# Sark plans to enhance stargazing tourism with new planetarium



Tourism officials on the island of Sark are set to enhance the experience of visitors interested in stargazing by proposing the establishment of a planetarium. The initiative is spearheaded by the Sark Astronomy Society (SAstroS), which aims to expand its appeal beyond the evening hours when the island is renowned for its clear, dark skies.

In 2011, Sark was acknowledged as the world’s first dark sky island by the International Dark-sky Association, a recognition attributed to its minimal light pollution. This accolade has drawn significant interest, evidenced by over 1,000 visitors to the SAstroS observatory last year alone. However, tourism authorities are keen to generate more daytime interest and capitalize on the island’s unique celestial assets. Jolie Rose, conseiller and deputy chair of Sark's tourism committee, stated, “We are so blessed with the view that we have, it's stunning. People are able to look at the Milky Way.” She added that while stargazing has gained popularity over the last decade, the introduction of a planetarium is a crucial next step in attracting more visitors.

The proposed planetarium is intended to be constructed initially in a cider barn, equipped with a projector. Plans include upgrading this setup with specially designed inflatable structures to ensure that activities can continue regardless of weather conditions. Rose noted, “It means if it's cloudy we can still do something and children don't have to miss it if they can't stay up late.” This development comes as Sark, which prohibits streetlights and cars, seeks to fully embrace its status as a dark sky sanctuary.

Moreover, Edd Stone, one of the guides at the SAstroS observatory, expressed enthusiasm for expanding daytime programming, indicating that the group is considering ways to utilize a solar telescope acquired last year. Stone expressed hope that the planetarium would serve as an effective tool for increasing daytime bookings, thereby enhancing the overall visitor experience on the island.

As Sark moves forward with this initiative, its efforts to blend daytime and nocturnal activities reflect a growing trend among tourism destinations to diversify offerings and maximise the potential of unique environmental features.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)