Biographical Notes of Candidates

Candidates nominated as Vice-Presidents

MIKE EDMUNDS (A), MA, PhD, FRAS, FInstP, CPhys. Emeritus Professor of Astrophysics, and former Head of School of Physics and Astronomy, Cardiff University. PPARC Council 2004-2007, STFC Council 2007-2010, RAS Council 1981-1984, 2007-2010. Currently Chair of RAS Heritage and IOP Curriculum Committees.

Special Interests: Chemical evolution of galaxies, origin of interstellar dust, history of astronomy, the Antikythera Mechanism, physics education and astronomy outreach.

I want to work to ensure the RAS is an effective professional society, functioning efficiently, represent researchers at all levels, and welcoming serious amateurs. There are two areas to which I particularly want to contribute. The first is the implementation by the RAS and partner organisations of processes to ensure the preservation and greater public use of astronomical heritage within the UK, particularly from the 20th Century. The second is the coordination and development of physics and astronomy education in a way that is beneficial to universities, school pupils, teachers, and society as a whole.

DONALD KURTZ (A) B.A., M.A., PhD (Texas), FRAS. Professor of Astrophysics, Jeremiah Horrocks Institute, University of Central Lancashire (2001 - date). Formerly, Professor and Life Fellow, University of Cape Town, South Africa. Currently RAS Council (2012-2014). Kepler Mission Asteroseismic Science Consortium Steering Committee. Past President IAU Commission 27 on Variable Stars. Past ESO OPC panel chair. Multiple "postes rouges" (visiting scientist) Observatoire Midi-Pyrénées, Toulouse, France. Visiting Professor, Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Naini Tal, India. Multiple Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Senior Fellowships, Japan. Dual UK and USA citizenship; South African permanent resident.

Special interests: My research interests are in stellar astrophysics with special emphasis in asteroseismology. I am one of three co-authors of the fundamental textbook in this new field. I am primarily an observational astronomer with ~2000 nights of telescope time. Presently I observe occasionally to obtain high-resolution spectra with the VLT and Subaru 8-m telescopes, but my main interest is in the revolutionary 4-year photometric data set for 190,000 stars from the Kepler Mission. I have a broad interest all of astronomy, physics and other sciences, and use this wide range to inform the typically 30 public outreach events I present each year to schools, astronomy clubs and other societies, astronomy and science festivals, adventure travel (African game reserves, white water river running), cruise ships, radio and television.

I have served the past three years on RAS council, and was the council member of the publishing committee that, under the leadership of the treasurer Professor Mike Cruise, changed the RAS publisher to the Oxford University Press with significant benefit to the society. I believe that astronomy, geophysics, and the fellows of the RAS are well served by its council, officers and panels, and by its professional full-time staff at Burlington House. The management of the society's assets for the benefit of its international fellowship, which

encompasses both professional and amateur scientists, the conservation of the society's heritage, and the guidance of the society into the new, and unclear future of open access publishing, require the dedicated guidance of council. With my research and public outreach background and experience, and with my extensive international connections, I would like to continue to serve the RAS for two more years as one of the Vice-Presidents.

JIM WILD (G) MPhys, PhD, FRAS, Professor of Space Physics, Lancaster University. Formerly on RAS Council 2007 - 2010.

Specialist interests: solar-terrestrial and solar-planetary physics, space weather, public engagement and outreach.

I have a long-standing interest in science policy and public engagement and would like to see the RAS further develop its voice in these areas. I feel very strongly that the RAS can better serve audiences outside London, with potentially significant benefits to Fellows, non-Fellows and the Society itself. The RAS is also in an envious position to engage with its professional fellowship through career development and training opportunities. To achieve these aims, I believe that we must increase our efforts to engage via social media, the internet and through regional events.

Candidates nominated for Council

MICHAEL F BRITTEN (A) BSc, FRAS, MCMI, MCII

I was a contemporary of Dame Carole Jordan at UCL, both of us studying under Professor CW Allen. After graduation, our paths diverged and I worked for many years in the high tech. industrial environment of British Aerospace. My work was in large defence programmes, initially leading a team carrying out mathematical modelling, systems research and development then, later, moving into project management. The company acted as Prime Contractor so the role involved negotiating contracts with the Ministry of Defence, HM Services, and subcontractors; and developing and bringing equipment and systems into service to time, cost, and specification, in a demanding commercial environment. I believe this experience to have close relevance to current needs of bidding and contracting for money for Astronomical research and equipment from funding bodies; and to help ensure programmes are managed subsequently for best and affordable outcomes.

I also spent some years representing the company internationally, marketing its capabilities and developing relationships with overseas government customers to assist the company's sales into their countries, in the face of international competition. I made a second career as a financial professional, developing and running my own business for several years, from which I am now retiring and looking for new challenges.

In terms of communicating my enthusiasm for Astronomy, although not practicing as a professional astronomer I set up and ran the Astronomical society at one of the British Aerospace sites; and inter alia was able to obtain one of NASA's precious samples of lunar

material for public lectures, which achieved splendid attendances! I have also given courses on astronomy at evening institutes; and maintain two telescopes at my home in a village in South Gloucestershire (a 16" Newtonian and 10" Meade), where we are blessed with night skies essentially free of light pollution.

I have maintained a close association with the RAS and have regularly attended its meetings for the last 20 years or so since becoming a Fellow. I take an avid interest in all branches of current research, endeavouring to keep up to date with developments and needs. If invited to join, I would be proud to be associated with the Council's work, and endeavour to help develop those areas of its influence where it was judged my experience could most usefully contribute.

Some areas of my particular interest are - Solar and planetary physics, earth sciences, extra-solar planet research, stellar evolution and high energy astronomy, the genesis and evolution of life; and I look forward to a solution to the Drake Equation which does not leave humankind alone in the Galaxy...

MARTIN BUREAU (A) BSc, PhD, FRAS, AAS and IAU full member. Lecturer in Astrophysics, University of Oxford, Official Fellow and Tutor in Physics, Wadham College. Previously JSPS Invited Fellow, Nagoya University, Visiting Scholar, University of California Berkeley, Hubble Fellow, Columbia University, Postdoctoral Fellow, Leiden University. Officer, AAS Committee of the Division on Dynamical Astronomy, 2004-2006. Member, STFC Fellowships Panel, 2008-2010. Member, Quebec Government Fund for Research on Nature and Technologies panel, 2011-now. RAS "A" Group Achievement Award 2013.

Special interests: Galaxy dynamics and interstellar medium. Structure, kinematics, stellar populations, formation and evolution of galaxies. Molecular gas distribution, kinematics, origin, physical conditions and star formation. Synergy between optical/near-infrared integral-field spectroscopy and radio/mm/sub-mm synthesis imaging. Currently involved in Atlas3D/SAURON and KMOS surveys.

I strongly support the mission of the RAS, both in its direct role as the primary organisation for astronomers and geophysicists of all kinds, and in its public advocacy mandate. As a councillor, in addition to the usual duties associated with sitting on council, I would primarily seek to participate in and advance a few well-defined topics. First, I would like to increase the participation of young members (graduate students and postdoctoral fellows) in the activities of the Society, and encourage them to organise sessions at the National Astronomy Meetings (thus creating closer ties across the UK community). Second, I would like to tighten the links with the International Astronomical Union, and generally promote its activities within the UK (e.g. IAU symposia). Third, as I have gotten more involved personally with development (i.e. fundraising) activities at my own university, I would like to promote and participate in similar activities for the Society, to help ensure its long-term financial health and expand its grant and fellowship programmes. I would also like to see and contribute to stronger lobbying from the Society, making the case that investing in astronomy, geophysics and science (and their teaching) is a wise economic and social decision.

MALCOLM COE (A) BSc (Hons) PhD, DIC, FRAS, ARCS, FHEA. Currently Professor of Astronomy, and previously Head of the School (2005-8), of Physics & Astronomy, Southampton University. Fulbright Award holder 1988 for sabbatical in Caltech. Research Interests: the study of X-ray binary populations in the Milky Way and the Magellanic Clouds. Recent papers in Nature and Science on this topic, plus nearly 200 refereed papers in international journals over my career. Primarily an observational astronomer (ground and space based) most of my career, but also a side interest in SPH simulations of high mass X-ray binary systems.

Education interests: promotion & delivery of astronomy degree programmes. I founded our award-winning annual Field Trip to Tenerife (now running for over 20 years), started our undergraduate degree programme Physics-with-astronomy (now also 20 years old), and, in 2006, created our Astrophysics-with-a-year-abroad programme which annually sends our best 5 students to spend their final academic year at Harvard. I also created and established the university observatory which is consistently used for final year night & solar projects.

Outreach and Public Engagement: I enthusiastically lead on Outreach and PER activities in our department, providing guidance and management for our 2 full time staff in this area. I have given over 200 talks to the public (schools, astrosocs, U3A groups, cruise ships, etc.) as well as many radio interviews. I have sat on the STFC Outreach grants panel for 5 years and the STFC Science in Society Advisory panel for 3 years. I have been a member of the ROG/NMM Advisory Panel and am currently a Trustee of the Winchester Science Centre (which hosts the largest planetarium in the UK).

If elected to council I will put most of my effort into initiatives to use astronomy as a vehicle to promote science to young people and encourage under-represented groups in science.

ROBERTUS FAY-SIEBENBURGEN (a.k.a ERDELYI) (G). M.Sc. Physics, Astronomy; MA History; PhD; Professor and Head of Solar Physics and Space Plasma Research Centre, University of Sheffield.

Special interests: Solar and Solar-Terrestrial physics, MHD waves. However, in general, I love all topics in astronomy and astrophysics.

Secretary (till 2001) and Chairman (2001-2007) of the UK Solar Physics Community. Currently member of STFC Science Board (non-core).

The main reasons for standing are:

(i) to help in a fully committed way and as hard as I can towards an even more successful recognition of our specific Royal Astronomical Society's interests with decision makers and with the wider professional society in these turbulent economic times;

(ii) to widen our participation in astronomy education and outreach;

and (iii) to foster special and unique opportunities for early career researchers. If elected, I would actively contribute to these efforts.

JAMIE GILMOUR (G) Professor of Planetary Science, School of Earth, Atmospheric and Environmental Science, University of Manchester

Special Interests: The prehistory, formation and evolution of the solar system and the bodies within it, particularly the terrestrial planets. To further understanding of this I develop novel instrumentation for the analysis of extraterrestrial material, including that returned by the Genesis, Stardust and Hayabusa missions. Planetary science education and public engagement.
I believe a scientifically literate public is vital to the health of our society (and economy). As an area of great public interest that enjoys a lot of media attention, Earth and Planetary Science can encourage people young and old to think scientifically, and to pursue qualifications and, perhaps, a career in science. This is one way in which our community is well placed to make a demonstrable impact, especially because it brings together a wide range of traditional scientific disciplines. If elected, I would encourage the society to support this effort and work to this end. In particular, I think we should try to find more (and/or coordinate information about) sponsorship for bursaries in our discipline (for school students to get experience of university or relevant industries, for school teachers to spend time with researchers, for undergraduates to get experience of research and present at conferences).

STACEY HABERGHAM (A) MPhys (Hons), PGCE, PhD, FRAS, MinstP. Research Assistant and Ogden Science Officer, Astrophysics Research Institute, Liverpool John Moores University.

Special Interests: Explosive Transients, Core-Collapse Supernovae, Galaxies, Star Formation, Outreach, Science Education, Women in Physics.

I have completed my STFC PhD studentship in 2013, and for the past year have been undertaking a competitive STFC STEP post-doc position at LJMU, which I have combined with an Ogden Trust grant to conduct outreach for half of my time. The opportunity I have had to carry out both research and outreach has been greatly beneficial and has improved my output in each area, it has also been extremely enjoyable and I look forward to continuing this work over the coming year.

As the first generation in my family to attend university, I have a passion for outreach and science education, in the hope that I can engage more young people, in a similar position to myself, to continue with physics and astronomy, and not be discouraged by the expectations placed upon them by society. I believe that the RAS has an important role to play in providing outreach, particularly to groups currently underrepresented in the world of academia.

Early career researchers are all too aware of the funding issues currently surrounding recent postgraduates who have a desire to continue their journey in academia, but are finding it hard to find jobs, especially within the UK. I also relate to the difficulties facing scientists who wish to have a family and continue in an academic career, and believe that more support for early career researchers in this area would help immensely in addressing the gender imbalance, particularly prevalent within the physical sciences. If elected to council I plan on

raising these issues at as high a level as possible, supporting the work of the RAS's diversity and education committees, and providing a voice for all early career researchers.

I believe that my experience in conducting outreach over the last 10 years, along with my position as an early-career female researcher who is open to sharing thoughts on all of the factors affecting those wishing to start a career in astronomy, and on engaging the next generation of astronomers, **w**ill prove useful on the RAS Council.

SUGATA KAVIRAJ (A) MSci (Physics), MSc (Applied Mathematics), PhD (Astrophysics). Senior Lecturer, University of Hertfordshire and Senior Research Fellow, Worcester College Oxford.

POSTS: Imperial College Junior Research Fellow (2009-12); 1851 Royal Commission Research Fellow (2008-10); Leverhulme Early-Career Fellow (2006-08); Junior Research Fellow at Worcester College Oxford (2006-2008). AWARDS: RAS Winton Capital Award (2011)

Special interests: Galaxy formation, co-evolution of galaxies and their black holes, globular clusters, active galaxies, galaxy mergers, public engagement, outreach and citizen science.

Given the increasing pressure on science funding, and the need to demonstrate societal and economic impact, the RAS has an essential role to play in securing the UK's science leadership, by engaging energetically with the public, policy makers and funding bodies alike. It is important to attract more early-career researchers to the Society, and maintain (and, if possible, expand) the support for these scientists, through schemes like the RAS fellowships. To maximize engagement with its fellows, many of whom live far from the south east; it is worth exploring if the RAS could broaden its activities outside London. If elected, I will work hard to help the Society achieve these goals.

JANE MACARTHUR (G) BSc (Hons) FCA FRAS
UK National Point of Contact for Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC)
Member of: British Interplanetary Society (BIS), UK Students for Exploration & Development of Space (UKSEDS), Austrian Space Forum (OeWF), Society for Popular Astronomy

Special interests: Meteoritics, Geochemistry, Impact craters, Astrobiology.

After graduating in Mathematics from the University of Nottingham, I followed a career in accountancy (running my own practice for 9 years) while pursuing distance learning courses in astronomy, planetary geosciences and astrobiology. In 2014 I expect to complete my studies for an MSc in Planetary Science at UCL and follow my research interests in planetary science. I am working on Martian meteorite NWA7034 and comparing its composition with ChemCam data from Mars Science Laboratory. My interest in meteorites and impact craters as potential habitable environments recently took me to impact structures in Estonia and Canada. I also developed, built and field-tested in Morocco an atmospheric sensor network

for Mars exploration with supervision from the Mullard Space Science Laboratory and working with OeWF.

Through the Education & Outreach committee of the BIS I am helping with a space MOOC (massive open online course) proposal funded by the Department for Education, targeted at 16-18 year-olds. I compiled a listing of World Space Week 2013 events in the UK of 71 (2012: 17), placing the UK in the top 5 most active countries worldwide. As UK National Point of Contact for SGAC, STEM ambassador and one of the Advisory Board of UKSEDS, I have been involved in outreach at the Big Bang Fair, Stargazing Live, talks in schools, and chaired a meeting resulting in the affiliation of UKSEDS with the BIS.
ESA invited me to live-tweet their Farnborough 2012 space conference and I ran the Twitter account for the European Planetary Science Congress 2013, achieving around 1 million daily impressions. My articles have been published on the UK Space Agency website, in BIS Spaceflight and Popular Astronomy magazines, The Observatory, and the SGAC newsletter. As a qualified chartered accountant I hope to be of assistance in maintaining the Society's long-term financial stability. I aim to make RAS better known within the student population and encourage attendance of events by establishing a social media strategy. I am keen to identify suitable opportunities to work with other national space organisations to support more events outside London, by building co-operation and facilitating relationships.

SIMON A. MITTON (A) M.A., Ph. D. Fellow and Second Bursar, St Edmund's College, Cambridge. College Fellow, Department of the History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge. Vice-President 2012-14, Council: 1975-78, 2002-05, 2012-14; Chairman, Library Committee 2010 -. Editor, Quarterly Journal RAS 1973-78. Editor, RAS-Springer book series, 2008 -. RAS-Cunard Guest Lecturer on Astronomy.

Specialist interests: history and biography of astronomy and cosmology, particularly the twentieth century; outreach activity, including university societies, major literary festivals, RAS Friends lectures, public lectures, and cruise ships

I have been a Fellow for 43 years, during a period when the influence of the Society on science policy, the public understanding of science, and support for the professional and amateur members has increased enormously. RAS has a superb programme of scientific meetings: the National Astronomy Meeting is world class, and it attracts international participation. For 25 years I was a science publisher. My knowledge of the publishing industry is proving invaluable in my role on the Library Committee and as the editor of the RAS-Springer book series. I am semi-retired, and therefore able to make a substantial commitment of time for the good of the Society. If elected to Council I will encourage all fields within astronomy and geophysics.

HUW MORGAN (G) B. Music, B.Sc., PhD, FRAS
Institute of Maths., Physics and Computer Science, Aberystwyth University

Astronomy, and solar physics in particular, is my love and obsession. As scientists, we depend on certain organisations to promote our fields and provide a venue/framework within which we can advise government, discuss specialist subjects with our contemporaries, and establish collaborations. From all these organisations, the RAS stands out as a leading light. I am a research-active astronomer with experience of public outreach and media contact. I am willing to work hard and dedicate my time to the promotion of astronomy, and I believe that the best way of doing this is by serving the RAS.

Education and Employment History

- October 2011 - present: Lecturer, Institute of Maths and Physics, Aberystwyth University, Wales
- March 2008 - September 2011: Scientific Researcher, Institute for Astronomy (IfA), University of Hawaii; 2005 - 2008: Junior Scientific Researcher, Institute for Astronomy (IfA), University of Hawaii; Feb. 2005: PhD, Inst. of Math. and Phys. Sciences (IMAPS) Aberystwyth University, Wales

Research interests: Solar physics and space weather. Development of new image processing and analysis tools applied to observations of the solar corona. A recent highlight is the discovery of the quiescent expansion of active region closed-magnetic field regions into the extended corona and solar wind.

Public outreach and teaching: I am a pioneer of Welsh-language science teaching in Wales, as the first official Welsh-medium Physics lecturer funded by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. I am dedicated to the promotion of science, and astronomy/solar physics in particular and am active in many public outreach activities.

JONATHAN D. NICHOLS (G) MPhys PhD FRAS, Lecturer and STFC Advanced Fellow, University of Leicester

Special Interests: Magnetospheres, auroras and radio emissions of the giant planets and their moons, exoplanets and brown dwarfs; through theoretical modelling, ground- and space-based observations and in situ spacecraft data analysis (where available!)

There remain significant challenges ensuring the UK research base in astronomy and geophysics remains world-leading. The RAS performs a number of crucial roles in helping to meet these challenges, by engaging with the public and policy makers, and supporting astronomy and geophysics research activities through meetings and funding, the Fellowship scheme supporting younger researchers being a particular highlight of the latter. The RAS, along with other learned societies, is also in an ideal position to play a leading and positive role in the transition toward Open Access. If elected as an RAS councillor I will undertake to ensure the Society is optimally placed to continue these supportive activities.

I play an active role in public outreach in schools and elsewhere, having previously engaged significantly with MPs, and I will endeavour to ensure that the profiles of astronomy and geophysics are raised in both the minds of policy makers and the public in general.

As a young(ish...) academic who works on both sides of the G/A “divide”, I will aim to ensure the RAS appeals to its broader membership. The RAS is in the perfect position to

encourage productive collaboration between the astronomy and geophysical communities, and I will work hard to ensure the RAS helps this to occur as effectively as possible.

GIORGIO SAVINI (A) PhD, FRAS, Member of IEEE and OSA.
Reader in Physics & Astronomy at University College London.

Special Interests: I have a keen interest in all fields of astronomy. I received my initial astronomical formation on optical telescopes observing NEOs, and subsequently in cosmology on the observation of secondary anisotropies of the CMB in clusters of galaxy from ground telescopes. In my post-doctoral years I worked on the optical hardware of the High Frequency Instrument of the Planck probe and the calibration and software validation for the SPIRE spectrometer on board the Herschel Space Observatory. I have designed and built polarization modulators for a number of experiments in the Far Infrared to explore the role of magnetic fields in star formation. Recently I have been involved in the search of molecules and characterization of exo-planet atmospheres and the design of the EChO satellite mission proposal.

If elected, I am hoping to renew and sustain the excellent role that the RAS has had in the past supporting the wide breadth of activities that the UK is leader in. With the growing demand that funding councils pose on the impact of science both in the broader scientific community and in industry I hope to use my experimental background to strengthen such connections with the astronomical agenda of the RAS at all wavelengths.

STEPHEN SERJEANT (A) BSc, DPhil, FRAS, FHEA, FInstP, CPhys. Head of Astronomy and Reader in Cosmology, The Open University. Co-lead of eMerlin gravitational lensing legacy survey and AGN working group of Herschel ATLAS key project, PI of Herschel NEP legacy survey, UK co-ordinator for JCMT Nearby Galaxies survey and one of four co-ordinators for SCUBA-2 All-Sky Survey. Co-winner of Daiwa Adrian prize. Lead science consultant for BBC Bang Goes The Theory; consultant for BBC Stargazing Live and BBC Light And Dark. Author of Observational Cosmology (CUP) and co-author of two other books.

Special interests: infrared and submillimetre extragalactic surveys, strong gravitational lensing, active galaxies, starburst galaxies, public engagement, higher education.

The RAS has an essential role in UK science and is by far the most effective body representing its community of astronomers and geophysicists. The pressures on astronomy in particular have never been greater. Diminishing funds mean vital roles in international facilities threaten to squeeze out equally vital world-leading national facilities and science exploitation. I would like to help the RAS maintain its position as a powerful advocate of the scientific and economic cases supporting the astronomy community. I am supportive of open-access publication experiments but our priority must be to use these opportunities to secure stable funding for the RAS in this new landscape.

Consortium science is now common, and many (myself included) have spent the bulk of their careers in large teams. Mentoring career-young staff is all the more important in these

environments. I would like the RAS to help create new mentoring networks for early-career researchers.

I'm a passionate advocate of extending opportunities to higher education and proud to work for the Open University. Over a quarter of UK undergraduates are part-time, facing distinctive problems, yet distance education students are sometimes neglected. I would like to see the RAS recognise and explicitly cater for all part-time and distance education astronomy and geophysics students (not just those at the OU).

RALPH E. SPENCER (A) BSc, MSc, PhD, FRAS, RAS Council 2010-2013. Emeritus Professor of Radio Astronomy, the University of Manchester.

Special Interests: Micro-quasars and X-ray binaries, jets in galactic and extragalactic sources, radio stars, radio emission from cosmic ray showers, radio astronomy techniques including data transport and phase transfer over optical fibres.

The Royal Astronomical Society does an admirable job in serving the needs of its members, both as a professional body and in encouraging amateur astronomers. One of the main attractions are the facilities in Burlington House, I was privileged to chair an IT committee during my last term on council, which oversaw improvements in the display facilities in the lecture room and in IT services in general. Video conferencing and lecture dissemination are planned, and if elected I would continue to support this activity, including incorporation of social media into the RAS's outreach activities.

One of the main issues for the society is in open access for publications and more recently data. After several decades of experience in research, teaching and administration I hope I can help the society in a potentially difficult period.

COLIN STUART (A) MSc DIC FRAS
Posts: Royal Observatory Greenwich astronomer. Science writer, speaker and author. BSc (Hons) Physics with Astrophysics, University of Manchester. MSc Science Communication, Imperial College, London. Have written for New Scientist, The Guardian, The Observer and the European Space Agency amongst many others.

Special interests: Telling the story of our attempts to unmask the nature of the universe to audiences of all ages and levels of education through both the spoken and written word. Overturning the notion that science – in particular physics and astronomy – is "too hard" or just about "facts". Vehemently countering the idea that "blue skies" research is a waste of money.

Astronomical research has never been more fruitful and the public interest in our subject is at an all-time high. I want to ensure the astronomical community pounces on this opportunity to continue that trend. The Society has a vital role to play in engaging with these new audiences and their growing appetite for astronomy. And whilst the heritage of the Society is one of its strengths, its approach needs to be equally forward thinking. Embracing the modern social

and multimedia age is key. Working day-to-day on the coal face of astronomy communication, I'd love to lend my experience to the cause.

JOHN K. WEBB (A) BSc, PhD, FRAS, Professor in the Department of Astrophysics and Optics, School of Physics, University of New South Wales. NSW Government Science and Engineering Award for Excellence in Mathematics, Earth Sciences, Chemistry and Physics (2013), Eureka Prize for Scientific Research (2012), Sydney Morning Herald "Top 100 Most Influential Sydneysiders" (2012).

Special interests: cosmology, quasar spectroscopy, varying fundamental constants, tests of Lorentz invariance; promoting astronomy/media/outreach.

If elected to Council I would be privileged to do everything I can to contribute to the continued success of the Society. Being UK-born and educated, I recognise the crucial role the Royal Astronomical Society has in the future of UK astronomy. I am keen to explore ways of doing more for fellows residing too far from London, especially overseas fellows, to regularly attend meetings. Irrespective of their location, all fellows should feel they get good value for money and feel actively involved. Modern technology means greater participation in London events is now more feasible than ever and there is room for improvement in this respect. More overseas activities can also be established. Maintaining and improving membership demographics, at home and overseas, is also important for a secure long-term, and I would like to explore greater social media engagement.

RICHARD J WHITE (A) BSc (Hons), PhD, Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Leicester. Secretary of the IoP APP group. Past: STFC Research Fellow, University of Leeds /University of Leicester.
Special interests: Very High Energy Gamma-Ray Astronomy, the development of new technology for astro-particle physics experiments in particular CTA, relativistic particle acceleration, dark matter, outreach activities.

If elected to Council I would act as a cross-member with the Institute of Physics Astroparticle Physics (APP) group. I believe this role would benefit both the IoP and RAS. I would also work to improve the Society's appeal to a broader demographic. As a relatively junior member of the community I believe that I can effectively engage early career researchers and help the Society take advantage of social media.

MARK WOODLAND (A) FRAS, Student with the Open University

Special Interests: High energy astrophysics, Black Holes and stellar remnants, AGN, Astronomy & Astrophysics outreach. Relativistic Cosmology.

It is my hope, that if elected to the RAS Council, It will enable me to have a more direct involvement with something that is close to my heart, and which I am passionate about, sharing my interests, with other likeminded individuals but with a focus on reaching out to

the younger generations. I am extremely driven, and I am always pushing the boundaries of what a student can achieve. I sit on the committee of my local astronomy group, and also run astronomy/astrophysics lectures at my place of work. I have recently given a lecture as part of the BBC stargazing live event. I have also been featured in *All About Space* magazine, and have also acted as magazine editor, for a large online publication.

I will be embarking on a research project, with an observatory in Cornwall this year, working with data from the NASA KEPLER telescope, all while still in the process of completing my degree.

It is my hope that if successful, I might be able to reach out to those who might not, under normal circumstances, feel they have access to such a prestigious group, with the resources and networking that it entails.
