



# MEXBOROUGH & SWINTON ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

## Press Release

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## Astronomers Bring Sunshine to South Yorkshire

(For immediate release)

Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society, a local educational charity, today unveiled plans to extend its Community Access Programme and open its observatory at Hooper to the public during the summer months. The summer programme will offer visitors the chance to observe our nearest star - the Sun. Society Chairman, Les Marsden, explained, "we tend to regard the Sun as rather special – and for life here on Earth it is – but in reality it is a very average type of star. By studying the Sun astronomers hope to learn more about the lives of stars further a field."

**The Society is keen to stress that members of the public should not attempt to observe the sun themselves unless they have the correct equipment. To ignore this warning could result in permanent eye damage.**

The Society's events give the public an opportunity to observe the Sun in complete safety thanks to its Solar Pioneer project, funded partly by the European Union through the Objective 1 Programme in South Yorkshire and partly by the Single Regeneration Budget. The project provides specialised equipment with which the Sun may be observed safely.

Les Marsden went on to comment, "We can offer the public a safe way to see the Sun and we hope to be able to show them sunspots and solar flares many times larger than the earth – showing what a violent and dynamic object the Sun really is."

The events will take place every Sunday between 13:00 and 17:00 in July, August and September; please note however that the events are dependant on the weather! Admission is £1 per person; all proceeds will be used to help the Society continue to promote astronomy and its associated sciences. You don't need to book just 'drop in'.

In addition to the programme of summer events, the Society will again be operating a programme of evening observing sessions in the winter months; dates will be published later in the year. Schools, youth organisations and community groups can make special bookings of the observatory.

For further information please see the Society's web site at [www.msas.org.uk](http://www.msas.org.uk) or telephone Les on 01709 584217.

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## Background Information and Notes to Editors

Mexborough & Swinton Astronomical Society is a registered educational charity its objects are to promote education in astronomy and its associated science for the public benefit.

Contact for further information: - Les Marsden 01709 584217

For further information please visit the Society's web site at [www.msas.org.uk](http://www.msas.org.uk).