

# SHOREHAM DISTRICT ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023

	<p><b>Apologies:</b> Lynn Beun, Ron Bewley, Les Binns, Ray Bradbury, Moira Brown, Jay Cooper, Phil Jemmett, , John and Shena Maskell, John Newnham, Judy Pullin, Jacky Woolcock, Peter and Rosemary Wyld</p> <p><b>Members Present:</b> Richard and Carrie Allan, Jan Bateman, Tony Benton, Val Bentley, Celia Beresford, Sean and Noranne Biddulph, Helen Brett, Jerry Campbell, Claire Card, Peter Casebow, Margaret Costello, Sue Crane, Averil Dean, Mike Dixon, Bernie Forbes, John Gardner, Dennis Grimwood, G Hammon, Bertie Harding, Tim and Jenny Holter, Clive Hope, Elizabeth Leahy, Maureen Leeves, Eva March, Ros Meadow, Sue Miles, Peer Murrell, Richard Nowak, Nigel Parsons, Dave Phillips, John Pointing, Jim Prior, Robin Ready, Brianne Reeves, Roger Smith, M Taylor, David and Rae Titcomb, Audrey Wende, Martin and Lili Wilson, Tony Zoppi</p>
	<p><b>Welcome from the President Brianne Reeve:</b></p> <p>Brianne was approached by a founding member of SDOS to join the Society 59 years ago, when it was the only ornithology group in Sussex. During that time she has held various positions, ranging from helping with refreshments to now having the honour of serving as President of the Society. She commended Council for their work to modernise and advance the Society with great energy and noted the huge amounts of time given voluntarily to keep all members up to date and informed. The Society was formed in 1953 and still remains well respected. Originally the Shoreham Ornithological Society, the initials were taken by Sussex Ornithological society when that was formed, so we became Shoreham District Ornithological Society. Brianne extended thanks to all Council members and outings leaders for their work on behalf of the membership.</p>
1	<p><b>Chairman's Report:</b></p> <p>The full report will be circulated by email tomorrow. Tonight's talk will extend thanks to all those who contribute to the work of the Society and highlight some of the many achievements over the last year.</p> <p>To start, thanks were given to all members who volunteer in so many ways, – leading walks, supporting public engagement events, helping at indoor talks, - the catering team, those who put out the chairs for meetings and organise the raffle. Also, those who contribute articles or images for the newsletters, support our Garden Birdwatch scheme and bring alive the data on trends and occurrences via the Usergroup. Without this support we couldn't deliver a tenth of what has been achieved in 2022/23, so thank you on behalf of all Council members.</p> <p>Also huge thanks to Council colleagues who are responsible for massive amounts of work, much of which is unseen, but keeps SDOS moving forward – e.g. managing the money, IT, newsletter, minutes and documentation, membership and speakers, walks and events, leading walks, representing SDOS and contributing to conservation work. It is calculated about 900 hours minimum has been freely given by Council members in the last year.</p> <p>A Vote of Thanks was proposed for Clive Hope who is retiring from Council after 19 years. Clive was Recorder between 2004-2013 and has led around 50 outings. He will be greatly missed by Council colleagues, but in his 'retirement' he will still be leading walks and helping behind the scenes with our 70 years publication. A round of applause was given for Clive.</p> <p>The written report sets out all the measurable achievements over the past 12 months, but here just a few highlights were picked out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eighteen walks were delivered by volunteers, some to new locations, others to popular longstanding places. The programme is vibrant and relevant. Participation has varied from 3 – 35+ participants in these events.</li><li>• 6 indoor meetings have been held at this new venue and it has been great to see people in person again. Attendance has been good, despite some parking issues, and the quality of speakers has been high</li><li>• Two fabulous newsletters and three Junior newsletters have been produced.</li><li>• Produced two very substantial responses to public consultations and the Chair's report contains case studies on our approach</li><li>• Lots of conservation work, contributing to discussions regarding the cement works development, bait</li></ul>

	<p>digging and signage for Adur SSSI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborated with Friends of Shoreham Beach (FOSB), World of Widewater (WOW), and Brighton U3A sharing events and also supporting Cissbury Bioblitz, engaging with 60-70 local residents</li> <li>• Facebook followers have increased by 33% in 12 months and now total 1000+. Many of these engage in conversation with local members by the river.</li> <li>• New Health and Safety and Safeguarding policies have been put in place and 29 Risk assessments have been completed for our walks programme.</li> </ul> <p>In conclusion it has been a successful year; we finally emerged from Covid with a full programme of walks and talks, were active on social media and in conservation and the Society continues to thrive and help people to connect to birds and nature. So thank you all for your support.</p> <p>There were no questions raised.</p> <p>An appendix to the report shows the Society’s approach to consultation responses. These are evidence based and reviewed several times before submission, to produce a professional report which reflects well on the Society. The full report can be accessed here:</p> <p><a href="https://www.sdos.org/public/SDOS_Annual_Report_2022-23.pdf">https://www.sdos.org/public/SDOS_Annual_Report_2022-23.pdf</a></p> <p>Brianne thanked Tony for his report and noted the time taken to produce more formal systems and processes e.g Health and Safety policy.</p>
2	<p><b>Annual Accounts:</b> TH reported on the accounts for the year, noting significant features of income and expenditure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During Covid lockdown, Society income was purely members subscriptions. These are now augmented by raffle income.</li> <li>• Key costs include ICT (use of Zoom and AGM online voting system) and meetings venue. Following lockdown, St Peter’s decided to retain the church hall for their own use sdn there is a substantial increase in the costs of hiring a hall for meetings.</li> <li>• Postage is also a significant cost. Hand delivery and availability to collect at meetings contribute to savings in this area.</li> <li>• Membership has increased by 25% in recent years, previously around 200 members but currently 259, although it is noted some subscriptions remain outstanding, so this is likely to decrease slightly. Facebook, public engagement events and informal ‘face to face’ contacts have all helped maintain membership levels.</li> <li>• As a result of increased membership, the subscription rate will remain at its current level, as set in 2006.</li> <li>• Funds have been spent on nestboxes and feeders and are available for investment in larger projects, such as our previous contribution to information panels at Widewater Local Nature Reserve.</li> <li>• Thanks were extended to David Titcomb for his work in examining the accounts.</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>Election of Offices and Council Members:</b> With the exception of Clive, all current council members are willing to stand again. These were duly elected on a show of hands, with no objections.</p>
4	<p><b>Election of Examiners:</b> David Titcomb was re-elected as Examiner.</p>
	<p><b>AOB:</b> MD offered congratulations on the success of Facebook, he stressed the importance of attracting more young people to the group and how it is crucial to campaign for birds.</p> <p>CH expressed thanks to Peter Wyld, not present tonight for all the hard work he has completed on the website and in maintaining everything during Covid.</p> <p>No complaints have been received, but there have been some challenges with the meeting venue. We were let down by the school who did not advise there was another booking and car parking has been problematic. Therefore, with effect from April the meetings will switch to Thursdays instead of Tuesdays evenings. Thanks were</p>

	given to Sue Miles, who has been kept busy renegotiating with speakers to change the dates and troubleshooting with the school.
	TB thanked Brianne for her role this evening and for her long history and continuity in supporting the Society.
	Meeting closed