

Minutes of the 2020 Biennial General Meeting  
of the  
**Astrobiology Society of Britain**

**BGM,  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**Committee:** Lewis Dartnell (LRD, *Outreach*), Jonti Horner (JH), Zita Martins (ZM), Karen Olsson-Francis (KOF), Jack O'Malley-James (JOMJ), Manish Patel (MRP, *Chair*), Louisa Preston (LP, *Treasurer*), Adam Stevens (AHS, *Secretary*), Jennifer Wadsworth (JW), David Summers (DS, *Thales Industry Link*), Liam Perera (LP), David Slade (DS2), Andy Dickinson (AD), Marina Barcenilla (MB), Paul Smith (PS, *UK Space Agency Link*), Jon Telling (JT)

**Present – AHS, JH, DS, MB, MRP, LRP, ZM, PS, JW, JOMJ, DS2, KOF  
William Edmondson, Stroller017, Mara Leite, Stewart Gault, Paul Hartley,  
Vatsala Tewari**

1. Chair's Report

- Membership report – current membership number stands at 111, showing a steady level from 2016 (112 members). In reality this represents an uplift in membership, given the membership technical issues linking back to 2018 resulting in a significant dip in membership numbers.
- Finances – L. Preston to present
- Review of activities in the last 2 years:
  - ASB-STFC Astrobiology Summer School
    - Led by Adam Stevens
    - Held in September 2018 at the University of Edinburgh
    - Total of 23 students attended, even balance of male/female attendees
    - Mixture of lectures and workshops, including outreach and careers sessions
    - High level of engagement and positive feedback from participants
    - The event was deemed a great success, and ASB intends to support an astrobiology-related summer school every two years if possible
    - The next ASB-STFC Summer School will be held at the Open University in late 2020 (details TBC).
  - ASB08 held at Newcastle University
    - Number of attendees – 98 representing 25 different organisations, with 30 of the attendees registered as students

- 28 speakers in total
- Recap sessions and keynote speakers
  - *ExoMars and Exploration*, with keynote by Claire Cousins and 4 other speakers
  - *Habitability of Cold and Icy Environments*, with keynote by Ruth Taubner and 6 other speakers
  - *Methods for in situ and remote sensing of biosignatures and habitability*, with keynote by Susan Conway and 6 other speakers
  - *Applied impact and outreach*, with 3 speakers
  - *Life at the limits*, with 6 speakers
  - 19 posters
- Plans for next ASB conference (St. Andrews in 2021, TBC)
- o Barrie Jones Award lecture
  - Awarded to Sarah Rugheimer (Oxford)
  - Barrie Jones Award lecture was held at the Open University as part of the OU Moon Night on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.
  - The decoupling of the BJA lecture from the ASB conference was deemed a success and incorporating the event into an OU-related school engagement event ensured an appropriately sized audience. It is proposed to continue this format and approach.
- o ASB Internships
  - A new scheme to support 1 short-term internship at a UK university has been rolled out in 2020. The process is currently on-going, and initial indications are that there is a significant interest in internships relating to astrobiology.
  - If successful, the intention is to make the internship support a regular opportunity.
- Many thanks to the committee for all their work over the last two years.

## 2. Treasurer's report

Second Official Report to cover accounts from October 2017 to March 2020

The Astrobiology Society of Britain has had a very successful few years, maintaining our membership base, attracting grants and funding, running and supporting conferences and financially positioning itself to be able to offer travel awards and internships for students.

The total income generated from October 2017 to March 2020 was £5,084.40 (from both NatWest and PayPal accounts) to add to our healthy account balance from 2017 with expenditure of £2,197.76 detailed within the attached financial

breakdown. Running costs for the ownership of the website are now paid annually.

We have had success in the beginning of 2020 with a grant from the UK Space Agency for our Rosalind's STARS outreach project however due to UKSA budget delays we have not received this award yet.

The ASB will be receiving £16,000 worth of funding to cover the salary of a Project Co-ordinator and the expenses incurred by our academic speakers. The ASB has been in a comfortable position to support subsistence grants for students to attend meetings, members expenses, conference dinners and speaker expenses for ASB 8. This accounted for all our outgoings this year, financially supporting those in our community, and we hope to carry this forward over the next few years. This is wonderful for the Society - we are maintaining a financial position whereby we can use our resources to encourage and support our fellow researchers, fund our own workshops and meetings and apply for our own grants. The ASB ends this year with a healthy account balance totally £9,770.05. There are plenty of funds to take us into the coming few years and hopefully support a number of important events and new projects in the future.

Louisa Preston, ASB Treasurer, March 2020

### 3. AOB

- a. Elections will be announced following the BGM. Nominations will be accepted from paid-up membership with a nominator and seconder.