

Report of the Chairman

The Chairman thanked C Murdoch for an excellent programme of speakers for the year and K Houston for both running the website, a very important medium of communication with members and also for running the discussion group meetings.

The new format of a discussion group then external speaker then back to basics session had worked well and will be retained for the forthcoming year. It was noted that the new format for the discussion group was working very well with active debates between members as opposed to a prepared lecture. The back to basics session had proved popular with increased attendances. Overall the attendance at meetings had increased over the previous year.

The tendency was noted to some attendees choosing to pay £2 at meetings rather than joining the Society was noted.

The finances were in a stable position with an increase in cash over the previous year.

The Society joined with other local Societies for a successful social in January. It was noted that around 8 members from Abergavenny (including partners) attended. This format maybe used again for the current year based on the positive feedback.

The report was approved by A Ellaway and seconded by K Houston

Report of the Treasurer

A Ellaway presented the accounts for the year. The Society has cash of £2975.67 an increase of £558 over the year. £90 had been paid to speakers for expenses.

G Creyke asked why more money was not being spent. The Chairman replied that the Society was always open to suggestions for activities or purchase of equipment, however none had been forthcoming. It was generally agreed that there is little point in acquiring observing equipment as there was sufficient access to such kit if required and the Society had sufficient audio visual equipment for its needs at present.

There was discussion as to the possibility of organising more trips. The Chairman pointed out that there had been a number of trips organised in the previous year with local societies, to various shows and the Natural History Museum amongst others but there had been very low take-up from the Abergavenny Society.

G Creyke suggested asked about the possibility of having coffee offered in the meetings. The Chairman pointed out that this had been raised the previous year but was not taken forward as the cost was disproportionate.

S Fewster said that in meetings in Crickhowell they hire a hall which enables them to have longer meeting with a refreshment break but also that they could hire the hall at a very good rate. A similar situation exists with Usk AS. The Chairman stated that considerable efforts had been made in the past to find suitable venues and the existing venue was very central although somewhat small if meetings were very well attended.

The discussion was closed without reaching any specific conclusions for actions but the Chairman underlined the point that the Society was open to consider any suggestions that would benefit members and increase their enjoyment. K Houston requested that members think of suggestions for trips.

The report of the Treasurer was accepted by N Busby and seconded by J Hill

Report of the Secretary

Unfortunately the Secretary had had to apologise for not being able to attend but did provide a written report which was read out.

The King's Head Hotel has been very accommodating although the room can be small. The Society joined Usk for the social meal in January

There had been 10 external speakers talking on a wide range of topics and the Secretary wanted to record her thanks to them all.

Forthcoming speakers were listed.

The Secretary ended by thanking all those in the Society that had assisted and supported her during the year, particularly the Officers of the Society.

The report was approved by J Hill and seconded by A Ellaway

Report of officers of the Society

Publicity

Michael Skidmore was unable to attend and had not submitted a report but it was noted that he had been regularly putting advertisements of meetings in local newspapers during the year and was thanked for that.

Webmaster

K Houston presented his report. In the year to date there had been 63,350 visitors to the Societies site, 335,920 page views and 151,821 "spiders". These figure were a bit down on the previous year but there had been a significant increase in downloads of documents (2964).

Links to the other local Societies had been added to the website. A policy on personal data has been added. Spam is at a low level. K Houston asked members to send suggestions to himself or the chairman and provide email details.

Discussion Group

There were 4 of the new format "Round the table" discussion and 3 "Back to Basics" meetings. Details are on the "Archive/2019" page on the website. It was concluded that the sessions had been well attended so will continue with the new format. If members have particular topics they would like to see raised please contact K Houston or N Busby.

There were no other reports from Officers. These reports were approved by J Hill and seconded by R Lambert.

Election of Officers

There were no new nominations for officers so the meeting was asked if they wished to re-elect the existing officers for a further year. This suggestion was unanimously accepted.

The Officers for the year 2020 are therefore as follows

Chairman – N J Busby

Secretary – C Murdoch

Treasurer – A Ellaway

Website – K Houston

Publicity – M Skidmore

Cosmology/ Round the table – K Houston

Facebook – C Murdoch

AOB

There was one item on AOB - 10th Anniversary event. In November 2020 the Society will have reached 10 years old. It was agreed that there was insufficient time in the AGM to work-up a proposal and do it justice but it was agreed by the attendees that it would be nice to mark the event.

Action K Houston agreed to form a small committee to consider options and suggestions from members are of course invited.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:50.