Salford Astronomical Society

Charity No: 1197817

Trustees' Annual Report 2025

Including the Director's Report

& Statement of Financial Activity

for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

Salford Astronomical Society

Trustees Annual Report for 2025

Financial Period reporting from 01/01/2025 to 31/12/2025

1. Introduction

1.1 Charitable Objects

The charity's charitable objects, as set out in its governing document.

To promote and advance the education of the public in the theory and practice of Astronomy and related subjects by:

(A) encouraging the public interest in Astronomy

(B) And/or circulating current Astronomical information

(C) And/or further the education and knowledge of the public and of its members, by providing facilities for the active promotion and participation in observational Astronomy.

The Society has also created a set of core values and a vision and mission statement

Core values for the Salford Astronomical Society:-

Sharing and Support	We aim to share good practice, and support everyone to fulfil their own potential. We foster innovation and welcome ideas through the sharing of skills and knowledge. We aim to engage with everyone who wishes to develop their skills and knowledge in the areas of science, ICT and astronomy
Teaching and Learning	We foster and create a supportive environment, where our members are encouraged to participate and engage in lectures, learning activities and self development
Accountability	We are transparent and take ownership of our work. Our members and trustees work to support each other and raise the profile of Salford Astronomical Society, its work with the community and the observatory. We welcome new members, and listen to their needs and areas of development
Respect	We respect the environment and world in which we operate. Our members and trustees hold themselves to the highest of ethical standards, and respect the diversity of people. We care about the world in which we live, our members and trustees are committed to listen and engage, and respect the views of others

(SORP ref - Para 1.17)

OUR MISSION	OUR VISION
Is to share our skills and knowledge, and to foster engagement and curiosity of other amateur astronomers, who share an understanding and appreciation of astronomy	Salford Astronomical Society envisions a world where people of all ages can come together as one, to share and appreciate the wonders of the universe equally, and provide accessibility to all people regardless of age, gender, background, ethnicity, disability and economic status

1.2 Overview (Executive Summary)

Salford Astronomical Society (also known as The Society and Salford Astro) is an open and inclusive society, respectful of the views and beliefs of others, with the aim to be a source of inspiration, knowledge and learning, and to provide a positive benefit for the local community. We strive to develop relationships with other organisations with similar interests and objectives, both locally and further afield.

(SORP ref - Para 1.17 and 1.19)

1.3 Governance and Management

Governing Document

Salford Astronomical Society is a CIO – Association. Registered with the Charity Commission on 07 Feb 2022, under the Charity Number 1197817. It is governed by Charitable Constitution and is controlled and managed by elected Trustees. The Trustees give their time freely and receive no renumeration or financial benefits.

(SORP ref - Para 1.25)

Organisational Structure

The Trustees meet together monthly at the Observatory and have key responsibilities for all decisions taken in the running of the Observatory and any activities provided by The Society. It is planned that additional sub-committees will be set up once a Volunteer Programme has been set up and finalised. The sub-committee will report directly to the Trustees. At the last AGM it was agreed that a range of working groups would be set up to support key areas of work that have been developed over the past year.

(SORP ref - Para 1.25)

Recruitment and Selection of Trustees

The existing Trustees are responsible for the recruitment and selection of new Trustees, these could be existing members of The Society. In selecting new Trustees The Society seeks to identify people who show an interest in the long-term aims and development of The Society. That new Trustees can bring engagement and ideas, and be willing to volunteer into broader community work and bring new skills and knowledge to the Society and its members.

Potential Trustees are invited to attend Trustees' meetings as observers, and are given more information about the Charity, its aims and objectives, and if Trustees are in agreement, then they are proposed as a new Trustee at the next Trustees' Meeting. This process will allow fair and non-judgmental consideration of a person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist skills and knowledge. New policies and procedures have been written with clear guidance on the recruitment of new trustees.

(SORP ref - Para 1.25)

Induction and Training of Trustees

Upon appointment, new Trustees are introduced to their new role, and provided with copies of the Society's Constitution Document, and its aims and objectives. The new Trustee will be given the opportunity to read over policies and procedures that are in place, and will be required to sign that these have been read and understood. Copies of up to date Policies and Procedures are available both electronically and in hard copy, and print outs are available upon request. The Trustee(s) will be provided with a "New Trustee Handbook". The new handbook is still to be finalised by Trustees before full circulation.

At the last AGM, new trustees were elected in a fair and unbiased manner, and in accordance with the Charity Commission guidelines.

(SORP ref - Para 1.25)

Risk Management

The Society has a designated Safeguarding Officer, who is fully complaint and holds an up to date enhanced DBS on the "Update Service". The Trustees have assessed the risk of Health and Safety and Safeguarding, and these are updated regularly at Trustees meetings.

A risk matrix has been developed and measures taken for any mitigation of risk. The Trustees are satisfied that systems and protocols are in place for risk to health and safety; and insurances and safety measures are in place for new Trustees, members and visitors to the Observatory.

Appropriate monitoring of DBS checks of Trustees, members and in place and are reviewed regularly, including any updates to policies and procedures, as well as appropriate training by the local authority Safeguarding Team. Volunteer and Trustee DBS checks will be carried out by Salford CVS.

2. Activities & Main Achievements

2.1 Outputs & Outcomes

What has been the focus of our work and Charity over the past year

2025 has been a year of significant growth, strengthened partnerships, and increased public engagement.

A major development has been the expansion of our collaboration with ZWO, following initial contact in late 2024. This partnership has grown into an active working relationship, with ZWO offering technical support and interest in future joint projects involving smart telescopes and astrophotography education.

We have significantly expanded outreach activity, welcoming Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Girl Guides, and Women's Institute (WI) groups for structured educational visits. These sessions included introductory astronomy talks, hands-on demonstrations, and guided tours of the telescope and classroom facilities.

A highlight of the year was our public solar observing event, where visitors safely viewed sunspots and solar activity using specialist equipment.

We also attended multiple community stalls and outreach events across Salford and Greater Manchester, showcasing telescopes, sharing astrophotography, and promoting open evenings

What are our long terms aims for the future for the Observatory

Our long term aims and objectives are to grow and develop our observatory into a venue that is open to the public free of charge, at various times during the week and weekend, and open at times where the night sky can be observed in a safe and engaging environment. The Trustees are working on a strategic plan of action for the next 5 years, and with new Trustees on board who have experience within the 3rd Sector and bid writing, the aim is to apply for grants and funds to develop a range of courses, learning and free training. Our long term aim is to develop a Volunteer Programme, with volunteers working alongside members and Trustees to open the Observatory at varied times throughout the week and weekends. Progress has been made with the plan, with the setting out of key objectives.

2.2 Policies on Grant-Making and/or Social Investments

The charity does not make any grants, or make social or programme-related investments at present.

(SORP ref - Para 1.38)

2.3 The Roles & Contributions of Volunteers

The Society at present does not operate or offer volunteering. However, the long term aim is to develop a new Volunteer Programme, so the Observatory can be open more often, at variable times during the week to a wider range of members of the public, to offer a greater range of courses and introduce more people and local residents to astronomy and star gazing.

(SORP ref - Para 1.38)

2.4 How the Public Have Benefitted

The public have benefited from free access to astronomy education through:

- Structured visits for Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Girl Guides, and WI groups
- Hands-on learning and guided tours of the Observatory
- A solar outreach event enabling safe daytime observation of the Sun
- Increased presence at community stalls and events
- Strengthened collaboration with ZWO

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2.5 Achievements and Performance (Meeting Targets for 2025)

TARGETS	ACHIEVEMENTS
Deliver a solar outreach event and outreach presence	A successful solar observing event attracted families and young people. Multiple visits delivered for Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Girl Guides, and WI groups.
Engage with Scouts and Guide Groups	The Society has continued to engage with more with the Scouts, Cubs and Guides Groups, word of mouth has meant that we have seen an increase during the Winter months for visits to the Observatory for educational learning.
To engage with more of the residents of Salford using a range of social media	We have been more active in our social media platforms, with our members posting many of their own pictures and photos with their own equipment, encouraging others to ask and enquire about visiting the Observatory.
Engaging with DwarfLab	We are continuing with our engagement with DWARFLAB, who have shown interest in working with The Society on future projects; especially the new Dwarf3 smart telescope
Engaging with ZWO	New engagement with ZWO and the possibility of future collaboration are in progress, with initial communication being made in Dec 2024 by the Society's Secretary

2.6 Looking Ahead (2026-2027)

Looking ahead to 2026/27, the Society will focus on expanding community engagement, strengthening collaborations, and securing funding. As well as applying for local heritage from Salford City Council, and apply to Historic England in 2026 for National Heritage Listing for the dome, telescope and observatory.

Community Engagement

- Delivering more structured learning sessions
- Increasing daytime events, including solar observing
- Launching the Young Explorers Club every Saturday
- Strengthening our role within the Young Astronomers UK Network

Collaborations

- Expanding partnership with ZWO
- Establishing new collaboration with DwarfLab
- Working with Jodrell Bank to access historical archives
- Linking with Manchester University for historic archives of the dome and telescope in use at Jodrell Bank

Funding

Funding remains a challenge. In 2026 we will prioritise applications to:

- National Lottery Community Fund
- Salford City Council Local Heritage Funding
- STEM and educational grant providers

Heritage Development

We will begin preparing an application to Historic England for heritage recognition of the Observatory dome and 18.5-inch Newtonian telescope.

Major Event Planning

We will deliver a large public solar event in August 2026.

Volunteer Programme (2027)

In 2027, we plan to launch a structured Volunteer Programme enabling:

- More frequent opening hours
- Daytime visits for schools and families
- Support for maintenance, administration, and guided tours

2.7 Administration Information

Salford Astronomical Society is situated on a green area of land owned by Salford City Council, and a "Pepper Corn" Rent agreement is in place. The address is Chaseley Road, Salford, M6 7DZ. The agreement has been a long standing agreement since the Observatory was erected and opened in 1971. Salford City Council have agreed that the Observatory is an asset to the community, and local Councillors' and MP's have shown interest in the future vision and plans for expansion. The Members fully maintain the building, the dome and the telescope free of charge.

3. Financial Review

3.1 Financial Position – Salford Astronomical Society

The Society has an open and transparent policy and therefore this Report will include financial statement from year since the registration with the Charity Commission. A full breakdown for each financial year is available and have been accepted by the Board of Trustees as True.

Review of the financial position of the charity

2019 – the status of the account was opened for The Society, new banking

2020 – The Society's status was "Not for Profit- 3rd Sector"

2021 – The Society's status was "Not for Profit- 3rd Sector"

2022 - The Society was registered as a Charity

2023 – First year as a registered Charity and Commissioner's Report

2024 – Completed

2025- Completed

2026 – Not due until 2027

3.1.1 Record of Accounts for January 2025 to December 2025

starting balance from Jan 2025	£2,356.33
TOTAL IN	
memberships	330
subs/donation	1,516.14
sumup	839.44
events/visits	197.25
grants	2111.21
external visits /MISC	150
TOTAL	5144.04
total from Jan 2025 + Total	£7,500.37
TOTAL OUT	
Insurances	202.53
elec/utilites	360.46
internet/phone	604.45
other/misc	4,946.00
TOTAL	£6,113.44
BALANCE	
Balance brought forward	£1,386.93
New Balance	**£1,386.93**

3.2 Details of Any Funds Materially in Deficit

The Charity has no funds which are materially in deficit. See accounting section.

3.3 Policy on Reserves

The Society has a Reserve Policy in place that is relevant to the size of the Society and has been ratified by the Board of Trustees, the Policy will be updated as deemed necessary by the Board of Trustees and The Society's Director.

"This policy will seek to ensure financial sustainability of The Society for the long-term. In setting the policy, the Board of Trustees has referenced CC19 Charities and Reserves, issued by the Charity Commission. In setting the parameters for the Reserves Policy, the Board of Trustees has considered the following".

- *If reserves are too low, The Charity risks insolvency and its charitable purpose will be put at risk.*
- *If reserves are too high, money will be tied up unnecessarily, thus limiting The Society's achievement of its purpose and jeopardising its ability to raise future funds.*

3.4 Going Concern

There are currently no going concerns about that Charity that need to be notified

3.5 Principal Sources of Funding

The Society does not receive any direct funding, and the main source of funding is from Donations from visitors to the Observatory, or funds or grants that have been successful through bid writing. Members also pay weekly subscriptions of £1.00 per member per week. Funds are also received from events and talks at the observatory. The Society applies for additional funding through grants and bids, to support its basic running costs, and will continue in this manner by applying for bids and funding from a range of sources.

3.6 Investments Policy & Objectives

The Society does no have any investments

3.7 Description of the Principal Risks Facing the Charity

Any risks that the Society faces are noted within separate policies and procedures.
A risk management policy is in place and is managed by the Trustees.

3.8 Remuneration of Trustees

All Trustees act in a voluntary capacity and receive no remuneration or other material benefits from their services to the Charity/The Society. Out-of-pocket expenses that are necessary and reasonably incurred by Trustees in promoting the purposes of the Charity are reimbursed at cost, and are noted down within annual accounts, for transparency.

3.9 Statutory Statements on Liabilities

The Trustees declare that:

- The charity has given no guarantees where potential liability under the guarantee is outstanding at the date of this statement
  (*eg:* any outstanding/ongoing contract or legal undertaking to buy or provide specific services);
- The charity has no debt outstanding at the date of this statement which is owed by the CIO and which is secured by an express charge on any assets of the CIO
  (*eg:* a mortgage on property owned by the charity);

4. Reference and Administration

4.1 Charity Name & Registration

Name of the Charity: Salford Astronomical Society (also known as The Society, Salford Astro)

Charity No: 1197817

The Society is not Registered with HM Revenue & Customs, at present there are no paid staff members

4.2 Charity's Principal Address

Salford Astronomical Society, Chaseley Road, Salford, M6 7DZ

e-mail: hello@salfordastro.org.uk

website: https://www.salfordastro.org.uk/

4.3i Names of the Trustees Who Manage the Charity

Table of Trustees in Situ FROM AGM IN JULY 2024 – added for clarity for this report

Name	***Office***	***Appointed***	***~~Resigned~~***	***Appointed by***
Gareth Lever	Chair	24 February 2021		AGM & Trustees
Julie-Ann Fox	Secretary	31 July 2024		AGM & Trustees
Julie-Ann Fox	Treasurer	9 March 2026		Trustees
Michael John O'Brien	Director	31 July 2024		AGM & Trustees
Anthony O'Sullivan	Trustee	31 July 2024		AGM & Trustees
Kyle Dodd	Trustee	20 June 2026		Trustees
Martin Sharpe	Trustee	02 May 2026		Trustees

4.3.ii *Table of Trustees who have resigned and removed from The Society*

Name	***Office***	***Appointed***	***Resigned***	***~~Appointed by~~***
Gary Yule	Chair	24 February 2021	3 December 2023	AGM & Trustees
Stephen Chandler	Trustee	31 July 2024	9 December 2025	AGM & Trustees
Lee Bowditch	Treasurer	24 February 2021	9 March 2026	AGM & Trustees

4.4 Names of Advisors & Senior Members of Staff

Name	Role	Address
n/a	n/a	n/a

4.5 Bank Account Details

The Society has a dedicated bank account with Lloyds Bank and is accountable for all accounts.

4.6 Independent Examiner

Not relevant at this present time, due to funding being below £25,000

5. Structure, Governance & Management

5.1 Type of Governing Document

Constitution

5.2 Charitable Objectives

The Society has policies and procedures in place that support its vision and mission objectives. The main objective is to bring Astronomy into every person's lives and to access this freely.

Astronomy and the equipment that is needed to enjoy this subject, is expensive, one of the key objectives of The Society is.

To promote and advance the education of the public in the theory and practice of Astronomy and related subjects by:

(A) encouraging the public interest in Astronomy

(B) And/or circulating current Astronomical information

(C) And/or further the education and knowledge of the public and of its members, by providing facilities for the active promotion and participation in observational Astronomy.

5.3 Statutory Declaration

The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

5.4 Trustee Selection Methods

There must be at least 3 Charity Trustees independently elected for the Board. The maximum number of Trustees is 12, in accordance with The Society's Constitution, Trustees are appointed or re-appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Charity Trustees. In appointing Trustees; due consideration is given to ensuring that the Trustees have, between them, the skills and experience necessary to manage The Charity/The Society effectively and in accordance with Charity Law.

5.5 Trustee Development

Going Forward, The Society will be creating and providing a detailed Trustee Pack, which will include a range of information about The Society, as well as planned training sessions around key areas, such as health and safety, safeguarding and risk assessment.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf. **Gareth Lever Chair**

6 Director's Report

Salford Astronomical Society

Director's Report

Completed by: Michael J O'Brien

Date of completion: October 2025

Reporting Year: 2024

Charity Commission Reporting Period: 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025

Overview of Members/Staff/Volunteers

Total # of Volunteers: N/A	Total # of Volunteer Hours Worked: N/A
Total # of Members : 72	Total # of Staff N/A

Primary Focus Areas:

- 2025 focused on member retention, youth engagement, community outreach, and strengthening external partnerships. Our core objective remains to make astronomy accessible to all.
- We are still continuing to reach out to community groups to increase interest in accessing the Observatory and all we have to offer, we are looking at connections with local groups we have not previously engaged with
- We are working on a 5 year plan for the expansion and growth of the Society, that will be developed by new Trustees and Board Members.
- We are continuing to seek funding for new equipment and telescopes to support with the courses and training that we plan to offer, as well as seeking funding for Smart Telescopes
- We continue to see support from our existing member/volunteers to help support programs, raising awareness of the Society, for example, hosting open days and events and attending community stalls across the City of Salford and the wider Greater Manchester region.

Organisation Goals: Progress Report

The main objective is to bring Astronomy into every person's lives and to access this freely. To provide the equipment that is needed to enjoy this subject, so that it is easily accessible, and to build up the use of smart telescopes to reach a wider audience to engage in astronomy.

Our key objectives are -

> To promote and advance the education of the public in the theory and practice of Astronomy and related subjects by:
>
> *(A) encouraging the public interest in Astronomy*
>
> *(B) And/or circulating current Astronomical information*
>
> *(C) And/or further the education and knowledge of the public and of its members, by providing facilities for the active promotion and participation in observational Astronomy.*

Community Outreach Efforts for 2025

Outreach Event	Purpose
Asda Community Stalls (May & Sept 2025)	Raise awareness and encourage new visitors
Buile Hill Park Events	Showcase telescopes and astrophotography
Solar Outreach Event (Summer 2025)	Safe solar observing for families and young people
CERN Research Institute (ongoing)	Access speakers and lecture opportunities
Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Girl Guides, WI Visits	Structured astronomy learning and guided tours

Major Accomplishments and future planning

Our key accomplishments during this reporting period:

- Expanded engagement with youth and community groups
- Planning a solar outreach event at the observatory
- Strengthened collaboration with ZWO
- Initiated new collaboration planning with DwarfLab
- Engaging in talks for set up the Young Astronomers UK Network from 2026
- Began development of the Young Explorers Club (launching 2026)
- Planning a large external solar event for August 2026
- Progressed heritage work toward a future Historic England application
- Progressed application for local heritage with Salford City Council
- Increase community cohesion with "Pop-Up" Urban astronomy events
- Increased outreach presence across Salford
- Improved social media engagement
- Advanced the 5-Year Strategic Plan

Challenges

Challenges The Society has faced and long term challenges:

- Funding limitations remain a significant challenge
- Need for modern equipment and smart telescopes
- Heritage documentation requires archival support from Jodrell Bank
- Recruiting a more diverse membership including children
- Encouraging volunteering and project participation
- Converting casual visitors into long-term members

Board Engagement Objectives

Key objectives and aims from the Board for the next Strategic Planning Proposal

- Strengthen community group engagement
- Increase visitor-to-member conversion
- Form Working Groups for maintenance and projects
- Engage MPs and Councillors to raise profile
- Attend Practical Astronomy Shows
- Prioritise funding applications
- Progress heritage recognition with Historic England and SCC (2026)
- Launch Young Explorers Club (2026)
- Deliver major solar events (2026)
- Develop Volunteer Programme (2027)

APPENDICES

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Report written by Secretary

With support from the Board of Trustees and Director's report