

I'm a recently retired astronomer from the Royal Observatory and acting chairperson of the Tweeddale Astronomy Society. This amateur astronomy group meets monthly in the Tontine Hotel and has a number of telescopes and an observing platform at Kalzie gardens. I believe one of the large telescopes there was partly funded by the common good fund. In order to raise the profile of the club and make the people of Peebles more aware of what we can offer I would like to run a few 'Sidewalk Astronomy' sessions on Tweed Green between now and the new year.

What I have in mind is a few (half a dozen) club members set up a small number of portable telescopes (three probably) somewhere on the Green between about 1800 and 2100 on a few nights which are forecast to be fairly clear. We would then engage with anyone who happens to pass by. For example, at present we are able to show the moons of Jupiter, the rings of Saturn, the Andromeda galaxy, craters on our own Moon and a few other star clusters and bright astronomical objects, even in the presence of street lights. Anyone interested in exploring further with our larger telescopes and darker skies at Kalzie will be invited to find out more from the society's website and come along to our observing sessions.

The telescopes are all manually operated, or battery powered, so do not involve trailing cables or high voltages and the light levels on the green are high enough the people will be able to see around them to avoid obstacles. We are not a commercial organisation, in fact the Society is a registered charity, and would not seek to charge anyone for looking through our telescopes, it's purely a pro bono activity to engage with interested people.

I'm not sure if we actually need permission to do this, but there is no harm in being open about our plans should they come to fruition. Do you foresee any objections to us doing this? If you would like more details I'm happy to have a phone or zoom call with you, just let me know.

I hope you will have no objections to this plan and do let me know if there is anyone else we should be talking to.

Sincerely

John