rate is available to anyone in full time education, aged 65 or over, or not in employment, and a combined subscription (also with a concessionary rate where applicable) is available for 2 persons who share the same address. These are also reduced pro-rata in the first year of membership.

A specific subscription for you can be quoted if you let the Membership Secretary know whether the concessionary and/or combined rate would be applicable.

### How to join

To join the CAS you need only to complete our registration form and pay your initial subscription. This can be done by attending a meeting and contacting the Membership Secretary who can usually be found by the reception table as you enter the room. No prior arrangements are necessary – just turn up on the evening.

Alternatively the form can be emailed or posted to you, then returned to the Membership Secretary along with your subscription – contact the Membership Secretary to arrange this.

### Trial visits

If you are unsure about joining, you are welcome to attend a maximum of 2 monthly meetings as a visitor to see what you think of the Society. There is a small charge of £2 per person per visit, but if you join the Society during the evening of your visit the charge for that evening will be fully refunded. If you wish to continue beyond those 2 visits we will require you to become a member.

*The Membership Secretary can be contacted at [memsec@cotswoldas.org.uk](mailto:memsec@cotswoldas.org.uk)*