

Notes from a Committee Meeting of the Flamsteed Astronomy Society held on Thursday 3rd March 2011 at the Young Education Services Office

1. **Present:** Lin Potter (Chair), Mike Dryland (Vice Chair), Deborah McGarvey, Mike Dear, Mike Meynell, Roger Geeson, Peter Kitcherside and Jane Bendall
2. **Apologies:** Rachel Harrison, Grey Liplely and David Waugh
3. **Matters arising** from the minutes of the 3rd November 2010.
 - David Rooney is not free to show a Flamsteed group round the Science Museum and there have been glitches in making other arrangements due to staff turnover. We can try again in the autumn
 - Lin mentioned that she has still not heard from the observatory in Essex.
4. **Observing evenings:**

Blackheath: Mike Meynell reported that due to the appalling weather, sessions had been regularly cancelled. He suggested that it might be better to book the same night each week and if a successful observing session takes place to cancel the following three weeks, thus trying to hold a monthly meeting. This of course would mean a big commitment from the organisers. The risk assessment can be done the day before if necessary, as we just need to tell the Museum the date, time and name and contact number of the team leader. It is not necessary to fill in a new form every time.

Greenwich Park: Mike Meynell had investigated the Baker Street Irregulars a group who meet monthly in Regents Park. The organisers are given a key to the gate and the sessions are open to the public with about 60-70 people turning up. It was agreed that we would approach the Museum – namely Mark Grover – to suggest that we would very much like to start negotiations with Greenwich Park authorities to see if it were possible to put a similar scheme in place for Flamsteed. See accompanying note.

5. **Trial text messaging scheme.** This is to enable organisers to reach members who cannot access personal emails or websites during a normal working day.

Use: It could be used for last minute changes of plan such as the go ahead or cancellation of observing plans.

It could be used as an on-the-day reminder about observing evenings or pub outings.

Costs are very low – but do depend on take up from members; £5.00 per month plus £37.00 (+ VAT) for each 1,000 text messages

It was agreed that this excellent plan should be implemented for the three month free trial on offer and then reassessed. Mike Meynell will announce the scheme at the beginning of our next lecture evening – next Monday 7th March – and asses the interest and take up.

6. Constitutional matters

In the past the Flamsteed had a proper written constitution in agreement with the Friends. Since the Friends were disbanded the Flamsteed has become a special interest group within the Membership Department, which of course is a totally integrated part of the Museum.

This means that there is no documented understanding between the Museum and the Flamsteed and it was felt that we may wish to regularise and formalise our relationship within the Museum. To that end it was decided to set up a sub committee comprising Mike Dryland, Roger Geeson, Mike Meynell, Chris Mann and David Waugh to explore our current standing and to suggest a way forward. Until the sub committee reports to the main committee we shall not approach the Museum for discussions.

Accounts: Mike and Jane to present a budget for Flamsteed expenditure to the Membership Office immediately to cover the financial year 2011/2012.

7. Deborah's visit to the Keck Observatory and Hawaii

Deborah is travelling to Hawaii in April and hopes to visit the Keck observatory during her holiday. She was hoping to take some Flamsteed leaflets and promotional material with her but sadly there is none available. Perhaps this is an issue we should revisit soon.

The committee asked her if she would give a 10 minute talk to the society on her return about her visit.

8. Any Other Business

a. **Parking:** Jane reported that Mark Grover was willing to allow cars to park if off loading refreshments and stay in front of Neptune Court for the duration of our next lecture, but this is a concession which may not be repeated. It was agreed that in future the cars would use the Museum car park after off-loading.

The situation for disabled drivers of course remains unchanged.

Jane to ask Rachel for some storage space for the tea and coffee pots to save Deborah having to carry them backwards and forwards every month.

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.