



Frequently Asked Questions

These are our most frequently asked questions. If you can't find what you are looking for here or need more details, please feel free to contact us. This website, and the society, is run by an enthusiastic group of volunteers and we respond to queries as soon as we can.

Q: Where are good places to go stargazing in Shropshire?

A: You can stargaze in your back garden or head out into the darker countryside. The number of stars you'll see depends on how dark the sky is. It is possible to see some stars in our towns, but for the best experiences you'll need to head out into the country. Check out these places for some inspiration:

[Dark skies in Shropshire](#)
[South Shropshire](#)

Q: Can you help my Scout/Cub/Brownies through their Astronomy badge? Can you help me set up an Astronomy club for my students/give a talk to my group/provide a pop-up Astronomy session at my venue?

A: Yes, we can. We have been doing this for years all over the county, but we need to take location into consideration. If you message the page with your contact details and location or contact us via our web page, we'll get in touch and discuss your requirements and our availability. Please note that as we are all volunteers, we need to make a charge for this to cover travel expenses and cost of resources.

Q: Do I need to be a member to come along to an observing session?

A: We welcome visitors to our observing sessions for a maximum of two visits while you decide if membership is for you. After that we would like you to join the society as a member, to help fund our activities. Membership has its value in that there are some member's only events, a monthly newsletter which keeps you up to date with all our and other astronomical events & activities and access to the members only section of the website. We can also keep you posted on special offers and exclusive events run by national societies. The Society is a non-profit organisation, and membership fees fund our valuable outreach work. Membership forms can currently be found on our website under the Information heading.

Q: Do I need a telescope or any equipment to come to an observing session?

A: No, you don't, but if you have them, we'd welcome you to bring them along and allow others to share them. There are always scopes available as committee members bring equipment, but – the more the merrier.

Q: I want to buy a scope/ some binoculars / imaging equipment what should I get?

A: We can't recommend any specific equipment as everyone is different with different requirements. However, we can discuss your requirements and offer guidelines on what spec to look for.

Q: I'm having problems setting up/using my scope, what can I do?

A: If you can get it to one of our Rodington or Little Ness sessions we can go through it with you and show you how to get the best out of it. If this isn't possible, message the page or contact us via our website for a chat.

Q: I want to see the eclipse/meteor shower etc. where can I go and do I need a scope?

A: The answer for this is usually the same – The darker the sky the better (for night time events), so away from street lamp lit areas and the higher the ground the better but one which gives you an unobstructed view of the direction the event is occurring.

You won't need a scope for a meteor shower. You can use one and binoculars for a lunar eclipse if you wish to see the surface of the moon, but you'll see the shadow without any aids.

NEVER LOOK AT THE SUN THROUGH A TELESCOPE OR BINOCULARS AND WITHOUT SOLAR VIEWING GLASSES OR THE APPROPRIATE FILTERS

Q: What events do you have coming up?

A: Our Facebook page lists all the events as soon as all the details are confirmed, so it's best to keep checking on there and on our online calendar on the website. Please don't message the page asking for details of an event on the day it's occurring as there's a good chance we won't be able to respond in time. All our events go ahead regardless of weather conditions if outdoors and on the rare occasions an event is cancelled, there will be a notification on the Facebook page.

Q: Are your events/observing sessions suitable for my child/ a beginner?

A: Our committee have experience in presenting to people of all ages and levels of ability. If we see we have youngsters in our midst, we will make sure they are catered for so they enjoy the experience. Some of the events we go to are not hosted by ourselves, for example, events at National Trust sites. In these circumstances we have no control over to whom the event is directed towards and some are adults only. This will be made very clear on the Facebook events page as links will be provided to book direct with the host.

Q: I am a member. Where your events have an entrance fee, do I still have to pay?

A: Yes, unfortunately you do. We are an enthusiastic bunch of amateurs and we love what we do but we incur expenses such as venue hire and fuel. We keep our membership fees deliberately low, but on these occasions, we do need to make a small extra charge to cover costs.

Sometimes we are not the host of the event, such as the events at National Trust properties. In these cases, you need to follow the booking instructions given on the Facebook page as bookings for these are out of our control.

Q: What does membership include?

Membership fees cover the cost of our "base" at Rodington Village Hall and some of the resources we provide at events and meetings. Membership fees are due on the 1st January every year.

Benefits of becoming a member:

- Unlimited attendance at Rodington and Little Ness Observing evenings
- Monthly edition of the Society newsletter, Hermes, which includes news of Society activities, articles of interest in space and technology as well as what to look out for in the night sky
- Access to the members section of the website which among other things includes back issues of Hermes
- Access to viewing equipment to loan
- Access to the Society library
- Invitation to the annual summer social
- Invitation to the Annual General Meeting
- Volunteering opportunities which give free access to chargeable events
- Access to second hand items for sale

Membership forms are on the information page. Save it to your computer, print off, complete and either scan on and email or post to return.