



Planetarium Update Report

January 2023

UK Astronomy is a registered charity in England and Wales (1190172)
and a company Limited by Guarantee (10276672)

Contents Page

Who is UK Astronomy?	3
Our Aims and Goals.....	3
Introduction to the project	4
Objectives of the Project.....	5
Progress to date:	6
Next Steps	7
Appendix	8
Appendix 1 – Press Release Milton Keynes	9
Appendix 2 – Press Release Buckinghamshire.....	11

Who is UK Astronomy?

UK Astronomy was founded by Ross Hockham BCAe.

UK Astronomy exists to encourage others to look up, because there are a billion worlds in your back garden.

UK Astronomy is a registered charity whose ethos is to educate, inspire and excite others by sharing our knowledge and passion for space. We do this by offering astronomy outreach and public engagement for anyone who thinks space is awesome and wants to find out how vast and magnificent it all is.

Our Aims and Goals

- To make astronomy more accessible to all.
- To encourage an interest in astronomy and STEM subjects.
- Increasing understanding of science, as well as other skills. For example, logic, vocabulary, verbal reasoning, and literacy.
- Increase young people going into STEM related careers.
- Increase mental wellbeing.
- Increase community cohesion.

Introduction to the project

We carried out a pilot study on 50 schools and youth groups across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes where we currently offer our services to gauge interest in the project.

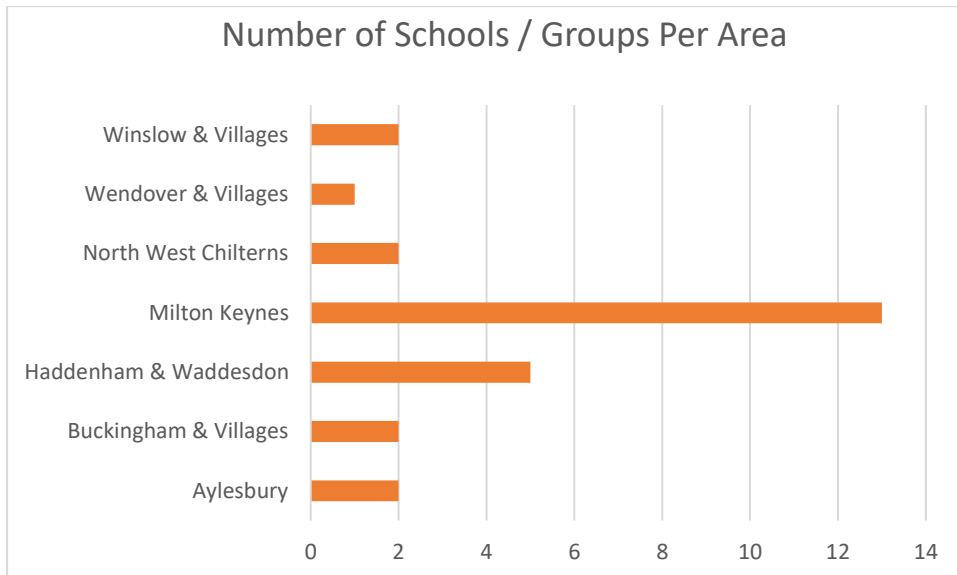


Chart: Number of schools / youth groups per area that showed interest in the planetarium service.

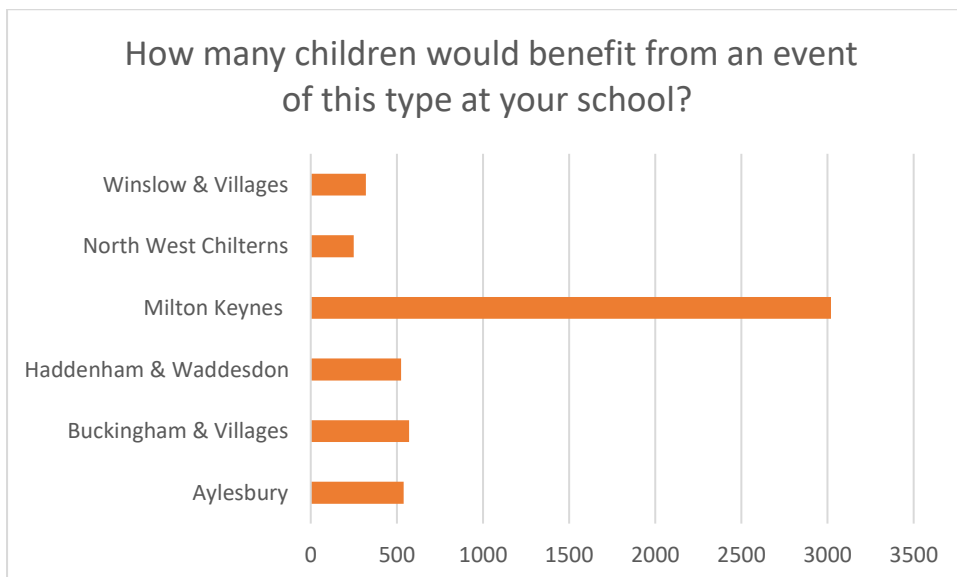


Chart: Number of children per area that could benefit if these Schools/Youth groups were to book the planetarium service.

Please note: the planetarium is an ongoing service and that these are not the only schools/youth groups that would benefit from this service. UK Astronomy will be offering this service to the wider community in both Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire in an effort to make Astronomy accessible to all.

Objectives of the Project

The objectives of the inflatable planetarium project are to ***enhance the lives of young people, strengthen our communities, improve the environment, and promote health and wellbeing.***

The project aims to provide young people with access to safe, stimulating, and enjoyable activities that can help foster an enthusiasm for the sciences and potentially motivate them to pursue STEM-related occupations. Through this, we hope to build strong relationships between young people and their communities by creating inclusive, safe, and supportive spaces that foster self-discovery and growth.

The project also aims to reduce environmental impacts by encouraging people to take an interest in astronomy and science in general, making them more aware of the natural environment and the need to protect it. It will also make them more aware of light pollution and more interested in protecting natural, open environments.

Finally, the inflatable planetarium project seeks to promote health and wellbeing by providing a healthy and enjoyable activity that encourages people to get off their phones / watching TV and go out and look up. It encourages them to engage with other people in their community, thus reducing social isolation and improving their mental health.

Progress to date:

We are pleased to report that significant progress has been made on our planetarium project. Our fundraising efforts were successful and by the end of October we had all the necessary funding from pledges in our bank account and were able to move forwards with the project.

After further research and due diligence checks, we made the decision to move forwards with ordering the necessary equipment for the project from Immersive Experiences.

In November, with the support of a legal volunteer we signed the contract and paid the first instalment towards the project with Immersive Experiences.

Whilst the planetarium was being made, UK Astronomy worked on getting its systems ready for launch. This involved:

- Set up new [website](#) pages about the planetarium service.
- Create new Terms & Conditions.
- Update our booking forms.
- Create a Planetarium risk assessment.
- Design the custom cover for the Planetarium.
- Design new leaflets including information about the new service.
- Design roller banners to display when the planetarium is used.
- Approaching schools who completed our survey and showed an initial interest in the project and invite them to book from May 2023.

In the first week of January, we received an update from the supplier that the planetarium should be with us by mid-February. Whilst we have been doing regular social media posts about our fundraising efforts and updating our supporters on the project activities to date, at this stage we decided to announce the service to the public and issued a press release.

This was sent to the following:

- Milton Keynes Citizen
- MK Community Hub
- MKFM
- Bucks Herald
- Bucks Free Press
- Wendover News
- Bucks Radio.

It was also shared in several Facebook groups for the local areas, as well as across our Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok and LinkedIn accounts.

Next Steps

The next step in the project is to begin training volunteers. We have identified a group of volunteers who will be trained in the operation of the planetarium equipment. The training will involve being hands on with the equipment. Once the volunteers have completed the training, they will be ready to begin offering the planetarium service to the public.

We are already getting enquiries and have begun to confirm bookings from May 2023.

We are confident the planetarium service project will be a great success, and we are excited to move forwards with the next steps. We will continue to provide updates as the project progresses and will be looking to invite funders to an exclusive event to see the planetarium in action in the near future.

Thank you for your continued support.

Ross Hockham, BCAe

“Because there are a billion worlds in your back garden...”

Appendix

- Appendix 1 - Press release Milton Keynes
- Appendix 2 - Press release Buckinghamshire

Appendix 1 – Press Release Milton Keynes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Milton Keynes based charity UK Astronomy is bringing the skies to you this Spring, with its NEW Inflatable Planetarium Service

Are you looking for a unique and exciting way to bring the stars to your next event? Look no further than **UK Astronomy's NEW inflatable planetarium.**

UK Astronomy is excited to offer this unique educational experience to kids, teens, and adults alike. Their inflatable planetariums are designed to bring the wonders of the night sky to life and provide an immersive learning experience.

This revolutionary service allows you to bring the wonders of the night sky to any event. The inflatable planetarium is a large, self-contained dome that can quickly be set up in any indoor location, making it an ideal choice for schools, libraries, museums, festivals, and more. Inside, a powerful projector displays a stunningly realistic image of the night sky, with stars and constellations that can be seen in vivid detail.

The Inflatable Planetarium Service is designed for people of all ages and backgrounds. The entire experience is designed to be engaging, entertaining, and educational.

"The UK Astronomy inflatable planetarium service is a great way to bring the wonders of the night sky to those who may not have access to telescopes. It's a wonderful way to share the beauty of the stars with everyone. We hope that this experience helps to inspire a lifelong fascination in the night sky." Ross Hockham BCAe, UK Astronomy Founder

For further information please visit www.ukastronomy.org

This work has been supported by funding from Arnold Clarke Community Fund, Buckinghamshire Council Community Boards, Foyle Foundation, Heart of Bucks, MK Community Foundation, Rothschild Foundation and William Harding Charity.

About UK Astronomy

UK Astronomy is a registered charity whose ethos is to educate, inspire and excite others by sharing our knowledge and passion for space. We do this by offering astronomy outreach and public engagement for anyone who thinks space is awesome and wants to find out how vast and magnificent our universe is.

The UK Astronomy team consists of dedicated volunteers who share the ethos and objectives of our wonderful charity. They are all dedicated to educating and supporting others in the field of astronomy at all levels of engagement - whether that be advice and help with equipment or education of all age groups.

If you would like to discover more about who we are and what we do, visit our website at **www.ukastronomy.org**. We just want to share this amazing hobby with everyone.

Media contact

Francesca Hockham

Info@ukastronomy.org

07581 012428

Appendix 2 – Press Release Buckinghamshire

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Buckinghamshire based charity UK Astronomy is bringing the skies to you this Spring, with its NEW Inflatable Planetarium Service

Are you looking for a unique and exciting way to bring the stars to your next event? Look no further than **UK Astronomy's NEW inflatable planetarium.**

UK Astronomy is excited to offer this unique educational experience to kids, teens, and adults alike. Their inflatable planetariums are designed to bring the wonders of the night sky to life and provide an immersive learning experience.

This revolutionary service allows you to bring the wonders of the night sky to any event. The inflatable planetarium is a large, self-contained dome that can quickly be set up in any indoor location, making it an ideal choice for schools, libraries, museums, festivals, and more. Inside, a powerful projector displays a stunningly realistic image of the night sky, with stars and constellations that can be seen in vivid detail.

The Inflatable Planetarium Service is designed for people of all ages and backgrounds. The entire experience is designed to be engaging, entertaining, and educational.

"The UK Astronomy inflatable planetarium service is a great way to bring the wonders of the night sky to those who may not have access to telescopes. It's a wonderful way to share the beauty of the stars with everyone. We hope that this experience helps to inspire a lifelong fascination in the night sky." Ross Hockham BCAe, UK Astronomy Founder

For further information please visit www.ukastronomy.org

This work has been supported by funding from Arnold Clarke Community Fund, Buckinghamshire Council Community Boards, Foyle Foundation, Heart of Bucks, MK Community Foundation, Rothschild Foundation and William Harding Charity.

About UK Astronomy

UK Astronomy is a registered charity whose ethos is to educate, inspire and excite others by sharing our knowledge and passion for space. We do this by offering astronomy outreach and public engagement for anyone who thinks space is awesome and wants to find out how vast and magnificent our universe is.

The UK Astronomy team consists of dedicated volunteers who share the ethos and objectives of our wonderful charity. They are all dedicated to educating and supporting others in the field of astronomy at all levels of engagement - whether that be advice and help with equipment or education of all age groups.

If you would like to discover more about who we are and what we do, visit our website at **www.ukastronomy.org**. We just want to share this amazing hobby with everyone.

Media contact

Francesca Hockham

Info@ukastronomy.org

07581 012428