



Mansfield & Sutton Astronomical Society
Sherwood Observatory
Coxmoor Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield,
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t: 01623 552276
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www.sherwood-observatory.org.uk

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General Observatory Procedures

Introduction

This procedure identifies the procedures for accessing the observatory, its safe use and ensuring its security out of hours.

The main driveway barrier should be unlocked first to ensure that the premises can be evacuated and emergency vehicles can have access if required. However, the barrier may remain locked for security purposes if only an individual or small group (say 2-3 persons), are using the facilities.

Access to the Observatory

Entrance to the building is controlled by swipe card, coded locks and keys. Swipe cards, codes and keys are issued to members who have received training and subsequently demonstrated their ability of competence in entering and leaving the building to the satisfaction of the Observatory Director or another member nominated by the Observatory Director.

The Observatory Director, or another member nominated by the Observatory Director, will then issue and activate the swipe card and keys.

The process is as follows;

1. Open the main barrier padlock as necessary. Open the car park barrier if a number of members or visitors are expected.
2. Remove the two locks from the steel shutter door (you will need to prevent the door from rising whilst these are removed). Open the shutter and place the lock barrels into their respective locks so they are not lost.
3. Open the outer door using the activated swipe card & switch on the entrance door light.
4. Input the secondary door code, and enter.
5. Switch on the hallway light.
6. Input the burglar alarm cancellation code on the burglar alarm keypad.
7. Close the outer door if required

Exiting the Observatory

The alarm cannot be set until all lighting has been switched to the welcoming mode. This activity is demonstrated at the competence training stage prior to key and cards being issued.

1. Ensure that all equipment and lighting that has been in use has been turned off where appropriate.
2. Close all doors
3. Set the burglar alarm rectifying any alarm coded equipment.
4. Switch off the hallway light.
5. Close the secondary door and double lock it.
6. Switch off the entrance hall lights.
7. Shut the main outer door and check the activation of the burglar alarm.
8. Check the outer door is securely locked shut.
9. Lower and secure the steel shutter.



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If the burglar alarm has not set, re-enter the building and re-set the alarm. If after a second attempt the alarm has not set, a member of the Committee must be contacted without delay.

The driveway and top car parks are secured by overhead metal barriers which are controlled by padlock and key.

Dome & Telescope

Access to the dome and telescope operation is controlled by swipe card and key. A card and key will only be issued to members who have successfully completed the telescope and dome usage training. Such training will be given by the telescope trainer, or a qualified person nominated by the trainer.

Swipe cards shall be initialised by the Observatory Director following approval of the telescope trainer.

The MSAS Telescope Training Procedure Manual identifies the pre-use checks of the main telescope; a copy of which is available at the Observatory.

Once the door is opened, turn on the main lights and place the door on the latch. At the top of the stairs, switch on the dome lights. Before using the telescope, confirm that,

- There are no obvious trip hazards, and the floor surface is clear and fit for purpose.
- Fluorescent lights, and the red lights are in working order.
- The mobile steps are free from damage and the braking system is in good working order.
- A serviceable torch is available for use in an emergency.
- The access to the dome is kept clear. A fire extinguisher shall also be present.

When using the telescope,

- NOTE: Drinks are not permitted within the dome.
- Only authorised people are permitted to open the telescope operating panel to access the electrical system.
- When switching on the power to the telescope control please be aware that the scope is directly above the head and care must be taken to prevent head strikes.
- The folding gate located at the top of the stairs must be used when large numbers of people are moving around inside the dome (this is particularly important when the public are present).
- Position the portable fence around the lower end of the scope to prevent access underneath.
- Mobile ladders must only be used with the braking system applied.
- Be aware of the position of the ladders in relation to the telescope at all times.
- Warn visitors that a moving dome may cause slight disorientation.
- Ensure that the immediate area around the telescope is clear before moving it.

Once the observing session is complete, ensure the equipment is closed down and stored safely in accordance with the Telescope Training Procedure Manual. Make sure all lights are switched off and the access door locked to prevent unauthorised access.



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Lecture Room

Please ensure the lecture room is clean, tidy and fit for the purpose of holding a meeting/lecture. Keep walkways clear of trailing cables or objects.

Chairs and tables shall be set out so that people can exit the building quickly and effectively in an emergency.

Torches shall be available in case of an emergency.

Kitchen

Any members using the kitchen must ensure the facilities are kept clean and hygienic. Ensure any spills are cleaned up promptly, and the work surfaces and floor are clean and dry. Clean all utensils, crockery and work surfaces after use, ready for the next use.

All members preparing food and drinks are requested to wash their hands beforehand.

Maintenance of the Observatory

The Committee shall ensure that all safety systems and emergency equipment are tested and inspected at the required frequency.

Society members are expected to keep the observatory building in a clean and tidy manner.

A small stock of cleaning materials is kept in the kitchen for use by members to clean the kitchen and toilet. If stocks need replacing, speak to a member of the Committee. Members are requested to read the instructions prior to use and use the appropriate protective gloves when using hazardous fluids. Please return to the correct storage area after use.

Damages & Defects

Society members are asked to inspect all items of equipment before they are used. Damaged or faulty equipment must not be used.

Any damages to the building or faulty equipment will be recorded in the Observatory Log Book which is stored in the lecture room. The Log book shall be reviewed as part of the Committee meetings.

Any item of electrical equipment which is repaired must be electrically tested before it is returned to service.

Safety Inspections

The Committee are responsible for ensuring that a formal (recorded) inspection of the premises is carried out at least monthly.



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Emergency Arrangements

This section provides guidelines to ensure safe and controlled evacuation of the Observatory during an emergency.

All members are required to sign in/out to confirm their presence.

A list of Responsible personnel is an integral part of this procedure and can be found in the Responsibility of Safety Controllers document. In the event that no appointed Incident Controller is on the premises then a nominated member who has an entry and exit swipe card will assume responsibility

It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that the entrance hall remains clear at all times.

Some members have received firefighting training and are allowed to fight the fire if it is deemed safe to do so but **MUST NOT** attempt to do so if they do not feel confident in doing so, or the fire is too large to attempt to fight with an extinguisher. If the fire cannot be extinguished after complete discharge of one of the approved fire extinguishers then the person MUST evacuate the premises.

All fire extinguishers will be maintained under contract and a member of the Committee must be informed if the extinguishers are ever used.

The assembly point following evacuation is the auxiliary car park at the site entrance.

The Committee shall ensure that at least one evacuation practice per year is carried out.

Evacuation Procedure

1. The alarm can be raised using the automated system or by shouting.
2. The alarm must be raised before any attempt is made to extinguish a fire.
3. On hearing a fire alarm, a nominated member (see Responsibility of Safety Controllers) will assess the situation and call 999 to request the relevant service as necessary.
4. Upon hearing the alarm, everyone without a key role is required to evacuate the building immediately and make their way to the assembly point. All visitors, and those unfamiliar with the building and grounds will be escorted at all times up to the assembly point.
5. Where stairs are involved, visitors will be encouraged to take care when using the stairs and not to rush or push.
6. Each Controller shall encourage visitors in their nominated area to leave the area quickly but safely and proceed to the evacuation assembly point. This action will be controlled by means of a 'Room Sweep'.
7. All areas of the building including the kitchen, office and toilet will be subject to a "room sweep"
8. Once each area is vacated, the Controllers will close all doors behind them.
9. At the assembly point, each Controller will confirm to the Event Coordinator that their respective area is cleared
10. No one is allowed to re-enter the building unless requested upon it being deemed safe by the appropriate Fire Brigade or recognised service officer.
11. The Event Coordinator will co-ordinate and co-operate with all essential services and Media.

Approved By _____ The Committee

Issued By _____ Observatory Director